



THE *Irish Forester*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF IRISH FORESTERS

WINTER 2014

New forestry programme

11 measures including support for afforestation, roading and FMPs

The new forestry programme provides increases in forest grants and premia but the funding period has been reduced from 20 to 15 years. At the time of writing the details are still being negotiated with Tom Hayes, Minister of State with responsibility for forestry and his staff in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

The allocation for forestry in Budget 2015 will provide funding for an afforestation programme of between 6,500 and 7,000ha which is modest. COFORD which is the Department's advisory body recommends a minimum annual afforestation programme of 15,000ha to achieve a viable forestry, wood energy and forest products industry.

The main proposals cover afforestation grants and premia while the remaining nine measures include roading grants, supports for reconstitu-

tion of damaged forests, woodland improvement and investment in technology as well as support for producer groups and incentives for private owners to produce forest management plans (FMPs).

However, the measures that are likely to attract greatest attention are the revised afforestation grant and premium schemes (Tables 1 and 2). "These measures aim to increase forest cover and generate additional supplies of timber and wood biomass to meet the projected increase in demand from the wood processing and renewable energy sectors," said Minister Hayes. "I am happy to announce that the number of annual premium payments being proposed is now 15 instead of 12 as set out in the earlier consultation document issued in March 2014" he continued.

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Ballyhaise students attend Florencecourt field day



Forestry students from Ballyhaise College, Co. Cavan at the Society's field day in Florencecourt, Co. Fermanagh on 16 May. The Society was delighted to have been joined by these enthusiastic representatives of our next generation of foresters. Front row: Maurice O'Neill, Breffni Maher, James Caffrey, Jonny Laird, David Meade, Damien Nolan, Mark McDermott, Tigernan Power, Dominic Broughan, Mark O'Hara, Peter Stuart, Jack Deely O'Brien. Back Row: Conor Kerr, Ciaran Morrin, Alan Harrington, John McHale.

Message from the President



This has been another busy and successful year for the Society. In addition to our usual full programme of events the Society, in association with the Wood Marketing Federation, organised a very successful conference – "What shall we do with the timber? Opportunities for Irish wood and wood products."

The new Forestry Bill is now nearing the end of its journey through the Oireachtas. The Society made representations at all levels during the passage of this important legislation.

In March the draft Forestry Programme 2014 – 2020 was published. An update was recently published and the final draft is currently in preparation for submission to the European Commission for State Aid approval. Like the curate's egg, it has good parts and parts that need to be improved. The Society is working diligently to remove impediments to achieving an annual planting programme of 15,000ha, as envisaged in the Bill and recommended by COFORD to achieve a viable, internationally competitive forestry, wood energy and forest products industry. The Society must also ensure that professional foresters are involved at all stages of the forest cycle and that decisions are based on up to date research.

I want to thank the members of the Society for their help during the year; in particular those members who worked on various projects and submissions and those who attended the numerous meetings where the professional forester's voice needed to be heard.

I wish all our members and their families a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Pacelli Breathnach
President
Society of Irish Foresters

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The inclusion of a single rate of premium for farmers and non-farmers is designed to incentivise non-farmers to plant trees under the new scheme.

Two new schemes, agroforestry and fast rotation for fibre production, have been introduced with respective premium schemes of five and ten year periods.

The Society welcomes a number of initiatives but is disappointed with the reduction of the premium payment period of 15 years, which falls well short of the existing 20-year timeframe and the rotation length of many forests especially broadleaves.

Providing greater premium payments for planting areas over 8ha is designed to encourage afforestation of larger blocks, which are accepted as being more profitable to harvest when they reach maturity than smaller lots.

A 10% increase in the annual premium for afforestation on unenclosed land (Table 2) is welcome but still far too low to act as a stimulus to encourage planting of the identified 250,000ha of productive unenclosed land suitable for afforestation. In addition, the establishment grant (€2,500/ha) is almost 30% below the rate provided for afforestation on enclosed land (Table 1).

There is a significant increase in grant aid where fencing is carried out using IS436 certified fencing stakes. IS436 fencing stakes conform to an accepted standard that guarantees a longer service life than non-IS436 material and is traceable to the sawmill or stake production plant.

