



The Mountaineering Council of Scotland

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Please reply by email to david@mcofs.org.uk

Eoghain Maclean <Eoghain.Maclean@snh.gov.uk>
Scottish Natural Heritage

30 March 2015

Dear Eoghain

Beinn Eighe and Loch Maree National Nature Reserve, Management Proposals 2015-2026 Response from Mountaineering Council of Scotland

We were not able to attend the drop-in session and we understand that although there is a draft management plan it will not be publicly available until finalised on the basis of responses to this consultation. This is despite the web page stating " ... if you would like more detail please email us and we will be happy to send you a draft plan showing all the objectives and tasks we have set out." We can therefore offer only very broad-brush comments based on the high-level management objectives contained in the consultation leaflet.

Natural Heritage Management

The MCOFS supports the general principle of promoting biodiversity and the ecological health of native species. We support reducing deer populations through culling to levels compatible with natural regeneration. Fencing can be a necessary tool but is not a sustainable long term method of control and we support the approach taken at Beinn Eighe.

Management for People

Paths on the estate are limited and, as far as we know, in reasonable condition. We support the continued maintenance of key routes onto Beinn Eighe at Coire Mhic Fhearchair (most of which passes through National Trust for Scotland land), Coire an Laoigh and to the col south of Meall a'Ghiubhais. There are places where informal parking may be damaging vegetation or creating a road safety hazard and where more formal parking may be required. This should be low-key and low-impact.

Responses to specific leaflet questions:

How to make more enjoyable to visit? We regard the NNR as already enjoyable to visit and have no view on how to enhance this further other than continuing to manage the reserve on the same lines as currently.

Aspects of most interest? As the representative organisation for mountaineering, hill-walking and ski-touring in Scotland, with over 12,500 members, our interests clearly lie in the mountain landscape.

Encounters with wildlife are an important part of the experience, as is the sense of walking in an ecologically rich and healthy environment. We regard their management and study as best left to those expert in these fields.

Yours sincerely

David Gibson, Chief Officer