

June Jones

**PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF
RHODODENDRON CONTROL AND
MANAGEMENT**

Now

- New funding now required. Can cope with £300 000 but not £3 000 000
- NT, NP, CCW get money to control patches
- Ask people their views and respond to them
- At the time there was ill feeling to the NT as there was a lot of burning being conducted
- The role of the Rhododendron Control and management committee now seen as:
 - New leaflet drop
 - Start up the campaign if new funds are sourced
 - Currently stagnant

Start of the process

- Beddgelert village is a tourist attraction because of rhododendron flowering in quiet period between holidays – MAY
- An open meeting was made for the whole community following information that Rhod was a problem, to inform the community of the extent of the problem
- CCW, NAT. PARKS came and informed communities
- The first meeting was crucial
 - Informed the local people of what it would do to livestock
 - Began airing a contentious issue
 - Questionnaires sent to all villagers: where would they like to be kept, where would they like to see it removed

Consolidation

- Beddgelert management group formed following the meeting
- All sectors covered, and all possible funding bodies included too: NP, CCW, NT,
- Good success in changing attitudes of villagers – continued early phase of meeting and communicating
- Thought about replacing *R. ponticum* with another *R.* species

Outcomes

- Tried to investigate commercial or money making ideas for Rhododendron.
- Villagers surprised at best money making idea from Rhod was not charcoal but floristry
- However, too many flowers would be required (1 container per week), and the plants would have to be managed to produce a certain height and quality of spray.
- Success in ensuring people now not growing *R. ponticum*
- People trying to control *R. ponticum*
- Important to communicate with and educate villagers by use of leaflets as to control strategies