



DVD of Coillte's bog restoration projects launched by minister

A NEW DVD titled "Bringing The Bogs Back To LIFE" has been produced to promote Coillte's EU LIFE funded bog restoration projects across the country and to demonstrate the work that went into them.

Three of the 14 raised bog restoration sites are in County Roscommon, they are Kiltewan, Drumalough and Cloonshanville Bogs.

Speaking at the event Minister Mary Wallace, Minister for State at the Department of Agriculture with special responsibility for Forestry said that she was delighted to launch the informative and very useful DVD which told the story of the great work done by Coillte under the EU funded LIFE initiative in restoring both raised bogs and blanket bogs in Ireland.

Also speaking at the launch, David Gunning, Chief Executive of Coillte said: "Coillte manages its forests commercially but, in doing so, we pay a lot of attention to environmental and social considerations. Our forests are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council as being well managed in accordance with strict environmental, social and economic criteria. Nature Conservation is an integral part of forest and land management and 15% of Coillte's estate is managed with nature conservation as the primary management objective."

Coillte is working towards restoring 571.2 hectares of raised bog habitat. This project is the largest single raised bog restoration project to be undertaken in Ireland. By the end of this project, significant habitat restoration work will have been

completed on over 5% of the national area of raised bog conserved in SACs - a significant contribution to conservation of the most valuable raised bog habitat in Europe.

Conservation aims to prevent any further damage to the raised bogs from activities such as drainage, forestry, burning and peat-cutting. These activities all adversely affect the raised bog habitat by drying out the bog surface and Raised bogs have been developing for thousands of years and apart from botanical diversity, they hold a record of past climates and can act as carbon sinks to reduce the impact of climate change. Due to their preservative properties, they can also hold archaeological remains. Raised bogs are domed masses of peat, up to 15m deep, formed by the accumulation of dead plant material. They originate in former lake basins and are mainly concentrated in the central lowlands of Ireland. In this way, they differ from blanket bogs, which have their origin in high rainfall and low temperature areas of mountain regions and the west of Ireland. Raised bogs are very wet, retaining large volumes of water and have a water level generally higher than the local water table.

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Minister for State at the Department of Agriculture with special responsibility for Forestry Mary Wallace TD with Coillte Manager, Frank Doolan from Trien, Castlerea, who manages six raised bog restoration sites, pictured at the launch of a DVD titled 'Bringing The Bogs Back To Life'