**Deer Management Plan for**

**NAME OF WOOD/ESTATE**

Location: insert town, county, etc

Owner(s): Managed on behalf of insert landowner name

Draft Deer Management Plan Written By: insert stalker/agent name

Deer Species present: insert species present

Area of deer management unit : insert area in ha

Date plan prepared: insert plan date and update as necessary

Deer Management Group: insert name of any relevant DMG involved

**Brief description of the wood/estate and management aims**

**e.g**. the land is a mix of woodland and arable crops. The woodland is mixed commercial conifer (50%) and broadleaves (50%) and the conifers were thinned in 2003. The arable land is cropped with maize and wheat.

There are two public footpaths through the wood and the main A66664 runs along the southern edge

**Adjacent Land Use**

Outline adjacent use such as arable, neighbouring woodland from which deer might come.

Outline any public access, nearby roads, etc that might impact on management.

**Past/current deer management.**

Outline what deer management has been done in the past and the current management level, e.g culling began in 2015 and has been done annually. We estimate there are 100 deer in the wood and our aim is to cull 25% of these each year. Culling is done by two stalkers from high seats and on foot.

**Previous Cull Records (can do a table for each species on the land)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SEASON | Spp males | | Spp females | | totals | |
|  | target | actual | target | actual | target | actual |
| 2015/16 | 10 | 11 | 15 | 15 | 25 | 26 |
| 2016/17 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2017/18 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2018/19 | 10 | 4 | 15 | 9 | 25 | 13 |
| 2019/20 | 15 | 15 | 18 | 18 | 33 | 33 |
| 2020/21 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Note: cull increased in 2019/20 as damage became too high.

**Cull Records: Comment /Additional Information**

We increase and decrease cull targets based on impact assessment as measured from browsing, pathway, dung counts as per the table in the **Annex at the end of the plan.**.

**Part 2**

1. **Deer Management Plan Objectives**

Example:

The main objective of deer management within the land is to regulate deer populations at a level that is compatible with their environment and our other management objectives. This means that we aim to will be to prevent unacceptable damage to the woodland and arable land to maintain or enhance biodiversity and reduce crop damage. This will be done in a professional and humane way, ensuring the physical well being of the remaining deer populations within the estate/wood/farm boundaries. Aiming for acceptable level of around 4-8 deer per 100 ha.

Do you aim to generate any income from venison etc?

1. **Monitoring**: Outline the method(s) you use to assess if objectives are being met

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective or issue** | **Method of assessment** | **Monitoring period and frequency** | **Who is responsible** | **Use of information** |
| **Deer numbers/**  **Density** | Dung Counts  Impact assessment | Annual | stalker /woodland manager | Set cull levels |
| **Cull targets** | Dung Counts, Impact assessments, Local Knowledge and Experience | Constant and ongoing | stalker | Set cull levels |
| **Browsing, Bark Stripping, Fraying** | Impact Assessments | Annual | Stalker/woodland manager | Set cull levels |
| **Annual Recruitment** | Cull data  Observation | Annual | stalker | Set cull levels |

**Monitoring: Comment /Additional Information**

Example: As one of our key objectives in deer management here is the prevention of damage, damage assessment is given a high priority in terms of determining appropriate cull levels.

**(c) Record Keeping. (As Deer Best Practice Guide**). All deer shot are recorded. Data captured includes: Species, sex, age class, weight, location (grid ref and DMU), embryos, lactation, destination of carcass (AGHE or private etc).

1. **Engagement with neighbours, DMG and Local Community**

e.g. have you spoken to neighbouring landowners re problems with deer on their land. Are the stalkers part of a Deer Management Group in the area and cull collaboratively? Are there potential issues with the local community in terms of sensitivities?

ANNEX

**Population density assessment:**

Information relating to assessment of **woodland** deer population: use the guide below to estimate the density of deer in the wood.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Woodland Deer Density Indicators Evidence | **4-8/100 Ha**  **Low Density**  **(acceptable – maintain cull target)** | **8-15/100Ha**  **Medium Density**  **(not acceptable – slightly adjust cull target)** | **15+/100Ha**  **High Density**  **(not acceptable – increase cull target)** |
| Tracks | Difficult to find deer slot marks or defined paths. | Defined paths slot marks easy to find in areas of soft ground. | Many well defined tracks and paths often black with constant use. |
| (Tick which applies) |  |  |  |
| Dung | Difficult to find with just the odd isolated pellet group. | Pellet groups relatively easy to find, particularly on woodland edges and good feeding areas. | Pellet groups very easy to find. Highly concentrated on favoured feed areas. |
| (Tick which applies) |  |  |  |
| Browsing of Vegetation | Natural regeneration of broad-leaved trees taking place with no or little damage to current years incremental growth. | Broad-leaved saplings present but showing significant damage. | No seedlings growing above dominant vegetation height. Often well defined browse lines on established shrubs and plants. |
| (Tick which applies) |  |  |  |