



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT TULLYBRICK LOUGH, COUNTY ARMAGH. 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 described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Tullybrick Lough Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

The area is of special scientific interest because of its wetland flora and fauna. Although small in extent, a wide range of wetland plant communities occurs, from open waters, through swamp and fen, to species-rich wet grassland. Patches of woodland add to the diversity. In addition, there are a number of rare species present.

Tullybrick Lough is a small, inter-drumlin wetland, which appears to be fed mainly by calcareous springs. As a result, it has the typical characteristics of a marl lough, with very clear water and extensive growth of Stoneworts *Chara* spp. Other open water species include the aquatic moss *Fontinalis antipyretica*, Yellow Water-lily *Nuphar lutea*, Broad-leaved Pondweed *Potamogeton natans* and Ivy-leaved Duckweed *Lemna trisulca*. The lough is fringed by a band of swamp dominated by Common Club-rush *Schoenoplectus lacustris* and Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*. This is backed by Great Fen-sedge *Cladium mariscus* and Common Reed *Phragmites australis*.

The vegetation adjoining the swamp communities varies around the lough. To the east, there is an area of sedge-rich fen, dominated by Lesser Tussock-sedge *Carex diandra*, Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata* and Common Sedge *Carex nigra*, growing over Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*. Brown Sedge *Carex disticha* is dominant in places, and forms a more species-rich community in the north, where it occurs with Greater Tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata*, Tufted-sedge *Carex elata* and Carnation Sedge *Carex panicea*. Associated species include Jointed Rush *Juncus articulatus*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis*, Sweet Vernal Grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and more notably Quaking-grass *Briza media* and Grass-of-Parnassus *Parnassia palustris* (at its only known County Armagh site).

Above the flood level the vegetation typically consists of a grassy mat of Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, and Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, with more localised stands of Remote Sedge *Carex remota* and scattered Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus*, Common Reed *Phragmites australis* and Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*. There is a wide range of associated herbs, including such scarce species as Cowbane *Cicuta virosa*, in addition to more common plants like Marsh Pennywort *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, Water Mint *Mentha aquatica*, Ragged-Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Marsh Cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, Marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris* and Marsh Bedstraw *Galium palustre*. The moss layer is variable, with the brown moss *Calliergon cuspidatum* the most prominent species.

In places around the lough there is a mosaic of carr woodland and open swampy glades. The woodland consists of a low canopy of mainly Grey Willow *Salix cinerea*, with Alder *Alnus glutinosa*, Downy Birch *Betula pubescens* and Aspen *Populus tremula*. The ground cover is quite variable, depending upon the degree of flooding, with wetter stands dominated by Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Bottle Sedge *Carex rostrata* and notably, close to the lough, Greater Tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata*. Drier woodland is also present and is dominated by Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, with an understorey of scattered Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, and a field layer of dense Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. As a result of dense shading, the ground cover is dominated by Ivy *Hedera helix*.

The site contains a number of vascular plants with a restricted distribution in the British Isles, including Greater Tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata*, Lesser Tussock-sedge *Carex diandra*, Tufted-sedge *Carex elata*, Great Fen-sedge *Cladium mariscus*, Cowbane *Cicuta virosa*, Grass-of-Parnassus *Parnassia palustris* and Least Bur-reed *Sparganium natans*. Notable bryophytes include *Calliergon cordifolium*.

Tullybrick Lough also provides valuable habitat for a range of wetland fauna, including birds and invertebrates.

SCHEDULE


The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora and fauna 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, including sand, gravel and peat.
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. Introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation.

4. The 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 (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraph 5 above.
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
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 and grading of rock faces.
13. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
 - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
 - (ii) modification of 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 wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 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.

The Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment
hereunto affixed is authenticated
by



DR J S FAULKNER
Senior Officer of the
Department of the Environment

Dated the 5 of OCTOBER 2001

FOOTNOTES

(a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule 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 in the Schedule 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.