Minister Hayes outlined a number of changes to the forest road scheme in relation to the area of eligibility and the timing of payments. "In addition it is proposed that a grant of up to €5,000

for special construction works be provided and support for connecting to existing forest road networks," he said.

A Department spokesperson said that the objectives of the programme "include the establishment of over 46,000ha of new forests, the construction of 960km of forest roads and

improved levels of support for the establishment and conservation of native woodlands".

Following public consultation the programme will shortly be submitted to the European Commission for State Aid approval and Minister Hayes aims to launch the programme on 1 January 2015.

TABLE 1. PROPOSED AFFORESTATION GRANT RATES IN FORESTRY PROGRAMME 2014 – 2015

Grant / premium category (GPC)	1 st Grant €/ha	2 nd Grant €/ha	Total €/ha	Additional fencing allocation €/ha IS436	Fencing allocation €/ha non-IS436	Total available funding €/ha	% increase
1. Unenclosed	1500	500	2000	500	300	2500	4%
2. Sitka spruce/ lodgepole pine	2200	700	2900	500	300	3400	3%
3. 10% diverse conifer	2250	750	3000	500	300	3500	3%
4. Diverse conifer	2500	800	3300	500	300	3800	3%
5. Broadleaf	3600	1100	4700	500	300	5200	-
6. Oak / beech	3800	1200	5000	500	300	5500	-
7. Beech	3800	1200	5000	500	300	5500	-
8. Alder	2400	800	3200	500	300	3700	-
9. Agro-forestry*	2820	940	3760	500	300	4260	-
10. Forestry for fibre*	1460	490	1950	500	300	2450	-

Source: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (2014) * New GPC

Premium Rates (same rates for farmer and non farmer)

TABLE 2. PROPOSED AFFORESTATION ANNUAL PREMIUM RATES IN FORESTRY PROGRAMME 2014 – 2015 (SAME RATES FOR FARMER AND NON-FARMER)

Grant / premium category (GPC)	Annual premium €/ha		Duration (years)	% increase (year on year)	
	<8ha	>=8ha		<8ha	>=8ha
1. Unenclosed	€160	€170	15	3%	10%
2. Sitka spruce/lodgepole pine	€380	€400	15	3%	8%
3. 10% diverse conifer	€440	€470	15	3%	10%
4. Diverse conifer	€470	€490	15	4%	8%
5. Broadleaf	€500	€520	15	4%	8%
6. Oak / beech	€540	€560	15	5%	9%
7. Beech	€540	€560	15	5%	9%
8. Alder	€500	€520	15	4%	8%
9. Agro-forestry*	€250	€250	5	-	-
10. Forestry for fibre*	€150	€150	10	-	-

Source: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (2014) * New GPC.

Society members who attended the study tour of Slovakia in September.

This year's study tour was well supported with more than 40 members travelling to visit the forests of the High Tatra Mountains in northern Slovakia. For twelve of the party this was their first tour. We hope that we will continue to see more of our younger members travelling to learn how forestry is 'done' in other countries. Finally, we were honoured to have no fewer than seven former SIF Presidents join us on this year's tour.



Coillte was represented by Stacey Bradley, Pat Carroll, PJ Fitzpatrick, Eugene Griffin, Kieran Moloney, Benny O'Brien, John O'Connor and Paddy O'Kelly.



AIFC members on the study tour included Sean Galvin, Tomas Hanrahan, Tony Mannion, Tom McDonald, Peter O'Brien and Kieran O'Connell.

Timber conference a major success



Speakers at the National Forestry Conference in Enfield on 6 June which was opened by Tom Hayes Minister of State: David Murray, Coillte Panel Products; Pacelli Breathnach, president, SIF; Joe O'Carroll, OC Consulting; Justin McCarthy, editor, Irish Farmers Journal; Minister Hayes; Donal Magner, WMF and IFJ; Mike Glennon, Glennon Brothers; Paul Harvey, chairman, WMF; Dr. Niall Farrelly, Teagasc; Mike Harvey, Maelor Nurseries; Dr. Annette Harte, NUI Galway; Traolach Layton, GPWood.

