



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rachael Hamilton

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Ettrick, Roxburgh & Berwickshire constituency

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

5<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Dear Minister,

I write with some urgency regarding the potential reintroduction of lynx in the Kielder Forest on the edge of my constituency of Ettrick, Roxburgh & Berwickshire.

Many constituents, especially farmers, have made representations to me about fears for their livelihoods if lynx were to attack their livestock and either cause significant or fatal damage to them. This would cause significant problems for the viability of their businesses, not to mention create more work for the farmers themselves.

The cost to the public purse of supporting a long-term livestock compensation scheme, and the ecological benefits of reintroducing lynx, have yet to be fully examined. We also have to think about existing native species that are struggling to survive in Scotland, and across the UK, such as the Scottish Wildcat and the Red Squirrel. Diverting funds out of budgets to help protect these species will inevitably take place to fund the protection of lynx.

Although I am sure you are looking after the interests of all stakeholders, I implore you to take special notice of the concerns of farmers and stop any reintroduction of lynx.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on such a vital issue to many farmers in the Borders.

Best,

Rachael Hamilton MSP  
Ettrick, Roxburgh & Berwickshire constituency