



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

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

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

The area is of special scientific interest because of its physiographical features and peatland flora and associated fauna. Biological interest relates to the diversity of the peatland flora and structural features on the bog surface, and the presence of rare and notable plant species. The area is part of a series of lowland raised bogs which lie in the River Main valley.

The intact surface of the bog represents a large area of uncut lowland raised bog, displaying a well-defined domed profile. The deep peat exhibits moderate hummock and hollow development with a small complex of pools at the northern end of the site. The bog vegetation is characterised by a high cover of Sphagnum mosses, ericoid dwarf-shrubs and other associated species.

The bog plain is dominated by a short ericoid sward of Heather Calluna vulgaris and Cross-leaved Heath Erica tetralix, with abundant Common Cottongrass Eriophorum angustifolium and scattered tussocks of Hare's-tail Cottongrass Eriophorum vaginatum and Deergrass Trichophorum cespitosum. Associated species include Bilberry Vaccinium myrtillus which is locally frequent on drier, shallower peats, and Bog Myrtle Myrica gale which occurs in one large stand along the north-eastern side of the bog. Cladonia portentosa reaches considerable abundance over much of the intact surface. Beneath the ericoid canopy Sphagnum capillifolium forms well-developed hummocks over most of the surface. The margins of the intact surface are frequently drier than the central core and Sphagnum bog-mosses are generally replaced by Hypnum jutlandicum, with scattered, low hummocks of Racomitrium lanuginosum.

The wetter hollows between the hummocks are characterised by the prominence of Bog Asphodel Narthecium ossifragum with occasional White Beak-sedge Rhynchospora alba. Sphagnum papillosum and occasional S. magellanicum occur in these hollows. The

abundance of Cranberry Vaccinium oxycoccus throughout the bog plain is notable. The small pools at the northern end of the bog contain some Sphagnum cuspidatum.

The lagg around the bog has been extensively cut for turf, creating a mosaic of habitats which are dependent on peat-depth and age of cutting. Vegetation communities range from acid pools supporting extensive growth of Sphagnum cuspidatum and Bogbean Menyanthes trifoliata, through heath and grassland dominated by Purple Moor-grass Molinia caerulea, to 'poor' fen and swamp. In the latter, the vegetation is dominated by Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata and Common Cotton-grass Eriophorum angustifolium, with frequent Water Horsetail Equisetum fluviatile over a Sphagnum moss carpet. Associated species include Marsh Pennywort Hydrocotyle vulgaris, Bog Pondweed Potamogeton polygonifolius, Marsh Cinquefoil Potentilla palustris, Meadowsweet Filipendula ulmaria and Sharp-flowered Rush Juncus acutiflorus. The ramparts between cuttings support dry dwarf-shrub communities dominated by Heather Calluna vulgaris.

Frosses Bog contains a number of notable species, including the hummock-forming moss Sphagnum imbricatum and the nationally rare S. pulchrum, which grows in the wetter hollows. The dwarf-shrub Crowberry Empetrum nigrum is found on the intact dome, which is unusual in a lowland raised bog.

SCHEDULE

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

1. Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating or re-seeding.
2. Increase in grazing intensity or change either in the type of livestock used or in feeding practices.
3. Introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation.
4. Application of manure, slurry, fertiliser or lime.
5. Application of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill, selectively or non-selectively, any form of animal, plant or other living organism.
6. Dumping, spreading or discharge of any matter.
7. Burning.
8. The release into the area of any wild, feral or domestic animal, plant or seed. "Animal" includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate, but excludes livestock and animals used in controlling livestock.
9. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, or the disturbance, killing or removal of any wild animal in a manner likely to affect the

continued existence of the species within the area except as provided for under the terms of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

10. The introduction of tree or woodland management, including afforestation or planting.
11. Drainage, including peat drainage or the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains.
12. Modification of the structure of water courses, including their banks and beds as by realignment, regrading or dredging.
13. Management of aquatic and bank vegetation.
14. The alteration of water levels or water tables or the utilisation of water including storage or extraction, but excluding water used for domestic requirements.
15. Infilling of ditches, drains, ponds, pools, marshes or lakes.
16. Reclamation of land from bog, marsh, river or lake.
17. Extraction of minerals including peat, sand, gravel, topsoil or subsoil.
18. Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hard-standings, banks, ditches and other earth works or the laying or removal of pipelines or cables, above or below ground.
19. Storage of materials.
20. Use of craft or vehicles likely to damage the vegetation.
21. Erection of permanent or temporary structures or the undertaking of building, engineering or other operations, including drilling.
22. Recreational, educational or research activities likely to damage the vegetation.
23. Changes in game management.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland on 6 November 1996



ROBERT C MARTIN
Chief Executive

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FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that the consent by the Department to any of the above operations or activities 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 above 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.