

APPENDIX E

Lee Cousins

Chair

SSA

11th June 2015

Dear Lee

LL&TNPA – Proposed Bye-Laws re. camping - loch shores and river banks

The SCA is objecting to the proposed Bye-laws, but our full letter will not be ready until after our Board meeting next Tuesday, June 16th.

In the meantime, I can state our reasons for objection, and also a couple of examples of good practice re. wild camping.

Canoe camping is an integral part of one of our recreational activities. Loch Lomond is a favourite training area for testing 'Leave No Trace' principles in camping, and also much used by D. of E. groups, and scouts and guides.

We understand that there is at present no information, or firm policies. on the number of new camping places to be provided; research on who camps where, and for how long; or a time scale for new provision. Nor is a 'permit system' organised, funded, or logistics planned.

Also, fundamentally, we see the access rights as contained in the Land Reform Act 2003, and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code having been seriously breached, which is a serious matter for the Scottish Parliament and the relevant Minister. This, to deal with vehicle-based roadside camping problems in a limited number of high-pressure areas. That this is the nature of the problem is clearly shown in the authority's 'Your Park' documentation.

At the least, we would say that consideration of any Bye-laws should be postponed until all of the matters above have been dealt with properly. Also, the very useful document produced in 2009 by SNH on 'Managing Informal Camping' should have been worked through in an organised and considered way.

As the RYA have already pointed out, better solutions to roadside camping pressures are already demonstrated within, and outside the Park area by the authority's own measures – putting in suitable infrastructure to support camping and high day visitor numbers. Examples of this, illustrating a range of measures, are:

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i) Salloch, East Loch Lomond – the once unsightly, parking area and shore land on the Rowardennan road, noted for big campsite fires, tree cutting, hi-fi noise and piles of litter, was cleaned up 5-6 years ago and totally transformed into a small managed campsite with controlled parking, toilets & water supply. This provision has proved effective and popular.

ii) Loch Lubnaig – the former unsightly, overused layby on the A84, full of campers trying to use bushes as toilets, was cleaned up three years ago and transformed into a managed campsite with controlled parking, toilets and spaces for motorhomes. It is now an attractive spot to visit and well used. No byelaw applies to the rest of the lochside, and you can see fishermen camping in other spots, usually without problems.

iii) The National Nature Reserve on Inchcailloch – a managed, small campsite operated by the NPA with composting toilets and water. This is much used by canoeists, and no problems have been reported there, although it is only a few hundred yards by boat from Balmaha.

iv) Outside the Park, Lochs Rannoch and Tummel in Perthshire have also suffered from similar problems of anti-social behaviour. Improvement has been by; provision of chained and locked litter bins; visits by both rangers and Police; and vigilance by local people

Regards

Robin Cole

Access and Environment Officer

Scottish Canoe Association