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### ***PRESS RELEASE***

#### **With photos**

117/11

#### **MINISTER OF STATE MCENTEE ATTENDS**

#### **“ALTERNATIVE WOODLAND VENTURES” FIELD DAY AT STRADBALLY HALL**

Shane McEntee TD, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine with responsibility for forestry, today attended the “Alternative Woodland Ventures” field day, organised by the Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA) at Stradbally Hall, Stradbally, Co Laois.

Noting the theme of the field day ‘Alternative Woodland Ventures’ and the schedule organised by the ITGA and the hosts, the Cosby family, Minister of State McEntee commented, “*Events like today highlight the multi-faceted nature of forestry and the opportunities it presents*”. The Minister of State also noted the wide range of items included in the Field Day.

The Minister said that “*we often refer to the non timber benefit of forests, and rightly so, and today’s field day highlights one of the most important and widely appreciated - forest recreation. From small woodlands in our towns and cities to larger forests located in our countryside, forests are among Ireland’s most widely used recreational amenities. Irish woodlands and forests very often have layer upon layer of natural, historical and cultural heritage encompassing a wide range of features and attributes*” Consequently, they are hugely versatile, being suitable for a wide range of activities involving people of all ages and abilities, from afternoon strolls and family picnics to orienteering and mountain biking.

In addition, wider benefits also accrue to the surrounding community, as visitors from Ireland and abroad come into the area and visit other attractions and create welcome business for local accommodation providers, shops, pubs and restaurants. Minister of State McEntee “*also added that forest recreational amenities can contribute significantly to rural income, development and employment.*”

27 June, 2011



*Minister of State Shane McEntee TD opens the Irish Timber Growers Association field day to Stradbally Hall, Co. Laois on Friday.*

**Standing from Left to Right:**

Brendan Lacey, ITGA, Minister of State Shane McEntee TD, Thomas Cosby of Stradbally Hall- field day host, Donal Whelan, ITGA, John McLoughlin, SIF.

ENDS