



THE COUNTRYSIDE  
RESTORATION TRUST  
CREATING A LIVING AND WORKING COUNTRYSIDE

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### The Countryside Restoration Trust Welcomes the Return of the Beaver

Following the announcement of a licensed release of European beavers in Scotland, The Countryside Restoration Trust (The CRT) welcomes the plan and believes that the threats to salmon fishing and damage to farmland have been exaggerated.

CRT Trustee Tilly Smith who, with her husband Alan, owns Britain's only free-ranging herd of reindeer, is excited by the scheme. Not only do Tilly and Alan have reindeer – itself a reintroduced species - but they also farm in the Cromdale Hills, with a stream used by spawning salmon flowing through their land. Tilly says: **“In our opinion the affect on farming and salmon fishing will be negligible. It is refreshing to see an introduction of an animal lower down in the food chain, like the beaver, when the emphasis in recent times has always been to bring back predators. The beaver’s activities will both enhance habitats and create new habitats. However, legislation should be in place to ensure that if control is necessary at some time in the future that this can be achieved. All secondary consumers need a primary consumer to keep them in check ultimately”**.

Trustee Zac Goldsmith also welcomes the release: **“Beavers are wonderful animals”, he says, “and their reintroduction would bring so many benefits. They are known to improve river ecosystems, boost fish populations and benefit the wider habitat, not to mention the sheer pleasure they would bring us all. There’s no obvious downside”**.

Wildlife Consultant Derek Gow, who will be involved in the release, says: **“From an ecological viewpoint it is an animal whose activities create habitat for a wide range of species. It will be an untidier countryside with the beaver, but it will be more sustainable. If there are problems, then their dams will not be protected – there must be more compromise in the countryside”**.

Writer, naturalist and Trustee Robert Burton says: **“The trial introduction of a small number of beavers (which can easily be removed again) should answer criticisms of the project. Small populations of beavers would be a welcome addition to otters and ospreys in the expanding wildlife-watching sector of the important Highland tourist industry.”**

Chairman Robin Page, who has seen the work of European Beavers in Northern Sweden is also in support of the scheme: **“This is far different from the flawed Norfolk sea eagle project. European beavers do not do the same amount of damage as North American beavers and remember their original disappearance was not caused by conflict with man – it was about the need for hats before the days of hoodies. I would like to see trial beaver introductions in England too. In East Anglia – in the Norfolk Broads, and it should be included in Cambridgeshire’s Great Fen Project.”**

**Ends**

### **Notes for Editors:**

**For further information**, please contact The Countryside Restoration Trust office on 01223 262999 or email [info@livingcountryside.org.uk](mailto:info@livingcountryside.org.uk).

The Countryside Restoration Trust is a farming and conservation charity which aims to protect and restore Britain's countryside with wildlife-friendly and commercially viable agriculture. The Trust is committed to promoting the importance of a living and working countryside through education, demonstration and community involvement.

The Trust is establishing a network of model farms across Britain which, using sensitive farming methods, will demonstrate how to protect wildlife, produce quality, seasonal food and preserve our countryside for future generations.

The Trust is also using living, working farms as educational centres of expertise to inspire farmers, land managers, the general public and politicians.

### **AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW**

**Tilly Smith can be contacted at:  
Reindeer House: 0147 9861228**

**Derek Gow: 07764690867**

**Robin Page: 07885577381**

**Robert Burton is somewhere in the South Atlantic.**