

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

### DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT DERRYVORE, COUNTY ARMAGH. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Derryvore Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

Derryvore is of special scientific interest for its wetland flora and fauna. The area is a diverse herb-rich wetland, with a number of unusual fen communities and several notable species. Unlike many of the other fens in Down and Armagh which tend to be found in inter-drumlin hollows, Derryvore occurs within the flood-plain of the River Bann and consists of a complex mosaic of fen and swamp communities on cutover peat. Winter flooding of the river helps to maintain the hydrological balance of the various wetland habitats.

The mosaic of wetland communities at Derryvore is largely dependent upon the depth of the former peat cuttings and the subsequent position of the water table. Where open-water pools remain, floating vegetation includes Common Duckweed *Lemna minor*, Ivy-leaved Duckweed *Lemna trisulca*, Broad-leaved Pondweed *Potamogeton natans* and more notably Frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*. Submerged species found in these pools include Blunt-leaved Pondweed *Potamogeton obtusifolius* and Bladderwort *Utricularia* sp. The scarce Cowbane *Cicuta virosa* grows along the edges of some of the pools. Other deep cuttings are dominated by Branched Bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*, forming an unusual community that has not been widely recorded from other wetlands in Northern Ireland. Frequent associates within these flooded cuttings include Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera* and occasional Common Marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre* and Common Valerian *Valeriana officinalis*. Another unusual associate of this community is Creeping-Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia*, which grows on the leaf litter. Characteristic moss species associated with the fen include the brown mosses *Calliergon cuspidatum* and more notably *C. cordifolium*.

Between the deeper cuttings, more elevated ramparts host another unusual community of tall fen dominated by Yellow Loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, with a range of associated species dependent upon local conditions. Where the water table is slightly higher, species such as

Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata* and Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata* are a constant component of the sward. In drier conditions, the community is more diverse and includes Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, Common Sedge *Carex nigra* and a range of grass species including Reed Canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, Velvet Bent *Agrostis canina*, Creeping Bent *A. stolonifera* and Tall Fescue *Festuca arundinacea*. One of the most notable species in this community is Common Meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum*, which is limited in distribution throughout Ireland. To the east of the area, the fen is dominated by stands of Reed Canary-grass *Phalaris arundinacea* with scattered Willows *Salix* spp.

Carr woodland occurs in places, particularly to the south-west of the area. This is dominated by Willow *Salix* spp. with scattered Alder *Anus glutinosa* in the wetter parts and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* where conditions are drier. Other communities which contribute to the diversity of the area include rush pasture and banks with marginal strips of short, sedge-rich acid grassland.

Derryvore Fen also provides valuable habitat for a range of wetland animals, including birds and invertebrates.

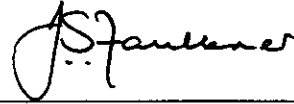
#### SCHEDULE

**The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora and fauna of the area:**

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals, including sand, gravel and peat.
2. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock used or in supplementary feeding practice.
3. Introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation.
4. The application of manure, slurry, artificial fertiliser or lime.
5. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraph 5 above.
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.

8. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.
9. Burning.
10. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
11. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
12. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or large stones and grading of rock faces.
13. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
  - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
  - (ii) modification of the structure of any watercourse;
  - (iii) lowering of the water-table, permanently or temporarily;
  - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
14. The killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
15. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area:
  - (i) Educational activities;
  - (ii) Research activities;
  - (iii) Recreational activities;
  - (iv) Exercising of animals.
16. Changes in game, waterfowl or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.
17. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area.

The Official Seal of the  
Department of the Environment  
hereunto affixed is authenticated  
by



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**DR J S FAULKNER**  
**Senior Officer of the**  
**Department of the Environment**

Dated the 20th of March 2002

#### **FOOTNOTES**

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required, planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the Department under Part IV of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not normally covered in the list of Notifiable Operations.
- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is large and what is small, the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.