

Laura Byers

Subject: FW: Letter from The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

From: Will Boyd Wallis
Sent: 06 September 2016 16:43
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: KENNETH STEPHEN [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Letter from The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

Dear Alex,

Thank you very much for your letter of 5th September. CNPA would of course be very happy to meet with you and/or any other SGA representative as soon as possible.

The guest blog you refer to was taken from an article I wrote for the Heather Trust Annual report which was intended to encourage keepers and all moorland managers to respond to the National Park Partnership Plan consultation. I have had mixed reactions from grouse moor managers in the National Park, some have reacted similarly to you and others have strongly welcomed the article. It was intended to be provocative but not negative or to 'scare' people or to imply that *all* grouse moor management is bad.

I understand from your email that you would like to invite an MSP or two along. That would also be fine, assuming they are there to join in the discussion and not simply to 'witness'. Can you let me know who you would like to be there so we can plan for an appropriate room etc.?

In terms of dates to meet, can I suggest the afternoon of 19th or morning of 21st September? Failing that we could go for the afternoon of 4th October.

Yours sincerely,

Will

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Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022: Consultation
27 June – 30 September 2016

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#BigParkBigQuestions

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022: Consultation
27 June – 30 September 2016

From: KENNETH STEPHEN [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2016 11:29
To: Will Boyd Wallis
Subject: Letter from The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

Dear Mr Wallis, please find attached a letter from SGA Chairman Alex Hogg regarding the Cairngorm National Park consultation.

If replying, please reply to this address.

Yours Sincerely, Kenneth Stephen, Communications Officer, The Scottish Gamekeepers Association, on behalf of Alex Hogg.

Dear Mr Wallis,

I am writing to you, ahead of the close of your consultation, in order to arrange a meeting with you regarding moorland management, which forms part of the consultation. If you were amenable to this, I would also like to invite local MSPs to witness the discussion.

Your blog of August 19th, on the CNPA website, contains many assertions regarding grouse moor management which, our organisation feels, could influence the tone, type and volume of response you get from the consultation. This could then be translated into policy.

As CNPA is a public body, funded by Scottish Government and reporting to Scottish Ministers- and not a campaigning body- we question why information which is more likely than not to encourage a negative opinion of grouse moor management should be disseminated from the park's official website before a democratic exercise takes place.

Some of the assertions made also merit a greater degree of scrutiny than are afforded in the article.

The suggestion that chemicals may be contaminating upland burns, without any evidence of this, will only serve to scare the general public.

What science is there to show this is the case? Grit is treated with a water resistant coating so there is little, if any, leeching. Livestock and pets treated with wormers defecate within the park all the time. There seems little suggestion in the blog that farmers and dog walkers will have to change to meet modern demands in this respect.

Similarly, there is no evidence that muirburn in Scotland's uplands affects drinking water. We know this as it was the subject of a recent FOI by the SGA to Scottish Water, who confirmed that there was no records of water contamination caused by rotational heather burning. Slow burning does not cause large escapes of carbon and the argument that burning prevents the spread of trees which can lock up carbon is highly simplistic. It is proven that trees growing on moorland peat soils cause carbon to be released into the atmosphere as they dry out the soil.

The blog comments about deer fences, hill tracks and flood management are also approached from a negative perspective with regard to grouse managers. While we share fully your disappointment with any form of persecution, we do not feel the overall picture painted is one of balance and is more likely than not to attract opposition to grouse moors which could then be reflected in the future direction of the National Park at policy level.

We would welcome, therefore, the opportunity to discuss this further with you in person, as stated at the beginning of this letter. Please let us know if this will be possible, whether you would be happy for MSP/MSPs to witness the discussion and what dates might suit, given the closing date for the consultation.

Yours Sincerely,

Alex Hogg, Chairman, The Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

