Supporting guidance for Open-range Deer Management

This is an old version of the page

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For recent changes to this guidance, please see the bottom of the page .

Introduction

This item supports land managers to reduce the number of deer on their land to benefit upland and moorland habitats.

For this item, priority will be given to sites in unfavourable condition that will benefit from deer reduction. Your deer range must include land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site, which is in, or is at risk of falling into 'Unfavourable' condition.

What needs to be done

Support your proposals with a Deer Management Plan – this must be completed in full, using the Deer Management Plan template. The plan should follow the Best Practice Guidance on Deer Management Plans and cover all the land over which you manage deer.

You can find information on annual cull deer returns and a link to the online recording system on the Scottish Natural Heritage website. Further details on how to fill in a return are available on the Best Practice Guides website.

The plan should include:

- deer population targets for enhancing the condition of key habitats; the agreed cull target may be reviewed on an annual basis
- a population model showing the cull and population response
- management required to deal with issues, e.g. reducing deer numbers and / or targeted culls to address trampling, over grazing, deer-vehicle collisions
- details of any deer fences to be erected, what impacts this might have on neighbouring land, and how these impacts will be addressed
- information on opportunities and constraints, e.g. better ground fenced off, how the deer population is influenced by management on neighbouring land, deer welfare issues
- in cases where deer reductions may impact on neighbouring interests, these should be described in the plan together with appropriate measures to address the impacts
- annual reviews of the population model based on counts, culls and monitoring data as appropriate
- monitoring, including regular population counts and a commitment to Best Practice habitat impact monitoring as set out in the Deer Best Practice guides; the monitoring will be fed back into the Deer Management Plan and inform deer management

Your Deer Management Plan should be in line with the Code of Practice on Deer Management.

Payment rates vary according to the size of your reduction cull. You can only claim when the cull target has been achieved.

Applicants may claim for this item in more than one year within an Agri-Environment Climate Scheme contract if they want to claim for their reduction in stages.

For example, year two claim for a payment of £2.00 per hectare for reducing the deer population from 20 to 15 deer per 100 hectares; year four claim for a payment of £1.60 per hectare for reducing the deer population further from 15 to 11 deer per 100 hectares.

As payment is for the culls actually achieved, the work should be entered onto the contract and claimed in the year that the work will be completed. So if your contract starts in 2016 but the deer numbers will not

be reduced from 20 to 15 until February 2017, the item should appear on the contract and be claimed in 2017.

You will need to retain both your venison receipts and statutory cull returns to Scottish Natural Heritage for the duration of the contract.

Where these records include any deer that are shot outwith the AECS claim area and which are therefore not eligible for this capital item, you should note these.

Further information

Please contact your local Scottish Natural Heritage Wildlife Management Officer to discuss further practical requirements detailed above.

- Deer population management

Recent changes

Section	Change
What needs to be done	Text added to provide further information regarding claiming for culls.

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page

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