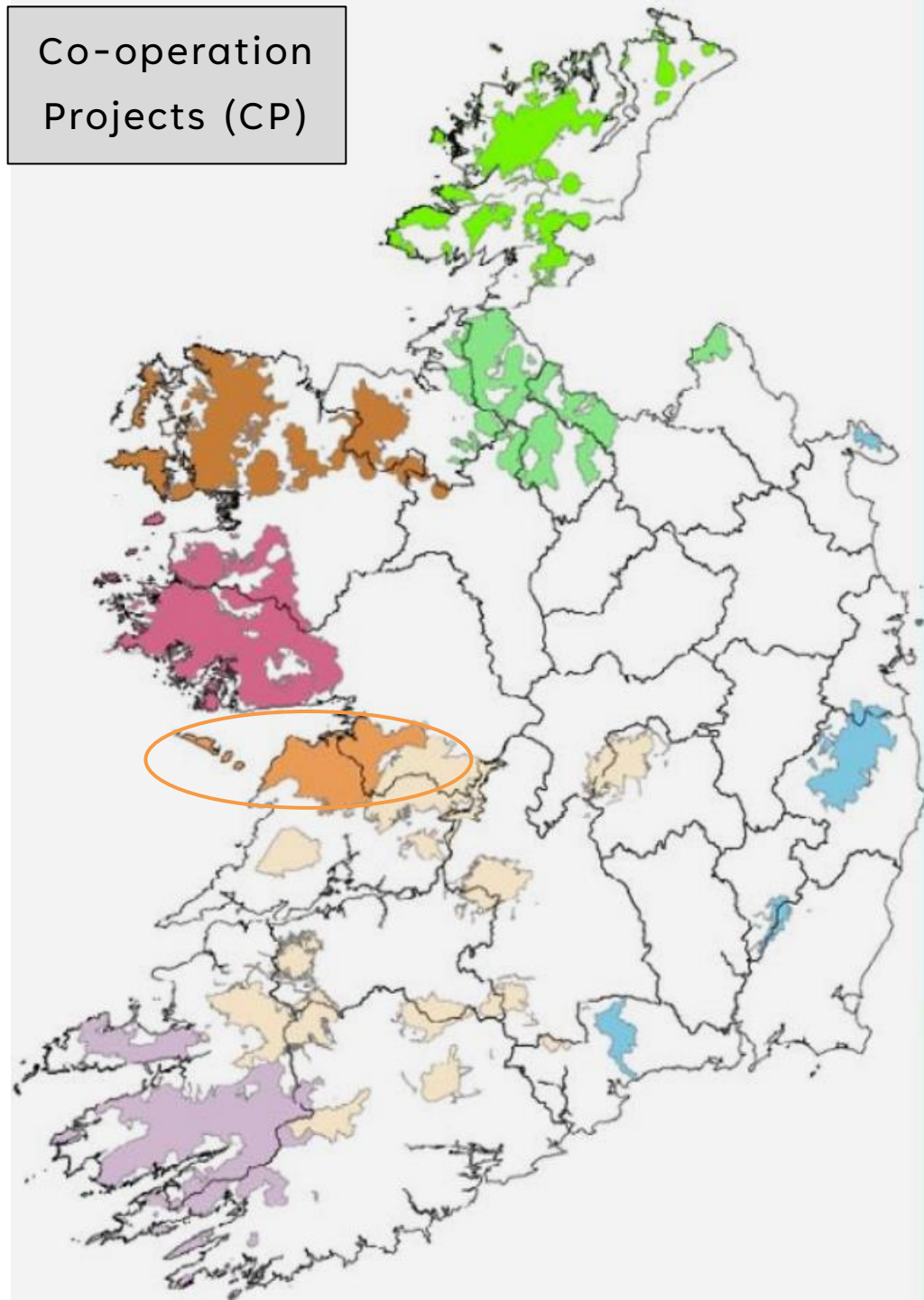


ACRES CP Burren Aran

Scheme overview & NPI targeting



Co-operation
Projects (CP)



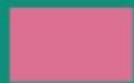
ACRES Donegal



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



**LOCALLY
LED SCHEME**

CP zone divided into 3 sub-regions:
Aran Islands, Clare Burren, South Galway





**LOCAL CP
TEAM**

CARRON OFFICE

065 7089000

info@acresburrenaran.ie

PROJECT MANAGER

Dr. Joanne O'Connell

Scheme is organised by
a local team at the
local level.

Contact the local office
and team with queries.

Primary contact – your
farm Advisor.

