



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine

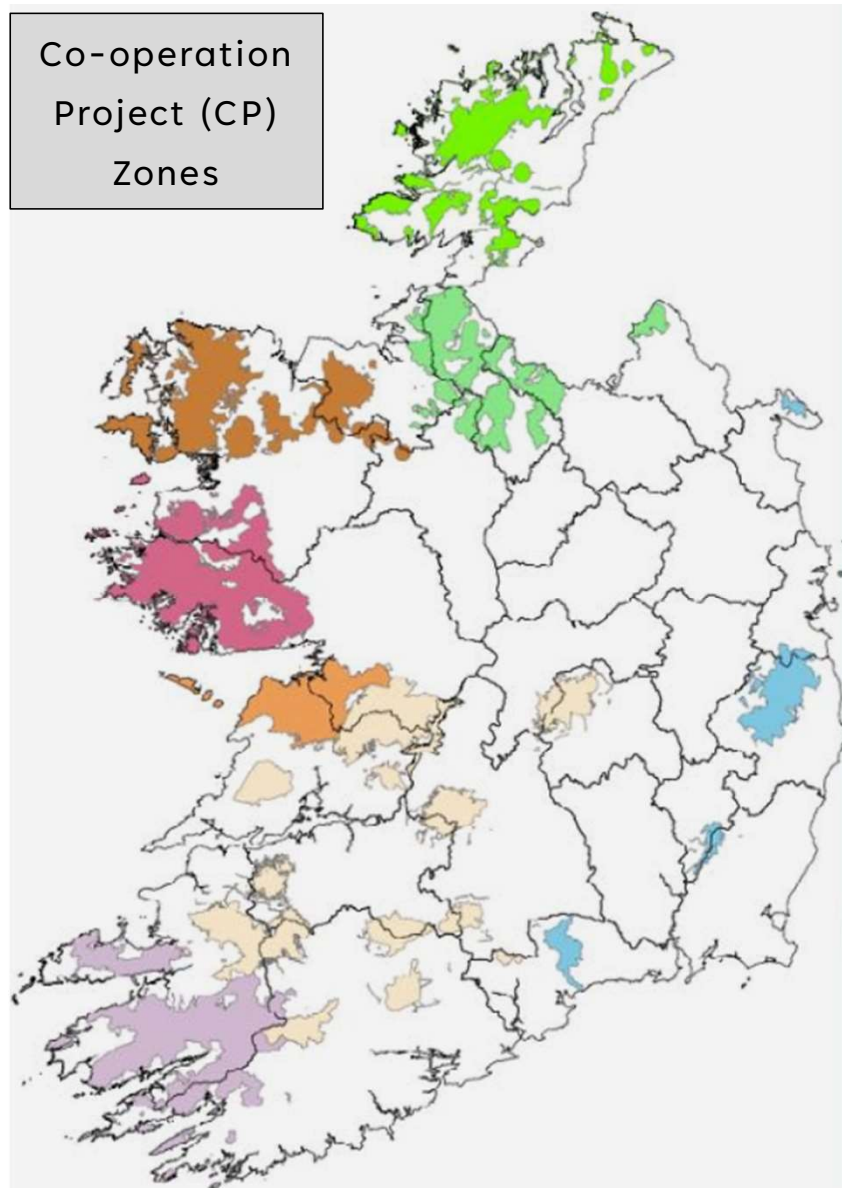


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# ACRES ADVISOR NPI TRAINING

Co-operation  
Project (CP)  
Zones



ACRES Donegal



ACRES Breifne



ACRES West Connacht



ACRES West Connacht



ACRES Burren Aran



ACRES Munster South Connacht



ACRES Kerry West Cork



ACRES Leinster

## 8 CP Zones

- Comprising mainly extensively farmed uplands.
- Based on protected areas (SAC/SPA), non-designated areas of importance and priority water catchments

# ACRES





## ABOUT US

Managed in 3 sub-regions:

