



Review of Section 40,
Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,
First Floor, 10 Ely Place,
Dublin 2.

11 December 2014.

My wife and I have planted c. 680ha of commercial forestry in thirteen locations in the West of Ireland. All of these properties are at risk of fire as all have at least a partial boundary with commonage or bogland ; this is not unusual in the West. All but 50ha are planted 20 years or more, outside the limit of cover for reconstitution. Since 1987 we have had four fires, all of which came in from outside the property. We have also fought a number of fires which threatened us.

Controlled burning is a high risk business as anyone who tried it knows and encouraging burning must lead to an increase in forest fires. You must have dry ground and a gusting wind to burn scrub – the very circumstances most likely for a fire to get out of control.

I have two points to make :

1. REINSTATE GRANTS FOR RECONSTITUTION AFTER A FIRE
2. ENFORCE THE LAW : In 27 years I have never been advised by a land owner that it is intended to burn land within a mile of my forest and I have never seen a prosecution reported in the local papers.

