



MINUTES OF THE QUAGGA PROJECT ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE HELD AT WEDDERWILL ON 1 MARCH 2018

PRESENT:

Mr M Gregor
Mr C Lardner
Ms P Swanepoel
Mr M Turnbull
Mr S Mitchell
Mr B Wooding
Mr E Steenkamp
Mr S Marais
Mr M d Alton
Mr B Le Roux
Dr G Buhrmann
Mr T Turner
Mr F Turner
Ms L Louw
Mr H Louw
Ms L Manson
Ms A Treurnicht
Mr N Treurnicht
Dr P Hulley

WELCOME:

The Chairman welcomed everyone present.

APOLOGIES

Ms K Turner
Mr F De Reuda
Prof L Hoffmann
Prof E Harley

1. SECRETARIAL

Minutes of the general meeting held on 21 September 2017 were accepted.

2. MATTERS ARISING:

2.1. Memorandum of Understanding with Stellenbosch University

MG advised that the University would not be hosting a group of Quaggas as originally discussed but that Prof Zama and Prof Hoffmann would be interested in remaining involved with the project. The university is happy to endorse the project and its goals but would not conclude an MOU with the project at this stage.

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1. Co-ordinators Report

| | |
|---|----|
| Core Herd movements | 3 |
| The Core Herd Properties | 5 |
| Grazing Agreements | 8 |
| Breed Society..... | 9 |
| Copenhagen University's recent research on quagga | 9 |
| Fund Raising..... | 11 |
| Publicity & Social Media | 11 |
| Tax position..... | 12 |
| Budget..... | 14 |

Core Herd movements

a. What happened in 2017

In March 2017, it was agreed that the Core Herd would be established, effectively releasing all non-Core animals either to the owners of the land they were grazing on, or for wider sale.

In practice this meant the following:

- i. Identifying all the animals that the QP wanted to keep in the Core Herds, and allocating those animals to one of the four properties identified as Core Herd hosts.
- ii. Relocation of as many of those animals as could be fitted into the October 2017 game capture window.
- iii. Transferring all Founder and Surplus animals to new owners. Surplus animals were sold and generated revenue for the QP .

Animals that were not wanted by anyone were transferred to a holding camp at Elandsberg.

- iv. Over 50 animals were darted and relocated, many using a helicopter.
 - a. One older animal died shortly after arriving at Melkplaas, very likely due to the stress of the relocation.

One animal died in a trailer during the actual capture / relocation process but overall it was an astonishingly successful exercise; largely down to good planning by Bernard and Tom.

b. What is planned for 2018

- i. All planned QP movements are complete at Arc & Ciel, Bontebok Ridge, Kosierskraal, Boland Landbou, Melkplaas and Groote Schuur.
- ii. **Nuwejaars Wetlands Special Management Area – North and South.**
The two herds in this reserve (currently separated by a road) can both be expanded.

We have a breeding strategy in place for these properties but at the time of writing, specific animal movements have not been confirmed.

1. Nuwejaars North:

- a. home to a very productive breeding group of three mares and Freddy; Freddy is possibly our best stallion and his current offspring are all very high quality.

During 2018, the team will decide how best to add mares to this group. There is the option of moving two mares up from Nuwejaars South, or of bringing in new (and better) blood from other Core Herd properties.

- b. Two of Freddy's excellent male adolescent offspring will be moved from Nuwejaars North back to the west of the Horse Sickness Boundary as prospective stallions for Vlakkenheuwel and Pampoenvlei. There is some admin required to do this.

2. Nuwejaars South:

- a. May be reinforced with the dominant stallion Mark from Wedderwill and ideally it too will receive new mares from other properties.
- b. One or two of Freddy's female offspring will be moved from Nuwejaars North to Nuwejaars South.
- c. The mature stallion Gio and the immature stallion Ziggy may be removed from Nuwejaars South, possibly for sale. They are good but not great.

iii. **Wedderwill.**

- 1. The stallion Mark will probably be moved to Nuwejaars South to complete that herd.

