

GLENELG PENINSULA DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Minutes of Meeting

10 May 2021

Held online at 11am

In the Chair	Julian Richmond-Watson (JRW)
Secretary	Michael Laing (ML)
Present	Arnisdale Cluanie Eilanreach Glenquoich East Glenquoich Glenshiel Kinloch Hourn Bunloinne Angus Davidson Ltd Scallasaig NatureScot FLS

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Druidaig and Beolary.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of 26th October 2020 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

All matters will be covered through the course of the meeting.

4. Stag & Hind culls 2020/21

Estate	Stags	Hinds	Calves
Arnisdale	42	80	23
Bunloinne	0	4	3
Cluanie	10	30	15
East Glenquoich	25	23	4
Eilanreach	35	80	16
Glenquoich	29	50	16
Glenshiel	31	72	13
Kinlochhourn	10	38	8
Open range total	182	377	98
Druidaig	4	20	10
Eilanreach Woods	10	0	0

Beolary	2	6	0
FLS	42	28	13
Peninsula total	240	431	121

5. Deer

a) Recruitment Counts

Estate	Percentage
Arnisdale	23
Bunloinne	42
Cluanie	18
East Glenquoich	18
Druidaig	20
Eilanreach	26
Glenquoich	14
Glenshiel	20
Kinlochhourn	22
Average	22.6

*Number are distorted by Bunloinne which was calculated over a very small number of hinds.

b) Condition

Arnisdale noted that evidence last year showed recruitment was very high so the hard winter and subsequent effect on calf numbers, is very disappointing. The cold and wet weather in March and April killed a lot of calves but the stags and hinds are now looking well. There has been some mortality in the older deer but mostly stags. It was noted that Glenquoich has suffered with a particularly low recruitment and commented that they have to feed otherwise deer head to Glengarry and never come back. East Glenquoich has witnessed very poor looking calves and is disheartened after the amount of feeding they have carried out.

c) Losses/Leakage

Glenshiel believe that the numbers leaking are as per previous years. Cluanie commented that woodland extraction has resulted in gates being left open which is likely to have caused additional leakage.

The situation at Bunloinne has been unclear for a number of years and cull numbers have been higher than expected. Sporting tenants have only recently become involved in the ground but recognise the high culls in relation to the size of the ground. AD Ltd is aware that estates to the east have commented on losses in the past, Bunloinne noted that some fences are porous although they are being improved. The situation will be monitored.

Beolary commented prior to the meeting that there are a number of deer being seen (~70) on Scallasaig that should not be there, it is unknown where they come from, but if they create too much damage, they will have to be removed.

d) Road kill figures

Cluanie reported road kills as 5 stags, 4 hinds and 5 calves.

6. Deer Management Plan

a) Government Working Group Report

NatureScot noted that whilst a lot of recommendations have been accepted, we are now working with a new government, a lot of the recommendations will require primary legislation and there will be a consultation period, so any changes are going to take some time to feed. Arnisdale noted that the group should make strong representations during the consultation period.

b) Habitat Monitoring

Habitat monitoring will be carried out through the summer as usual and the findings should be sent to the secretary and AD Ltd once complete.

A number stalkers queried the need to carry out habitat monitoring when the government have ignored habitat data while considering the working group report. The Chairman accepted the concern and everyone agreed that it is still necessary to collate to use as evidence should it be required.

c) Population Model update

The population model has been updated and is attached to these minutes as an appendix.

d) Glenelg Working Group report

Glenquoich reported that due to the Covid constraints, the working group has not been able to meet but a meeting will be held in August in order to keep the DMP up to date.

e) Proposed Stag Cull 2021

Estate	Stags
Arnisdale	40
Bunloinne	5 to 10*
Cluanie	10 to 15
East Glenquoich	25
Druidaig	8
Eilanreach	35*
Glenquoich	30 to 35
Glenshiel	30
Kinlochhourn	20
Total	203 to 218

*plus woodland stags

f) Hind target 2021/22

The hind target will be discussed during the October meeting. It will be based on the population model but individual estates deer numbers during the cull will be taken into account by stalkers.

7. Local Community Engagement

Local community engagement has been challenging as a result of Covid but invites will be sent out to interested local parties next time the group is able to meet in person for a Spring meeting.

8. Finances

The bank balance is currently a little over It is likely that the group will have to contribute to any future helicopter count so a surplus is necessary.

9. AOCB

a) Helicopter Count

NatureScot commented that cheaper alternatives to helicopter counts is not yet available because the technology is still not suitable. NatureScot will seek to have the Glenelg DMG counted in 2022.

b) Feeding Deer

Kinloch Hourn queried other estate's feeding strategies. An open discussion was held where various members raised their thoughts. Most feed to maintain deer condition but some estate also feed to prevent damage to livestock fields. Other estates feed to avoid deer wandering away from the ground. An after meeting summary produced the following information:

Estate	Feeding?	Numbers fed	Feed products
Arnisdale	Yes	80 stags, 25 - 30 Hinds & calves	Protein cobs, high energy blocks
Bunloinne	No	-	-
Cluanie	Yes	300	Deer rolls, high energy blocks
Druidaig	No	-	-
East Glenquoich	Yes	250 - 300	High energy blocks, turnips when necessary
Eilanreach	No	-	-
Glenquoich	Yes	300 - 400	Silage, high energy blocks, deer cobs
Glenshiel	No	-	-
Kinlochhourn	Yes	20 - 25 stags	Deer rolls

c) Woodland Creation

AD Ltd informed the group that there are attractive grants for landowners collaborating with each other to develop woodland schemes. Opportunities may be particularly possible between Glenquoich, Kinlochhourn and Arnsdale. All owners should consider for discussion at the next meeting. **ACTION OWNERS**

d) ADMG

LS, with her involvement in ADMG, was asked for any comment on the workings of the Group. LS advised that we should keep a close eye on the Working Report and arm ourselves with information, habitat assessments and counts. LS recognised that we have a good functioning group.

10. Simpson Game

Cameron Simpson of Simpson Game (SG), joined the meeting to comment on the current situation within the game industry. SG currently have a huge amount of game in stock but continue to buy from Estates. Market recovery will be slow and as a result, the price SG will be able to pay for game is unknown. SG will continue to collect from all estates next season. They have not turned any estates down to date and do not intend to.

Queries were raised over dealers buying lead shot game. SG have confirmed that Food Standards Scotland have not mentioned any changes to processors and any changes that might be made will take at least a year to implement. Therefore, lead shot deer will certainly still be collected next season. SG do not have any customers requesting venison from lead free sources.

Arnsdale suggested that representations should be made by members to their local politicians proposing that venison should be more widely used in schools and the military due to its health benefits.

Arnsdale thanked Cameron Simpson for attending and for their continued support to the group.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Sunday 10th October 2021 to be held at the Cluanie Inn (Covid dependant) at 2pm.