

**Highland Invasive Species sub-group  
Committee Room 1  
3/3/09**

**1. Attending**

Ian Collier	Forestry Commission Scotland - Chair
David O'Brien	Highland Biological Recording Group
Llinos Davis	Cairngorms National Park Authority
John Parrott	Scottish Native Woods
Steve North	SNH
Jonathan Willet	Highland Council

**2. Apologies**

Barbara Souter	NTS
David Glass	Chair of the Caithness Biodiversity Group
Julie Bowen	Scotland TranServ
Rob Dewar	NTS
Ian Milne	SEPA

**3. Action Points from the 20<sup>th</sup> January**

**Previous AP1.** JW to contact the Scottish IS Group to see if they have information on invasive species that are likely to be a future problem in Highland. **To call back.**

**Previous AP2.** Simon McKelvey to send HBRG the records from the Conon catchment invasive species survey that has just been completed. **Report being finalised, once this is done the records will be sent off.**

**Previous AP3.** All members of the group were to populate these lists with further information. **Discharged.**

**Previous AP4.** JW and RD to meet and develop draft leaflets. **Nearly completed.**

**Previous AP5.** JW to contact LBAPs to ask for their contributions to the Local Priority Invasive Species lists. **Discharged.**

**Previous AP6.** Sue Poulson, FCS Rhododendron Officer, to be asked to speak to the Forum event in February. **Discharged.**

**Previous AP7.** How many species should be included in the general invasive species leaflet? All or just the top 5? **Decision needed.**

**Previous AP8.** Plantlife's aquatic plant leaflet to be used in Highland rather than developing a new one. **Leaflets acquired from Plantlife.**

**Previous AP9.** LD to contact Rob Raynor about the Mink Leaflet and if it fits in with their plans for the new Mink Control Officer. **Discharged.**

**Actions carried forward**

**AP1.** JW to contact the Scottish IS Group to see if they have information on invasive species that are likely to be a future problem in Highland.

**AP2.** JW and RD to meet and develop draft leaflets.

#### 4. Action Points arising from the Forum

**Forum AP1.** JW suggested that as the issue of EPS and invasive plant species control methods had arisen a few times this could be looked at by the sub-group to collate and or develop guidelines for best practice to ensure that the EPS legislation is not breached. **See item 6.**

**Forum AP3.** IC to circulate information on how to respond to the SRDP reviews currently underway.

**To pass any comments relating to Rhododendron control and the SRDP contact [colin.edwards@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:colin.edwards@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) and cc this to [alex.morris@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:alex.morris@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)**

**Forum AP4.** HISF sub-group will continue and seek to deliver the projects that it has proposed.

**It was agreed that the aims of the sub-group should be reordered to reflect the changing focus of its outputs.**

- To raise awareness and spread good practice;
- To work together to secure new resources and funding.
- To identify any major gaps and prioritise key areas for future work; and
- To bring together the key players and take stock of the situation regarding invasive non-native species in Highland;

#### 5. Funding of Projects

##### **Mapping Invasive Species.**

This is the key project to take forward ASAP. SNH, FCS and THC are all possible funders. RAFTS, Transerv and SEPA are possible funders to be contacted. The project would be in two parts; a survey of the existing resource and then mobilisation of the most important/ available datasets. A rough budget would be £6-9000. Undoubtedly even the higher sum would not enable mobilisation of all the existing data.

**AP3.** JW to contact RAFTS and SEPA regarding funding.

**AP4.** JW to send in a SNH grant application in ASAP.

**AP5.** JW to draft a letter to IC asking FCS for a funding contribution.

**AP6.** JW to find out how many hits the Invasive Species pages have had.

##### **Mink.**

NW Highlands Mink Control project is delivering the actions on this. The sub-group needs to ensure that action outside the project area (e.g. Skye, Lochalsh, South West Ross and Lochaber) is still being supported.

##### **Awareness Raising.**

There was discussed a need to develop a portal to receive records and also where to go for advice. The Invasive species pages on the Highland Biodiversity website could be developed further to do this.

JP said Scottish Woodlands are looking to develop an easy way of mapping Aspen using online mapping sites and postcodes. IC said the Highland Squirrel Group is looking at something similar. We shall wait and see how these work.

### **Other Projects.**

There was agreement that the three plant projects should be undertaken in the coming financial year. There may be an issue in terms of capacity of gaining funding and managing these projects.

### **Giant Hogweed.**

Around £5000 is required over 3 years to fund a contractor (or a few locally based contractors) to liaise with landowners and managers to deliver coordinated Hogweed control in infested areas.

**AP7.** JW to contact the Nairn Access Group about current G Hogweed control.

**AP8.** JW to contract Bob Laughton regarding last year's RAFTS proposal for Invasive Species Control and see if we can use their idea.

**AP9.** IC to contact the SRBPA regarding their involvement in this project.

**AP10.** JW to draft an SNH bid and submit this ASAP.

### **Rhododendron.**

There was a general discussion about this species and the intimidating scale of the problem. To begin to deal with it these action points were agreed;

More information on the distribution of Rhododendron in Highland is required the mapping project should deliver this, however more work may be required depending on how much data is available and accessible.

Once this data is collected, develop a strategy for Rhododendron Control in Highland. At the end of 2009 ask Sue Poulson to come up and give the sub-group a talk on how her work has progressed in 2009.

**AP11.** Once the IS mapping has been completed look to start drafting the Rhododendron Control Strategy.

Natural England Rhododendron control project, this was mentioned by DOB and related to Phytophthora control.

## **6. EPS Best Practice.**

It was agreed that the SNH/ FCS EPS best practice guidelines (currently in draft) would be promoted and supported by the group to contractors/ land managers whose work may cause potential EPS impacts.

**AP12.** SN/ IC to circulate the SNH/ FCS EPS best practice guidelines when they are finalised.

### **7. Leaflet.**

A designer has been appointed and the text for the Japanese Knotweed, Mink and Rhododendron Leaflet has been sent to him. The Introductory leaflet text is still being drafted. The leaflets should be published in late April/ May.

It was agreed that the introductory leaflet should, define what invasive species are, why they are a problem, highlight the 5 invasive species prioritised for action in Highland, look at some local priority species and some (5?) species that may move into Highland in the next 10 years. It should link to the 3 species specific leaflets being produced and highlight the web portal for access to further information.

**AP13.** JW and RS to liaise about this text and send it to the designer.

### **8. DONM.**

TBC