Aran Islands, Clare Burren, South Galway

**Contact details: [acresburrenaran.ie](http://acresburrenaran.ie)**





## FARM ADVISOR ROLE

Direct link to the farmer

CP team support for advice and feedback

Two-way knowledge transfer

Vital to the success of the scheme

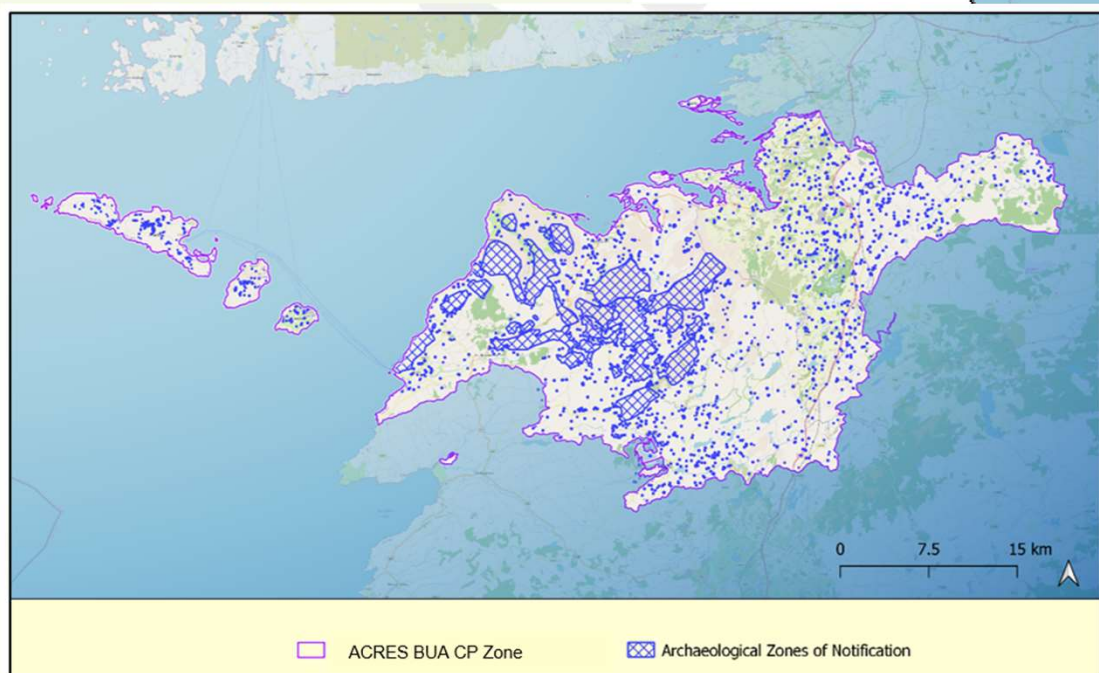
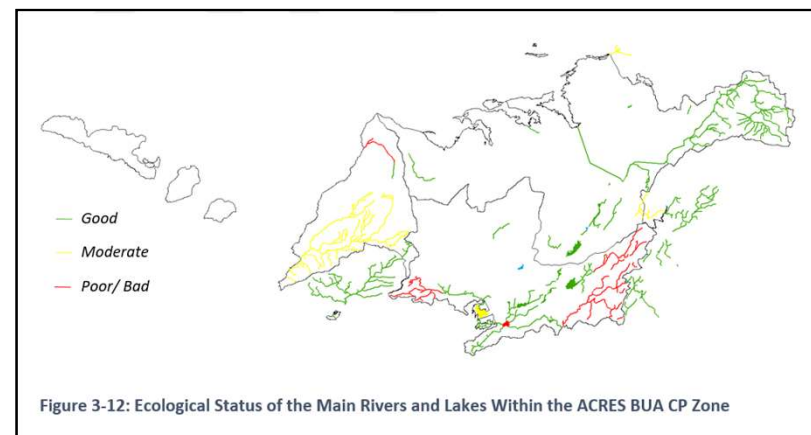
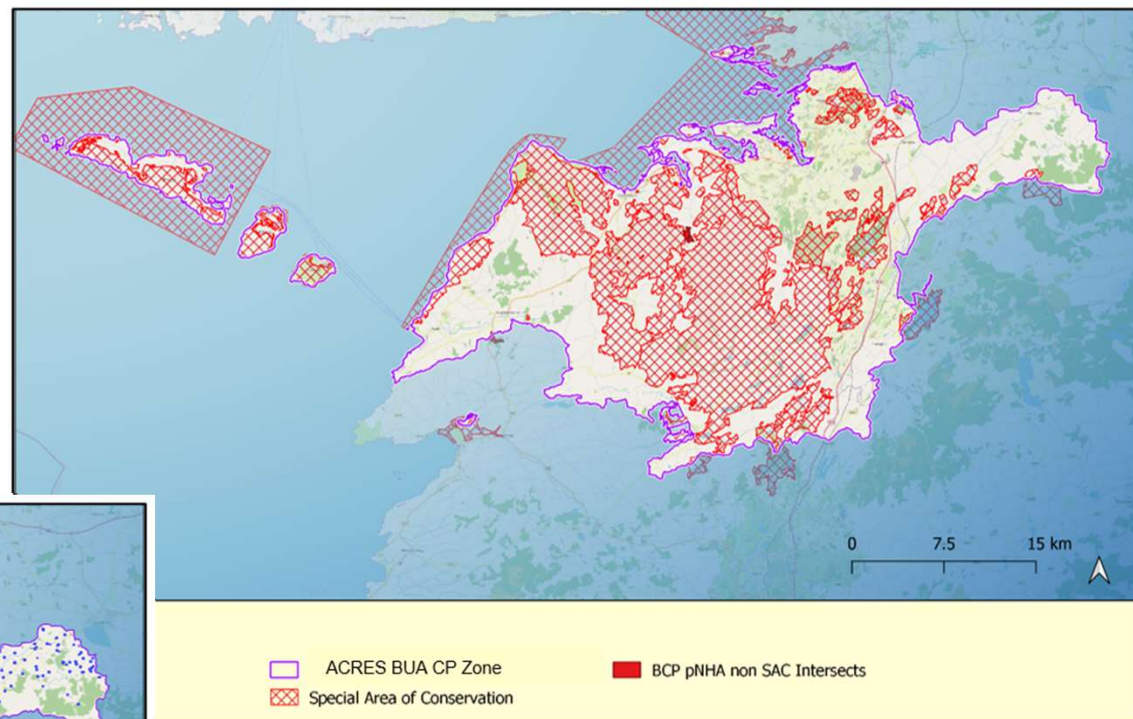




## LOCAL ACTION PLAN

### ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITY TARGETS

Most priority targets that have bad / inadequate status are linked to grazing issues



# RESULTS-BASED APPROACH



## FREEDOM TO FARM

Moves away from flat-rate payments for restrictions.



