

BIRSE PARISH DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP

Record of Autumn Meeting on 3rd November 2020

(Via Microsoft Teams due to Covid 19 restrictions)

Members Present: Andrew Farquharson (Finzean Estate), Stuart Young (Birse Estate), Malcolm Nicol (Ballogie Estate), Doug Boyle (BTCO), Jane Winton (Secretary & Farmers Rep)

Others Present: Iain Hope (NatureScot)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Andrew Farquharson (AF) welcomed all as Chair. There being no apologies and two items were noted for Any Other Business.

2. BP DMG Papers

- 2.1 It was noted that the Record of the last autumn meeting on 5th November 2019 is available on BCT Website along with the Deer Management Plan 2019/24.

3. Current Deer Management

3.1 Red Deer

It was noted that the DMG's interim cull to 30th September of 70 red deer was below target for this stage of the year which is probably due to the restrictions put in place during this Covid 19 pandemic. It was reported by all groups that there are lots more people utilising the forests due to lockdown which is resulting in less deer being seen. Birse are seeing a lot less deer due to lots more mountain bikers using the forests and hills. It was noted that the rut had been short this year and that the venison price was very low at present.

3.2 Roe Deer

It was noted that the DMG's interim roe cull total to 30th September of 72 was below target towards the DMG's agreed roe cull for the year, due to the reasons set out above. IH reported that cull totals seem to be down across the country.

3.3 Related Information

- (a) Deer Fences: MJN asked if anyone had heard of further proposals from Glen Tanar to reinstate the deer fence on the Birse march. No one had. (Post meeting MJN had confirmation from Michael Bruce that a new deer fence is being actively discussed).
- (b) Deer/Vehicle Collisions (DVCs): It was noted that there had been some DVCs involving roe but no more than usual and that there is not a particular location at present in the DMG area where DVCs are a specific issue.

4 Brief Updates on Other Species

- 4.1 Red Grouse, Black Grouse and Capercaillie: It was thought again that grouse had been affected by ticks and it was noted that Finzean and Ballogie had had some sightings of capercaillie this year.
- 4.2 Raptors, Brown and Mountain Hares: It was noted that there seems to be lots of red kites in the area and also a healthy population of brown hares.

4.3 Other Species: It was confirmed that there have been no signs of mink or grey squirrels.

5. **Any Other Business**

5.1 Fire Plans & Map: It was noted that Ballogie Estate has produced a Birse Area Fire Map (previously circulated) which was discussed. In order to be allowed to give assistance to the FRS, it is necessary to be listed on the Community Asset Register. and so MJN agreed to register for this initially to find out what it entails. MJN will also contact Michael Bruce as Chairman of the South Grampian Wildfire Group to discuss map requirements and a further meeting will be held at beginning of February 2021 to progress this further.

5.2 Deer Monitoring: It was agreed to contact IH when progressing this further.