The Society, together with the Wood Marketing Federation and supported by COFORD and the Irish Farmers Journal organised the 2014 national forestry conference 'What shall we do with the timber?' The event was a major success.

In his keynote address to the conference, Minister Hayes updated the large attendance on current and long term issues associated with the development of the forestry sector. These included "measures taken to deal with the storm damage to Irish forests earlier this year, the ongoing work in dealing with forest diseases and ensuring that factors affecting afforestation and forest management are dealt with effectively." He said that he was also currently addressing "the formulation of the new forestry programme

to bring us up to 2020, the updating of the legislative framework and the outcome of the review of forest policy."

Minister Hayes remained at the conference to hear the views of speakers representing nurseries, growers and sawmillers and adopted a refreshingly active role in the ensuing Question and Answer session.

The key message emanating from this conference was that the forestry and forest products sector must continue to be both innovative and export oriented. The industry is now export-led and the positive message was that Ireland's timber processors have more than sufficient capacity and marketing expertise to purchase, process

and market all of the timber produced in Irish forests well into the future (see www.wood.ie for conference presentations).

A panel of expert speakers discussed market opportunities for Irish wood and wood products. These included traditional outlets in Ireland and overseas as well as new markets for engineered wood products. Dr. Niall Farrelly, Teagasc addressed the opportunities for adding value at forest level while the timber processing sector was ably represented by Mike Glennon, Glennon Brothers; Traolach Layton, GPWood and David Murray, Coillte Panel Products. The nursery sector was represented by Mike Harvey, Maelor Nurseries while Joe O'Carroll, OC Consulting provided the wood energy view.



Tillamook Forest revisited 22 years later

The Society's visit to Tillamook Forest during the 1992 study tour of Oregon and Washington was hosted by Dave Johnson, District Forester, Forest Grove District, Oregon Department of Forestry. A highly productive Douglas fir forest, Tillamook was ravaged by a series of devastating forest fires which burned more than 146,000ha between 1933 and 1951 (www.tillamookforestcenter.org). The 1992 study tour report records that "the town of Hillsboro, between Beaverton and Forest Grove, was a traditional agricultural town which was fast becoming popular as a dormitory town of Portland". Hillsboro is now known as "Silicon Forest" because of the large number of high tech companies located in the area.

Retired District Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry, Dave Johnson (left) welcomes Pacelli Breathnach back to Tillamook Forest.

Ireland's earliest arboricultural society

Hugh Crawford



Hugh Crawford is the incoming President of County Kildare Archaeological Society.

An article by Professor Augustine Henry, published in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* in 1921 stated that the earliest arboricultural society in Ireland was the Dublin Arboricultural Society which was founded in 1830. The Duke of Leinster was its first president and most of its 67 members enjoyed a privileged background. In 1831, the Society published a transaction which stated that "this Society shall be designated the Dublin Arboricultural Society; the object of which shall be to collect, embody, and diffuse scientific information relative to the forming of plantations and the care and management of wooded land in Ireland".

After its inaugural meeting in February 1829, the Dublin Arboricultural Society set out to "develop the means by which the culture of forest trees might be extended and improved in Ireland" and "to dispel the dark ignorance which was observed in the usages of woodmen". The newly formed committee expressed concern that "in addition to a scarcity of fuel for the wretched population, the trees selected for planting here were those least adapted for the soil and terrain".

Having highlighted the ignorance which prevailed in relation to arboriculture in Ireland, the Dublin Arboricultural Society appears to have floundered shortly after 1831 as its finances dwindled sharply. In 1831, the *London Gardeners' Magazine* reported that, in an effort to garner members, the society's annual membership subscription had been reduced to one guinea and its life subscription to ten guineas. No further references have come to light.

It should be noted that the Irish National Foresters, founded in 1877, had no arboricultural objectives despite its name, and had no links to the aforementioned Dublin Arboricultural Society. It was a benevolent organisation which made a significant contribution to the relief of the destitute in Irish society. In 1927, its golden jubilee year, the Irish National Foresters boasted a membership of more than 100,000 in 800 branches throughout the country and dispensed £1.5 million to assist members.

