



Irish Forestry Unit Trust

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| Fermoyle MU |
| Lugganimma and Fermoyle, Co. Galway |
| MANAGEMENT PLAN |
| 2022 – 2041 (Period 1: 2022 -2026) |

2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OWNERSHIP AND LANDUSE HISTORY.

The Fermoyle Management Unit (MU) comprises of 2 distinct properties totaling 514ha. All properties are located in West Galway, West of Lough Corrib. These sites were open mountain, heath and bog before they were planted. These sites would have provided rough grazing ground before being planted.

Properties:

1. Fermoyle , 230.2ha. Established in 1986. Acquired by IForUT prior to 2016
2. Lugganimma, 283.7ha. Established in 1985. Acquired by IForUT prior to 2016

Elevation

34m to 165m

Statutory Land Designations

The sites are surrounded on all sides by various site designations for the Connemara Bog Complex. Connemara Bog Complex is designated as an SAC with the core interest being Western Blanket Bog (Site code 002034). It is also designated as an SPA for various bird species for which the bog complex provides an optimum habitat (Site code 004181). The specific species of concern in the SPA are Cormorant, Merlin, Golden Plover and Common Gull. All licenced/grant operations are subject to statutory consultation with the NPWS and any other significant operations will involve consultation with the local wildlife ranger. The felling licence will advise what operational restrictions will apply in relation to future operations.

The Connemara Bog complex is also a pNHA.

Connemara Bog Complex SPA Site code 004181 [Connemara Bog Complex SPA/ National Parks and Wildlife Service](#)

Connemara Bog Complex SAC Site code 002034 [Connemara Bog Complex SAC/National Parks & Wildlife Service](#)

Water/Fisheries Sensitivities:

The MU is within the Cashla river sub-catchment which belongs to the Galway Bay North Catchment. The Cashla river runs adjacent to the property boundaries in many places. In addition there is a complex of lakes such as Lough Fermoyle, Rusheen Lough and Muckinagh lough amongst many others, which are adjacent to the property. Many of these lakes are fisheries sensitive and are an important resource for anglers. In

general, the Cashla river catchment is in good ecological status, the good status indicator being derived from the condition of macroinvertebrates in this catchment.

These sites do fall into what would be classified as an acid sensitive area. Water bodies in these areas are more likely to be impacted by acidification.

Margaritifera

The MU does not fall into a Fresh water pearl mussel sensitive area.

Old Woodland Sites (OWS):

There is no OWS/potential OWS in the Fermoy MU.

Archaeology/Historical/Cultural:

There are no recorded or protected structures/monuments in the MU.

As standard procedure, any old farmhouse/cottage or other buildings and stone walls/significant ditches etc are considered as more recent cultural heritage and are protected during harvesting and roading operations. By and large, the landscape here, due to its nature does not have many cultural features of note.

4. SOIL TYPES.

The main soil types in the Fermoy MU are peat and deep peat soils.

5. SUMMARY OF THE LANDSCAPE VALUE OF THE FOREST.

Moderate Felling Impact with High Afforestation Sensitivity

All forest blocks are classed as Moderate felling impact on the IForUT system due partly to the extensive bog landscape and relatively large size of the IForUT holdings.

Whenever felling licences are submitted the Forest Service will correspond with relevant local and statutory bodies to investigate any potential landscape sensitivities.

The Forest Service high Landscape Sensitivity class, as defined for afforestation planning covers all properties. IForUT have no plans to carry out any afforestation within this Management Unit.

6. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES.

- 1) To maximise economic output from the forest at local and national level.
- 2) To manage FMU in accordance with the principals of the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and international benchmarks of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC).
- 3) To manage timber production in a sustainable way.
- 4) To maintain and enhance the landscape value of the forest.
- 5) To protect existing biodiversity and where opportunities arise enhance and further promote new biodiversity.
- 6) To manage forest activities with due regard to local, regional and national stakeholder interests.
- 7) To promote continuous professional development at management level.

