

To the Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene Panel Meeting Members on December 9th 2014



The Tai O Community Cattle Group has been busy this year dealing with Feral Cattle matters on Lantau, Island. We are out with the cows a minimum of 4 days per week.

We implemented (with AFCD approval) the cow safety collar trial scheme.



This scheme has been supported wholeheartedly by the community. I make these collars and put them on as many cows as possible from Shek Pik to San Shek Wan. These collars are monitored by our group and our volunteers. They have not caused any injuries or deaths to the cows.



Due to the herds traveling along the roads we have also proposed a plan to the AFCD regarding Shek Pik.

Suggested Stile, Gate & Fencing Points to contain Shui Hau Cattle herd within Shui Hau Wan, Shui Hau Fields & adjacent Country Park Area & keep them segregated from the South Lantau Road

1. Travelling from Tong Fuk to Shui Hau the first main entry/exit point is by the Football Field on the left hand side of the road, next to the main access to the wan for the kite boarders. The herd currently gains access to the road via the right hand side of the football pitch. The first photo shows it's position & narrowest point which could be the first gate/stile/fence. The second photo is on the left hand side of the football pitch & shows the narrowest point here from fence to tree were another gate/stile/fence would be erected to block them coming the other way. The third photo shows the bridge access to the bay from the same area, but currently the animals don't use entry/exit point.



2. Continuing to Shui Hau Tsuen & on the left hand side after the tall white house at the entrance to the village is this pathway, but it seems impenetrable to the herd, hence no need for a gate/stile/fence.



3. Continuing through the village, on the left hand side, this walkway over the drainage ditch to the Shui Hau Fields requires a gate/stile/fence.



4. As you exiting Shui Hau Tsuen, heading to Shek , is the bridge crossing over the river connecting the South Lantau Road to the Lo Kei Wan headland. A gate/stile/cattle grid would be required here.



I strongly recommend a complete site visit & field walk with yourself, your Project Manager (et al) & I first.

Shui Hau Herd Numbers:

With regard herd numbers, sex & tags numbers I'm afraid I still don't have an up to date list as I still haven't had time to do this properly because of work commitments, but also because in this recent heat they have been mainly undercover & very dispersed, but I will do in due course. At present there are anywhere between 22 - 28 animals which make up the herd., the variation is due to the fact that some animals, especially the older males tend to move away & back to the herd. The majority of the animals are female I believe (60/40?) & I would say there is a 60/40 split regarding non-tagged/tagged animals.

Potential Water Buffalo Relocation:

As previously discussed we have in Shui Hau Wan, with it's attendant river, valley mangrove swamp & former paddy fields, a perfect Water Buffalo environment.

We currently have two bulls living there (down from three before), & I would estimate that there is room for at least six more on an initial trial basis to see how they integrate with the existing animals (who are very docile), with a view to relocating more there based on how the initial trial goes. I currently work in Pui O so have spent quite a bit of time with the herd there, as well as investigating the size of their range, have a good overview of their herd numbers, & based on my observations I would say there is room for a herd of up to 20-30 individual water buffalo in the Shui Hau Wan basin.

Coexistence:

With regards the water buffalo & cattle existing together in a contained Shui Hau Basin Area, based on my observations as well as those of others on the island, the two animals do seem to coexist together very well, I have never seen or heard of any rutting or fighting between water buffalo & cattle bulls. It is also my observation that although they do share many grazing grasses & plants in common there is some feeding specialisation differences between the two groups which is complementary to a certain extent.

Matthew Bradford

On 23 Jul 2014

Sai Kung Vegetation Additions

Regarding trees and other vegetation best suited for supplementing a cows diet
We hope that with the help of the necessary panel, that these trees could be planted in Sai Kung around the Chong Hing main area- Bauhinia, Hibiscus Celtis Biondii, ficus variegata & Macaranga Tanarius.



Public Service Announcements

Our first public Service Announcement was posted on YouTube on July 30th 2014

Hong Kong Feral Cattle Safety Shui Hau RIP

An accident that killed a mother cow leaving a calf behind in Shui Hau this has had over 10,000 views, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbaOvy5PQEI&list=TLFMIIGA_Rmll8



Our newest Public Service announcement is here-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3jPtk-4-7k&list=UUSjguH3HkxQoBtxdIJdgAZQ>



On December 5th 2014 I met with District Commander for Lantau Island, Patrick Laidler.

During our meeting we discussed the speeding issues on South Lantau Road. I also showed him the site of our last accident in Shui Hau on November 12th 2014. LS RN 14016413

We lost 2 cows in this incident, both mother and baby had to be euthanized.



Speeding was obvious on this day and the District Commander would like to see more cameras installed along the roadside. We discussed road safety issues regarding all people and animals.

This will mean having a discussion with the Transport Department in the near future regarding signage etc.

On 14th October 2014 a young cow was killed near the Shek Pik reservoir and 2 others injured. LS RN 140-151-30.

The driver of a van was arrested in this case.



We will continue to check for updates on these 2 cases.

Shek Pik Issue regarding cows kept from grazing on the slope by the water department.

After the relocation we had an average of 30 cows in the Lower Shek Pik Area near the prison. Several months went by and the herd could be seen walking up the road towards Tai O with babies in tow. This is a steep and dangerous road for travel by people or animals. Some cows would also cross the road above the reservoir and head towards Shui Hau. This is very dangerous as speeding drivers are not use to having cows along this stretch of road.

The cows had stopped grazing on the slope above the prison and it took me four months to find out why! I spoke with Mr Lin of the Water Department and he told me that cows grazing on the slope would disturb the damn and lower Shek Pik would flood. I explained to him that there were only 15 cows left that were in danger on the road as they couldn't access the slope. Even though cows have grazed there for years he would not compromise and let them in. They closed it off in late May I believe. Now the grass is tall, uncut and drying from the summer and the cows must travel to eat. Steven Calpin from the SPCA is trying to look into the matter.



Ngong Ping Cattle Safety involving tourists...

The cattle in Ngong Ping are bothered and harassed on a daily basis at the Ngong Ping monastery. The tourists feed them, pet them and take photos with them. If a tourist is injured a cow could be blamed. The Ngong Ping 360 and monastery use the cows as a tourist draw but take no interest in the cows welfare. This is unexceptable!

Man below slapping them (warned)



Quietly feeding...



Guidelines must be put into place for the tourists and enforced.



In Tai O we have 11 cows that are easy going. We have 2 fresh water stations set up for them as there isn't a fresh source in Tai O. Here is one station-

Our groups interest is to keep all cows on Lantau, Island healthy and safe from harm.

We hope your distinguished panel will help us to continue doing this in the future by giving us more government support!

Thank you for your kind attention,

Kathleen Daxon

Chairperson – Tai O Community Cattle Group

Update Urgent! 8th December 2014 Baby Calf in Mui Wo dies overnight and is eaten by dogs.

Due to lack of information Mui Wo villagers removed this calf at 10pm on 7th December 2014 from the bushes where it was hidden and put out in the open with the mother. This is the last time it was seen alive. People must understand that although mothers look for their calves they should not interfere as it can lead to cases like this-