Interestingly, Joseph Hutchinson, Lord Mayor of Dublin and a direct ancestor of Kevin Hutchinson (former President of the Society of Irish Foresters), was a founding member and served as General Secretary of the Irish National Foresters for over 50 years.

Society supports student wood awards



Participants at the Third Level Student Wood Awards (SWA) presented by Tom Hayes, Minister of State with responsibility for Forestry and organised by the Wood Marketing Federation (WMF) with Wood-ni in the National Botanic Gardens (left to right): Des O'Toole, Coillte and SWA judge; Donal Magner, secretary WMF; Paul Harvey, chairman WMF; Minister Hayes; Gerard Murphy, Coillte; Andrew Macilwraith, CIT; Paul Glavin, CIT (architecture winner); Daniel Sweeney, CIT (special award); Debbie Hackett, Coillte and awards' co-ordinator; Simon O'Driscoll, SWA judge and Simon O'Driscoll Furniture; Kieran McGrath, CIT (engineering winner); Christian M'órcz representing Erika M'órcz, DIT (special award); Ross Boyce, DIT (winner of innovation award); Killian Jackson, DIT award representative; Ronan Cannon, GMIT Letterfrack (special award); and Tom Sweeney, GMIT Letterfrack (winner of design award).

The Society is an important supporter of the Third Level Student Wood Awards. The aim of these awards is to raise the profile of timber design in Ireland's third level colleges. Organised by the Wood Marketing Federation in association with Wood-ni, the awards are now well established in architectural, engineering and design faculties in Ireland's institutes of technology and universities.

"We are especially interested in supporting students who wish to explore the innovative use of home grown timber," said Society President, Pacelli Breathnach. "I'm delighted to see that a number of students are using Irish timber in innovative ways in both its sawn or engineered form," he continued. Tom Hayes, Minister of State with responsibility for forestry, who presented the awards in the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin said: "These awards have gone from strength to strength and I am confident that participating students will have worthwhile careers in their chosen fields specialising in wood construction and design."

Ross Boyce DIT won the innovation award for designing a simplified timber construction system using OSB. Paul Glavin CIT won the architecture award for his project 'Timber Construction in Medium Rise' while the engineering award also went to CIT. Kieran McGrath experimented with Irish timber in timber truss connection design. Tom Sweeney Letterfrack GMIT won the design category for his project 'Weave' a highly innovative flexible cladding system in engineered wood.



Marcus Hanbidge awarded the Society's 2013 Augustine Henry

Pacelli Breathnach, President SIF presents the Augustine Henry medal to Marcus Hanbidge Forestry Services Ltd, Kilkenny. Marcus was awarded the Society's 2013 Augustine Henry medal in recognition of his achievement in gaining the highest marks in his final year forestry examinations at Waterford Institute of Technology.

World Forestry Center

Vincent Upton, Teagasc



Vincent with Oregon's largest Sitka spruce which has a diameter of 4.7 metres and is around 800 years old.

The World Forestry Center (WFC) in Portland, Oregon was founded in 1964 and aims "to educate and inform people about the world's forests and trees, and environmental sustainability". Part of the WFC is an adult professional development department, the World Forestry Institute (WFI) which brings forestry professionals from around the world to study natural resource management in the Pacific North West (PNW) for 6 to 12 months. This region has a long and complex forest history and the conflict between commercial forest harvesting and conservation over the spotted owl and other endangered species during the 1980s and 1990s is well known. This has left a legacy of tension in the region which is slowly dissipating but the production of timber from federal lands has been reduced to a tenth of what it was previously.

Reductions in harvesting has had a particularly negative impact on rural areas where alternative industries and employment are limited. The PNW also possesses a number of National and State Parks which house a fascinating diversity of plants and wildlife in addition to containing some of the most beautiful scenery in the country. For Irish foresters a visit to the PNW offers the opportunity to see many of our commercial conifer species, including Douglas fir, Sitka spruce and lodgepole pine in their native range.

