

KNAPDALE BEAVER TRIAL
LOCAL STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEETING
CAIRNBAAN HOTEL, FRIDAY 29 AUGUST 2008 10AM

Present:- See attached sheet

Apologies:- See attached sheet

Abbreviations:- Scottish Natural Heritage – **SNH**
Royal Zoological Society of Scotland- **RZSS**
Scottish Beaver Trial – **SBT**
Scottish Wildlife Trust – **SWT**
Scottish Environment Protection Agency – **SEPA**
Historic Scotland – **HS**
British Waterways – **BW**
Forestry Commission Scotland - FCS

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor D McMillan as Chair welcomed the participants to the Forum. A round table introduction took place.

2. REMIT

Chair gave a brief background to Stakeholder's Forum remit, explaining that it was a condition of the Scottish Government license that there should be put in place a Forum to allow the views of the local community, including local businesses and property owners, to be fed into the decision making processes for the project.

A round table introduction took place.

3. PRESENTATION

Simon Jones SBT gave a brief power point presentation on the background of the Knapdale Beaver Trial and actions to date.

4. REVIEW OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LICENSE CONDITIONS

Simon Jones SBT handed out copies of the Scottish Government license and covering approval letter and offered to clarify any of the conditions.

The following points were clarified:-

- The view of the Forum and local landowners will be taken on the implementation of Condition 8 regarding removal of animals which move outwith the trial area. Any animals in the Crinan Canal will be removed.
- Action point 1: Stakeholder Forum to discuss license condition 8 at next meeting.
- A suite of tracking methodologies are being worked up e.g. GPS, ear tags, chip implants and radio methods. It will be most important to tag adults at the time of

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release and thereafter young animals when they disperse (1-2 years old). It will not be possible to radio tag all animals at all times.

- Action Point 2: SBT/SNH to make papers on beaver tracking methodologies available on website.
 - Important areas of lichens and key stands of hazel will be identified and fenced as appropriate in response to Condition 27.
 - With regard to monitoring **SWT** and **RZSS** will deal with beaver specific aspects. **SNH** will lead on the monitoring of the animals impact on the environment by co-ordinating work and acting as independent reviewers and advisors to the Scottish Government. All information will, in time, be freely available on the website in compliance with the license condition regarding public availability of information and data.
 - Regarding the socio-economic impacts it was confirmed that SWT, RZSS, SNH and FCS will all have a role in monitoring these.
 - It was confirmed that FCS will lead on the on-site visitor management associated with the trial.
 - It was confirmed by **SNH** that **HS** will advise on the monitoring of potential impact on scheduled monuments particularly the submerged crannog in Loch Coille Bharr.
- CORRECTION**

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5. REVIEW OF LOCAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION and 6. REVIEW OF PUBLIC DROP- IN SESSION

Alan Bantick SBT reported that 50 people had attended and with the exception of one couple they had all been supportive of the project. There had been many questions and a number of offers of support. They opposers had expressed concern that the partners would not have the courage to implement the exit strategy. Questions had related to:-

- Rate of dispersal
- Mink eradication
- Tourism impacts
- Do beavers eat fish?
- Precise release sites (3)
- Rate of population growth
- Precise timetable for release

7. OPEN QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

It was commented that this was a local consultation on what is in effect is a national issue. It was felt that there is a need to raise the debate to a national level as well as at local level as there is a greater national dimension to the discussion as it moves forward.

- **Alan Bantick SBT** confirmed that the Trial site at Knapdale will not test all the potential impact of beavers and therefore other trials may be considered elsewhere in Scotland in the future. It was also confirmed that a National Forum on Species Re-introductions is being formed by **SNH**.
- Will the project be able to pay for the monitoring of the built heritage aspects?
- It was confirmed that the trial period budget covered some of these costs but any increases would have to be discussed with the Partners and other Agencies such

as **BW and HS**.

