

National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

PRESS RELEASE: Thursday, 15 August 19

BEGINS:

Michael Gove to welcome AONBs' Declaration for Nature

Embargoed until 00:00 Wednesday 10 July 2019

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove will today address the 2019 Landscapes for Life conference for the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The conference, this year being held in Colchester, comes at a landmark moment, marking the 70th anniversary year of the National Parks and access to the countryside act, which led to the creation of the UK's 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oml7b9Jx3tk&feature=youtu.be> (Visible after 10.45am Wednesday)

In his address, Michael Gove will warmly welcome the AONBs joint statement of intent on the recovery of nature, the Colchester Declaration (#Declaration4Nature). The Colchester Declaration is the AONBs' collective pledge for nature: to protect what remains and recover what has been lost.

Set against a backdrop of unprecedented concern for the future of the natural world, and intergovernmental reports that the current global response to the effects of human impact on nature is insufficient – AONBs believe that now is the time to significantly increase the scale and pace of our delivery.

Mr Gove will note Professor Sir Robert Watson's report of last year recognising that worldwide 1m species are at risk of extinction. In response to this the UK government is establishing a Nature Recovery Network in which AONBs are well placed to be at the frontline of delivery due to their geographical spread across the UK coupled with well-established close partnerships with landowners and other conservation partners in their regions.

He will also welcome some notable recent successes delivered by AONBs: the [Lincolnshire Chalk Streams project](#) which has conserved 29km of rivers and 45km of surrounding habitats conserved; and the [Northern Upland Chain](#) which has seen three AONBs and two National Parks working together to recover hay meadows and conserve curlews, which were added to the 'red list' of endangered UK birds in 2017.

ENDS.

Notes to editors:

The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) is a charity that provides a strong collective voice for the UK's 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). Its objectives are to promote the conservation and enhancement of AONBs, advance the education, understanding and appreciation by the public of AONBs, and promote the efficiency and effectiveness of those promoting or representing AONBs, other Protected Areas and those areas for which designation might be pursued. It does this by taking a collaborative and partnership based approach to working with our membership and other organisations at a national level to achieve shared goals. For more information see

Web: www.landscapesforlife.org.uk Twitter: @naaonb @AONBFamily

The Essex/Suffolk AONBs – Dedham Vale and Suffolk Coast & Heaths – are delighted to be the host team to support the National Association for AONBs with this “Outstanding Opportunities” conference in the special 70th anniversary year of the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act.

www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org and www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are some of the UK's most outstanding landscapes and belong to an international Protected Landscape Family. There are 38 AONBs in England and Wales, and a further eight in Northern Ireland. For further information about the AONB Family visit www.landscapesforlife.org.uk

Landscapes for Life Conferences provide an opportunity for the AONB Family and those interested in protection our precious landscapes to join together and address issues of current concern. See <http://www.landscapesforlifeconference.org.uk/>

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