## PAYMENTS FOR DELIVERY

In ACRES CP, up to €400/ha



## MARKET FOR BIODIVERSITY

Puts value on biodiversity, water quality & climate benefits

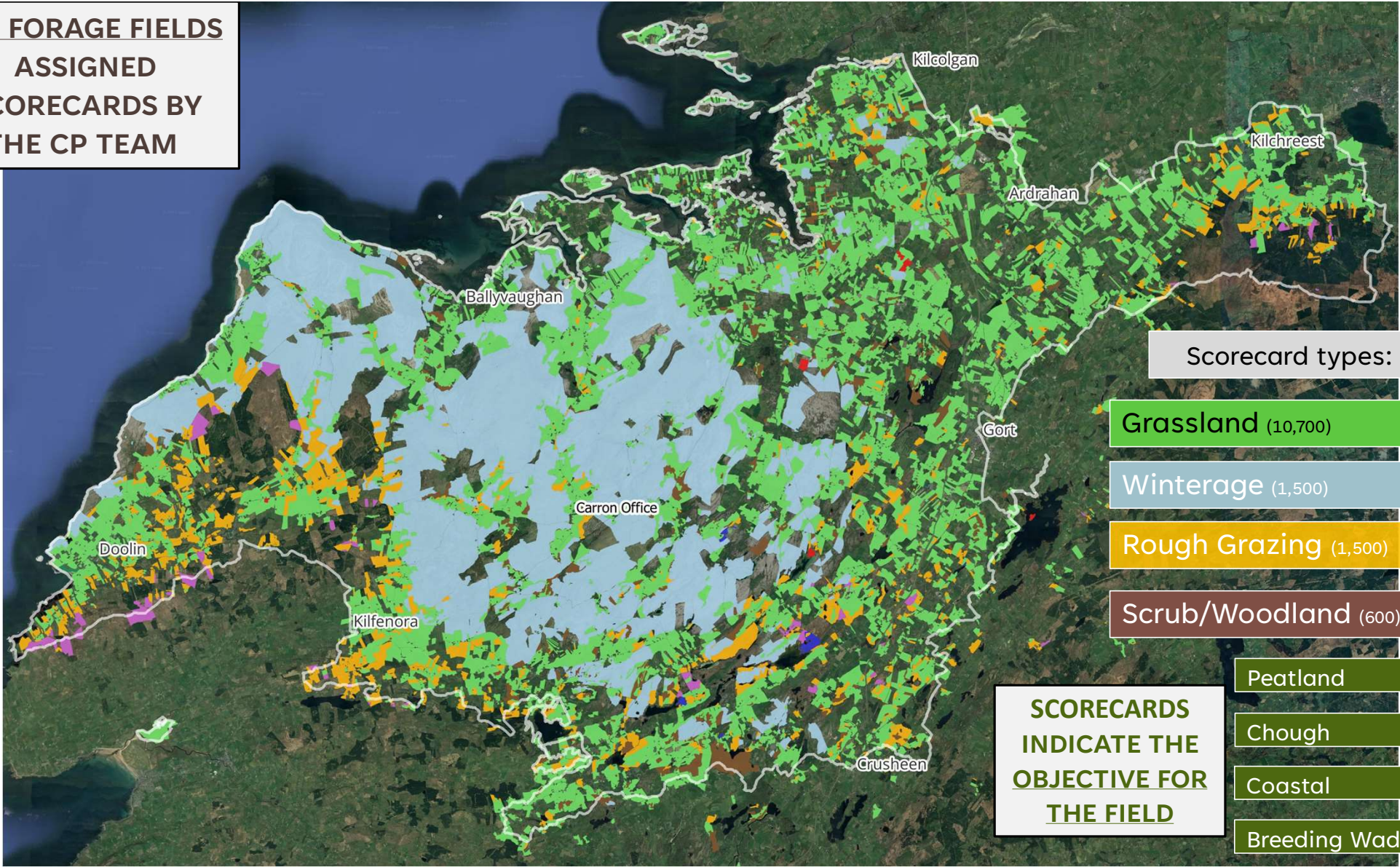


## SCORING

Higher the score, higher the payment rate; fairer & better value for money



**ALL FORAGE FIELDS  
ASSIGNED  
SCORECARDS BY  
THE CP TEAM**



Scorecards	What does well	Total area	% of CP Area	No of Fields
Grassland (LIG)	Fields with lots of wildflowers	27,002ha	50%	10,758
Winterage	Good winter grazing, low scrub, no silage feeding	19,927ha	37%	1,446
Rough Grazing	Wildflowers, some rush and scrub cover	4,755ha	9%	1,456
Scrub woodland	A few tree species, values a patch of scrub woodland in a field, minimal disturbance	1,844ha	3.4%	603
Peatland	High water table, few drains	523ha	1%	69
Coastal grassland	Balanced grazing, low coastal erosion	159ha	<1%	89
Others	Chough, Breeding Wader	152ha	<1%	40

Overall..

