

NFM Community of Practitioners

June 2021 Event

Date: 10th June 2021, 1000 – 1300

Location: Online using Zoom

Focus: *Stakeholder Engagement – using experience and innovation to develop and sustain successful catchment wide NFM partnerships.*

Presentations & Questions:

1. Fiona Sugden and Una McMahon (Environment Agency): Approaches to stakeholder engagement for Leeds FAS NFM - successes and lessons learnt.

- **David Kennedy, (Environment Agency):** What is the target water volume reduction for the NFM work?
 - **Fiona responds:** 5% flood reduction in flood water in the city center. Recently modelling told us that whilst it is a lot, it is achievable. They will be sharing their modelling results soon. It has been helpful for identifying areas of NFM priority.
- Audience members keen to see modelling outputs.
 - Suggested paper by David Kennedy (open access) outlining the effectiveness of tree planting for flood mitigation: **Assessing the significance of wet-canopy evaporation from forests during extreme rainfall events for flood mitigation in mountainous regions of the United Kingdom (Chappell et al. 2020).**
- Roger Nowell: (1) I presume that you are adding extra resilience on top of flood defenses? I.e. Have you got a level of protection already and are not starting from scratch? It would be interesting to know what quantities of resilience the measures are seeking to achieve. (2) Where are resources coming from when majority is taking for traditional defenses?
 - **Fiona responds:** Our flood reduction target is set on climate projections to enhance protection and they are funded by Leeds City Council. However, there is ongoing work to attract further funding.

2. Laura Farquar (Environment Agency): Virtual site visit to Brownlee Centre, University of Leeds

- What are the modelled benefits for flooding of a semi-urban project of this size?
 - **Richard Grayson** (University of Leeds) responds: As far as I am aware, we have not done any specific modelling of the site yet. I imagine we will aim to try and get this done through a student project at some point.

3. Jonathon Dent, York St Nicks – Sustained long-term engagement.

4. Eleanor Shipp and Dr Janet Richardson, iCASP – NFM Monitoring guidance toolkit.

5. Bede Mullen, Slow the Flow – Volunteers and maintaining organizational momentum.

- How has the uptake been for landowners volunteering land through the website? - Suzie K
 - **Andy Bray (Calder Rivers Trust)** that is something our Farm & Rural Liaison Officer is doing, working closely with the South Pennine Farmers group.

6. Jenny Broomby, JBA – Broughton Hall

7. **Suzie Knight, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – Upper Aire stakeholder engagement**
8. **Kate Bailey, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – Catchment partnerships**

Discussion notes:

Engagement Gaps

- **Jenny Armstrong:** Regarding stakeholder engagement in NFM across Yorkshire, do you feel that there is any group or area of society that is missing in the conversation? Do we need more political agents, or specific age groups?

Political engagement:

- **Andy Bray:** Working on Calder Catchment – the value of NFM in terms of flood mitigation and multi-benefits – isn't fully understood at a political level – is there a way for practitioners to be engaging with local government in a more effective way to get them on board and engaged?
- **Jonathan Moxon:** we need to think about existing networks and political engagement on a big scale. It would be helpful if people could share their connections. What we have not taken key issues raised by COP and taken it to the wider forum. We need to consider the right approach for political engagement.
- **Hugh Clear Hill:** Many different Politicians so it is important to identify what floats their boat to help with recognition and persuasion of the importance of upstream work.
- **Jenny Armstrong:** how can we streamline bureaucracy?
- **Billy Coburn:** Thames 21 had very good relations with Local Authorities - regular meetings with Planners to get environmental permits resulted in 106 agreements.

Upstream – downstream engagement

- **Jim Smith:** Forestry Commission – has anyone done any work or engagement with landowners or farmers in upper catchments with recipients of landowners in lower catchments?
- **Jenny Broomby:** responds that she attended an event in the Yorkshire Dales which involved practitioners and a couple of people up from Otley to learn about NFM work upstream. Otley people came away from the event much more convinced about NFM activities upstream. This is helpful to 'sell' the benefits of NFM.
- **Jenny Armstrong:** should we speaking about NFM in terms of flood reduction, or shall we include links to well-being and multi-benefits as well?
- **Matt Hodkin responds:** The Innovation Resilience Project is all about making these connections. One aspect is the funding side but also the recognition and appreciation from downstream stakeholders of work that upstream landowners are doing.
- **Hugh Clear Hill:** there is a lot of discussion about the links between rural and urban (upper and lower). The White Rose Forest project is now extended to the whole of North Yorkshire looking at the impacts of upstream NFM and benefits. Also, there are links between wider health benefits and the carbon agenda which are important, and it all needs to be pulled together.
- **David Kennedy:** the key to engaging your critical stakeholder group e.g. Landowners, will be your link via catchment sensitive farming officers, so that as ELMs comes online it will open up

potentially significant funding for NFM activity, and importantly, will enable landowners to access payment rates for this work, something that is often a barrier. In addition, this potentially will also allow maintenance payments which will help offset some of your liability issues.

- **Andy Bray:** That becomes difficult when you are not in high priority CSF (Catchment Sensitive Farming) areas. Natural England do not assign staff to these areas, e.g. all of Calderdale and Kirklees. But I agree, supporting landowners and farmers in accessing land management support is essential. There is a lot still in the air at the moment with ELMs opportunities.

Future event ideas/next steps:

- **Coastal NFM**
 - **Duncan Fyfe** – widely perceived that there are few opportunities for NFM on the coast – underexplored topic area that project partners are dealing with (Scarborough, East Riding). They have lots of challenges with concrete walls. Can we explore this?
 - **Response from Jim Smith:** North Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership in East Yorkshire – nature-based solutions development in progress – lots of interested in natural capital and sea grass for carbon capture Etc.
- **Political engagement**
- **Upstream/downstream partnerships**
- **NFM monitoring (funds and best practice?)**