

SOUTH WEST ROSS DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

CONSTITUTION

Name

The Group name shall be South West Ross Deer Management Group.

Objectives

The Group's objectives are to promote the sustainable management of deer in the South West Ross area of the Scottish Highlands, as detailed in the Group Deer Management Plan.

Group Area

The geographic area will include, in effect, all that land between Applecross and Achnasheen, bounded to the north by Loch Torridon and the roads between Shieldaig, Kinlochewe and Achnasheen (A896 & A832) and to the south by Loch Carron and the A896 from Lochcarron village to Achnasheen (total area, excluding towns/villages assessed as 62,340 ha), as depicted on attached map. The boundary may be open to amendment should the committee decide.

Criteria for Membership

Land Managers (e.g. farmers, private estates, NGOs, private forestry companies and land management companies) that wish to become members must own or manage land within the Group area.

Representatives from Scottish Natural Heritage, the local community and other locally relevant NGOs may be invited to attend meetings of the Group. Whilst they have an important role in informing the DMG decision process, final decisions on the management of the deer within the Group area will rest with the landowning members

Members obligations

Members agree to support the effective running of the Group as recommended in the Code of Practice for Deer Management:

1. Members representing landholdings where deer are present should inform other Members of their:
 - deer management objectives.
 - desired deer density and population profile (if applicable).
 - methods used to assess if their objectives are being realised and their review process.
 - other land management objectives.
2. Support good attendance at meetings (owners, managers and stalkers).
3. Provide unrestricted exchange of count and cull data.
4. Advise DMG when there is to be an activity which might or will impact directly on neighbours e.g. woodland expansion
5. Exchange information informally about poaching activity.
6. Exchange information about habitat/crop impact issues.
7. Exchange and consult regarding any proposed new activities which might impede movement of deer, e.g. fencing.

8. Exchange information about DVCs
9. Work with other Members of the Group to resolve any problems that arise as a result of differing management regimes and collaborate with other Members
10. Support the interests and work of the Group, e.g. exchange views on current legislation, marketing, competence etc.
11. Abide by the Constitution, the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and observe all statutory requirements.

Meetings

- The Group will meet twice annually as a minimum.
- The Secretary will keep a record of all meetings and copies will be circulated to Members.
- An Annual General meeting shall be held at such a place, date and hour as the Group shall decide.
- Notice of the AGM shall be given to all Members in writing at least twenty-eight clear days before the date of that meeting.
- Special General Meetings may be held where and when the Group may determine and shall be held upon a requisition in writing to the Secretary signed by at least two-thirds of the membership or at the instigation of the Chairman.
- There will be a commitment to reaching Group decisions through consensus as opposed to taking a vote.
- A Quorum at any meeting of the Group shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the Group membership.

Office Bearers

Office bearers will comprise a Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer and any other co-opted office bearers that the Group requires to fulfil its functions. All office bearers should be elected annually at the AGM and shall serve for one year only. Re-election on a rolling basis is permitted with no restriction on the period of time that an office bearer may serve.

Funding and Financial Arrangements

The Group will be self financing and the subscription will be set annually at the AGM. Subscriptions will be payable at a date to be determined by the Group. The Treasurer/Secretary and the chairman of the Group will operate a Bank Account for the Group and all financial transactions must pass through this account. Joint signatures will be required on all cheques or debits drawn on the account above a figure of £500.

A financial Statement will be prepared by an Auditor appointed by the Group and provided to the AGM for ratification by members. In the event of funds being left upon the winding up of the Group the disbursement of these funds will be determined by the Members.

Conflict resolution

It shall be the duty of the Group Members to seek agreement in respect of Group objectives and, where a dispute arises between Members, to resolve such dispute by negotiation and compromise. When agreement cannot be reached it shall be in the option of the Chairman to refer the matter to arbitration by the Chairman of the Association of Deer Management Groups or such other independent expert as the parties may agree.

Collation and release of information

Storage of membership information will be the responsibility of the Group Secretary. The information will be used solely for the administration of the Group and stored in accordance with the law.

Collection and use of deer management information for planning purposes will be the responsibility of Group members.

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APPENDIX 1

Code of Conduct for Members

The following code lays out the standards of behaviour required from all Members of the Group.

1. Abide by the law e.g.
 - Deer (Scotland) Act 1996
 - Firearms Act 1968 and subsequent amendments
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
 - Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill 2011
2. Abide by Industry Best Practice Guidance
3. Pay subscriptions when due
4. Supply cull records annually and other relevant monitoring data as agreed by the Group
5. Support the working of the Group