- Good water quality, protected/minimally damaged water courses.
- Low nutrient inputs
- Balanced grazing i.e. not skinned nor ungrazed
- Good, (i.e. not a fence) boundaries - stonewalls, hedges, treelines, earthbanks



# NON-PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS

Actions which...

1. should help increase the field score
  2. enhance biodiversity on the farm
  3. generate additional farm income
- Works must have clear benefits for Biodiversity, Water Quality, Climate and/or Cultural Heritage.
  - Works plans drawn up by the Farmer and Farm Advisor once per year with submission windows.
  - All plans screened by CP team for permissions / planning (Local Authority, NPWS, NMS, Forest Service) and to ensure that objectives of the CP area are being met.
  - TAMS available for modernisation actions.



# NON-PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS

## Habitat Management

- Hedgerows
- Traditional orchard
- Planting trees
- Riparian margins
- Wild bird plots and strips
- Bracken control

## Wildlife Supports

- Barn Owl/Kestrel Nest Box/Bat Box
- Swallow / Swift box
- Rodenticide free rodent control
- Wader scrapes

## Infrastructure

- Repair of stone walls
- Culverts
- Fencing (barbed, permanent, Sheep)
- Solar fencer
- Gates
- Mobile feed storage bins
- Pasture and solar pumps
- Water troughs
- Water storage tanks
- Rainwater catchers

