



**Muirburn Code Review**  
***Draft Minutes from***  
**Steering Group Conference Call**  
 held on  
**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**Attendance**

Simon	Thorp	Director
Anne	Stoddart	Administrator
Michael	Bruce	Glentinar Estate (GTE)
Tim	Baynes	SL&E
Ronnie	Kippen	SGA
Richard	Luxmoore	NTS
Duncan	Orr-Ewing	RSPB
Colin	Shedden	BASC

Graham	Sullivan	SNH
Derek	Wilkie	SFRS
<b>Apologies:</b>		
John	Gillies	Crofter, Raasay
Gemma	Hopkinson	GWCT
Alistair	Hamilton	SRUC
Jonnie	Hall	NFUS

**1 Minutes of Last Meeting held at BASC on 15<sup>th</sup> March and matters arising**

- 1.1 The work is funded. Action 1.3 to inform members of record keeping requirements and how to claim for input is still to be addressed. **Action: Director, Administrator**
- 1.2 The proposal for a reading list for Steering Group members will be addressed further. The aim will be to bring everyone to same level of knowledge, but keep the reading list short. **Action: GTE, SNH, SRUC**
- 1.3 Work to develop a research database to support the Code has started. This will only cover issues directly linked to the Code; information relating to other issues will not be included. A decision will be made whether or not this information will be made available as a download, or on application to the Muirburn Group.
- 1.4 Further information may be available from:
  - 1.4.1 The Glenwherry Hill Regeneration Project in Northern Ireland. **Action: SGA**
  - 1.4.2 Matt Davies, now at Ohio State University, would be asked to contribute. **Action: GTE**
  - 1.4.3 Work by the ClimateXChange (Rob Brooker) to produce a summary of evidence in relation to carbon sequestration on peatland. **Action: SNH**
  - 1.4.4 Supporting data behind Richard Luxmoore's paper that was presented at the Wildfire Conference in November 2015 will also be reviewed. **Action: Director, NTS**

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- 1.4.5 The Technical guidance for the 2015 Wildfire Conference and Eurofire guidance material supplied by M Bruce would be made available on the website. **Action: Administrator**
- 1.4.6 Details of RPID seminar series will be requested. **Action: Director**
- 1.4.7 The Scottish Government are responsible for the publication of the Code, but a high level statement, if deemed appropriate, will be sought from Government solicitors regarding the relationship between the Code and both criminal and civil law. **Action: SNH**
- 1.4.8 Contact will also be made with the European fire and conservation network. **Action: GTE**

## **2 The Draft Revised Code**

- 2.1 The aim is to produce a succinct, readable Code that presents the issues in a form that is acceptable to a wide audience. Additional information will be held in appendices or as links to additional information, which may already available or be drafted to support the Code.
- 2.2 The main challenge will be how to organise the large volume of information into a format that works for practitioners.
- 2.3 Cutting will be included in the Code, for its role as an alternative option to burning and in support of burning.
- 2.4 Concern was raised that the revised draft lacked the clarity of the existing code by using ‘should’ and ‘must’ rather than the more prescriptive ‘do’ or ‘do not’.
  - 2.4.1 In discussion, an alternative view was put forward that being over prescriptive was a weakness of the existing Code.
  - 2.4.2 The Code was seeking to encourage a more considered approach to deciding whether burning was appropriate to achieve management objectives in the weather and vegetation conditions on the day.
  - 2.4.3 Further views were requested in response to this first draft and the Scottish Government will be kept informed of the range of views. **Action: All**
- 2.5 In developing the Fire Prevention Section, a reference to Hazard & Risk Assessment should be included. **Action: GTE**
- 2.6 The response by the SFRS to reported fires in areas where the SFRS had been informed of muirburn was highlighted as an urgent issue to be addressed. **Action: Director, SFRS**

## **3 Guiding Principles**

- 3.1 Some guiding principles were suggested for the development of the Code.
- 3.2 The aim is to produce a practitioners guide - we should look at the code through the eyes of someone new to muirburn, as well as the seasoned campaigner.
- 3.3 The Code is intended to be the start of a process, not the conclusion.
- 3.4 We do not want to over-complicate the Code, as this will reduce its readability.

- 3.5 Before including additional information we should challenge its inclusion:
  - 3.5.1 How relevant is it?
  - 3.5.2 Will it enhance the Code or just add padding / background?
  - 3.5.3 Can the extra information be presented in another way – for example as Additional Information?
- 3.6 The Code should link to other sources of information, not repeat this information, if it is available elsewhere.

#### 4 Organisation of the Steering Group

- 4.1 A first draft of a revised Code was considered in outline.
- 4.2 The Director proposed that sub-groups should be formed to review and propose changes to different parts of the draft code and to address other issues that form part of the review process.
- 4.3 A chart showing how this might work had been circulated and this was discussed. Several changes to the allocation of tasks were proposed and additional people to engage in the process were proposed. This chart has been revised to include these changes and it is re-circulated with these Minutes for approval and action.
- 4.4 Someone will be required to coordinate the work of each sub-group. There were some volunteers during the meeting, but for other sub-groups a coordinator has been nominated. A red cross on the chart indicates coordinators.
- 4.5 It is expected that the chart will develop as the review progresses. Steering Group members are encouraged to propose changes to this chart.
- 4.6 Some specialist advisors have been identified. Those marked on the chart with a ‘?’ have not yet been approached.
  - 4.6.1 The coordinator of each sub-group is encouraged to approach these people for input and to identify other people who may be able and willing to provide input. **Action: Sub-group coordinators**
  - 4.6.2 Please keep Anne Stoddart informed of any contacts made; she will be able to assist with making contact if this will be useful.
  - 4.6.3 There is no budget available for the input of specialist advisors, but advise the Director, if there is a special case for any funding.
- 4.7 A flow of information from sub-groups and stakeholders is to be encouraged. Anne Stoddart will be monitoring progress and she should be contacted with any requests for changes, support or updates on progress.
- 4.8 It was proposed that a small coordinating group of three members should review the development of the draft Code to avoid divergent styles and inconsistencies. Michael Bruce and Graham Sullivan agreed to assist the Director.
- 4.9 Proposed terms of reference for the sub-groups have been drafted and are forwarded with these Minutes. An initial task for each sub-group will be to review these terms of reference and to propose any changes for their work.

