

Just Say No! by James Fenton



was shocked recently to see what is happening in the wild areas of the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park. Every side glen in the Glens Dochart and Falloch area now has a hydro scheme. This necessitates the construction of tracks high into the hills and the addition of dams into previously wild burns.



Two pictures of the upper reaches of the Ben Glas burn above Glen Falloch. Photo Credits James Fenton

It makes you wonder why we have National Parks.

And it is not just in National Parks that these 'run-of-river' hydro schemes are being built. I was even more shocked to see a track being bulldozed in the heart of the Torridon mountains up the River Grudie towards the back of Coire Mhic Fhearchair (Beinn Eighe). This was once a National Park Direction Area, and has always been seen as being of National Park quality. It also lies within a National Scenic Area and a core area of wild land.



A new track snaking up the River Grudie from Loch Maree, Beinn Eighe & Liathach behind. Photo Credit James Fenton

There was an outcry from the mountaineering fraternity about earlier planned hydro schemes in the Torridon area: why so silent now?

Why cannot the various government agencies just say “No” to these injudicious schemes? Why does the government not care about the Scottish landscape? Is nowhere sacrosanct?

If you realise that the huge hydro schemes of the 1950s/60s produce less than 10% of all Scotland’s electricity, is it worth sacrificing the remaining wild areas for a just few more megawatts?

Category

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2. National Parks

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2. LLTNP
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Date Created

August 18, 2016

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