



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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Finlay Carson MSP
Convener
Rural Affairs & Islands Committee
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Adam Conner,

As I am sure you and your members are aware, at the end of June, Moray and the Highlands experienced some of the worst wildfires seen in Scotland.

The heroic response by the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, gamekeepers, estate workers, and farm labourers, finally brought the massive wildfires under control, but there was significant damage. While there was no loss of life or severe damage to properties, large areas of woodlands and moorlands were badly affected and in some cases decades of work managing habitats was lost to these fires.

In recent weeks, I have met with a number of constituents and also representatives from Moray Estates, one of the estates who suffered the most damage. We believe there are lessons that can be learnt about the response to these wildfires and also, consideration given to what can be done to minimise the chances of wildfires taking hold in the future.

I believe there is a strong case for some Parliamentary scrutiny of this issue as well as looking at international experiences of dealing with wildfires and the efforts taken to prevent them.

It would seem to me that your committee is best placed to look into this subject and call witnesses from the range of individuals or groups affected, as well as government bodies.

I know like all committees you have very limited time before the end of this Parliamentary session, however, given the importance of this issue and the increasing number of wildfires that we are experiencing in Scotland, I hope your committee will consider holding one or two sessions on this crucial topic.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and if you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Douglas Ross,

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