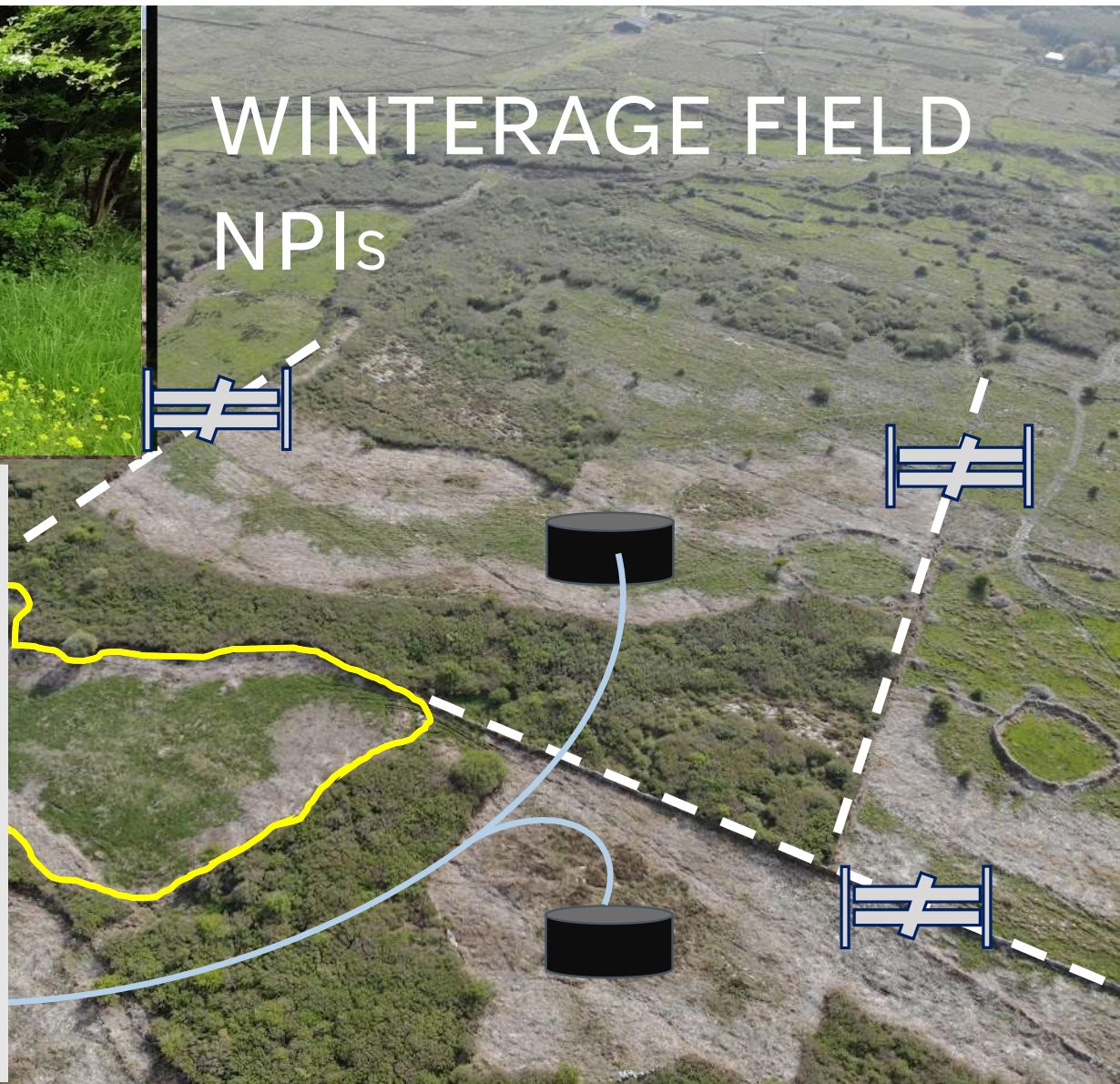
## Burren

- Mobile feed troughs
- Heritage gates
- Scrub removal hand tools (area and strips)
- Track resurfacing



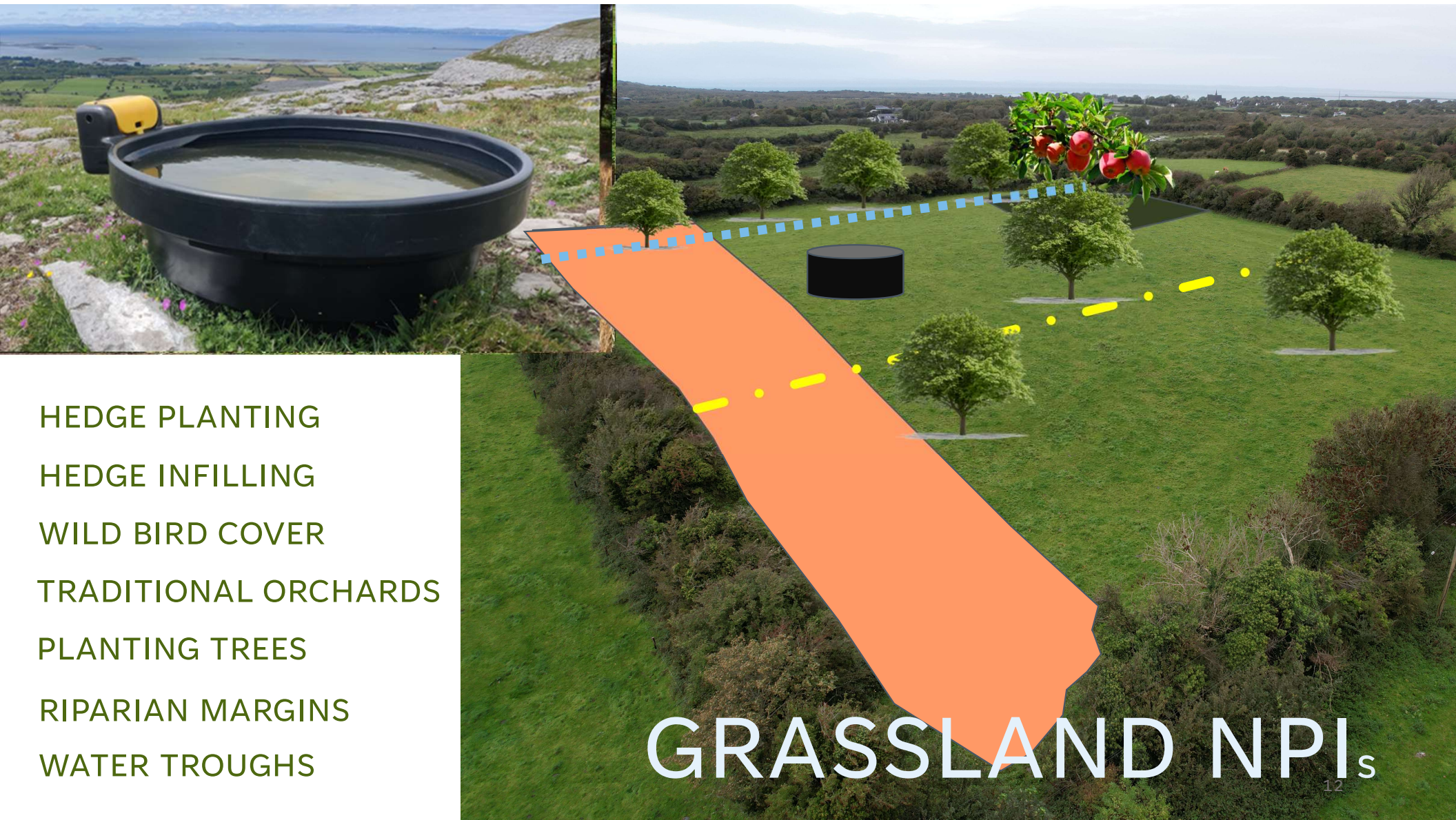


## WINTERAGE FIELD NPIs



- Land that's easier to manage.
- Easier to graze fields fully.
- Cleaner water for livestock.
- Improves long-term prospects.
- Higher score & higher payment.





