

Licence granted for historic return of beavers to Glen Affric

Friday 22 August, 2025

A licence for the historic official reintroduction of beavers to Glen Affric, following months of unexpected delay by Scottish government agency NatureScot, has been granted.

Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) and Trees for Life have been working in partnership on the proposal since 2022, which will now see the first official release of beavers to the northwest Highlands, four centuries since the native species was driven to extinction in Scotland.

Following two years and three phases of extensive local consultations, last December FLS applied to NatureScot for a licence to release beavers into Loch Beinn a Mheadhoin.

A family of beavers will now be released into a National Nature Reserve owned by FLS, above Beinn A' Mheadhoin Dam in Glen Affric, potentially this autumn. The beavers will be translocated from unsuitable farmland habitat elsewhere in Scotland, where they might otherwise be culled.

Alan McDonnell, Trees for Life's Head of Nature Restoration, said, "This successful result for FLS's well-considered licence application to reintroduce beavers to this famous glen is a positive step from Scotland's biggest public landowner. FLS should be congratulated for its hard work and for showing leadership as a government agency.

"Going forwards, Trees for Life's dedicated Beaver Management Officer will be there to engage with the whole community, offering practical support to ensure that local people can enjoy and benefit from beavers being brought back to Affric, with any localised issues well-managed."

Beavers create wetlands that benefit other wildlife, soak up carbon dioxide, purify water and reduce flooding. They can also bring economic benefits to communities through eco-tourism.

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