



Unfinished Business

A National Parks Strategy for
Scotland



APRS
The Association for the
Protection of Rural Scotland

NEWS RELEASE

CAMPAIGN FOR MORE NATIONAL PARKS STEPS UP A GEAR

For immediate release 12 January 2017

As the curtain comes down on the Centenary Celebrations of the US National Parks Service and the major contribution of Scot, John Muir, to the creation of an extensive network of National Parks in America, a major success story with almost 300 million visitors annually, efforts are being stepped up in Scotland to try to secure more National Parks.

Scotland currently has only two National Parks – Loch Lomond and The Trossachs and The Cairngorms – and sits near the bottom of the world's league table in terms of its number of National Parks, despite having a rich abundance of world class scenery and natural and cultural heritage assets.

Two Scottish charities, the Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) and The Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland (APRS) have joined forces to organise an exhibition and a reception in the Scottish Parliament next week (17-19 January), sponsored by Finlay Carson MSP.

The purpose of these events is to brief Parliamentarians and others in the corridors of power on the considerable benefits of establishing more National Parks as part of regenerating some economically fragile and special scenic rural areas and positioning Scotland more strongly on the international stage.

One of the keynote speakers at the Parliamentary Reception will be Scot Carol Ritchie, Executive Director of the Europarc federation which brings together representatives from National Parks throughout Europe to share best practice.

In advance of these events Ross Anderson, Chairman of SCNP has written an open letter to Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform highlighting how cost effective the creation of more National Parks could be.

In his letter he argues that "the creation of more National Parks will benefit the economy to a level that will far outweigh the revenue costs of running them, and this is confirmed by evidence-based research undertaken recently for SCNP and APRS".

In response the Scottish Government's concern about the perceived costs of further National Parks he points out that "new National Parks, potentially covering smaller areas than the existing two Parks, could be considerably cheaper to run with less complex operational models while making a significant contribution to economic regeneration in remoter rural areas".

There is growing support at grassroots level for the creation of more National Parks and this has been demonstrated recently with a number of well-supported local initiatives.

Anderson contends that with the Scottish Government recently announcing plans for an economic agency to regenerate Southern Scotland “this provides an ideal opportunity to give the area a major economic boost by creating two new National Parks, which could prove to be the most cost effective initiative supported by the new agency as Park designation would help showcase the area’s special heritage qualities globally as part of the worldwide family of National Parks.”

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. For more information please contact Ross Anderson on 01505 842610 or John Mayhew on 07787 195690, 0131 225 7012 or scnp-aprs@btconnect.com
2. A copy of the open letter to the Cabinet Secretary is attached.
3. SCNP promotes the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of National Parks, potential National Parks and other nationally outstanding areas worthy of special protection. SCNP is a registered Scottish charity, No SC031008. www.scnp.org.uk
4. APRS promotes the care of **all** of Scotland’s rural landscapes. APRS is a registered Scottish charity, No SC016139. www.aprs.scot
5. In their *Unfinished Business* report SCNP and APRS call for more National Parks to be established covering Ben Nevis/Glen Coe/Black Mount; a coastal and marine National Park, centred around Mull; The Cheviots; Galloway; Glen Affric; Harris; and Wester Ross
6. Copies of *Unfinished Business* are available from John Mayhew – see contact details above – or can be read online at <http://tinyurl.com/zwmoydp>