CLARE BURREN

Neal Jeuken

085 1483134

SOUTH GALWAY

Donal Hogan

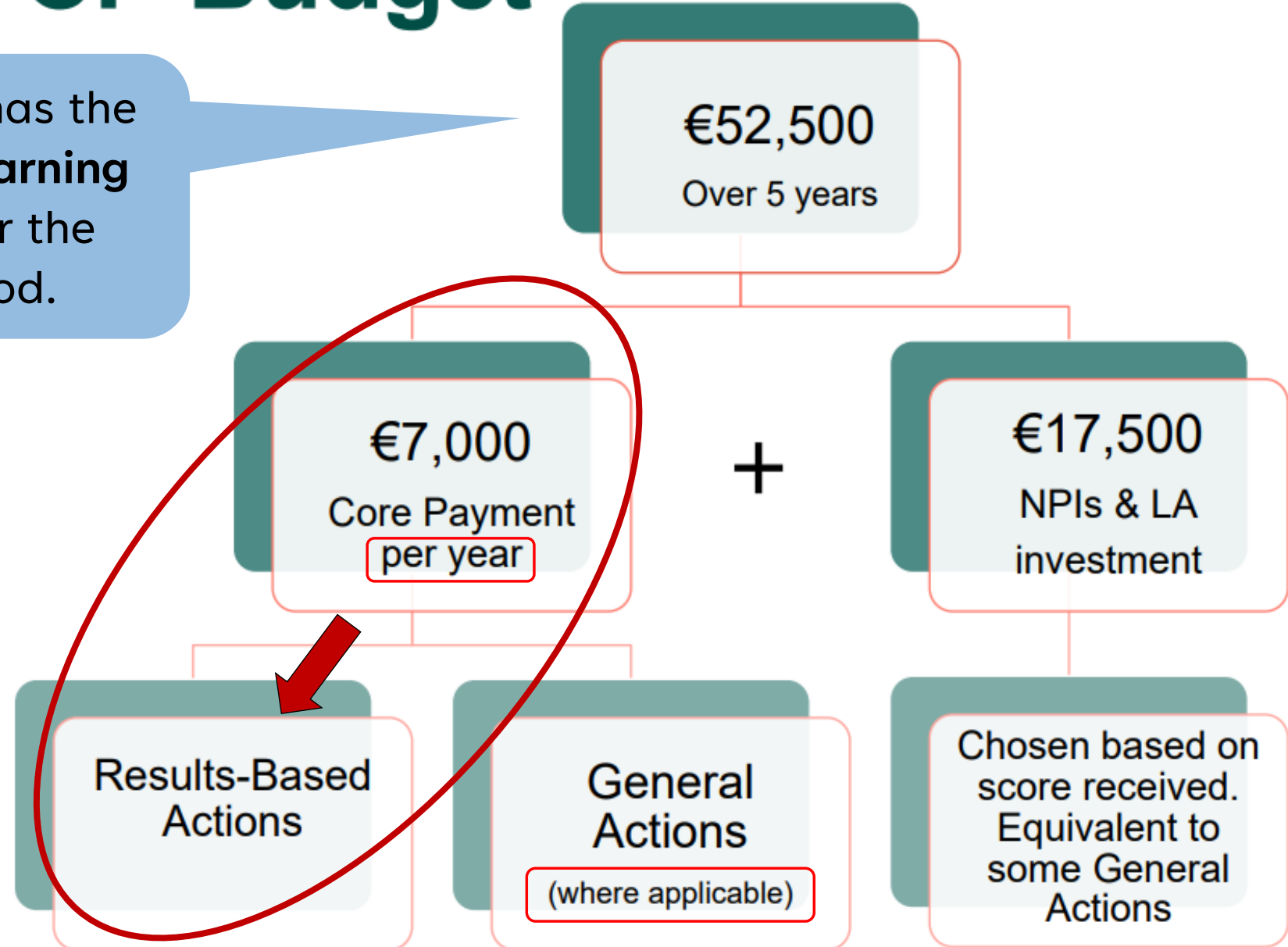
085 1414073

ARAN ISLANDS

Patrick McGurn

ACRES CP Budget

Every farmer has the potential of **earning** €52,500 over the 5 year period.



RESULTS-BASED APPROACH



FREEDOM TO FARM

Moves away from flat-rate payments for prescriptive management



PAYMENTS FOR WHAT YOU DELIVER

Payments linked to habitat quality, with up to €400/ha earnable



MARKET FOR BIODIVERSITY

Puts value on farm biodiversity, water quality & climate benefits



SCORING INCENTIVE

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

ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL FARMLAND PRODUCTS

WOODLAND

GOOD WATER
QUALITY

SPECIES-RICH
GRASSLAND

HEDGEROWS

WHILE STILL
PRODUCING
AGRICULTURAL
GOODS



THE CORE “€7,000” PAYMENT

Results-Based Payment Rates (Private land)								
Field Score	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	<4
Payment Rate (ha)	€400	€350	€300	€250	€205	€175	€150	0

Reduced Rate (ha) for OFS (Organics)	€150	€100	€50	Scores <7 are covered by the €250 OFS flat rate				
--	------	------	-----	---	--	--	--	--

Commonage Rates								
Field Score	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	<4
Payment Rate (ha)	€220	€180	€145	€115	€90	€70	€60	€50 (participation pay)

Commonage <10ha	€120/ha flat rate payment (with Commonage Farm Plan)							
-----------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



FIELD SCORING

All fields are due to be scored by your Farm Advisor in the 1st, 3rd and 5th years of the scheme

Declaration in years 2 and 4 stating scores are the same as previous year

What do the scorecards look for?

