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From:

Sent: 08 January 2015 19:07

To: Nature Conservation

Subject: Public Consultation Process on Burning and Hedge Cutting Controls

8th January 2015

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

7 Ely Place

Dublin 2

Re: Public Consultation Process on Burning and Hedge Cutting Controls

Dear Minister,

I welcome the opportunity to submit a reply to the review of section 40 of the Wildlife Act. I farm sheep and cattle on the uplands commonage of approximately 3000 acres. I am the fourth generation of my family to farm this commonage and as I have two sons and two grandsons I foresee these mountains being grazed by sheep and cattle for a long time to come. I recognise and respect the need to protect the environment and wildlife habitats during the recognised months of growth and reproduction, as did all generations before me. As these farmers maintained the areas by burning on the commonage to make a living from sheep while also protecting the environment.

In answer to your questions on;

Hedge cutting: I feel that the dates should be changed for health and safety purposes to ensure trees and shrubs etc. are not a hazard to road users especially walkers.

Burning of Vegetation:

Q(a)- No, burning dates should be amended to read 1st September to the 15th April (due to later growth in higher areas also land too wet)

Q(b)- Yes, as growth in severely disadvantaged areas is much later and birds also hatch later.

Q(c)- Yes, as growth is much later in upland areas

Q(d)- No, only for health and safety issues

Q(e)- Yes, by ministerial order (if weather was very wet and burning could not take place between 30th September to 15th April)

I recommend controlled burning of small areas each year so sheep can graze new growth and wildlife can feed on new shoots.

Hoping you will consider my recommendations carefully and introduce longer burning periods.