2. One other QP animal, Patricia, also needs to be removed from Wedderwill.

That will complete the QP movements on Wedderwill

iv. Vlakkenheuvel:

1. All of Vlakkenheuvel's mature stallions were removed last year and two new ones added. A third is required and one of the immature Nuwejaars stallions will be moved here.
2. 5 x D and 3 x Z grade animals will be removed.
3. That will complete the planned QP movements on Vlakkenheuvel.

v. Pampoenvlei:

1. One of the immature Nuwejaars stallions will be moved to Pampoenvlei.
2. That will complete the planned QP movements on Pampoenvlei

The Core Herd Properties

c. Vlakkenheuvel:

- i. Represented by Boet Le Roux
- ii. Vlakkenheuvel: approx. 2000 ha, mixed arable and grassland, fenced only for domestic stock. One fenced camp of 25 ha.
- iii. Has hosted a QP herd for many years and, for various reasons, has historically not had the best animals.

The herd was substantially reduced in October 2017, all the dominant stallions were removed and two good new stallions were introduced. A third good stallion is expected to be introduced from Nuwejaars in winter 2018

- iv. 21 animals currently allocated, including 5 breeding-age females and 6 juvenile females.

8 animals to be removed in 2018 based on grading.

- v. A maximum of 25 QP animals is proposed.

d. Pampoenvlei:

- i. Represented by Henry Louw
- ii. Pampoenvlei: 1,800 ha, fenced game reserve. Other game includes eland, gemsbok, bontebok, springbok, wildebeest, kudu, giraffe, and Nguni cattle. Fenced for game.
- iii. Has hosted a QP herd for many years and, largely through the stallion Henry, has a high proportion of good animals.

These animals tend to be very white and the recent introduction of the stallion Khumba will hopefully add some colour to this herd. One new stallion will be introduced from Nuwejaars in winter 2018.

- iv. 19 animals currently allocated, including 8 breeding-age females and 3 juvenile females.
- v. A maximum of 25 QP animals is proposed.

e. Elandsberg:

- i. Represented by Mike Gregor
- ii. Elandsberg Nature Reserve: 4,000 ha game reserve. Quagga run with bontebok, eland, mountain zebra, springbok, red hartebeest, gemsbok, black wildebeest. Fenced for game.

Three new stallions were introduced during the 2017 moves.

- iii. Elandsberg Camp: 12 ha grazing. Suitable for 7 animals. Currently serves as Quagga Project holding pen for animals in transit, some consideration being given to using it as an experimental mating area.
- iv. 26 animals currently allocated, including 10 breeding-age females and 8 juvenile females.
- v. A maximum of 30 QP animals is proposed.

f. Nuwejaars Wetlands Special Management Area:

- i. Represented by Mick D'Alton
- ii. Nuwejaars North & South: fenced portions of a 46,000 ha special management area.

A key feature of the SMA is the attempt to connect several conservation areas on the constituent farms, using wildlife corridors. Animal wildlife includes eland, bontebok, buffalo, hartebeest, hippo and 235 species of birds.

The quagga are currently split between Nuwejaars North and South. The herd in Nuwejaars North is particularly productive and the majority of Freddy's recent foals have been A graded. He has been allocated two more mares in the 2018 moves.

- iii. This is the most 'visitor-friendly' of the Core Herd properties.

It also has a permanent office, with wildlife management staff who manage all aspects of the resident quagga .

Our contact is Erica Brink who manages monitors and manages the QP animals very professionally. Hopefully this is will be a long and mutually beneficial arrangement.

- iv. Currently home to 18 animals, of which 6 are breeding-age females and 3 are juvenile females.

Two juvenile stallions will be brought back inside the Horse Sickness Boundary in 2018 and one stallion, possibly Wedderwill's Mark, will be relocated to Nuwejaars South.

