

Hannah Blythyn
Minister for Environment
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

27th September 2018

Dear Minister,

Re: Aber Dyfi SPA and SSSI

I'm writing to welcome your recent decision to uphold the conditions on the shooting consents in the Dyfi protected area. I was delighted that you were able to endorse the Planning Inspector's findings and recommendation, as the conditions at that site are an important aspect of the protection of the dwindling population of Greenland white-fronted geese in Wales.

RSPB Cymru is committed to working in partnership on the Dyfi estuary to improve the fortunes of the declining Greenland white-fronted goose flock in this location. We welcome that Natural Resources Wales has taken a precautionary approach to managing the timing, type and extent of activities that can take place in the area, to ensure the integrity of the area's special features is not adversely affected and that this was recognised by the Planning Inspector. There is a large degree of uncertainty surrounding the effect of wildfowling activities on the geese, and so taking a precautionary approach to carefully regulate when and where shooting is allowed to take place is crucial to ensure this red listed globally endangered bird is given the protection it needs.

With this in mind, I urge you to follow up this decision by reviewing the 2016 decision of the Welsh Government not to introduce a ban in Wales on the shooting of white-fronted geese – both the endangered Greenland white-fronted geese and their globally more common

Pencadlys Cymru

Tŷ Sutherland
Pont y Castell
Heol Ddwyrainiol y Bont-faen
Caerdydd
CF11 9AB

Wales Headquarters

Sutherland House
Castlebridge
Cowbridge Road East
Cardiff
CF11 9AB

Ffôn/Tel 029 2035 3000

rspb.org.uk



Mae'r RSPB yn aelod o BirdLife International, partneriaeth o gyrff cadwraeth sy'n gweithio i sicrhau cartref i fyfyr natur o amgylch y byd.

The RSPB is a member of BirdLife International, a partnership of conservation organisations working to give nature a home around the world.

relatives, European white-fronted geese. Removing these geese from the quarry list in Wales as a precautionary measure would mean the Greenland race would no longer be pursued as a legally huntable species, and avoid accidental mortality because of confusion with the very similar European sub-species. This is the only way for Wales to truly fulfil its biodiversity commitments under its own domestic legislation and international agreements such as the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Given the extremely low numbers on the Dyfi (down to 22¹ individuals in 2016-17 season) and smaller more vulnerable flocks being seen on Anglesey and appearing in areas of north east Wales last year, areas where there is no voluntary protection against shooting, it is paramount action is taken now to ensure Greenland white-fronted geese have the best possible a chance of thriving throughout Wales in future years.

Yours Sincerely,

{Information redacted}

Head of Policy and Advocacy

¹ <https://monitoring.wwt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Greenland-White-fronted-Goose-Study-report-2016-17.pdf> - Wales census numbers on pp.6