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Edward Mountain, MSP
Convenor, Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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7 November 2024

Dear Edward,

Launch of statutory public consultation on proposal for a new National Park in Galloway

Following the Government's proposal to establish a new National Park in Galloway, NatureScot – in its role as reporter – has been engaging with communities, businesses, public bodies and other interested parties in the Galloway and South and East Ayrshire area in order to seek initial views and develop more detailed proposals for consultation.

Today [7th November], NatureScot has launched a formal statutory public consultation on the proposal. As well as gauging whether or not there is support for the proposal, the consultation will seek views on options for the possible area, functions, powers and governance of a new National Park in the area.

The consultation process will include a full consultation paper and survey available via the [NatureScot website](#), a survey available both online and distributed to households and businesses in, and near, the area proposed in the nomination, a series of independently facilitated public meetings across the area, as well as meetings, activities and events for businesses, under-represented groups and young people. Information about the consultation surveys and events will be published today on [NatureScot's website](#) and the dedicated [online engagement hub](#).

It is extremely important that we hear from people living and working in the area and that the people of Galloway and South and East Ayrshire have the opportunity to discuss the issues, consider the content of the proposal including the desirability of a National Park in their area and suggest any alternatives.

I recognise the significant public interest in this proposal and am aware that there is both support and opposition. Everyone's views will be listened to and taken into account and I am

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encouraging everyone with an interest to engage with the consultation process in a constructive and respectful way.

The 14 week consultation period will start today and it will conclude on Friday 14 February. As I announced last week, the consultation period has been extended to take account of the festive period and to enable as many people as possible to respond.

We will carefully consider the outcome of this public consultation and NatureScot's report before taking any further decisions on the proposal for a new National Park in Galloway.

I have written to the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee and the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee to inform them of the launch of the consultation.

Yours sincerely,



MAIRI GOUGEON

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