Ideally some good quality females from other Core Herds will be used to expand the Nuwejaars herd.

- v. The carrying capacity of QP animals has yet to be determined by Nuwejaars but could theoretically be as many 30.

Grazing Agreements

The four Core Herd properties have agreed to remain 'non-commercial' in the medium-term; choosing not to trade their Founder animals, not to buy in any 'surplus' animals, and to host substantial Core Herds on their properties for the QP.

The four properties are Vlakkenheuvel, Pampoenvlei, Nuwejaars Special Management Area and Elandsberg.

In return for retaining those Founders as Core Herd breeding stock, and for the space on their properties, the QP is proposing to pay these landowners an annual grazing fee. A formal agreement will have to be drawn up and agreed by the Directors of the QP.

Two basic principles seem to be reasonable foundations to the agreement:

- g. Each landowner will be paid a grazing fee by the QP. The amount has yet to be finally determined but will be based on the number of animals the land and informed partly by what the QP can afford to pay.

It is proposed that this grazing contract will be for an initial 3 year period. Ideally it would be 5 years (which would allow for a whole new quagga 'generation') but at this moment we cannot prudently budget for that length of time.

- h. Each landowner has a number of Founder animals 'owed' to them.

These animals will only be allocated to landowners by the QP at the termination of their grazing contract. In the interim the QP has complete control over all the animals in the Core Herds.

When those Founders are finally allocated, the QP will do so according to the number and sex that was originally recorded for them and what is best for the QP. This will all be included in the individual contracts.

Breed Society

Breed Societies are regulated by DAFF and fall under the responsibility of the Registrar of Breed Societies.

The first step is for the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Senzeni Zokwana, to 'recognise' the animal that the Breed Society wants to promote.

Typically the Minister accepts the recommendation of the Registrar and the Registrar has recommended the Rau quagga. That recommendation is currently sitting with the Minister (along with a number of others) and we are waiting for it to come out of his office. Our case is a little unusual since Rau quagga are not typical breed Society material.

I was advised 20/02/2018 that the Minister is likely to change in the next re-shuffle – that will not speed anything up.

The rest of our application – Constitution, breeder support, application forms – has all been submitted. As soon as the Minister signs off the Rau quagga as a legitimate 'animal' in terms of the Animal Improvement Act, the Registrar will start processing the rest of the paperwork.

The Registrar has to make a site visit as part of this process; there will not be budget for this until April.

Copenhagen University's recent research on quagga

A team from the University of Copenhagen recently published a paper investigating plains zebra across Southern and East Africa. It examined whether DNA analysis supports the recognition of several sub-species, which were originally categorised on the way they look.

For example, East African plains zebra tend to have thick, bold, unbroken stripes, with no hint of shadow stripes. Namibian zebra, on the other hand, often have very broken stripes, shadow stripes all over the body and limited striping on the legs. We now know that the quagga was the southernmost and least stripy of them all.

Very roughly, plains zebra go from extremely crisp black-and-white to much more variable and jumbled stripe patterns, the farther south you go in their range.

The Copenhagen study took DNA from 59 zebras across their range and drew all sorts of interesting conclusions.

For example, they believe that all plains zebra originated from a population somewhere in Southern Africa about 370,000 years ago.

Of interest to the Quagga Project, the researchers did not find significant DNA differences between the quagga and other plains zebra populations. In fact, the most genetically divergent population is in northern Uganda. Those animals don't look any different to other East African zebra.

The authors suggest that the quagga could even be regarded as a variation of the plains zebra - a lesser classification than a sub-species.

The conclusion here is that hide-colour ('pelage') is not a great indicator of the genetic differences between zebra populations.

This is interesting for us because one valid criticism of the QP is that the only thing we are breeding towards is a specific hide-colour - what about all the other things that might have been different about the quagga?

