



Bringing the bogs back to **LIFE**

funded by LIFE Nature and Coillte

"RESTORING ACTIVE BLANKET BOG IN IRELAND"

End-of-Project Conference: 4-5 October 2007

Westport, County Mayo, Ireland



coillte



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End of Project Conference October 4th/5th
2007 – Westport, Co. Mayo, Ireland

Coillte's Experience

Kevin Donnellan – Life Blanket Bog Project Manager

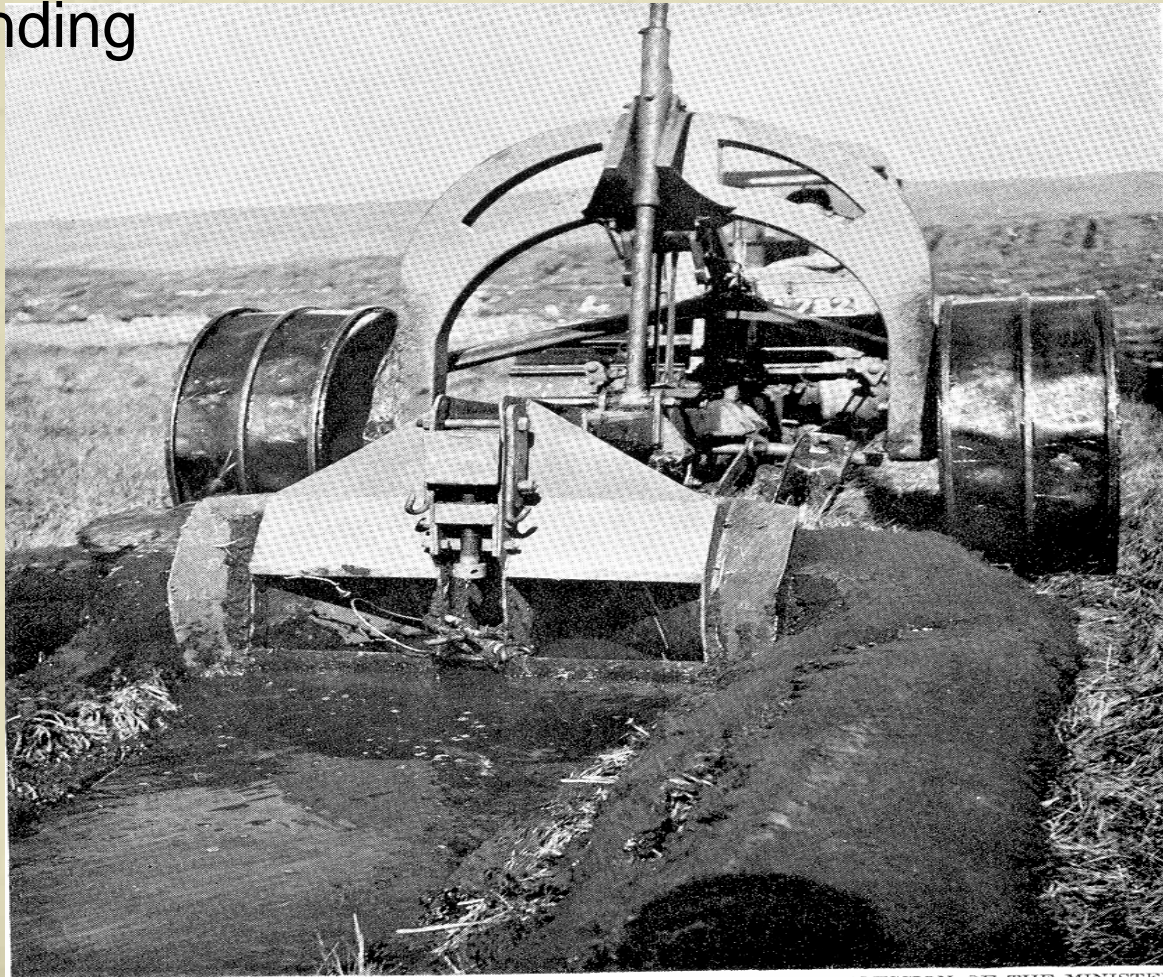


COILLTE'S EXPERIENCE from blanket bog landscape to coniferous forest and back again!!



