SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ALTORE LAKE

SITE CODE: 000224

Altore Lake is situated approximately 11km north-west of Tuam and 4km south-west of Milltown, Co. Galway, between the R332 and the N17, in a lowland Karst area. The site is underlain by limestone with a thin covering of free-draining sandy boulder clay.

The site was formerly a lake that was drained around 1969. Therefore, the main habitats within the site are lowland wet grassland, freshwater marsh and reed-beds.

Species associated with the permanently wet areas of the site are Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*). The plants found in the marsh areas include Marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), Common Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*) and Amphibious Bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*). The area surrounding the former lake is lowland wet grassland with Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Marsh Ragwort (*Senacio aquaticus*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and Common Mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*).

The site is an important winter feeding site for Greenland White-fronted Geese (mean peak of 62, 1985/86-1989/90). Other winter waterfowl species recorded are Teal 80, Mallard 57, Lapwing 170, Curlew 60 (all figures are from 1 count during 1984/85 - 86/87). Teal, Mallard and Snipe also breed at this site.

Otters (an Annex II species listed in the E.U. Habitats Directive) occur on the site. This site is of importance because of the occurrence of Greenland White-fronted Geese and the presence of Otters. The site also provides habitat diversity with a small area otherwise surrounded by improved grassland.

5.11.2009