14. Summary of silvicultural systems to be used.

| System | Conifers | Broadleaves |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Clear fell | ✓ | |
| Selective fell | | |
| Thinning to MTI | ✓ | |
| Line thinning only | | |
| Non thin regime | ✓ | |
| Non intervention | | ✓ |
| Natural regeneration | | ✓ |
| Replanting | ✓ | ✓ |
| Other | | |

20. 5 Year Monitoring Report Summary. Fermoyle MU

| | Objective | Was it achieved? | How this information was applied to 5 year Management Plan review? |
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| 1 | Economic Return | No harvesting operations have taken place here to date. | There has been no economic return from these properties since IForUT have come into ownership. This is due to lower yield class there being no formal access into the site. The site is generally low productivity and there being some pine mixed through the crop. |
| 2 | Certification Standards | Certification standards and IForUT systems applied over plan period. Managers working off FMM | Continue as before and update FMM as required. |
| 3 | Timber production | Timber production in this MU has not happened during IForUTs ownership. | No timber production due to poorer yield classes in the two properties in the MU and there being no formal access into the sites. A ROW is being negotiated with a neighbour to try to facilitate operations taking place at some point in the future. Felling coupes have been designed bearing in mind the low productivity of the site and impact on water. Felling coupes are on the larger side while still being within forest service limitations of size. It is the aim to get the property clearfelled as quickly as possible over the next number of years while balancing impacts on water, landscape and local infrastructure. It is possible that there will be some areas to the south of Fermoyle which will have to be left in situ due to the boggy nature of this ground and its proximity to the lake. This will be monitored closer to the time of felling which is some time away at present. |
| 4 | Landscape | Two new landscape layers added to designations [REDACTED]. Forest Service layer taken off National Development plan for new planting and Landscape Unit appraisals based on Coillte LUs. | New landscape layer added to Sensitivities Map in MP. All forest blocks are classed as moderate felling impact on the IForUT system due partly to the extensive bog landscape and relatively large size of the IForUT holdings. All sites are highly sensitive for afforestation. IForUT will not be carrying out afforestation in this area. |

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| 5 | Biodiversity Enhancement | Biodiversity limited in this MU and opportunities to enhance have been limited. There have been changes in the required national standards. These standards will require increased broadleaves and openspace alongside things like county roads and dwelling houses at restocking stage. These are unlikely to affect this FMU due to its remote location. | Not many opportunities to enhance biodiversity in this plan period as no operations have taken place. There are significant failed areas and ride lines within the properties which provide significant open space. Due to the numerous factors of site designations in relation to the bog surrounding the property, the deep peat soils on the site, acid sensitivities and fisheries sensitivities, combined with the low productivity - it is the intention that this site will not be replanted. The site will instead be utilised fully as a biodiversity site and it will over an extended period of time, be transformed back to UP status, allowing the open heath to regenerate. This will be done only with the full permissions of DAFM. A case for permanent forest removal will be made under the Felling and Reforestation policy on the grounds of "Overriding environmental considerations". This will be done gradually over at least a 20 year period. It is anticipated that a programme of maintenance on the felled areas will be required to prevent natural regeneration of conifer seedlings. NRC areas will be retained – it is expected that these will revert to moribund with time. If not a fell to waste operation will be carried out. |
| 6 | Stakeholder | Sparsely populated locality. Very little interactions with neighbours. | During plan review a more comprehensive stakeholder consultation has been conducted. See Stakeholder files. Access routes are under negotiation. Very sparsely populated area. |
| 7 | Professional Development | ██████████ managed. Forest Managers are members of SIF and attend lectures and field days as part of continuous professional development. | Retendering of whole portfolio into regional management units in 2010 to simplify overall forest level management and FSC compliance. New centralised network server (██████████) has been introduced for managing FMM and IForUT database. |
| 8 | Forward Planning | Continue with current standards and work practices and review on a continuous basis to implement industry best practice. | Carry out reviews of Forest Management Manual and updating of best practice. |