

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT INISHROOSK,
COUNTY FERMANAGH. 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 'Inishroosk area of special scientific interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its importance to breeding waders and for the quality and diversity of the wetland vegetation, which includes a number of uncommon plant species. The boundary also extends into the lake itself which, with its associated flora and fauna, is one of the finest large shallow eutrophic lakes in Northern Ireland.

The site consists of two low-lying interdrumlin plains which are drained by a connecting ditch network. The larger plain adjoins a stretch of the main Upper Lough Erne shore and undergoes periodic winter flooding.

The area has been identified as the best lowland breeding wader site in the Erne Basin and the second most important site in Northern Ireland, with over 1% of the breeding Snipe Gallinago gallinago in Northern Ireland and nearly 2% of the breeding Redshank Tringa totanus recorded here in 1987. Other regular breeding birds include Lapwing Vanellus vanellus, Curlew Numenius arquata and several pairs of Shoveler Anas clypeolata.

In winter the site regularly supports large flocks of Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus, Wigeon Anas penelope and Curlew, while Greenland White-fronted Geese Anser albifrons flavirostris will occasionally use the site.

Along the lough shore are patches of swamp, dominated by tall grass and grass-like plant species such as Common Reed Phragmites australis and Bulrush Scirpus lacustris. Behind the swamp is a broad band of tall fen, in which Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata and Bladder Sedge C. vesicaria predominate, with a wide range of associated species including Cowbane Cicuta virosa, Flowing Rush Butomus umbellatus, Greater Spearwort Ranunculus lingua and Water Dock Rumex hydrolapathum.

The tradition of low-intensity grazing and hay-making in this area has resulted in the retention of species-rich marsh and fen meadow grassland over most of the site. The species-rich marsh is characterised by the predominance of Creeping Bent Agrostis stolonifera and Soft Rush Juncus effusus over a brown moss carpet, while the fen meadow consists mostly of tall sedges such as Common Sedge Carex nigra and C. rostrata, and of Marsh Cinquefoil Potentilla palustris.

A number of scarce plant species occur, including Greater Water-parsnip Sium latifolium, Marsh Stitchwort Stellaria palustris, Needle Spike-rush Eleocharis acicularis, Buckthorn Rhamnus catharticus, Wood Club-rush Scirpus sylvaticus and Marsh Pea Lathyrus palustris.

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. 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.
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. Any change in the established method or frequency of rolling, mowing or cutting.
4. Any change in the annual pattern of application of manure, slurry or artificial fertiliser.
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 (NI) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under (4) and (5).
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for
 - (i) plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (NI) Order 1977;
 - (ii) normal cutting or mowing regimes for which a consent is not required under (3).
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.
13. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water) eg
 - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
 - (ii) modification in 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 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.
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.

SEALED WITH THE OFFICIAL SEAL OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND ON 24 March, 1993



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FOOTNOTE

Please 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 give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.

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