

Option Name: Scrub control light, stems less than 7 cm diameter, manual cut

Option Code: SLH

Option Payment: Year 1: £1271.83 per ha

Option Aim(s): To decrease the area of invasive scrub 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 scrub 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: 'Scrub control light, stems less than 7 cm diameter, manual cut' may only be carried out in EFS(H) and EFS(G). The need for scrub removal will be specified in the site specific Remedial Management Plan (ssRMP). The area and location of scrub to be removed will be clearly detailed on the ssRMP map.

Essential capital works: 'Scrub control light, stems less than 7 cm diameter, manual cut' 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 ¹		
		Admin	CwRS	OTSC
SLH1C	Complete all 'Scrub control light, stems less than 7 cm diameter, manual cut' as detailed in the site specific Remedial Management Plan in the first year of the EFS(H) or EFS(G) agreement.			✓
SLH2C	Complete foliar spraying with an approved herbicide on the claimed area of 'Scrub control light, stems less than 7 cm diameter, manual cut' in the field(s) where the works have been approved to ensure that regrowth is no more than 10% cover over the area.	✓	✓	
SLH3C	Scrub stems that require cutting must be cut as close as possible to ground level.			✓
SLH4C	Cut stems must be treated with an approved herbicide.			✓
SLH5C	Scrub cuttings must be removed from the site or burned at an agreed location as identified in the site specific Remedial Management Plan.			✓
SLH6C	Standing scrub must not be burned.			✓
SLH7C	Keep field records as required in the site specific Remedial Management Plan.	✓		✓

¹ 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.

Foliar spraying is only carried out on very light scrub with little foliage. Spraying should be carried out as per manufacturer instructions.

Cut stems should be treated immediately with an approved herbicide.

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 1st July and 15th 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 17th June 2014. The removal of scrub may require a felling licence. Please check the attached link to decide if a felling licence is required when carrying out Scrub Control:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/felling-licences>

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>