In May 2014, Vincent Upton, a researcher with Teagasc, travelled to Portland to undertake a six month fellowship with the WFI. Vincent focused on examining how forest management and policies are accounting for ecosystem services in the region. An important part of the fellowship is site visits with forest owners, management compa-

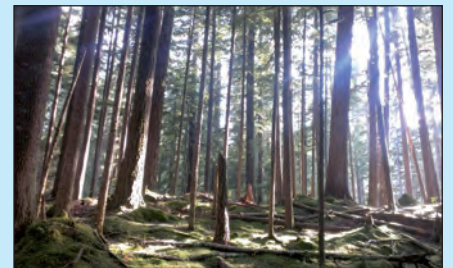
nies, sawmills and federal and state forest and park employees. This presents an opportunity to meet people from across the forest industry and gain an insight into different perspectives on forestry.

The US has a range of innovative schemes that seek to balance development and conservation, including conservation banking and the use of green engineering on private lands to protect and

enhance water quality. Some large industrial owners have been proactive in measuring the services from their lands and using this information to identify new markets and to engage with the public.

From a federal or national perspective the Forest Service specifically included the term ecosystem services in their planning rule for 2012 which will require forest managers to account for them in management plans in the future.

The US benefits from a well-established set of environmental markets which are supported by legislation but interest in these approaches to conservation, particularly at an EU level, will likely make them of increasing relevance to Ireland. However, based on experience from the US smaller landowners may face a number of barriers to engaging and benefiting from these new markets.



Mixed Douglas fir and western hemlock old growth in Olympic National Park.

More information about the fellowship can be found at <http://wfi.worldforestry.org/>. Vincent's fellowship was funded by the Harry A. Merlo Foundation, the COFORD funded ECOVALUE project and Teagasc.



A group of private forest owners examines a log placement project in Oregon that received co-funding and support from state and federal agencies. Recognition of the value of large woody debris in river ecosystems has seen a reversal of management practices from keeping rivers clear to deliberately adding logs and tree root wads in strategic locations.

Eustafor visit – Slieve Blooms

Coillte hosted the 2014 European State Forest (EUSTAFOR) annual conference which was attended by more than 50 delegates representing state-owned forest companies and agencies across Europe. The theme of the conference was "Managing highly productive forests in a changing world".



Delegates at Kinnitty Castle during a field trip which visited several of Coillte's establishment and harvesting sites in the Slieve Blooms.

SOCIETY EVENTS 2015

5 March

Annual Augustine Henry Forestry
Lecture – NBG, Glasnevin

17 April

AGM and Eastern Field Day
Aughrim, Co. Wicklow

15 May

Northern Field Day – Co. Donegal

12 June

Western Field Day – Co. Limerick

11-18 Sept

Annual Study Tour – Belarus

25 September

Southern Field Day – Co. Waterford

8 October

Annual Sean Mac Bride Forestry

Northern field day



Veterans of the Forest Service - Ken Ellis, Trevor Wilson, Brian Monaghan and Bill Wright – at one of Florencecourt's many veteran trees.

On 16 May, Society members visited Florencecourt, Co. Fermanagh – home of the distinctive Irish yew. Following a guided tour of Florence Court House, Colin Reilly of the Forest Service led a varied and interesting field day where the topics discussed included the challenge of combining commercial forestry with an ever increasing recreational demand, environmental designations, invasive species, management of ash crops, veteran tree selection and the development of Low Impact Silvicultural Systems.

New Members

We welcome the following new members to the Society of Irish Foresters

Associate

Peter Fegan

Student

Ana de Miguel Munoz, Denis Kenny,
Jason Meenaghan

Technical

Colm Brophy, Leo Byrne, Karl Coggins,
Brian Kane, Sarah Moynihan,
Niall O'Neill, Rainer Wirz

Window to the past

N11/Glen of the Downs – but not as we know it!

The old coaching road between Dublin and Wexford ran through the Glen of the Downs. The Sugar Loaf, or Golden Spear Mountain, dominates the background.

- Courtesy of the Lawrence Collection,
National Library of Ireland.



*To all our members, thanks for your
support during the year*

*Nollaig shona is gach sonas i
gcomhair na h-athbhliana*

*Happy Christmas and a
peaceful New Year*

Acknowledgements

Editorial

Donal Magner, Pacelli Breathnach, Hugh
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