

East Sutherland Deer Management Group

Minutes of Game Keepers Meeting

1st May 2013 at Sutherland Estates Office Golspie at 2 pm

Apologies:

Brian Lyall, Neil Mackay, Peter Baker, Robbie Milne

Present:

P Voy, Sutherland Estates (Chairman)

A Grant, Kildonan,

R Bain, Torrish

B Colvin, Kintradwell

L Hague, Gordonbush

R Rowantree, Gordonbush

A Mackay, Dalnessie

I Smith, Dunrobin

J Cruickshanks Ben Armine

R Strickland, Clebrig

D Macaskill, FCS

M Robertson, FCS

E Cameron, Sutherland Estates (Secretary)

Matters Arising:

Deer Count

The figures for the 2013 Deer Count spreadsheet were considered to be misleading. It seemed to suggest a significant increase on deer numbers. It was felt that it would be better to have them unclassified rather than wrongly classified. Calves were in good condition which makes them difficult to class.

Use of a helicopter disturbs the deer, running deer could be counted twice.

There are more areas being counted which increased the total deer numbers

Robbie Rowantree to correct the spreadsheet.

Agreed to raise this at the AGM

Alistair Polly, Morvich to be invoiced for subscription now that he has submitted deer count figures.

Habitat Management

Many people are seeing a lot of heather beetle damage.

Tom Chepman, Loch Choire - ESDMG is monitor "pilot" area for habitat management.

Habitat monitoring was considered to be important and estates are encouraged to continue their habitat monitoring and record their findings. ESDMG to consider a mapping based system to show the results.

Hind Cull 2013

It was generally felt that an increased cull for hinds would be required. Dunrobin and Kintradwell were going to do similar cull as in 2012

Increase of Deer in new areas

Deer are spreading to new areas of land that are currently out with the ESDMG group area particularly around Cambusmore to Dornoch and Ospidale. It was suggested that the Estate owners in these areas could be asked to join the Group.

Peter Voy to ask Sinclair Coghill about the best way forward

SNH

The Achork AAA area has been classed as unfavourable due to trampling. There are a lot of sheep and cattle there all year round and 100/140 stags in winter.

Loch Choire, Dalnessie, Clebrig

Ownership of Achork Forestry?