

Setting the Scene - The Land Managers' Perspective



Simon Thorp
Director,
Scotland's Moorland Forum

Scotland's
MOORLAND  **FORUM**

Introduction



Scotland's Moorland Forum



- Chairman: Lord Lindsay
- Aims:
 - Engage with upland / moorland issues
 - Promote improvements in policy, practice & management
- Cross-cutting debate
- Consensus building
- Collaborative work
- Thirty organisations
- Formed in 2002



The Heather Trust



- Scottish Charity
 - Membership organisation
- Seek to Promote Integrated Moorland Management
- Working throughout the UK
 - Work with IUCN UK PP
- Meeting 1st October
 - Finzean, Aberdeenshire
- In England:
 - Best Practice Burning Group
 - Bog-athon visits



The Approach



Landowners' Concerns



- Do not understand what the fuss is about
- Their peatlands do not need to be restored.
- Feel excluded by the language
- See the interest in peatland as a threat
 - More intervention in the conduct of their businesses
- Dislike being branded as the cause of problems
- Unable to see any benefit from getting involved in peatland management.



- Bog-athon
 - Three moors in three days – core group from BPBG
 - Seeking to defuse tensions introduced following the Natural England UER
 - Compared issues on different moors
- Some conclusions
 - Input from the landowner / manager crucial to success
 - Issues: historical context, current management
 - Site specific solutions are essential
 - ‘Sphagnum is king’
 - Keep all tools available - mouth, match, machine (+ sprayer)
 - Encourage intelligent, sensitive use
 - Knowledge gaps

Landowners' Potential



- ‘Part of the solution, not the problem’
 - ‘Love a Landowner’
 - All too often seen as the villain
 - Not (always) resistant to change
- Private sector capable of delivering solutions
 - Need to have required output explained
 - Use entrepreneurial skills
 - Make use of available tools



Private Sector Response



Private Sector Response



Landowners' Potential



- ‘Part of the solution, not the problem’
 - ‘Love a Landowner’
 - All too often seen as the villain
 - Not (always) resistant to change
- Private sector capable of delivering solutions
 - Need to have required output explained
 - Use entrepreneurial skills
 - Make use of available tools
- What’s in it for me?
 - Benefits do not always need to be financial
 - Take time to explain benefits in land management terms



Breaking Down the Barriers - 1



- Language
 - Explain the peatland story in land management terms
- Presentation
 - Blanket bog / deep peat

‘More than just a bog’



Breaking Down the Barriers - 1



- Language
 - Explain the peatland story in land management terms
- Presentation
 - Blanket bog / deep peat
 - How much peat in Scotland is covered in bog pools?
- Better Engagement with landowners
 - All peatland is owned and landowners control the management
 - Range of different owners – not all are supportive
 - More effort required

Breaking Down the Barriers - 2



- How to engage with the majority of peatland owners
 - Low levels of damage
 - More sensitive management – not restoration

