

Eight organisations including Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, the Royal Zoological Society and the Royal (Dick) Vet School have formed a partnership to address the threats to the species - the main ones being interbreeding with domestic or feral cats, and the risk of disease.

They will provide training in wildcat surveys and wildcat-friendly land management practices, and will involve schools, volunteers and community projects in learning about wildcats, and responsible domestic cat ownership. The work will also co-ordinate neutering and vaccination of feral cats, and will monitor the wild-living cat populations through an extensive network of trail cameras.

Commenting on the announcement, Colin McLean, Head of HLF in Scotland, said: “We have some incredible native wildlife in Scotland but our species and habitats are under constant threat. We are delighted to see such a strong partnership working together for the good of this iconic Scottish species. We hope that with the |HLF grant announced today, communities across the country will be inspired and empowered to safeguard the existence of these rare creatures”.

Further information

Shiona Mackay, HLF, on tel: 01786 870638, mobile: 07779 142890 and via email: shionamackay1@btinternet.com; or Jon Williams on tel:0707 591 6035 or email: jonw@hlf.org.uk

Fergus Macneill, Scottish Natural Heritage Public Relations: on tel: 01463 7250212 or email: fergus.macneill@snh.gov.uk