## **5 Workshops**

- 5.1 Four workshops will be held in different parts of the country. The following programme was proposed and members were asked to propose locations and venues:
- 5.1.1 October – West and Islands
    - The Sleat peninsula on Skye was suggested as a possible venue, and this will be considered after the visit by the Moorland Forum, at the end of May.
  - 5.1.2 November – North & East – this could address deer management issues.
    - To avoid conflict with the SWF Wildfire meeting, this date may be swapped with the February meeting (see para 5.3).
  - 5.1.3 February – Borders
  - 5.1.4 March – Perthshire to bring a national perspective to the review process. Battleby might be a suitable venue.
- 5.2 Although specific target audiences might be proposed, each workshop would address all parts of the Code.
- 5.3 The Scottish Wildfire Forum is holding a meeting in Dingwall in November. Merging this event with a muirburn workshop might not be effective, and it might be best to avoid holding a workshop, soon after this event.

## **6 Presentation**

- 6.1 Contact had been made with the designer involved in the Best Practice Deer Management Guide.
- 6.2 A link will be made to relevant information being developed as part of the Forum's Principles of Moorland Management project, and the use of a common / associated style of presentation could be beneficial.

## **7 Stakeholder Engagement**

- 7.1 When the first round of changes have been incorporated into the draft Code, there will be an opportunity to make it widely available to encourage input from a range of stakeholders.
- 7.2 Social media will be used to promote the draft Code to new audiences, and other materials will be developed, for example presentations, to allow information to be presented during meetings.

## **8 Scenarios and Case Studies**

- 8.1 These will be considered for inclusion within, or reference from the Code, as part of the presentation process.

## 9 Project Plan

- 9.1 The Director will present the draft Code as a ‘work in progress’ to the Scottish Government at the end of May to satisfy the requirements of Milestone 2.
- 9.2 Initial comments or concerns about the direction being taken by the Code should be submitted by 17:00 on 27<sup>th</sup> May. **Action: Members**
- 9.3 The proposed revised Code will be developed by the end of August.

## 10 Next Meeting

- 10.1 The trawl for dates for a teleconference came up with 2<sup>nd</sup> August to match the availability of the majority. Other arrangements will be made to get the input from those who are not available on this date. As the review process develops, it is likely that the Steering Group will wish to seek other opportunities to engage.  
**Action: Director**

## 11 Summary of Actions

Ref	Item	Action
1.1	Record keeping	Director, Admin
1.2	Reading List	GTE, SNH, SRUC
1.4.1	Info from Glenwherry	SGA
1.4.2	Input from Matt Davies	GTE
1.4.3	Input from ClimateXChange	SNH
1.4.4	More info about wildfire ignition	Director, NTS
1.4.5	Wildfire conference / Eurofire links to website	Administrator
1.4.6	Details of RPID seminar series	Director
1.4.7	Relationship of Code to Civil & Criminal Law	SNH
1.4.8	Contact with EU fire & conservation network	GTE
2.5	Hazard & risk assessment into Fire prevention section	GTE
2.6	SFRS callout system	SFRS
4.6.1	Approach to specialist advisors	Sub-Groups
9.2	Initial comments or concerns by end of 27 May	All

## **Terms of Reference for Sub-Groups**

### **1 Aim**

- 1.1 Sub-groups are being formed to allow a more detailed view of sections of the Code to be given.
- 1.2 The Sub-Groups will provide proposals for developing the allocated section of the report, or the development of other output.

### **2 Coordinating Group**

- 2.1 A Coordinating Group has been formed to provide an overview of the development of the Code.

### **3 Composition**

- 3.1 A Coordinator for each sub-group as been nominated.
- 3.2 The sub-groups will be formed from members of the Review Steering Group, but other people with specialist knowledge or experience may be invited to contribute to the Group, at the discretion of the Coordinator of the sub-group.
- 3.3 The size of the sub-groups has been kept small, although specialist advisors may increase numbers.
- 3.4 Coordinators are asked to keep the Administrator informed of any changes to the composition of the Group.

### **4 Development of the Draft Code**

- 4.1 Feedback from the sub-groups will be incorporated into the draft Code by the Director, with input from the Coordinating Group,

### **5 Reporting**

- 5.1 The use of tracked changes / redrafted sections of the report should be sent to the Administrator.

### **6 Timescale**

- 6.1 Coordinators are asked to provide initial feedback about their plans for completing the actions requested from each sub-group, with a proposed timescale, by the end of Friday, 10 June.

### **7 Costs**

- 7.1 Funding is available as a contribution to costs. Timesheets and expenses claims should be submitted to the Administrator.

- 7.2 A time charge of £40/hr has been agreed for commissioned work carried out by the Moorland Forum. Reasonable expenses will be paid in full, where possible.
- 7.3 The review is operating to a fixed budget and it may not be possible to pay at the full rate.
- 7.4 There is no funding available for input from specialist advisors.