Major milestones:

- Formation of Coillte in 1989
- Survey of blanket bog Natural Heritage Areas in early 1990s
- SFM/FSC Certification in 1998-2001
- LIFE funding



In 2001 Philip Murphy, Aileen O Sullivan and Tom Kavanagh submitted an application for Blanket Bog restoration project to EU



DEPT. OF LANDS COPYRIGHT.

In 2002 EU LIFE project approved for 1212ha (14 sites)

Main Project actions:

- Project management
- Preparatory work
- Tree removal
- Drain blocking
- Fencing
- Roading
- Water Q monitoring
- Water level
- Vegetation monitoring
- Media Publicity
- Project reporting
- Scientific study
- Ground Inventory



Project Team Members:

Project Manager, Public Relations Manager , Accountant , Ecologist,
Site Managers, plus support team (Harvesting, Engineering and Lab)
Forest workers and contractors



Preparatory actions:

- Expert adviser Russell Anderson Forestry Commission
- Management plans - NPWS
- Felling Licence - Forest Service
- Networking - Border Mires / Scottish Peatland Proj



Commercial felling 160 ha planned and completed

Emlaghdauroe site in Connemara near Clifden
A Coniferous forest in a sensitive landscape



Internal view of pine plantation



Commercial harvesting – removal of timber from site



Timber products from project - mainly pulpwood with some pallet wood





Drain blocking – 1500 ha planned for dam installation



Dam Installation





Felling to waste 900ha planned



Felling to waste – Sitka spruce in Cappahoosh near Recess



Felling to waste by machine at Dromalohurt in Kerry



Removal of regenerating conifers on 350 ha
Slieve Bloom – regenerating conifers in SAC



Post removal of regenerating conifers



Overgrazing at Glencullen in Mayo



Fencing to control grazers - 555 ha planned



AFTER LIFE THREAT



PROJECTS MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

ALL PROJECT TARGETS ARE ON
SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION

PROJECT TEAM DEVELOPED WORKING
RELATIONSHIP WITH STAKEHOLDERS

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE GAINED
ON CONSERVATION WORK

YOUR CONTRIBUTION OVER THE NEXT
TWO DAYS WILL ALSO BE PART OF THE
EXPERIENCE



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Operational Management

Joe McEvey – Site Manager - Eskeragh



Eskeragh Site ... 40.6 ha located in Bellacorrick Bog Complex SAC

Site Objective

Restore site from low yielding forest to valuable natural resource i.e. active blanket bog



Main work elements

- Visit other Life projects
- Boundary fencing/fireline
- Felling of non commercial trees
- Block existing plough drains
- Install water level monitoring system (WaLRaGs)
- Construct Car Parking
- Erect Boardwalk
- Inform stakeholders/host visitor groups

3,500m Fencing



Project group visit to Scottish Life Peatlands Project



Felling to waste all trees felled by chainsaw



Post felling



Felling and chipping at Eskeragh 8 ha chipped



Post chipping



Felled trees before windrowing



Windrowing developed to replace chipping
felled trees put into rows to create open bog habitat





Water level monitoring system (WaLRaGs) 11 gauges installed



Car Park construction to facilitate demonstration site



Road repair and upgrading for site access



Building the Board walk



100m length Assembly/viewing platform





Visitor tours - Society of Irish Foresters Tour - 2004



Maintenance works ongoing

- Monthly monitoring of walrags
- Periodic checks for trespass
- Removal of natural regeneration of conifers

Conclusion

- Significant regeneration of blanket bog vegetation
- Reverse Role
- Learning Experience
- Thanks



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