

FARDRUM AND ROOSKY TURLOUGHES

Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)

A statement of Environment and Heritage Service's views about the management of Fardrum and Roosky Turloughs Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")

This statement represents the views of Environment and Heritage Service about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. Environment and Heritage Service has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of Environment and Heritage Service is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the Schedule on pages 2-4 of the attached Document B for a list of these operations and activities). Environment and Heritage Service welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Fardrum and Roosky Turloughs is a very sensitive site, with a wide range of features of special interest. Environment and Heritage Service would like to encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the ASSI and its associated habitats, species and earth science interests.

Turlough system

General objectives include:

Turloughs are naturally fluctuating waterbodies. They are principally filled by subterranean waters and typically do not have a surface outflow. They are found only in karstic limestone areas and, worldwide, appear to be virtually unique to Ireland. Most flood through the winter and then dry up through the summer although this pattern is of course determined by rainfall patterns. Their continued functioning depends upon the hydrological system relating to the turloughs being maintained.

Specific objectives include:

To maintain in a naturally functioning condition the component parts of the turloughs, including risings, sinks and outflows together with the fluctuating condition of the

waterbodies. This is achieved mainly through not excavating or infilling any part of the site.

Wet grassland and fen

General objectives include:

Wet grassland and fen associated with the turloughs are important habitats for wildlife, while the quality of natural waters is very important in maintaining those habitats. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the turloughs habitats through the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Many of the more sensitive species can be quickly lost through intensive management treatments, such as fertiliser and herbicide application. However, grassland generally needs some management to retain its interest. Although occasional small patches of scrub can be valuable in providing additional habitat niches for birds and invertebrates, in the absence of management, coarse grasses and tall vegetation can quickly take over and ultimately woody species may become dominant. Grazing by cattle is the most effective way of controlling the growth of more vigorous species and helping to maintain open areas and a diverse sward structure, although overgrazing should be avoided as the wet soils are particularly susceptible to poaching.

Water quality is an important consideration as increases in the nutrient status of the water and underlying peat soils can lead to an increase in the dominance of undesirable species at the expense of other valuable plant communities. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance of good water quality through the control of pollution and artificial enrichment.

Discourage non-native species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife.

Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the lough, such as swamp, fen, wet woodland and wet grassland, through sensitive management.

Specific objectives include:

Grassland

Low intensity grazing has contributed to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the continuation of this practice.

Prevent the loss of more sensitive grassland species through the control of scrub and tall vegetation. In general, this can be achieved through the appropriate grazing regime. In some cases, other methods of control such as cutting, may be required.

Ensure that disturbance to the site and its wildlife is minimised.

Fen

Increases in the nutrient status of the water and underlying peat soils can lead to an increase in the dominance of undesirable species at the expense of other valuable plant communities. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance of good water quality through the control of pollution and artificial enrichment.

The more species-rich types of fen vegetation can be maintained through very light summer grazing by cattle (or ponies) that are adapted to the wet conditions. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the continuation and extension of this practice, although overgrazing should be avoided as the wet soils are particularly susceptible to poaching.

Patches of scrub and woodland provide valuable habitats for birds and invertebrates. However, the spread of scrub into the fen could shade out valuable plant communities and cause the fen to dry out. In general, the control of scrub and rank growth can be achieved through the appropriate grazing regime. In some cases, other methods of control such as cutting, may be required.

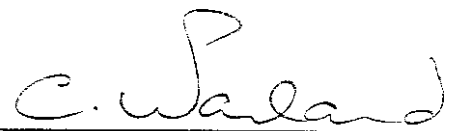
Open water

Encourage the maintenance of water quality through the control of pollution and artificial enrichment.

Encourage the maintenance of naturally fluctuating water levels.

Low intensity agriculture around the lough contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage practices that ensure disturbance and enrichment of the waters, bed and shore of the lough and its wildlife is minimised.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment
hereunto affixed is authenticated
by



Senior Officer of the
Department of the Environment

Dated the 2nd of May 2007