

Trudy Harrison MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Natural Environment and Land Use)  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

14 February 2023

Dear Minister,

Defra's decision to establish legal protection for the Eurasian Beaver from 1 October 2022 was excellent. We also welcomed the *Defra Strategy for Beaver Reintroduction in England* and the Defra policy paper on *Protection and Management of Beavers in England*, both issued in Sept 2022.

In the months since those announcements, a number of partnerships around the country have put the finishing touches to their proposals for well-considered beaver releases to the wild, in accordance with the best practice guidance in the documents mentioned above.

It would help very much for conservation planning purposes to know when applications will open for Beaver releases to the wild.

We urge you to ensure that this date is as soon as possible because, as an increasing body of evidence indicates, the return of the Beaver will be an important contributor to achieving the Government's environmental targets.

Enabling re-establishment of Beavers into appropriate river catchments across the country is a simple, significant and cost-effective action that Government can take to restore biodiversity and water quality of our watercourses and help mitigate the impacts of climate change-induced flood risk.

We would be very grateful if you were able to give us certainty on dates for applications.

Yours sincerely

Prof Alastair Driver, Director, Rewilding Britain

Nick Bruce-White, England Director, RSPB

Andy Knott MBE, Chief Executive, League Against Cruel Sports

Will Travers OBE, Executive President, Born Free Foundation

Rosalind Forbes Adam, Founder & Director of Projects, Wood Meadows Trust

Dr Rose O'Neill, Chief Executive, Campaign for National Parks

Andy Lester, Head of Conservation, A Rocha UK

Dr Stephanie Wray, Chair, The Mammal Society

James Sawyer, Chief Executive, IFAW

Jill Nelson, Chief Executive, People's Trust for Endangered Species

Richard Benwell, Chief Executive, Wildlife & Countryside Link

Nick Jones, Executive Director, Executive Director Humane Society International/UK

Rob Stoneman, Director of Landscape Recovery, The Wildlife Trusts