HEDGE PLANTING  
HEDGE INFILLING  
WILD BIRD COVER  
TRADITIONAL ORCHARDS  
PLANTING TREES  
RIPARIAN MARGINS  
WATER TROUGHS

GRASSLAND NPIs



# ROUGH GRAZING NPIs

HEDGEROW PLANTING

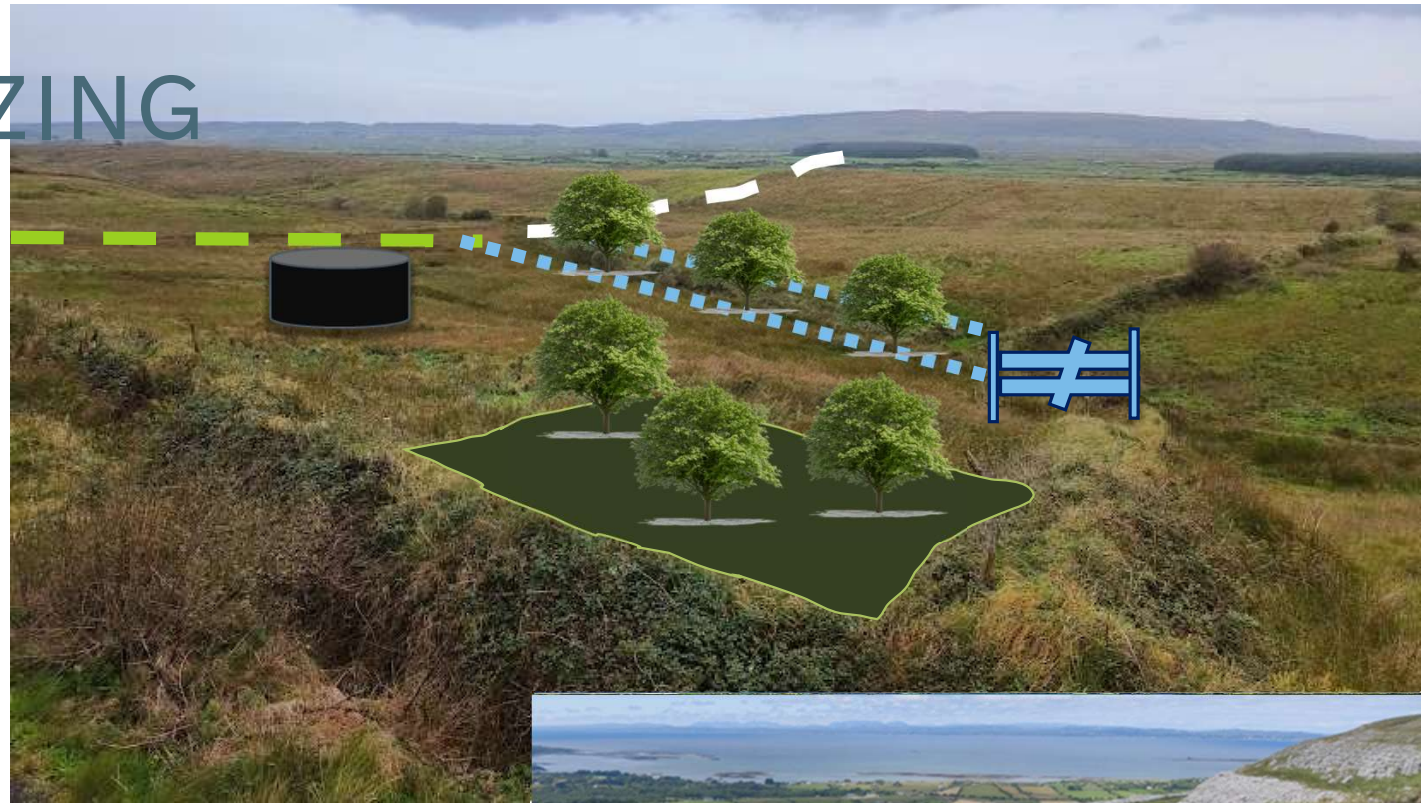
STONE WALL REPAIR

PLANTING TREES

RIPARIAN MARGIN

GATE INSTALLATION

WATER TROUGH INSTALLATION





# FARMYARD NPIS



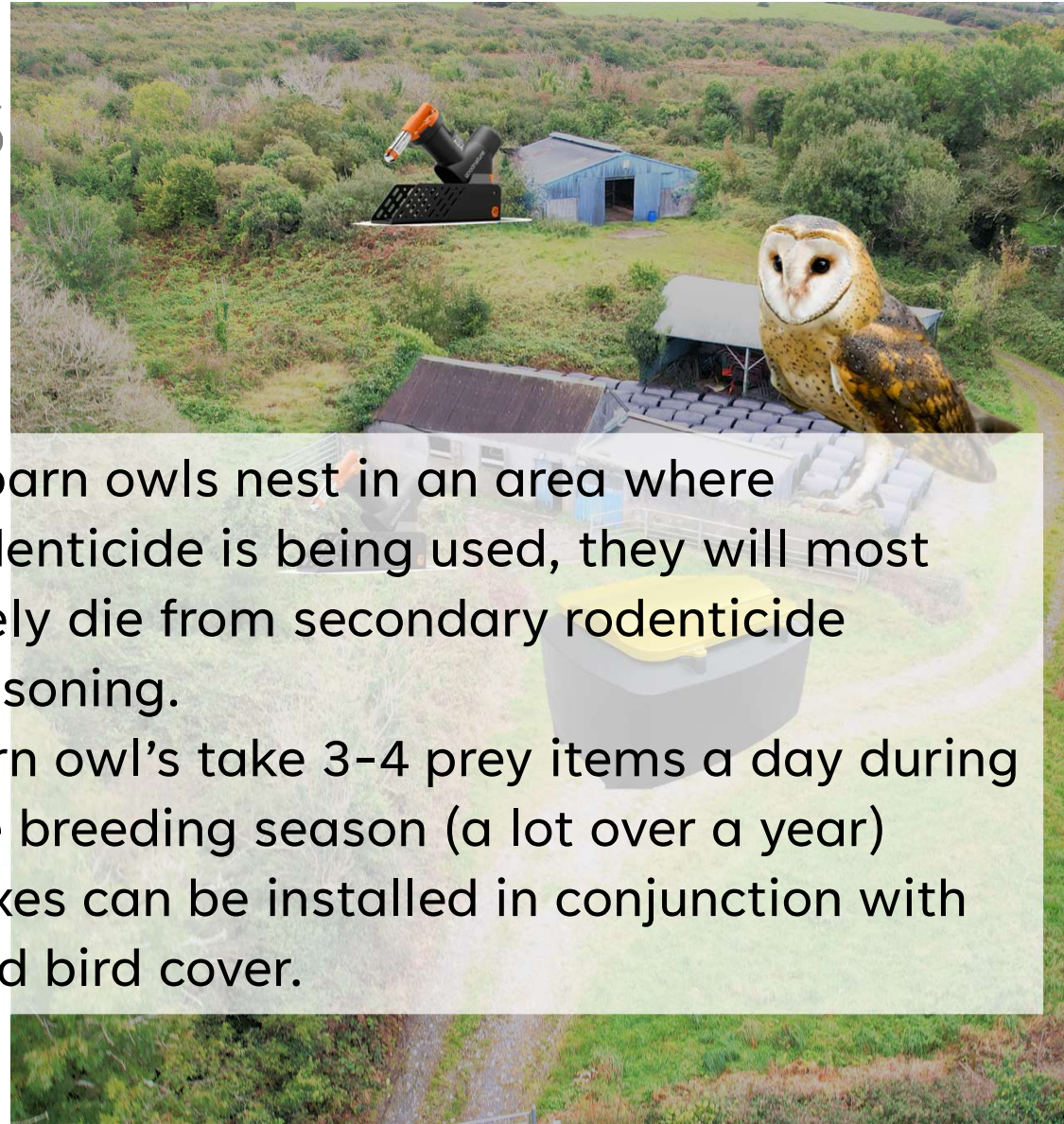
BARN OWL BOXES

RODENTICIDE-FREE RODENT CONTROL

FEED STORAGE BINS

If barn owls nest in an area where rodenticide is being used, they will most likely die from secondary rodenticide poisoning.

- Barn owl's take 3-4 prey items a day during the breeding season (a lot over a year)
- Boxes can be installed in conjunction with wild bird cover.



