

**Cairngorms National Park
LAND MANAGEMENT FORUM**

**Duke of Gordon Hotel, Kingussie.
Wednesday 28th March 2012**

MEETING NOTE

Present:

Alison McKnight	Agroecosystems
David Frew	National Trust for Scotland
Duncan Ferguson	Spey District Fishery Board
Eleanor Mackintosh	CNPA Board
Patrick Thompson	Ben Alder Estate
Hamish Trench	CNPA
Ian Cowe	Forestry Commission
Andrew Hamilton	Strutt and Parker LLP
Jamie Williamson	Alvie & Dalraddy Estates
Hebe Carus	RSPB Futurescapes
Johnnie Grant	Rothiemurchus Estate
Malcolm Wield	Forestry Commission Scotland
Drew MacFarlane-Slack	Scottish Land and Estates Ltd
Donna Skelly	Grigor and Young
Carol Evans	Woodland Trust
Paul Timms	Select
Penny Lawson	CNPA
Stuart Reid	Highland Wood Energy
Rhoderick Noble	CKD Galbraith (Chair)
Chris Donald	SNH
Ailsa Anderson	Scottish Land and Estates Ltd
Duncan Bryden	CNPA Board
Scott Petrie	Scottish Land and Estates Ltd
Will Boyd-Wallis	CNPA

Apologies

Lucy St Johnston, Alister Laing, Catriona Rowan, Ian Francis, Richard Cooke, Roger Knight, Simon Thorpe, Steve Brown, Vicky Hilton, Angela Douglas, Jayne Glass, Martin Price, Rob McMorran, Robert Raynor, Angus McNicol, Mark Nicholson.

I. Introduction and CNPA update

Will Boyd-Wallis welcomed all attending and gave an update on relevant areas of CNPA activity as follows.

The purpose of the Forum was reiterated, ie to:

- share and compare information and experience
- provide practical advice
- develop new ideas and opportunities

- help land managers

Woodland Expansion exploratory mapping

An update was given following the presentation of this work at the last LMF meeting. Maps highlighting possible areas of expansion with the objectives of a) cost-effective productive forestry, and b) improved pinewood networks were illustrated. It was re-emphasised that the maps are not a 'blue print' for expansion but rather a tool to show where expansion *could* occur taking the other objectives and constraints of land management into account. This approach has been endorsed by FC and the Highlands and Islands Forestry Forum and enquiries from land managers regarding the use of the maps are welcomed. One possible use of the maps may be to support SRDP applications and efforts are being made to ensure that all parties involved in assessing applications are aware of them. It was noted that SRDP bureaucracy can be a major barrier to woodland expansion and reassurances were given that this point has been raised both at the Highlands and Island Forestry Forum and at the Scottish Government Woodland Expansion Advisory Group.

Landscape Toolkit

This is a pilot produced by CNPA as an information and planning tool to help inform land management and development decisions and pre-empt likely planning issues with regard to landscape impact. The toolkit is still under development and is now available for consultation at www.cairngorms.co.uk/landscape-toolkit.

Action: Members are encouraged to explore the toolkit and offer feedback.

Wildfire

Recent dry and warm weather has caused high wildfire risk conditions, illustrated by Fire Risk Severity Index ratings submitted by Michael Bruce, South Grampian Wildfire Group. Awareness is being raised through press releases and alerts on www.cairngorms.co.uk/news/ and scottishlandandestates.co.uk.

Responsible behaviour at times of high fire risk is one of the pieces of advice for the public contained in the recently published CNPA 'Tread Lightly in the Park' leaflets. The leaflets encourage responsible access and are now available for wide distribution. Printed copies can be obtained from Fran Potheary at CNPA, and a downloadable version is being developed.

Cairngorm Estates Survey

A survey to quantify the importance of estates to the economy, similar to a previous survey in 2003, has been fully endorsed by Scottish Land and Estates and will be carried out during 2012/13.

Deer stalking awareness signage

Development of a template sign is nearing completion. An example has been produced for Invercauld Estate. The template along with guidance on how the sign can be customised to meet requirements of individual estates will be circulated by email once finalised. CNPA will meet reasonable costs of sign manufacture for interested estates.

Action: Enquiries to Penny Lawson or Will Boyd Wallis at CNPA.

Deer Density mapping

The aspirational and actual deer density maps for CNP produced through CDAG have been well received by ADMG. The maps are available as a tool for deer managers. There is an outstanding need to fill in areas of the map which remain blank.

It was noted that the Scottish Government are keen to promote deer farming to meet demand for venison, and a presentation on this was requested for the next LMF meeting.

Action: CNPA/SL&E to investigate and arrange.

National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017

The full results of the consultation on the draft plan are now available at

www.cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/national-park-plan/cairngorms-national-park-plan-2012-2017/.

The Plan is due for final sign-off by the CNP Board on 11th May 2012.

CNPA Land Management Training Project

Up coming training for this year includes:

Deer Stalking Certificate Level 1 (April)

Wildfire TBC

Making the most of peatlands TBC

WANE Act & Wildlife crime TBC

Heather Habitat monitoring TBC

Further details from Will Boyd Wallis, CNPA.

2. Renewable energy from biomass

Ian Cowe, FCS Biomass Development Officer for Grampian and CNP area outlined the advantages of using woodfuel for land managers including reducing heating costs, enhanced woodland management, contributions to the local economy and reducing carbon emissions. There are also diversification opportunities through sale of surplus wood to market, providing sites for storage and distribution hubs for suppliers, etc. Stuart Reid, HW Energy, illustrated financial benefits of using biomass for estates' own heating needs and developing woodfuel supply as a business. Financial support for non-domestic biomass installations is currently available via Phase 1 of the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), with Phase 2 for domestic users due to be launched in 2013. Early applications are advised to take advantage of guaranteed rates of payment.

Relevant case studies and further information available at

www.usewoodfuel.co.uk (FCS)

www.lowcarboncairngorms.org (including CNPA Woodfuel Action Plan)

www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk

www.decc.gov.uk/rhi

Ian Cowe is available for FREE one to one business advice and support to members,

ian.cowe@forestry.gsi.gov.uk, 01224 441664.

3. Jubilee Woods

Carol Evans, Woodland Trust Scotland outlined the Jubilee Woods initiative which sets ambitious targets for tree planting and woodland expansion across the UK during 2012, the Jubilee year. The Woodland Trust can assist land managers wanting to get involved by providing:

- Press and PR assistance
- Grants for some smaller woodland schemes, 60% intervention
- Free on-site advice and comprehensive report.

More info at www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/jubilee-woods

Action: Anyone getting involved with the project is asked to report stories to Scottish Land and Estates.

4. Vicarious Liability legislation and Due Diligence

Donna Skelly, Solicitor, Grigor and Young explained the implications for land managers and responsibilities throughout estate staff structures. Detailed briefing available on the CNPA website.

The need for training on this issue was highlighted. Alvie Estate have invited Donna Skelly to give a talk covering due diligence etc around June. Anyone interested in attending is invited to contact Jamie Williamson, jamie@alvie-estate.co.uk, 01540 651 255.

5. Discussion – banned substances

Following on from the last presentation, legal issues and practicalities of dealing with banned substances such as poisons were discussed. Scottish Land and Estates have a publication on this available through www.scottishlandandestates.co.uk, free to members, £30 non-members. It was agreed that the LMF could investigate ways to progress this, eg an amnesty.

Action: Will Boyd Wallis/CNPA to research options and co-ordinate discussion with relevant partner organisations.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 26th September 2012.
Venue Deeside area, tbc.

Sincere thanks were extended to all speakers, organisers of the meeting and the Chair.