

Questions and discussion following talk by Iain Vallentine

Beaver reintroduction in Scotland - Progress and prospects

Q = Question A = Answer S = Statement

Q. Why was there no progress, why such an anti-feeling towards beaver reintroduction within government circles after the first beaver trial at Knapdale?

A. It was probably due to the view of one civil servant.

Q. What are the issues of concern regarding possible beaver damage to waterways?

A.

- There are concerns over possible damage to canal embankments, and at the first Knapdale trial there was concern at possible damage to feeder lochs.
- For the subsequent trial, risk assessment work has been done and British Waterways is satisfied with the results.
- Knapdale is a confined situation for the beavers and they don't have access to the open water system.
- We now need to incorporate techniques to handle the effects of beavers into our management practices for waterways.
- For management and practical changes such as this, you need to take people with you a step at a time.

Q. What is the criteria for small mammal reintroduction, such as for the beaver trial at Knapdale?

A.

- The licence conditions at Knapdale, where the release will take place in 2009, covers four families of beavers (each family being not more than two adults and their kits).
- We need to monitor numbers and movements. If we need to manage the population and bring in additional beavers, we'll ask government for permission for a top up.