

Highland Invasive Species sub-group meeting notes.

10am. 18th August 2009.

Committee Room 5, Highland Council HQ.

1. Attending.

John Parrott	Scottish Native Woods
Steve North	SNH
Ian Collier	FCS
David Glass	Caithness Biodiversity Group – Chair
Babs Macritchie	NTS – Balmacara
Ian Milne	SEPA
Rob Dewar	NTS - Inverewe
Jonathan Willet	Highland Council
Lois Canham	North Highland Mink Control Officer

2. Apologies.

None.

3. Note of last meeting.

Approved.

AP1. JW to contact Bob Laughton regarding last year's RAFTS proposal for Invasive Species Control and see if we can use their idea. **Ongoing. AP1.**

AP2. IC to contact the SRBPA regarding their involvement in this project. **Discharged, awaiting reply.**

AP3. Once the IS mapping has been completed look to start drafting the Rhododendron Control Strategy. **Ongoing. AP2.**

AP4. SN/ IC to circulate the SNH/ FCS EPS best practice guidelines when they are finalised. **Discharged.**

AP5. JW to contact RAFTS, Chris Horrel, to inform him of the Invasive Species mapping project. **Discharged.**

AP6. All to send ideas of other contractors. **Discharged.**

AP7. SNH, SEPA, FCS. To contact their technical departments and find out what format they want the IS data in. **Ongoing. AP3.**

AP8. JW to circulate GH contractor spec. **Discharged.**

AP9. SN and IC to draft a proposal on Rhododendron Control in September. **Ongoing. AP4.**

AP10. JW to contact the Conon and District Salmon Fishery Board to see if they could use Lever and Mulch in there is control programme. **Discharged.**

AP11. LD to invite Lois Canham, the new North Highland Mink Control Officer to the next meeting. **Discharged.**

The Rum Community are interested in starting some invasive species control

AP12. IC to contact the community regarding any work they could undertake. **Discharged.**

It was noted that there is a bid for Life funding for rat control on Rum. Preliminary work is already underway looking at a small scale rat control area and its affect on the breeding success of the Manx Shearwaters.

4. Mink update.

Lois Canham the new Mink Project Officer for North Highland updated the group on the project's work.

- 100 rafts are out at the moment.
- Fishery contacts have been very helpful.
- Rafts are sited every 5km along rivers and now along the coast as well.
- The webpage is now on the Cairngorms project site (no content yet).
- Lois have give talks to the North Highland College in Thurso – Gamekeepers Course.
- Funding only in place until March 2010, but the expectation is that funding will be found to continue the work.
- The new funding bid will include Water Vole surveying.

AP5. JW to post leaflets to the Gamekeepers Course.

5. Mapping Invasive species in Highland

This contract is in the process of being let.

There was a wide ranging general discussion on data and what to do with it. There was agreement that we do need better data but also we need to use the existing data much better. Some kind of public website for submitting records would be helpful, but thought is required about how it would work and be managed.

AP6. JW to contact contaminated land unit regarding their policy of dealing with/ identifying INNS on contaminated land.

6. Giant Hogweed Control.

Funding has been secured and the contract will be let in Autumn/ winter this year.

7. Future projects.

Grant applications for Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed are being considered.

Rhododendron. There was a discussion around the SRDP, it being the main funding stream for managing this species. It seems likely that SNH and FCS will have a meeting to discuss a joint bid along the lines of the work already underway in Argyll and Bute.

AP7. IC to contact Liz Poulson regarding how the job has been going to help inform the FCS/ SNH funding bid.

AP8. IC to organise a meeting between potential funders.

Leader could fund up to 40% of costs of a project provided there was strong community involvement.

It was accepted that there is a need for both a strategic and community-level approach in terms of species management and the two to mesh together.

It was mentioned that there was a programme of Himalayan balsam removal on the River Eden see press releases at www.edenrivertrust.org.uk

8. Leaflet update.

At the printers. Lots of orders for copies to be sent out.

9. AOCB.

There was mention of the NBN non-native portal. Through some research I couldn't find it but there was a portal on the UK INNS website http://www.nonnativespecies.org/01_Fact_File . There is some information on INNS on the NBN's International Biodiversity day page <http://www.nbn.org.uk/IBD/Home.aspx>

The consultation on the DEFRA Japanese Knotweed biological control agent closes on the 19th of October.

Salmonberry control. There has been a trial underway in Caithness looking at the most effective control methods funded through Landfill tax. Orkney are looking to do something similar and the Stornoway Castle Trust are also looking at control measures.

10. DONM

November 10th November. 2-5pm. SNH Offices, Dingwall.