



Integrated Land Management Advisory Forum Tuesday 6th March 2007, Braemar Village Hall

DRAFT MINUTES

PRESENT

Eric Baird	CNPA Board
Stuart Black	CNPA Board
Simon Blackett	Invercauld Estate
Richard Cooke	ADMG, Dalhousie Estates
Will Boyd-Wallis	CNPA (Minutes)
Fiona Chalmers	CNPA
Matt Davies	"Firebeaters"
Jim Innes	NFUS
James Irvine	DCS
Alister Laing	SAC
Eleanor Mackintosh	CNPA Board
Alastair MacLennan	CNPA Board (Chair)
Colin McClean	CNPA
Malcolm Morrison	Smith's Gore
Nicky Penford	FWAG
Eoin Smith	Glen Tanar Estate
Pat Snowdon	SEERAD
Vicky Thomson	Aberdeenshire Council
Richard Wallace	FCS

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from: Duncan Bryden, Iain Hope, Ian Francis, Roger Knight, Frank Law, Helen McDade, Archie McNab, Steve North, Anne Rae, Colin Shedden, Adam Smith, Simon Thorp, Drennan Watson.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (9th November 2006)

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Will Boyd-Wallis reported on the actions points:

- AP1. In general sharing of information between the agencies is good. CNPA are in discussion with SEERAD on how accessing information like IACS data, that may serve a useful function in framing policies for the Park as a whole.
- AP2. Following a number of changes in recent months, the staff contacts in CNPA should now be relatively stable. In response, it was requested that CNPA send out a brief "who's who" to the forum.

- AP3. There are a number of embryonic ideas being pursued on monitoring socio-economic impacts of legislation change on land management. E.g. impacts of Section 7 Agreements (Deer Act) on Estates
- AP4. A study on “Future Landscapes” is being implemented to look at the costs of delivering public benefits. It was pointed out the a previous survey had been undertaken by the Cairngorms Partnership, but that this was limited in that there was no opportunity for dialogue between estates and surveyors and it gave no indication of how public money should/could be spent.
- AP5. Links between tourism and land management are being implemented through the Tourist information Centres where the important role of land managers is strongly highlighted. FWAG have started an initiative on open farms and the Highlands and Islands Food network have started an “open gates” project.
- AP6. DCS excerpts were provided with the last minutes.

AP1	Provide a summary note of the roles of CNPA staff relating to land management	CNPA
-----	---	------

AP2	Send a summary of the Future Landscapes project to forum members	CNPA
-----	--	------

3 WILDFIRE

Matt Davies from the *Centre for the Study of Environmental Change and Sustainability* provided an informative presentation on issues surrounding fire management: The making the most of the prescribed fire and avoiding the threat of wildfire. Further details are obtainable on the website: <http://firebeaters.org.uk>

It is intended that the website will include an interactive section aimed at predicting rates of spread at any given time or place.

Some key points from the talk:

Whilst fire is an essential tool for moorland management, there are great benefits to be had in ensuring some patches within the moorland mosaic are left entirely un-burnt.

Unmanaged/rank moorland can be lead to a serious threat of wildfire and spread into the peat soil layer.

Diversifying forest structure and incorporating fire breaks reduces likelihood of fire spread and helps to protect valuable habitats.

Burning on forest edges has two benefits: it helps to prepare the ground for new seedlings to grow and reduces the fuel load and threat of spreading forest fire.

4 SCOTTISH RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Pat Snowdon of *SEERAD Rural Development Policy and Planning* provided an update on the new SRDP (2007-2013) and Land Management Contracts.

The new SRDP will be more strategic, with a stronger focus on outcomes, delivered by a more integrated public sector. A regional approach will be used to deliver the Programme. The main components of the Programme will be the Less Favoured Support Scheme (LFASS), Land Management Contracts (LMCs) and LEADER. LFASS plays a key role in sustaining the land management that supports local communities and provides wider public benefits. LMCs will aim

to deliver economic, social and environmental measures in an integrated way. A key objective will be to encourage innovation and collaboration among those receiving support. LEADER is an addition to the Programme and will provide support at a local level for projects that are identified by local communities. Pat spoke of both the risks and the opportunities in the new programme.

Funding for the Programme will come from the EU, the Scottish Executive (the majority) and voluntary modulation. It is hoped that the voluntary modulation regulation will be agreed by the end of March so that the funding package can be finalised. The total budget for the 7-year Programme may be in the region of £1.5 billion but this will depend on the rate of modulation that is used. Over £825 million of this is already committed to LFASS and existing agri-environment and forestry agreements.

Whilst regionalisation is a key aspect of the SRDP, funding will not be regionally allocated. Regional priorities will be advised by regional rural development fora and be set by the minister.

The indication is that there will be no reduction in forestry funding.

The SRDP will be formally submitted to the European Commission (EC) after the voluntary modulation regulation has been agreed in Brussels. Drafts of the SRDP have already been sent to the EC in order to speed up the approval process when it is formally submitted.

Copies of the slides from Pat's PowerPoint presentation are available on request – please contact Will Boyd-Wallis.

5 PLANNING TO SUCCEED

Malcolm Morrison of *Smith's Gore* spoke on the establishment of a three year partnership project funded by CNPA, the Crofters Commission and HIE.

The aims of the project are to help promote business success and to increase the number of young people working in the farming sector. The key theme of the process is to take a positive approach and focus on the things that can be changed for the better. Ten planning to succeed groups have been set up in the Highlands. It is hoped that as many farms from the National Park (in the HIE area) may be involved as possible. Contact Malcolm for further details: 07789 922666.

6 NATIONAL PARK PLAN

Will Boyd-Wallis provided an update on progress. The Park Plan is to be approved by the Minister Sarah Boyak in March 2007. CNPA has set up co-ordination teams with representatives from all departments which are charged with the duty of ensuring each of the seven priorities within the Park Plan is implemented. Each of the teams will engage with the various relevant agency funding bodies and other partners with a key role in delivering the plan.

7 CAIRNGORMS DEER ADVISORY GROUP

CDAG met in February 2007 and agreed to investigate ways of developing inclusive deer management plans across the Park. CNPA will develop guidance on the content of deer management plans, what information is required for an inclusive process and how consultation should proceed. This guidance will be discussed with all DMGs and wider interests. CDAG also agreed to develop a project to assess the socio-economic impacts of deer reductions taking place within the Cairngorms.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Monitor Farms

The monitor farm scheme is soon to be launched in the National Park. The first meeting of those involved in the scheme is due to take place in Strathdon on 23rd March. It will be led by two facilitators: Jim Booth and Peter Cook. Or more information, please contact Fiona Chalmers on 01479 870547.

AP3	Send a summary of the Monitor Farms project to forum members	CNPA
-----	--	------

Nature Exchange

Arch Network is a Scottish Non Government Organisation promoting learning and development in natural and cultural heritage between Scotland and other European countries. Trainers, students and young workers have the opportunity to gain new skills and to expand their European point of view by becoming involved in international joint working. There are a range of FREE exchange visits to European countries. For more info go to the archnetwork website:

<http://arch.blogware.com>

Core Path Planning

This has reached the second stage of consultation with the consultation document and draft maps being published on 30th March with public meeting being held in May/June. Details are available on the CNPA website: <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/access/corepaths/index.php>

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Suggested date for next meeting is **12 JUNE 2007**.