

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT PETTIGOE PLATEAU,
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 'Pettigoe Plateau area of special scientific interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because it is one of the largest expanses of blanket bog in Northern Ireland; the discontinuities in the boundary reflect the occurrence of mineral soils which have been farmed. The area has a range of upland oligotrophic lakes and supports a breeding population of Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria.

The extensive blanket bog which covers the area exhibits the full range of characteristic vegetation and structural features associated with this type of habitat. These features include a large number of well developed pool complexes, frequent acid flushes and a number of basin mires. The bog vegetation is characterised by luxuriant Sphagnum mosses, dwarf-shrubs and other associated species, with the strong oceanic influence indicated by the constancy and abundance of Purple Moor-grass Molinia caerulea and the frequency of Bog Myrtle Myrica gale. A notable floristic feature of this bog is the abundance of Black Bog-rush Schoenus nigricans, which is not confined to areas of water movement as in more easterly bogs, but tends to spread out over the general bog plain; this feature is characteristic of the true Atlantic blanket bogs of western Ireland.

The lakes on the plateau include representatives of a number of distinct Northern Ireland lake types, based on their aquatic macrophyte communities. The main lake type is characterised by the association of Quillwort Isoetes lacustris with Water Lobelia Lobelia dortmanna. Other lake types, distinguished by associations of White Water-lily Nymphaea alba with either Yellow Water-lily Nuphar lutea or the aquatic moss Fontinalis antipyretica, are also present.

The plateau is the second most important breeding site for Golden Plover P. apricaria in Northern Ireland, as well as being one of only a few recorded upland breeding sites for Dunlin Calidris alpina in recent years. Other breeding waders include Lapwing Vanellus vanellus, Curlew Numenius arquata and Snipe Gallinago gallinago, while Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus and Common Tern Sterna hirundo are known to breed in the area. In addition the site is also regularly used in winter by Greenland White-fronted Geese Anser albifrons flavirostris for feeding and roosting.

SCHEDULE

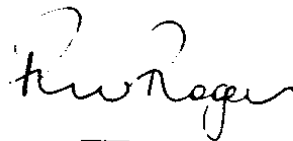
The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora, fauna and physiographical features of the area:

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 vehicle 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 27 April, 1994



Assistant Secretary

M Cunningham
CIVIL SERVANT OF
CLARENCE COURT, BELFAST

FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that 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 (NI) Order 1991. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not 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 give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.