This report suggests that there really doesn't seem to have been anything else different about the quagga (genetically) and does not support the argument that the Quagga Project may be missing some mysterious and lost DNA that defined the quagga.

This is supportive of the Quagga Project mission - the difference between quagga and zebra is extremely slight; so slight that there is more genetic difference between some visually indistinguishable zebras than there is between quaggas and the average plains zebra.

The Copenhagen team have approached the Quagga Project to extend this study by testing some of our project animals.

Fund Raising

The QP currently has a healthy bank balance but it will need to raise funds in due course.

The most obvious fundraising strategy is for the QP to sell animals. The QP currently has 20 mature mares and might expect to produce >15 foals per annum.

- i. **Selling to other Rau quagga breeders at lower than market value:** The QP's mission is to rebreed quagga. If supporting other breeders could accelerate that, then this will probably be the right thing to do. It doesn't matter who breeds Rau quaggas, just that they are bred.

The best forum for doing this would be through the Quagga Breed Society, when it is formally constituted.

It will be a little awkward if the QP sells animals at a discounted rate to breeders who simply put those animals in a public auction to make a profit. Some thought must be given to this process.

We have had one 'in-house' sale but it was a rather confused affair and would need to be more tightly organised next time.

- j. **Selling in the open market / at auction:** The QP did this in March 2017, other breeders have done it subsequently, and animals are expected to appear at auction in 2018.

The QP is in a consolidation phase and has no current plans to sell animals at public auction during 2018.

Publicity & Social Media

- k. **TV:** 50:50 filmed and flighted a piece on the QP. Professor Kennedy Dzama of Stellenbosch University chatted to camera about the Quagga Project and it would be great to get him involved again in the future.

- l. **Articles:**

- i. Highlife – British Airways in-flight magazine. Article by Pippa de Bruyn. Very good reach and presented the project in a good light.
- ii. Safarious online – Keri Harvey researched an article and asked for final copy approval which was given. It has not been published yet.

- m. **Facebook & Instagram:** We are going to up the reach of our social media activity. Jeroen (who manages our tech) continues to be very helpful and we are going to try and partner more closely with other organisations – the Nuwejaars SMA for example.

We have 1,458 followers on Facebook and should try to up that significantly. Of course this isn't the same as reaching out to a university, or a major donor, but the value of this sort of reach comes in different forms:

- i. There are people out there who want to help and it's important to be easily available to them
- ii. There are critics of the QP and we can counter that by mobilising support
- iii. These platforms are ridiculously international – we can't reach these people while going about our day jobs in the Western Cape without social media
- iv. Our objective is to bring back the quagga and the more interest we generate in that the easier it will be
- v. It's very motivating to get messages of support every day! A picture we posted on 8 Feb ended up being seen by over 10,000 different people.
- vi. Once we get a rhythm going on Facebook, we will start making more use of Instagram as well. We can tell a bit of a story on Facebook whereas Instagram is largely limited to images. Both are useful.

There are two issues with keeping a social media presence going – finding the time and finding the content.

Ideally we will post at least every two weeks. Weekly would be better. If we post every new foal, the relocations, publicity we get, etc, we should be good to go.

Tax position

Grant Thornton have agreed to do our audit, and provide tax advisory services, free of charge. This is thanks to Craig Lardner. The QP will issue a s18A certificate to Grant Thornton, allowing them to deduct the notional amount of their bill from taxable income.

Two specific pieces of tax advice should be mentioned:

- n. **Sales of animals as an unavoidable part of managing the objectives of the QP:**
The QP has limited land available and each year some surplus animals have to be removed in order for the project to carry out its objectives.

These sales should be free of income tax, as a necessary part of fulfilling out public benefit objectives but it is not certain. This will have to be tested at the end of the 20187 financial cycle.

The outcome of that negotiation may determine how we treat these sales going forward.

