

From: [Hawthorn Sporting](#)
To: [2002 Act Review](#)
Subject: Review of the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002
Date: 28 March 2016 09:56:04

Dear Sirs

I am writing this submission in support of the Fox Control Service given by our local hunts.

We have the Shooting Tenancy on the Duke of Buccleuch's ground on Bowhill Estate. The lease covers 28,000 acres of land in the Scottish Borders and there is a further 8,000 acres of grouse moor in the centre of the estate which Buccleuch have in hand but do not have kept at the present time.

We have had this lease since 2012 when we moved into the Scottish Borders from Northumberland. As a fifth generation game keeper I have been running my own shoots since 1996 and have experienced the service given by various hunts both north and south of the border.

The land we lease is surrounded by a vast expanse of forestry which in turn increases the population of foxes coming onto our shoot. We would not be able to control the amount of foxes we have without the support of a good scenting full pack of hounds as there is no doubt that they can effectively cover more acres of fell land in one hour than we can in days. This is an important method of fox control on a large estate especially if snaring might be severely restricted in the future. Restricting the number of dogs in a pack would also seriously affect the fast humane way in which the fox is dispatched under the current legislation.

Our commercial shoot can be very badly affected by fox predation as fifty percent of birds released are partridges which are a ground roosting species. The fox is an adrenalin driven killer which is in his element amongst partridges in particular and can kill hundreds at one time and not just to satisfy his hunger.

The feasibility of our business depends on the predation of our stock without which we would not be able to sell days and without which we would not be able to cover the costs of employing staff. The income from shooting all contributes to the local economy of the Scottish Borders.

Buccleuch have eight farming tenants on the estate which are all stock farms, so as we cover the whole estate for fox predation we are kept very busy in the lambing season. Since the grouse moor became unkept the fox related problems have increased ten

fold. The huntsman and his staff are always available to help us with these problems.

When the hunt come onto on our shoot we follow the hunt on quad bikes to assist the hunt in anyway we can. We have been witness to the professionalism shown when they are hunting and have not had any concerns or had reason to question the legality of how they conduct the day. Working as a team with the hunt we also provide support with our keepers, their guns and local knowledge of the ground.

Lastly I think that shoots and farmers alike are all grateful to the services our hunts have to offer and without which our livelihoods would suffer in someway or another without the quality of service they give us.

Stuart Riddell
Shooting Tenant on Bowhill Estate
Managing Director
HAWTHORN Sporting LLP



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