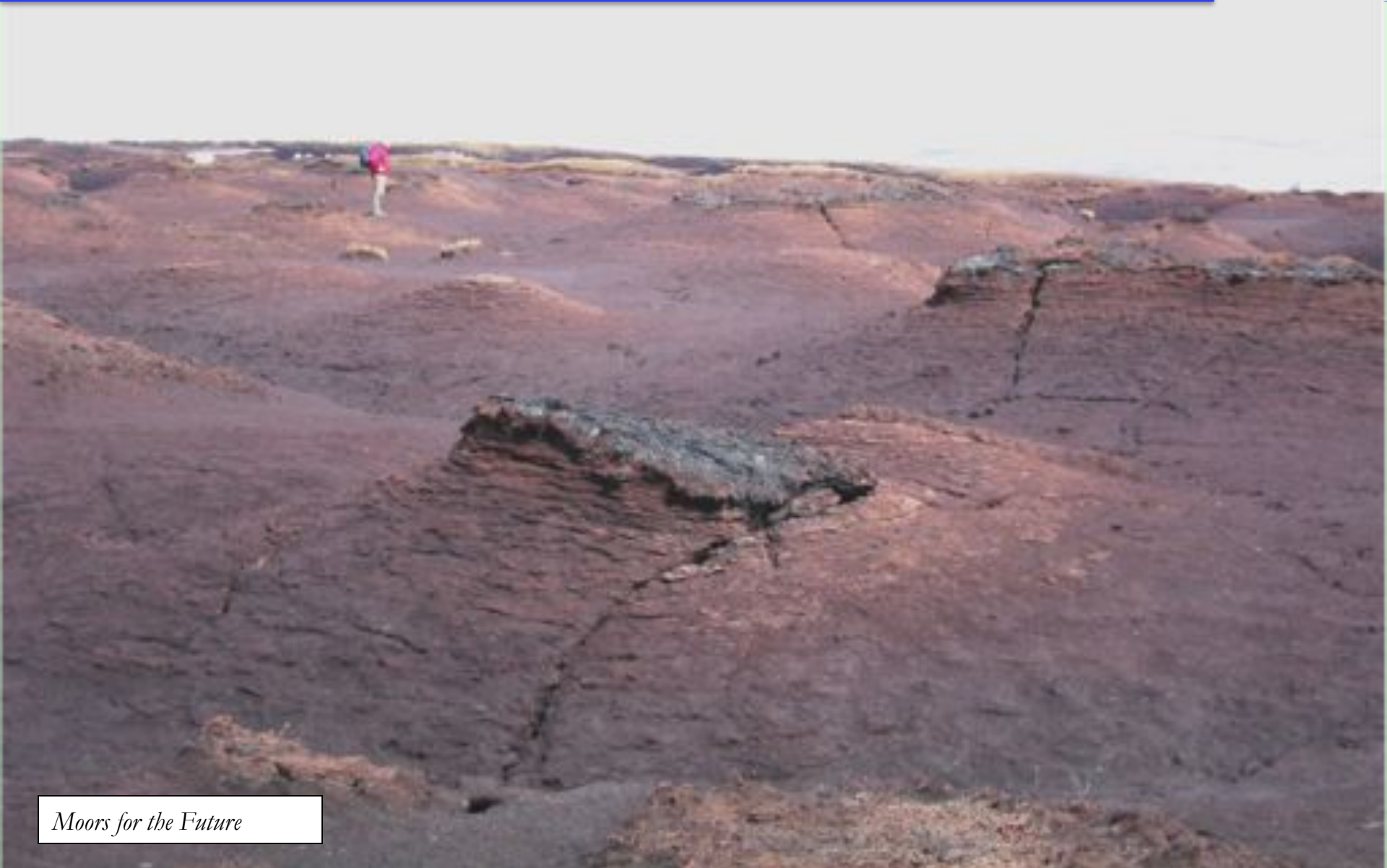
Erosion - 1



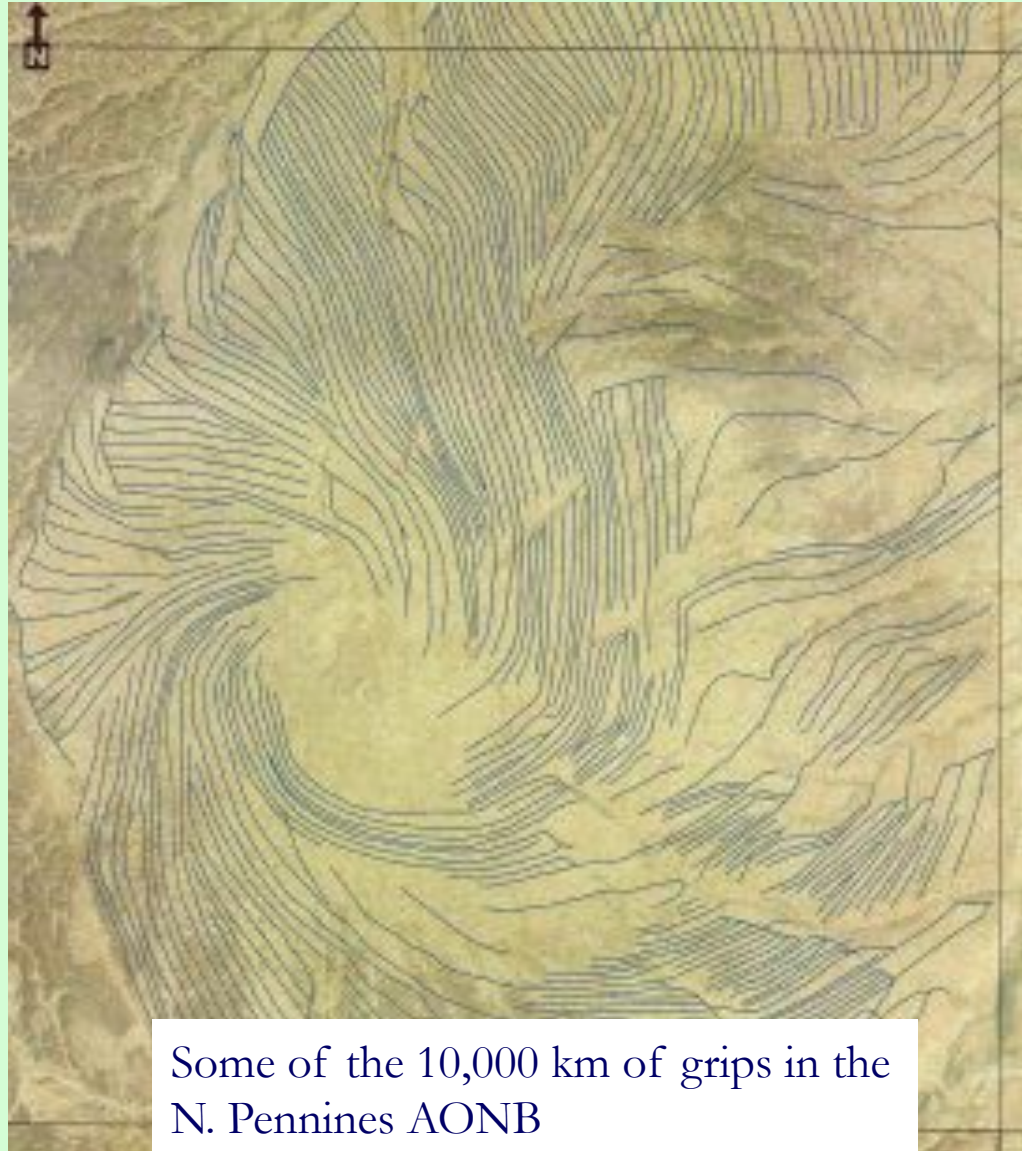
Erosion - 2



Bare Peat



Drainage



Some of the 10,000 km of grips in the
N. Pennines AONB



- How to engage with the majority of peatland owners
 - Low levels of damage
 - More sensitive management – not restoration
- Demonstration Sites / Pilots
 - Often spoken about, seldom delivered
 - Need to get serious – important way to reach landowners
 - Longer-term vision required
 - Allow exchange of views
 - Research opportunities
- Advice & Advisors
 - Value of local advisors
 - IUCN UK PP Demonstrating Success / Peatland Action

Demonstrating Success UK Peatland Restoration



- 24 case studies
- NGOs, business, agencies
- blanket bog, raised bog, fen



- Address concerns
 - Restrictions on management
 - Research the impact of rewetting
 - Heather beetle
 - Grazing
 - Grouse production
 - Livestock diseases – e.g. Saut

Addressing Concerns



- Sheep disease
 - Saut
- Linked to Bog Asphodel
 - Responds to wet ground
- Photo sensitivity
 - Blindness
 - Loss of ears





- Many owners & managers of peatland feel excluded
- Local solutions are required
- Some compromise will be necessary
- Use landowners & managers as an asset – they can make the changes
- ‘Part of the solution, not the problem’