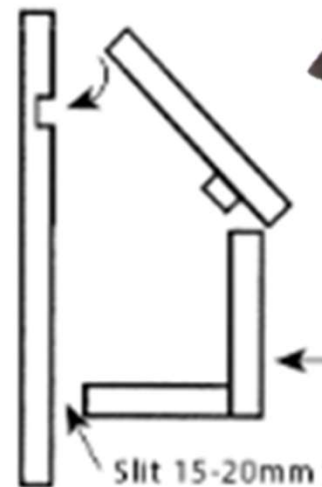
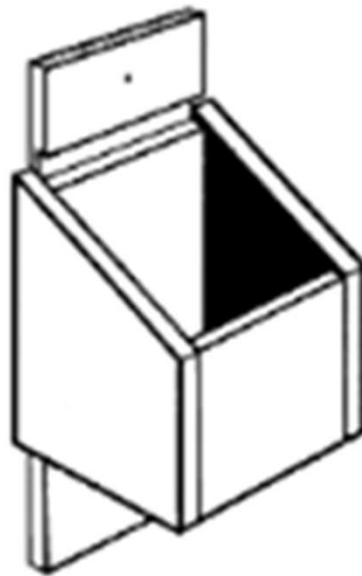


# FARMYARD NPIS



SWIFT BOXES

BAT BOXES



# BURREN/WINTERAGE ONLY

## MOBILE FEED TROUGHS

Encourage use of Burren ration over damaging ring feeders on winterages



## HERITAGE GATES

Produced locally in the area, enhance the visual landscape and are long-lasting



## EXISTING TRACK REPAIRS

Installed during BP, require on-going maintenance, enable positive works on winterages







## SCRUB AREAS

- Must be taped in field
- Visited by BUA CP team
- % cover of polygon as drawn on GLAM

### HIGH COVER >70%

Polygon drawn around a patch of scrub or an area of dense scrub

### LOW COVER 6-40%

Light cover, easily removed scrub like briars.