Farmer name: _____ Surveyor: _____
 Field number: _____ Survey date: _____
 Business ID: _____

Dominant grassland type: Wet grassland Dry grassland **Soil type:** Mineral soil Peat soil **Total Score:** (A+B) /100

A Ecological integrity

A1 What is the number of **positive indicators** in the field? Tick all positive indicators present below.
 Note all positive indicators present as you walk a 'W' through the field.

Positive indicators: (tick those present)

<input type="checkbox"/> Bedstraws & Stitchworts	<input type="checkbox"/> Lady's smock (Cuckooflower)	<input type="checkbox"/> Orchids	<input type="checkbox"/> Sphagnum & Branched mosses
<input type="checkbox"/> Bird's-foot-trefoil	<input type="checkbox"/> Lesser spearwort	<input type="checkbox"/> Ox-eye daisy	<input type="checkbox"/> Tormentil (Common & English)
<input type="checkbox"/> Carline thistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Louseworts (Common & Marsh)	<input type="checkbox"/> Purple loosestrife	<input type="checkbox"/> Umbels large (and/or Common Valerian, Common hogweed)
<input type="checkbox"/> Cuckoo's nest	<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh marigold	<input type="checkbox"/> Ragged robin	<input type="checkbox"/> Umbels small (Pignut, Yarrow, Wild carrot)
<input type="checkbox"/> Eyebright	<input type="checkbox"/> Meadow saffron	<input type="checkbox"/> Scabious (Devil's bit)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Composites (Cat's ear, Hawkweeds, Hawkbits & Goat's beard - not Dandelion)
<input type="checkbox"/> Field poppy	<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh thistle	<input type="checkbox"/> Sorrel (Common & Sheep's)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Flag Iris
<input type="checkbox"/> Heathers	<input type="checkbox"/> Meadowsweet	<input type="checkbox"/> Small rushes (Spike, Woodrushes, Heath)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow rattle (Hay rattle)
<input type="checkbox"/> Kidney vetch	<input type="checkbox"/> Meadow thistle		
<input type="checkbox"/> Knapweeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Mints (all)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lady's mantle			

Are there different native wildflowers present?

A2 What is the cover of all positive indicators (listed above) throughout the entire field?
 Cover is the proportion of the field taken up by all positive indicators present.

Low: None present or you can take several steps without encountering any positive indicators at all.	0
Medium: You encounter several different positive indicators with every step taken (and in between steps).	10
High: You encounter many different positive indicators with every step taken (and in between steps).	20
Very high: You encounter multiple different positive indicators with every step taken (and in between steps).	25

Are these wildflowers common?

A3 What is the combined cover of **negative indicators/weeds** throughout the plot? (tick if present)

<input type="checkbox"/> Docks (NOT small sorrels)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rhododendron	<input type="checkbox"/> Himalayan balsam
<input type="checkbox"/> Thistles (Creeping & spear)	<input type="checkbox"/> Common Nettle	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Toadflax
<input type="checkbox"/> Perennial Rye-grass	<input type="checkbox"/> Field Bindweed	<input type="checkbox"/> Blackberry
<input type="checkbox"/> Ragwort	<input type="checkbox"/> Cowslip	<input type="checkbox"/> Blackberry
<input type="checkbox"/> Nettles	<input type="checkbox"/> Giant Hogweed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):

High >25%: Occurring in dense patches or abundant throughout the field. Very visible in the sward. -20
Medium: Occurring in patches or scattered throughout the field. Visible in the sward. -10
Low: Scattered. Plants not visible in the sward. 5

Are there (a lot of) weeds?

A4 **Vegetation Structure.** Note: If grassland is primarily grazed use A4(a) (including marsh fritillary suitability assessment); OR, if grassland is cut for hay or silage, use A4(b). Refer to the guidance for sward quality details.

A4(a) What is the vegetation structure in grasslands which are **PRIMARILY GRAZED?** OR **A4(b)** What is the vegetation structure in grasslands which are **CUT FOR HAY or SILAGE?**

Over-grazed: Sward short throughout with little variation in height of vegetation. Few plants in flower.	-10	Poor structure: No field margins present. Field margins are overgrown with tall vegetation.	-10
Moderate (over-grazed): Field has short sward with little variation in height of vegetation.	0	Moderate structure: Field margins present but overgrown with tall vegetation. Grazing or mowing is evident.	0
Good: Field sward medium height throughout with positive indicators flowering. Areas of taller and/or shorter sward also occur.	25	Good structure: Field margins present but overgrown with tall vegetation. Grazing or mowing is evident.	15
Moderate (under-grazed): Mostly tall vegetation. 50-75% of field has tall sward. Litter and dead vegetation occurring.	15	Good structure: Wide field margins present (2m+) and/or good headlands. Grazing of after-grass takes place providing variations in height of sward, sward does not look uniform in appearance.	25
Under-grazed: Rank vegetation present throughout the field.	-10		

What is the grazing regime? (or mowing)

A5 Marsh Fritillary suitability assessment in primarily grazed grassland

Numerous patches (at least quarter of the field), or majority of field with Devil's Bit Scabious? Yes No

Is the Devil's Bit Scabious present from ankle to knee height throughout? Yes No

A6 Field boundary quality. Assess the quality of the **WORST 30m** of field boundary quality.

