

**Option Name:** Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control

**Option Code:** RLP

**Option Payment:** Year 1: £5049.57 per ha

**Option Aim(s):** To decrease the area of invasive rhododendron and laurel on priority habitats located on semi - natural sites, thereby enhancing their biodiversity.

**Scheme applicability:** Wider – EFS(W)  Higher – EFS(H)  Group – EFS(G)

**This option is made up of:** Annual Management requirements  NPI (capital items)

**This option is:** Permanent  Rotational

**Option Description and Outcome:** This non-productive investment (referred to as capital works) Option will remove dense rhododendron and laurel on semi-natural habitats to increase the biodiversity value of the site. Payment for the essential capital works is included in the Option payment rate.

**Choice of site:** 'Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control' may only be carried out in EFS(H) and EFS(G). The need for 'Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control' will be specified in the site specific Remedial Management Plan (ssRMP). The area and location of rhododendron and laurel to be removed will be clearly detailed on the ssRMP map.

**Essential capital works:** 'Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control' is considered as capital works.

**Additional optional capital works available for this Option:** None

**Area Permitted:** Minimum 0.01 ha Maximum Not Applicable\*

\* DAERA reserves the right to limit a Higher Level agreement value where it considers appropriate to ensure value for money.

## Requirements and Controls:

Code	Non-productive investment requirements (capital works)	Control type <sup>1</sup>		
		Admin	CwRS	OTSC
<b>RLP1C</b>	Complete all 'Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control' as detailed in the site specific Remedial Management Plan in the first year of the EFS(H) or EFS(G) agreement.			✓
<b>RLP2C</b>	Complete foliar spraying with an approved herbicide on the claimed area of 'Invasive species control of rhododendron and laurel - primary control' in the field(s) where the works have been approved to ensure that regrowth is no more than 10% cover.	✓	✓	✓
<b>RLP3C</b>	Rhododendron and laurel stems that require cutting must be cut to leave approximately 30 cm (12 inch) stumps.			✓
<b>RLP4C</b>	Stems that require cutting must be treated with an approved herbicide.			✓
<b>RLP5C</b>	Rhododendron and laurel cuttings must be removed from the site or burned at an agreed location as identified in the site specific Remedial Management Plan.			✓
<b>RLP6C</b>	Standing rhododendron and laurel must not be burned.			✓
<b>RLP7C</b>	Keep field records as required in the site specific Remedial Management Plan.	✓		✓

<sup>1</sup> The possible control types for each requirement may be:

'Admin' – administrative checks, 'CwRS' – Control with Remote Sensing, 'OTSC' – On-the-Spot Check

### **Further Advice:**

Observe all relevant Health and Safety guidelines when operating machinery, using hand tools and applying chemicals when completing works under this Option. Work should not be carried out when ground conditions are wet in order to minimise damage to the site.

For further information on Health and Safety guidelines, please check the attached link to the Health and Safety Executive NI:

<http://www.hseni.gov.uk/guidance/industries/agriculture-3-column.htm>

Cutting rhododendron and laurel stumps close to ground level encourages vigorous regrowth. It is vital after cutting, when the sap is at the surface, that stumps are treated immediately with an approved herbicide and IPM implemented. If treated at this time, the chemical will travel into the root structure before the cut seals as the sap regresses into the stump. Spray marking of treated stumps with a water-soluble coloured dye will aid identification.

For further information on the correct way to use pesticides, please refer to the attached link:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/code-practice-using-plant-protection-products>

The removal of dwarf or Western gorse (*Ulex gallii*) is not permitted. Dwarf or Western gorse is a smaller, more compact shrub, with smaller spines when compared to European or common gorse/whin (*Ulex europaeus*). In contrast to whin, which mainly flowers in the spring, Western gorse flowers from late summer to autumn. The shrub is mainly found in the Mourne, Slieve Croob and Slieve Gullion areas on dry and wet heath.

Any noxious weeds which colonise the site following the removal of the scrub must be controlled as required by the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977. This is by cutting between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 15<sup>th</sup> March or where justified as part of the implementation of IPM, with an approved herbicide, applied using a spot sprayer only. Noxious weeds are as listed under the Noxious Weeds Order 1977 and include wild oat (*Avena fatua* L.); thistle (*Cirsium vulgare* (Savi) Ten.); *Cirsium arvense* (L. Scop.), dock (*Rumex obtusifolius* L.; *Rumex crispus* L.) and ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea* L.).

It is your responsibility to ensure you comply with the Waste Management Regulations (NI) 2006 and Cross-Compliance requirements.

The Forestry Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 and the associated Forestry (Felling of Trees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 resulted in the introduction of felling licences from 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The removal of scrub may require a felling licence.