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Graeme Dey MSP
Convener
ECCLR Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

29 June 2017

Dear Graeme,

I am writing to you to inform you that I intend to announce the Scottish Government's response to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee and SNH reports on deer management on 29 June 2017.

We welcome the Committee and SNH reports on deer management and note that their conclusions are very similar.

We also welcome the progress made thus far by Scotland's deer sector but acknowledge that significant additional effort is required.

In light of the reports, we will therefore:

- look to all deer managers to ensure that the public interest is properly taken into account in deer management planning. The Scottish Government will also look to SNH to be proactive in ensuring the public interest is protected and to use the full range of enforcement powers under the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 where appropriate;
- set up an independent expert group to examine and develop solutions to barriers to effective deer management in the uplands and a separate panel under the Deer (Scotland) Act 1996 to look at lowland deer management;
- be looking to see effective deer management that protects the public interest embedded across the upland deer range, with appropriate deer management plans in place and commensurate action being taken on the ground;
- in the lowlands, we will be looking to see all those who own or manage significant areas of land taking responsibility for deer management, and in particular taking action to reduce the risk of collisions between deer and road traffic;



- ask SNH to report on progress on deer management in 2019. If the review does not find sufficient progress with the objectives above, then we would have no alternative but to consider fundamental changes to the framework for deer management in Scotland.

Yours sincerely



Roseanna Cunningham