Poor: Wire fence only or very poor quality field boundary present. 0
 5
 10

How are the field boundaries?

What is the dominant boundary in this field?

Dominant: Hedgerow Treeline Also present: Hedgerow Treeline Earth bank Stonewall Earth bank Stonewall Drainage ditch Wire fence Drainage ditch Wire fence

B Threats & pressures

B1 Is there any evidence of damaging activities to habitat, vegetation, or archaeology?

High: Damage occurring across a large area (>21%) or of a serious nature if confined. -30
Moderate: Damage occurring across a medium area (>6-20%) or of a moderate nature if confined. -20
Low: Damage occurring across a small area (<5%) or of a minor nature if confined. -10
None: No damaging activities. 0

Damaging activities: (tick relevant damage & describe in comments)

Damage from supplementary feeding Quarrying Boundary damage
 Damage to archaeological features Burning Removal of mature scrub/trees
 Inappropriate herbicide use Dumping Other (please specify):

B2 What is the level of risk to water quality?

High: -25 **Low:** -5
Moderate: -15 **None:** 0

Any damaging activities?

Risks to water quality?

B3 What is the extent of bare soil & erosion?

High: Excessive areas of bare soil within the body of the field. Bare soil may also be extending out significantly from the main field area. -20
Moderate: Bare soil present in patches or points. Bare soil may be caused by occasional vehicle/tractor access may be present. -10
Low: Bare soil more or less restricted to regular stock paths, 'pinch' points & small congregation areas. No soil loss. 10

Are there excessive areas of bare soil?

B4 What is the cover of non-native invasive species?

High: Abundant. Some species cover >25% of the field. -20
Moderate: Frequent. Some species cover 10-25% of the field. -10
Low: Scattered. Plants not visible in the sward. 0
None: No non-native invasive species present. 0

Non-native invasive species: (tick if present)

Rhododendron Himalayan balsam Tree Toadflax Blackberry Cowslip Field Bindweed Blackberry Giant Hogweed Other (please specify):

Any non-native invasive species?

B5 What is the extent of spreading immature scrub?

(This can be brambles, seedlings, scrub and trees generally lower than 1m in height and with a stem diameter of <5cm. Do not include established scrub.)

High: >25% of the field has immature scrub cover, some well-established saplings may be present. Field stock may be present. -20
Moderate: 10-25% of the field has immature scrub cover. -10
Low: Small patches of immature scrub or individual seedlings of immature scrub with overall cover of less than 10%. Grass growth easily seen underneath the scrub. 0

Is there (a lot of) encroaching scrub?

B6 What is the cover of bracken?

High: Very dense stands of bracken covering over half or more of the field, forming closed canopy. -20
Moderate: Dense stands of bracken covering 25-50% of the field, forming partial canopy. -10
Low: Scattered stands of bracken covering less than 25% of the field. 0
None: No bracken present. 0

Common management recommendations to pick from:

Continue current management of this high quality grassland.
 Control the occurrence and spread of invasive species. Consult with CP team regarding solutions.
 Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching scrub, supporting actions are available.
 Control the occurrence and spread of encroaching bracken.

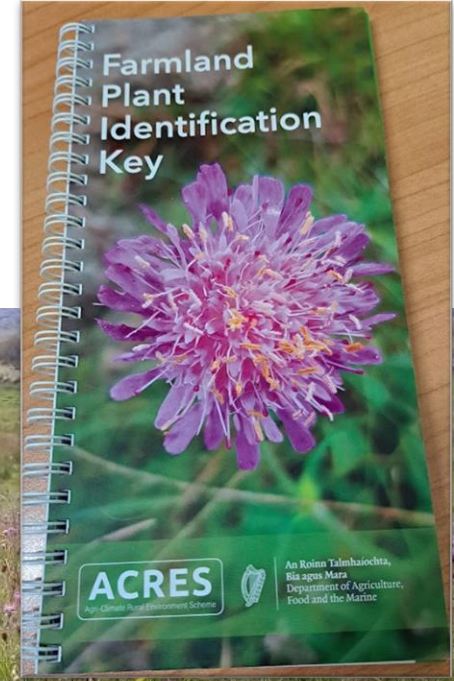
Consider reducing fertiliser inputs.
 Consider using supporting actions to slow or impede the flow of drains.
 Use stock to graze field more evenly.
 Improve stock management, supporting actions e.g. Fencing / drinking facilities are available.
 Move feeders / troughs regularly and keep away from drains and rivers.