- It was confirmed that the £1.5 project budget included the **SNH** costs. Beaver is a national Species Action Framework species identified by the Scottish Government and as such public funds have been allocated to it by the Scottish Government, through SNH.
- It was confirmed that the fund raising to meet the additional £750,000 target is ongoing and that expenditure is spread across the 5 years of the trial. **SWT** have a good track record and have 5 years to raise this.
- There is currently no European or lottery funding input as the lead in time was too long but this might be considered in the future.
- All existing base line data information relative to the project will be available on the website.
- The **SNH** Monitoring Group will include **SNH** as Chair, **RZSS**, **SWT** as members and particular invitees to deal with specific issues.
- The role of the local stakeholder forum in monitoring was agreed in principle last year but should be properly defined. **Action Point 3: SBT/SNH to ensure that monitoring and research proposals for trial are available to stakeholder forum members via website.**
- The field officer will be involved in practical animal handling and will have a primarily scientific background but will be involved in elements of public relations.
- It was clarified that mink is not a European protected species and that the danger referred to in Condition 9 relates to Otters. **Action Point 4: SBT to develop mink trapping proposal associated with trial.**
- **Forestry Commission Scotland** will follow standard protocols with regard to deer control with no need for special action. There is plenty of available habitat.
- It was noted that not all of the potential affected landowners were present and it was asked if they would be entitled to representation. **Simon Jones SBT** confirmed that all had been invited and would be welcome to an active involvement in the Stakeholder Forum.

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(POST MEETING NOTE:- Simon Jones SBT has subsequently found out that, as a result of an administrative error, not all neighbours were invited to this initial meeting and apologises for this omission, which has now been rectified. The note of this meeting which will be sent to all those neighbours)

8. STAKEHOLDER FORUM – THE WAY FORWARD?

With regard to future re-introductions it was agreed that the good practice regarding early consultation and other licence proposals could be extended elsewhere. **Alan Bantick SBT** confirmed that the partners have seen the value of including everyone and this will be a standing item for future meetings- *“it is an open door – please use it.”*

Simon Milne SWT confirmed that there were no other license applications under consideration.

It was agreed that **SEPA** should be a standing member of the Forum. With regard to the monitoring and educational aspects there would need to be a balanced approach.

It was generally agreed that the size of the Forum, its representation and its mix was about right and it was further confirmed that the community councils particularly the **North Knapdale and Ardrishaig Community Councils** are important stakeholders.

Action Point 5: SBT to follow up invitations to SEPA and local Community Councils regarding local Stakeholder Forum.

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It was noted that all Forum information would be available on the website www.scottishbeavers.org.uk in due course but that paper copies would be available, on request, to those that do not have internet access.

The possibility of a Forum site visit was discussed and it was agreed that this should take place at an appropriate time. Simon Jones SBT to arrange.

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9. A.O.C.B

There was no other competent business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Suggested January 2009 in Tayvallich Village Hall to co-incide with the appointment of the Field Officer.

Chair closed meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

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KNAPDALE BEAVER TRIAL
LOCAL STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEETING
CAIRNBAAN HOTEL, FRIDAY 29 AUGUST 2008 10AM

Attending:-

Councillor Donald McMillan – Argyll and Bute Council Ward 3 Mid-Argyll (Chair)

Councillor Douglas Philland – Argyll and Bute Council Ward 3 Mid-Argyll

Councillor Ron Simon – Argyll and Bute Council Ward 6 Cowal

Kevin Williams – Argyll and Bute Council – Development Projects Manager

Heather Anderson – Argyll and Bute Council – Admin. Supervisor (Note Taker)

Sir Hugh and Lady Flora Campbell Byatt – Lergnahension – adjoining landowners

Dr John Raven – Historic Scotland – Ancient Monuments Inspector NW

Kenneth Brack and Joe Connelly – Strathclyde Police – Wildlife Liaison Officers

Dave Batty, Martin Gaywood & Karen Judd – Scottish Natural Heritage – Policy and Advice Managers and Mid-Argyll Area Officer.

Johnnie Hall - National Farmers Union Scotland

Jamie Mellor- National Farmers Union Scotland

Drew McFarlane-Slack – Scottish Rural Property and Business Association – Highland Regional Manager

Dr Alan Kettle-White – Argyll Fisheries Trust – Fisheries Biologist

Peter Quelch – Argyll Green Woodworkers Association

Dan Pulptlett – Trees for Life – Aspen Project Co-ordinator

Nick Purdy – Forestry Commission Scotland – West Argyll Forest District Manager

Eleanor Garty – Woodlands Trust