

Saving Scotland's Golden Eagles

A pioneering habitation management project by Scottish Power has generated fresh hunting grounds for a pair of golden eagles, despite being in the vicinity of a new 46 turbine windfarm at Beinn an Tuirc, near Carradale in Kintyre.

Many thousands of Sitka Spruce conifer trees, a non-native species to Scotland, have been removed to make way for natural regeneration of a heather moorland, a perfect environment for the red grouse, the eagle's main prey species. This area is attracting the magnificent birds of prey away from the disturbance of the windfarm and it is hoped they will be encouraged to breed for the first time in several years.

Saya Harvey, Scottish Power's ecologist, is extremely pleased at the project's progress. "Grouse started to use the cleared area even before the vegetation regenerated", she explained.



"It would be fantastic if we can get the eagles to breed successfully and rear a chick next year." Although one egg was laid and incubated this season, unfortunately it didn't hatch and was found to be infertile.

Saya has been using a Skye MiniMet Weather Station to Record local Environmental conditions at the site. She adds this grouse counts and vegetation assessments throughout the year. This project has caused great interest amongst conservation groups and the concept may be applied to other sites in the future, improving habitats for other species as well, such as black grouse and hen harriers.



Many thanks to Saya Harvey for this application