Consider establishing a field margin.
 Field boundaries - reduce cutting.
 Field boundaries - consider planting gaps with suitable native species.
 Field boundaries - continue current management of high quality boundaries.
 No management advice.
 Other management advice.

Are there areas of dense bracken?

ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

Does the field retain native
wildflowers?
&
Does the grazing (or mowing)
regime still **allow at least some**
of these to flower?





THREATS & PRESSURES

Are there **problem plants** and any **problem activities** impacting the fields condition?

Are there **risks to water quality**?



Scorecards	What does well	Total Area	% of CP Area	No. of Fields
Grassland	Fields with lots of wildflowers, lighter grazing	27,002 ha	50%	10,758
Winterage	Good winter grazing, low scrub, no silage feeding	19,927 ha	37%	1,446
Rough Grazing	Wildflowers, with tussocks, rushes and scrub cover	4,755 ha	9%	1,456
Scrub/Woodland	Tree and scrub species with minimal disturbance	1,844 ha	3.4%	603
Peatland	High water table, few drains, no non-natives	523 ha	1%	69
Coastal	Sensitive grazing, minimal disturbance	159 ha	<1%	89
<i>Others</i>	Chough, Breeding Wader	152 ha	<1%	40

Generally, the scorecards reward:

- Less intensive management (less inputs)
- Lighter grazing during flowering period
- Minimal bare soil and disturbance
- Good-quality field boundaries
- Good water quality



‘Scorecard Summary Reports’ are due to be issued out to farmers by DAFM, and these should:

- Give a full **map overview** of all the scored fields
- List the scorecards and the **field scores** achieved
- List any **management advice & possible NPIs** (all optional)

For **HIGH** scoring fields:

- Aim to **keep doing what you’re doing**.
- Discuss with your advisor any possible tweaks to increase further

For **LOW** scoring fields:

- Are there certain management changes (grazing/mowing) that could help?
- Are there certain NPIs that could help address scorecard issues?

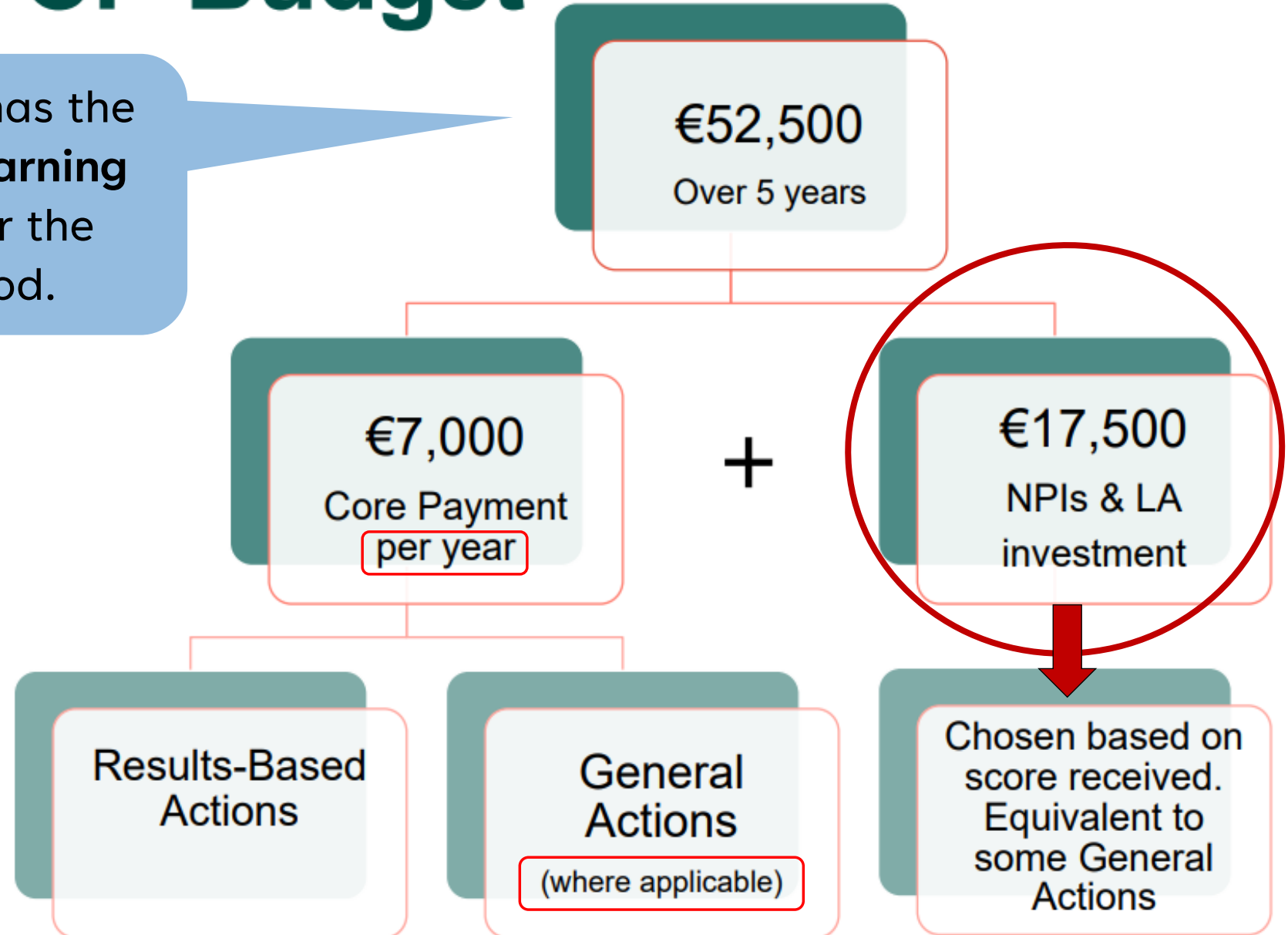
Also for LOW scoring fields:

