

The Report on the proposal to extend the southern boundary of the Cairngorms National Park into Perth and Kinross: Summary

Introduction

In March 2008 Scottish Ministers announced their proposal to extend the southern boundary of Cairngorms National Park on, or approximately on, the line indicated in the Cairngorms National Park Boundary Bill. This Report fulfils Ministers' request for us to consult and submit a Report on their proposal by the end of 2008.

This Report addresses the two key issues that Ministers asked us to investigate:

- exactly where the new boundary should be;
- what changes should be made to the number of members each local authority nominates to the Cairngorms National Park Authority Board.

We ran a public consultation on these two issues from 1st August – 24th October 2008. In total 66 people and organisations responded.

The boundary

Our recommended boundary is shown in detail on Maps 1-8 available here: www.snh.org.uk/nationalparks. In summary, it includes within the National Park:

- the Drumochter hills and summits
- the entire lengths of the River Garry, A9, railway and National Cycle Route 7 that lie between Dalnaspidal and Killiecrankie
- the communities of Calvine, Blair Atholl and Killiecrankie
- the Gaick and Atholl hills and foothills
- the dispersed community within upper Glen Shee.

Allocation of local authority nominations

Angus and Moray Councils each nominate 1 member to the Cairngorms National Park Authority Board at present. Once the Park is extended, we recommend that Perth and Kinross Councils should also nominate 1 member. There are two options for allocating the remaining 7 nominations between Aberdeenshire Council and The Highland Council. Placing more emphasis on the estimated population in each local authority area in the Park would lead to The Highland Council retaining the ability to nominate 5 Board members (as at present), and Aberdeenshire Council nominating 2 (rather than 3 at present). Alternatively, if one places more emphasis on the area in each local authority within the Park, The Highland Council would nominate 4 members, and Aberdeenshire Council, 3. The arguments for and against each approach are finely balanced, and the level of support for each option amongst consultees was similar. We have no strong view about which of these alternative options is preferable, and we recommend that this matter is considered further as part of the Scottish Government's National Parks Review.

The full Report is available here: www.snh.org.uk/nationalparks