- o. **Public sales of animals at the Wildswinkel auction March 2017 and subsequently.** This is trickier but there is an outside chance that we can achieve an exemption.

It is more difficult to argue that these very high profile, high value events are not taxable trading. However, Grant Thornton are happy to present our case in a cooperative manner with SARS.

The tax liability for 2017/2018 (Wildswinkel auction + subsequent sales to third parties – expenses) will be approximately R400,000 if we achieve no exemptions.

For ALL sales in 2017/2018 we have budgeted as if tax is due and at the time of writing we are preparing to pay a provisional tax bill of approximately R400,000. We will argue for a tax refund at the end of the year, but not rely on it.

Having declared these sales in 2018, we will probably be looked at quite carefully in the ensuing years when we declare only a fraction of the income.

.....

NB: If we do end up in a position where we have to pay tax on all our sales, there is a case to be made for setting up a wholly owned 'normal' company through which all the commerce and expenses flow.

*That would leaving the existing **Quagga Project, incorporated under Section 21** as a very 'clean' charitable company that never gets tough questions from SARS, donors, etc.*

Budget

At the last meeting it was decided that a budget should be drawn up by the end of November 2017, for the subsequent 24 months. That was done but has not yet been released because it has to be approved by the Board. That will be done as soon as final agreement is reached on the Core Herd grazing fees.

It includes some guesswork (e.g. the cost of animal movement in 2018) but the overall picture is pretty clear.

Key points:

- p. Income 2018:
 - i. No income has been budgeted for animal sales in 2018
- q. Expenses 2018 – the largest costs will be:
 - i. Grazing fees:
 - ii. Relocations:
 - iii. Wildlife Management:
- r. Assuming we do have to pay the current tax liability AND have no further animal sales (i.e. a cautious view) the QP will run out of money in about mid-2021.

The Chairman (seconded by Craig Lardner) thanked March for all his hard work on this report.

3.2. HERD REPORT

3.2.1 Updated Herd reports attached

3.2.2 [How to report/register a new quagga foal.](#)

- * Write down the **date of birth**/first time you noticed the animal.
- * **Take a left and right side picture** of the animal. Note that the mare will be very protective of the new foal so give them at least two weeks to a month to settle down before “stalking” them for the photo.
- * Take a **photograph of the foal and its dam** together. While the foal is very young it will stick very close to its mother. This bond loosens as it grows older and it may begin to socialise with other females.
- * Note who the **mother** is
- * Note who the **father** is (the herd stallion if no animals have been moved recently)
- * Note the **sex** of the foal.
- * Contact Bernard (elandsbergbuffalo@icon) to let him know the animal’s details.
- * Bernard will then reply with the animals **registered number** and “**initial**”
- * Once the animal has been sexed it can be **named**
- * Please check before you name the foal if that name has been used before as we do not want duplication in the animal names



*

[How to sex a new quagga foal](#)

- * The easiest way to sex a foal is to wait until it urinates. Males urinate forward below their body while the females urinate backwards behind the body.
- * Sub adult and adult males sometimes show their penis
- * From behind a male has a Y shaped black stripe below the tail while a female has a wider even width stripe.

[How to photograph a quagga](#)

- * The photographs of the left and right side of the animal must be as “flat” as possible with the animal at 90° to the camera.
- * The animal should be looking forward with a straight neck

- * The photograph should be clear and as close as possible
The photographs should be taken early morning or late afternoon with the sun behind the photographer
The picture (when cropped) needs to be bigger than 1MB, preferably 5MB in size and in focus in order for us to count the stripes with accuracy.
- * Both a left and a right side photograph is needed for each animal

4. FINANCE

5. GENERAL

- 5.1. Correspondence
Included in the co-ordinator's report
- 5.2 Other issues
 - 5.2.1. Wedderwill were thanked for their hospitality.

6. NEXT MEETING

August 2018 – date to be advised.
Venue: to be advised

CHAIRMAN