- Any ‘improved’ fields will generally score low but these are needed for food production – perfectly fine!



ACRES CP Budget

Every farmer has the potential of **earning** €52,500 over the 5 year period.



NON-PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS



Actions which...

1. Help increase the field scores
2. Enhance biodiversity on the farm
3. Generate additional farm income

- A NPI plan can be drawn up by the farmer & advisor once per year.
- NPIs must have clear benefits for biodiversity, water quality, climate and/or cultural heritage.
- All work plans are looked at by the CP team to sort out any permissions (NPWS, NMS, Forestry) and to ensure local objectives are being met, as part of the necessary **‘screening’ process**.
- **NPIs are only approved from the date of issue of the NPI-AWP Approval Letter from the DAFM.**
- TAMS remains available for farm modernisation actions.

FIELD INFRASTRUCTURE NPIS

To be targeted for better **grazing** management

- Installation of Gate (€185) - 8ft min*
- Heritage Gate (€496) - 4ft min*
- Stone Wall Repair (€3/m internal or €1.50/m ext.)
- Fencing
 - Permanent Electric (€1.52/m)
 - Barbed Wire (€2.60/m)
 - Sheep Wire (€3.44/m)
- Solar Electric Fencer (€257/unit) - 0.4 joule min*

*costings based on minimum spec/size



NPIs FOR WATER QUALITY

To be targeted for **water quality** benefits

- Riparian Margin (€5.50/m); with Sheep Fencing (€13.93/m)
- Riparian Tree Planting (€13.93/tree) - min 10 trees
- Rainwater Catcher (€716/unit)
- Solar Water Pump (€1852/unit)
- Water Storage Tank (€798/unit) - 2500 litre min*
- Water Trough (€290/unit) - 70 gallon min*
- Pasture Pump (€289/unit)
- Culvert (€476/unit)

