



24th March 2016

The Right Hon Lord Bonomy
2002 Act Review
Natural Resources Division
The Scottish Government
1-C North, Victoria Quay
EDINBURGH
EH6 6QQ

Dear Lord Bonomy

REVIEW OF THE PROTECTION OF WILD MAMMALS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I am writing in my capacity as a land manager on a Highland estate which, several times a year, uses the Three Straths Foxhounds to assist in our active management of predation. For us, it is one of the elements, of which there are several, that allow us to maintain the fox population at an acceptable level.

I believe that the review's purpose is to investigate whether the Act, as currently applied, is affording the necessary level of protection to wild mammals, while still allowing for the effective and humane control of certain species. While the Act includes exceptions to hunt several species of wild mammal, we only control foxes with hounds in our area.

I firmly believe that the legislation currently strikes the right balance as it is always our aim, when hunting with hounds, to flush the fox to guns as quickly as possible so that it can be humanely dispatched. I cannot conceive of an amendment to the current Act that would make any of our actions more humane or enhance the welfare of the wild mammal.

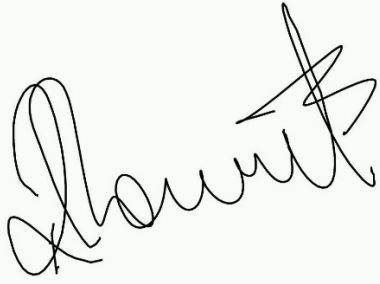
There is some discussion that the welfare of the fox would be enhanced by reducing the number of hounds in a pack. My opinion is that a sufficient number of hounds in a pack achieve a "locate and flush" much more quickly than one or two hounds would and that an arbitrary number of one or two would do little to enhance the welfare of the fox and in most cases would prolong the time that the fox was being hunted as well as greatly reducing our efficiency as fox controllers.

We always aim to have a sufficient number of marksmen present so that we can bring the hunt to a conclusion as quickly as possible and move on to hunt other areas on the

day. We have, on occasion, cancelled a hunt if we cannot get a sufficient number of marksman present to achieve a quick end to the hunt, although this will vary according to the area that we are proposing to hunt on the day.

There has been no involvement with the police on any of the days when we have used the Three Straths Foxhounds to assist us with our predation management work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light green rectangular background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'Robbie Rowantree'.

Robbie Rowantree