### MEDIUM COVER 40-70%

Most of the drawn polygon is scrub

### SCATTERED <5%

Large polygon with scattered bushes, re-growth from previous scheme.

- Only immature scrub on grassland
- Not woodland or bushes on limestone pavement

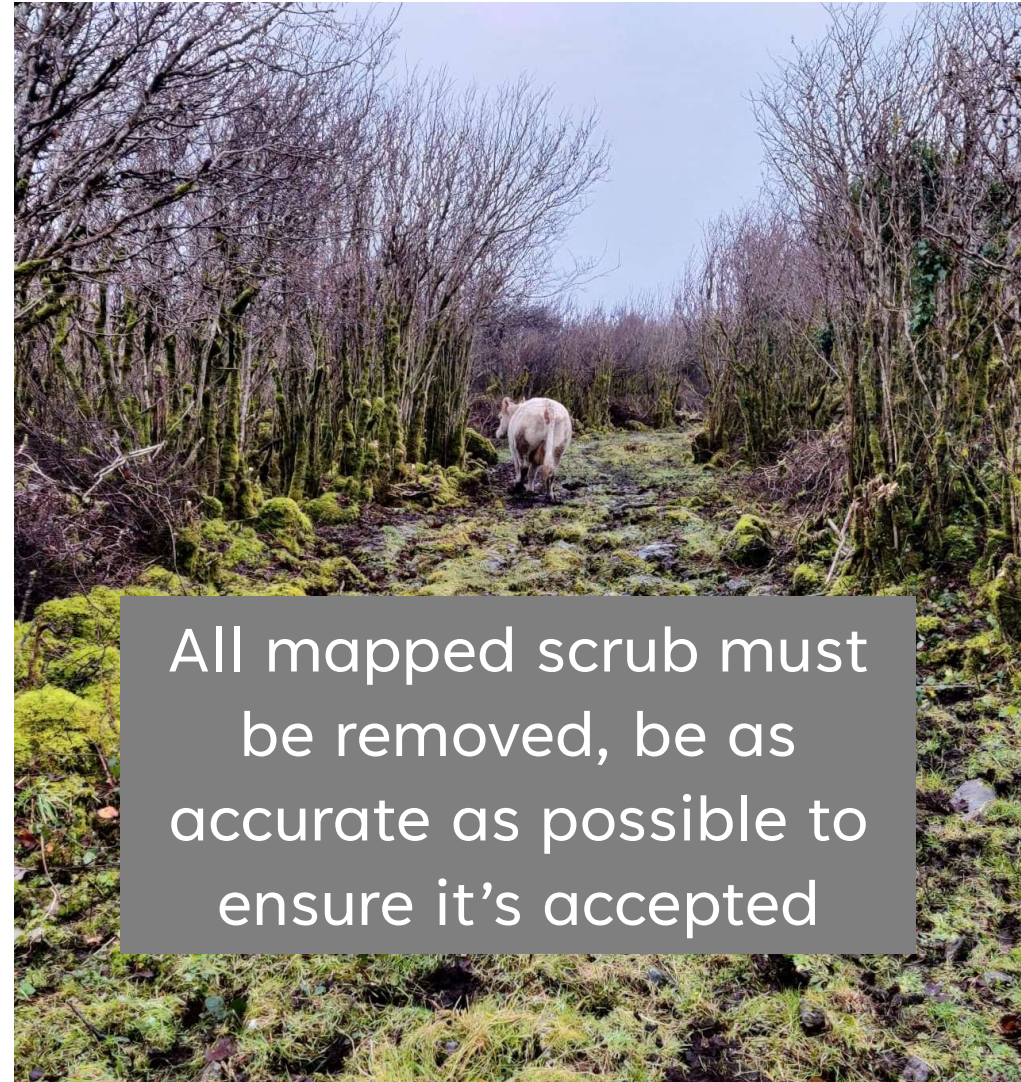
## LINEAR SCRUB

### PATHS

Through woodland to link  
grazable areas

### BANDS

Cutting scrub encroaching out  
from the edge of a woodland



All mapped scrub must  
be removed, be as  
accurate as possible to  
ensure it's accepted

\*ALL REGROWTH MUST BE KEPT UNDER CONTROL FOR DURATION OF PROJECT



## HOW NPI PROCESS WORKS

- Meet farmer, explain scorecard issues
- Focus work plan on improving scores
- Draw up actions on GLAM
- CP team have read-only access during application window; contact team for plan mentoring
- CP team download data then screen for AA and accept/reject based on CP objectives
- Department validates decisions and issues approval letters
- Farmer carry out works



# LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Large-scale actions planned between the farmer and CP team

Contact CP team on behalf of farmers if they're interested

Earliest window is Spring 2024

List not complete to date and works also need to be screened





## QUESTIONS