*costings based on minimum spec/size



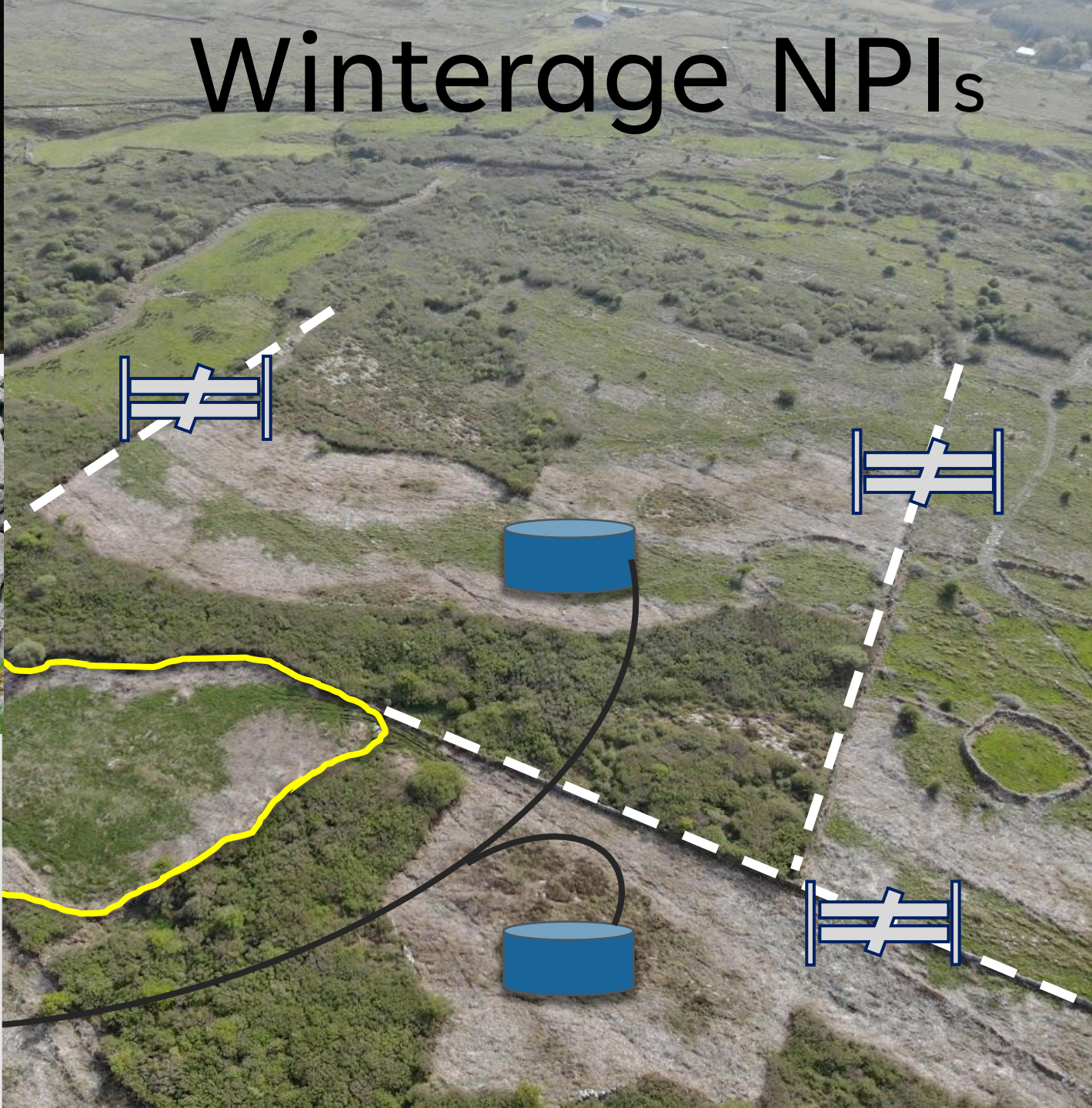
BURREN-ARAN CP ONLY NPIs

To be targeted for the management of **winterages** and species-rich grassland fields

-
- Mobile Feed Troughs (winterage-only) (€59/unit)
-
- Feed Storage Bins* (€175/unit) - 1 cubic metre
-
- Winterage Track Repair (existing route) (€3/m)
-
- **Scrub Control** (chainsaw) – areas & paths (€14,784/ha – but proportional to cover and area)
-

*costings based on minimum spec/size





Winterage NPIs

- Land that's easier to manage.
- Grazing can be more targeted.
- Cleaner water for your livestock.
- Improves the long-term prospects.
- **Higher scores and higher payments.**

HABITAT MANAGEMENT NPIS

- Bracken Control - Strimming (€835ha)
 - Bracken Control - Mechanical (€242ha)
-

- Conservation of Archaeological/Heritage Sites
€133/monument
-

- Field Margin 3m (€5.45m) - (non-CP fields only)
-



HABITAT CREATION NPIs

Creating and enhancing farm habitats
for the long term

- Tree planting options:
 - **3 trees** (€31)
 - 160 trees 0.05ha (€1247)
 - 300 trees 0.09ha (€2302)
- Planting Traditional Orchard (€1302) - 10 trees
- Planting New Hedgerows (€22/m)
- Hedge Rejuvenation (€18/m)



