

Minister for Environment
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20th May 2008

BEAVER REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

I refer to your application submitted to the Scottish Government on 21 December 2007 for a licence under section 16(4) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to release European beaver for a trial reintroduction in Knapdale, Argyll.

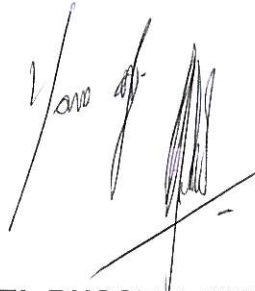
I am pleased to be able to tell you that we have decided to grant a licence for the project as set out in your application.

The licence allows the Scottish Wildlife Trust and Royal Zoological Society of Scotland to release up to four families of beavers (each family to comprise not more than two adults and their kits) within the Knapdale release site as defined in the application. The release of the beavers will not take place until 2009. There will then be a period of five years to assess the viability of the reintroduction. Any further releases of beavers at the end of the trial or in relation to any other trial will require a further licence from the Scottish Government. The decision on whether to grant any further licence is a matter for the Scottish Government.

The licence is subject to a number of conditions set out in the attached annex. These relate to the management of the project, the potential impact on the protected areas and species within the release site and the arrangements for post release monitoring.

We have received a number of letters from individuals and national organisations expressing serious concern about the potential impacts on their properties and businesses. I recognise that many of their concerns may only be assessed in the context of an actual trial taking place. However I attach great importance to the project maintaining a channel of communication by which the concerns of local businesses and property-owners are taken into account, and, where possible, conflicts are averted before they occur.

I wish the beaver reintroduction project every success, and I look forward to the opportunity to see these charismatic animals at home in the Scottish countryside



MICHAEL RUSSELL MSP
Minister for Environment