

LARGALINNY

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 Largalunny 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 5-7 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

Oakwood

Oakwood is an important habitat for wildlife. It provides food and shelter for a wide variety of mammals, birds and invertebrates.

Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the woodland at Largalunny through the development of its structure and the conservation of its associated native plants and animals. These include lower and higher plants of limited distribution within Northern Ireland and important invertebrate communities.

Specific objectives include:

Encourage the woodland to become more "mature" by avoiding disturbance.
The structure of the wood will gradually become more diverse, with

well-developed canopy, shrub and ground layers, and an abundance of species like Ivy, mosses, liverworts and lichens that live on the trees themselves.

Encourage the retention of dead wood, both on the woodland floor and still standing in the canopy. Dead wood is a very important habitat for some of the less conspicuous woodland species such as fungi and invertebrates.

Encourage regeneration of woodland and discourage damage to trees and shrubs through the control of grazing. In general, natural regeneration is preferable to planting.

Blanket Bog and Heath

Blanket bog and heath are important habitats for wildlife. Much of Largalunny contains a mosaic of Heather-dominated habitats such as wet heath, dry heath and blanket bog. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of this mosaic through the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Bogs and wet heaths depend on rainwater and maintaining a high water table is vital to their "health". In addition, the peat soils and many of the species that grow there are very sensitive to physical disturbance. However, most heathland communities need some management to retain their interest. Small patches of scrub within heathland are valuable in providing additional habitat niches but, in the absence of management, woody species can quickly take over. On the other hand, too much grazing, especially through the winter, can cause heathers to be replaced by coarse grasses.

Specific objectives include:

Low intensity grazing has contributed to the conservation and enhancement of the bog and heath. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage a regime that avoids overgrazing or poaching.

Where appropriate, prevent the loss of light-demanding species through the control of scrub and bracken. In general, this can be achieved through the appropriate grazing regime. In some cases other methods of control, such as cutting, may be required.

Where burning is considered appropriate, it should only be undertaken after close consultation with, and the agreement of, Environment and Heritage Service. Burning can cause the loss of more specialised plants and animals, and may damage the peat soils, leading to erosion. The burning of blanket bog should be avoided as the habitat is particularly sensitive to it.

Where appropriate, encourage the blocking of drains to prevent the vegetation from drying out.

Management principles applicable to all habitats throughout the site

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

Maintain the diversity and quality of the habitats by ensuring there is no application of fertiliser, slurry, herbicide or fungicide to the site.

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

Maintain the diversity and quality of other associated habitats such as river, lake, swamp and fen, through sensitive management. These adjoining habitats are particularly important for wildlife, especially invertebrates. The latter includes a particularly rich assemblage of Dragonflies.

The Geological Series

Earth science features provide information about a region's geological history and can also aid interpretation of geological processes in the past and present.

The earth science interest at Largalunny occurs as the fossil assemblage found in the rocks around Carrick Lough. Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance of the ASSI and its Earth Science interest.

Provided no damaging activities, as set out in the Schedule (pages 5-7), are undertaken without consent, the needs of owners, occupiers and the Department can be met.

Earth science features such as those at Largalunny may require occasional management intervention, in order to maintain access to, and exposure of, the geology. This could include, for example, selective removal of vegetation or any major build up of loose rock.

Specific objectives include:

Maintain the geological series in an undamaged state.

Maintain access to the geological series.



E Diane Stevenson

Authorised Officer

Dated the 28TH of JANUARY 2008