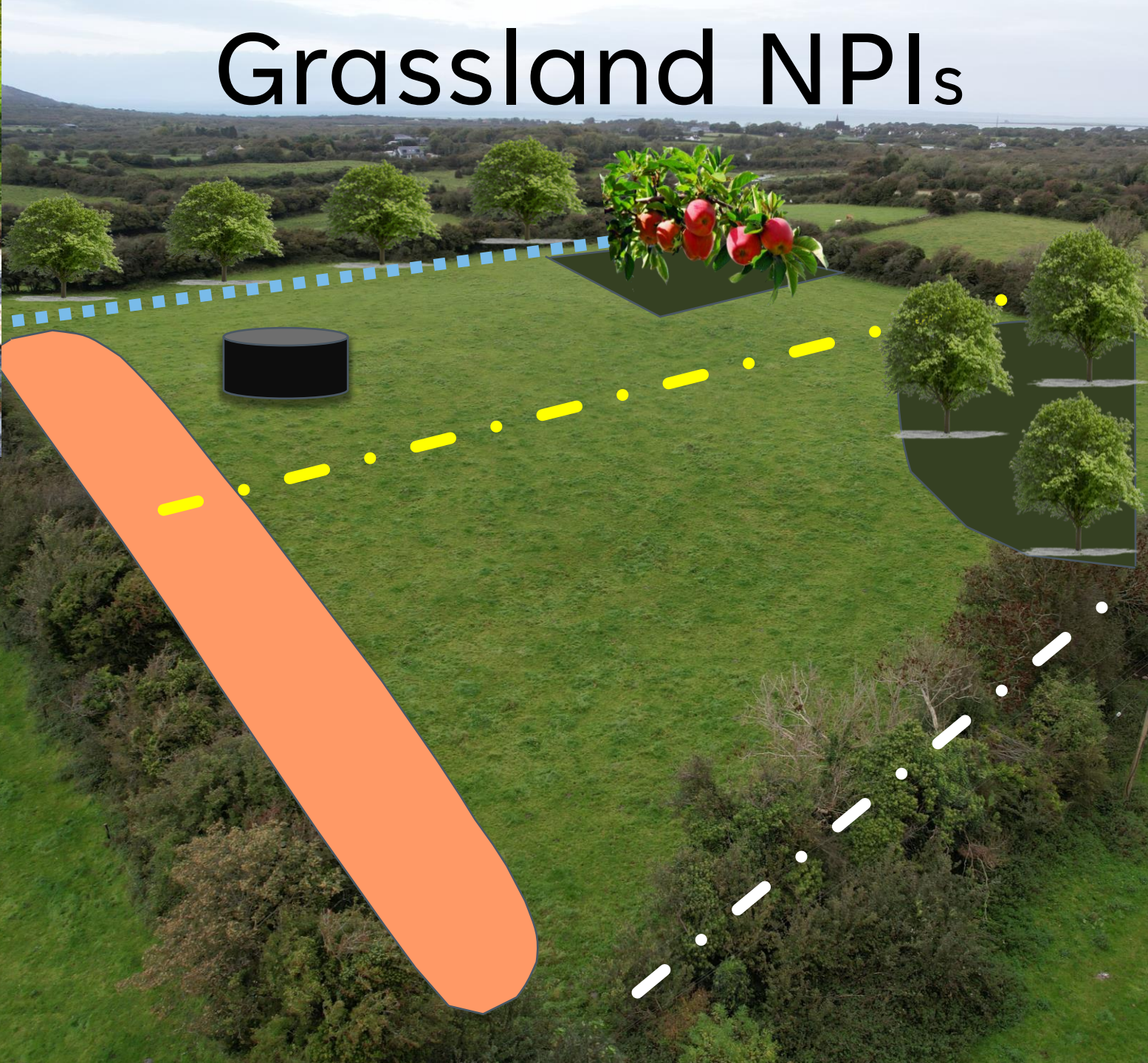
Seed Savers



Teagasc



Grassland NPIs



- HEDGE PLANTING**
- HEDGE INFILLING**
- WILD BIRD COVER**
- TRADITIONAL ORCHARD**
- PLANTING TREES**
- RIPARIAN MARGIN**
- WALL REPAIR**
- WATER TROUGH**

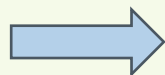
WILDLIFE SUPPORT NPIS

Actions to support declining and endangered wildlife

- Barn Owl / Kestrel Nest Box (€294)
- Bat Boxes (€56)
- Swift Boxes (€134)
- Rodenticide-Free Rodent Control (€272)
- Feed Storage Bin (€175)
- Winter Stubble (€119/ha)
- Wader Scrape (€256)
- Wild Bird Cover Strip - 9m/w (€540 per 100m)

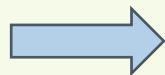


NPI SCHEME LIMITS



Please refer to the available **ACRES NPI Specification Document** for more detail on all actions.

TIME SENSITIVE NPIS



NPI Action type	Scheme Limit (max payable)
Barn Owl/Kestrel Box	6 boxes
Bat Boxes	15 boxes (1 NPI point = 3 boxes)
Traditional Orchard	2 orchards
Rodenticide-free Rodent Control	6 units
Swift Boxes	9 boxes (1 NPI point = 3 boxes)
Swallow Boxes	12 boxes (1 NPI point = 3 boxes)
Wader Scrape	5 scrapes
Solar Electric Fencer Unit	6 units
Solar Pump	2 units
Water Storage Tank	4 units

Table 1. Time Sensitive NPIS

NPI	NPI AWP Approval Date - NPI delivered in the year of approval	NPI AWP Approval Date - NPI delivered in the year following approval	Deadline to withdraw NPI action
NPI Bracken Strimming	on or before 15 May	after 15 May	15th June
NPI Bracken Mechanical	on or before 15 May	after 15 May	15th June
NPI Wild Bird Cover Plot	on or before 15 May	after 15 May	30th June
NPI Wild Bird Cover Strip	on or before 15 May	after 15 May	30th June
NPI Winter Stubble	on or before 15 May	after 15 May	30th September

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Large-scale/more complicated actions planned with the CP, contact the team directly or through farm advisor.

Proposed examples include (still under development):

- Invasive Species Control
- Machine Scrub Control
- Full Dry Stone Wall Rebuild
- Natural Spring Protection
- Wildlife Pond Creation
- Lesser Horseshoe Bat Roost
- Peatland Restoration Actions

- Anticipated application window is summer 2024



THANK YOU

QUESTIONS

