

Minutes of the Spring Meeting

EAST SUTHERLAND DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP held at GOLSPIE INN, GOLSPIE on 8th MAY 2015 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Mr A Mackay	Dalnessie	Sir Michael Wigan	Borrobol
Mr J McMorran	Balnacoil	Mr Mark Lee	FCS
Mr G Symmers	Balnacoil	Mr J Billet	Kintradwell
Mr T Chetwynd	Loch Choire (V Chairman)	Mr R Bain	Torrish
Mr R Rowantree	Gordonbush	Mr B Lyall.	Badanloch
Mr L Hague	Gordonbush	Mr N Mackay	Loch Choire
Mr B Colvin	Kintradwell	Mr J Urquhart	Dunrobin/Dalreavoch
Mr P Bakker	Altnaharra		
Mr P Voy	Sutherland Estates (Chairman)		
Mrs E Cameron	Sutherland Estates (Secretary)		

In Attendance:

Ms Linzi Seivwright SNH

1. WELCOME

Peter Voy welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced James Urquhart, Dunrobin Sporting, who runs the sporting and deer management on Dunrobin and Dalreavoch estates.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Lord Joicey, B Stickland, A Nicolson, D MacAskill, FCS and W Lamont, FCS

3. CULL/COUNT 2014/15

J McMorran suggested count figures needed to be adjusted re unclassified. Discussion followed on need to have accurate count. R Rowantree suggested access SRPD for funding for helicopter count. Loch Choire & Dalnessie were largely happy with their count but concerned that Ben Armine did not count on the same day. Borrobol noted that hinds were in poor condition but the reverse was seen at Balnacoil where hinds had improved. The figures appear to indicate an increase in numbers in the east of the area with a more stable picture in the west. Following a number of years of well co-ordinated counting, there was an impression that things had slipped this year. It was decided to re-introduce a pre-count meeting in 2016 in an effort to improve co-ordination.

4. HABITAT MONITORING

Fran Michelmore Root hopes to have a prototype of her system available for testing in the summer using data collected from Badanloch.

5. DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Linzi Seivwright, now a private consultant, stated that the political spotlight was on DMGs, stressed the need to have a comprehensive DMP that was useful to all that was useable and dynamic. Current DMP was a useful reference tool. DMP has to show a working/action plan with cull targets, needs to meet Public Interest in relation to social and economic elements.

The assessment of the existing ESDMG plan by SNH showed it to be lacking in several key areas which are now required. The Group need to decide what sort of plan they would like to have; whether it is to be more map based as suggested by L Seivwright and V Clements or whether we update the existing plan produced by R Putman.

It was agreed to ask Linzi Seivwright, Victor Clements and Rory Putman to tender for the Group's DMP.