



TYNE CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP

7 February 2023 9.30am – 12:00

Pandon Room, Newcastle Civic Centre, Newcastle

Present: Ceri Gibson (Chair (TRT)), Rebecca O'Connell (EA), Jimmy Young (GMBC), Gayle Wilson (GMBC), Duncan Hutt (NWT), Zoe Lewin (DCC), Steven Lipscombe (NNPA), Natalie Rutter (NCityC), Abi Mansley (NCountyC), Hellen Hornby (Groundwork), Steven Thompson(NW), Darren Varley (NCityC), Rachel Penn (WT), Stephen Brend (DWT), Katy Valleley (NU), Amanda McKeivitt(EA), Shaun Holland (STC), Tom Stevenson (SCC), Jo Wilkes (TRT), Liz Walters(TRT)

1. Attendees arrive

2. Welcome Ceri Gibson

Thanks to Liz Walters for arranging the meeting and Darren Varley for organising the venue. Attendees introduced themselves.

3. WINEP workshops update received after the meeting, Ceri Gibson TRT

All projects submitted through the portal have been assessed.

Catchment and nature-based schemes have been considered for all wastewater projects across the region. These are predominantly focussed on phosphate reduction in line with WINEP drivers. Eight C&NBS schemes have been submitted as preferred options for consideration by NW. These are in Till/Tweed, Northumberland, Wear and Tees.

Proposals for clean water issues, INNS and land-scape scale catchment resilience projects have been submitted for 25YEP and Habitats Directive drivers. EA and Ofwat should provide feedback and comments on the submitted proposals in Spring (March- May 2023)

No information is lost from this stage of the process. Project ideas will be reviewed with potential leads as opportunities arise.

Phase 2 for another 2 years has been agreed. NECH will be funded to continue facilitate delivery of catchment schemes. Workstreams will be different from phase 1 and will cover; refinement of WINEP options, stakeholder engagement, procurement and further investment.

Specifically for the Tyne Catchment:

NWL acknowledge the degree of interest and activity in the Ouse Burn catchment. Ouse Burn sub-Catchment Partnership will be supported to develop an Integrated Plan and continue to develop the CaSTCo demo (linked to the Ofwat national programme).

Extending sediment evaluation throughout the North Tyne is considered favourable by NWL.

The NECH team will get back to partnerships with more detail by the end of February 2023.

ACTION Ceri to circulate final list of Tyne projects

4. Rede Sediment Sampling projects Katy Valleley MRes student, Newcastle University

Katy detailed her key interests and course details. Her Masters in Research is centred around a partnership project between TRT, EA and NU. Which combines river ecology and geomorphology, the course finishes in Aug but the research may be continued through another MRes or a PhD.

Freshwater pearl mussels (FPM) are a keystone species present in the River Rede. The hypothesis of the research is that sediment is a key aggravator of FPM which is a very sensitive species and can be subject to catchment-specific decline. Two elements of the research:

- Quantify the fine suspended sediment inputs to specific tributaries and the main channel
- Land use and erosion risk modelling looking at tributary risk factors eg slope, land use, size and calculate how much sediment per m² and potentially identify where it is coming from.

The sediment sampling is taking place at 11 sites in the upper Rede. There are two single upstream control sites and 9 downstream locations at significant tributaries. Each of these has two samplers, one installed in the tributary and the other 50m upstream of the confluence in the main channel.

The samplers resemble 'torpedoes' which have been secured to the river bed pointing upstream. The velocity of the water is halted within the sampler, water outflows whilst the sediment remains in the tube. This is collected monthly, filtered and cooked at 40°C creating a solid sediment mass whilst preserving the clay particles.

The modelling element of the project is still to be conducted.

Volunteers welcome to help with sample collection email k.valleley1@ncl.ac.uk

DISCUSSION:

- NWT work at Whitelee Moor to hold back sediment
- Phytophthora in alder tree in Rede catchment
- Water crowfoot study identify clean water sites in NorthumberlandNP

ACTION

- Contact Katy if you wish to assist with sample collection k.valleley1@ncl.ac.uk
- Katy to present research results in September

5. South Tyne Sediments projects Jayne Lovegreen (NW)

Unfortunately Jayne was unable to attend today's meeting.

6. Ryton Willows and Parsons Haugh Estuary Edges Project, Hellen Hornby (Groundwork)

Joint project with Gateshead MBC following a successful bid for FCERM funding, PS and GW are key contacts at the LA. Ryton Willows is upstream from Newcastle on the Gateshead side of the Tyne. Groundwork is supporting the LLFA in mitigation for past flood defence and dredging works. Groundwork are carrying out a feasibility into habitat improvements and river restoration. Initial ecological, habitat and biodiversity profiling has been carried out and there is potential onsite for the creation of saltmarsh and wetland estuarine habitats over a large area.

At Ryton Willows, the Tyne has a steep engineered bank and very narrow mudbanks. There is rock armour present which prevents natural regeneration. There is potential to reconnect parts of the site to the river although there are a variety of constraints eg pylon, housing, gas mains, rail and the Keelman's Way. Old maps have shown the change in the river over the past 200 years and phase 2 surveys identified the need for hydrology and geological investigations and a Preliminary Ecological Assessment for bat, great crested newt, otter and water vole surveys. Fish surveys in the main river have demonstrated a lack of marine and estuarine species, the water here is predominantly freshwater. There are opportunities for reconnecting the estuary to the site including historic channels and deculverting a stream.

The preliminary proposal for the site includes scalloping the estuary edges, deculverting the stream and using it to create pools and scrapes; these proposals will be put out to consultation.

DISCUSSIONS

- Has climate change been considered in the design?
- Consider re-routing the public access (Keelman's Way)?
- Involve public in consultation?
- Use of site for BNG or other funding eg carbon-offsetting
- Scrub habitat considered?

ACTIONS

EAW to share concept restoration plan of Parson's Haugh and Ryton Willows

7. Team Valley Flood Alleviation Scheme, Amanda McKeivitt (EA)

This project has several elements: Eslington Park culvert and weir removal; Kingsway Culvert fish passage improvements; Lady Park Burn trash screen; low, linear flood defences through the Trading Estate; and NFM in the upper catchment.

A pre-app has been submitted to Gateshead MBC and the final business case will now be completed in April not March, due to the need for additional modelling, further work to complete the design and the wait for additional guidance on biodiversity net gain.

The Lady Burn Park trash screen work has been completed.

Eslington culvert blocks frequently and the trash screen needs replacing. Network Rail has placed lots of restrictions on the design, the final design will include a concrete U-trough underneath both

Network Rail bridges. This work is planned for summer 2023 but permissions are still being sought from Network Rail, Marine Management Organisation and the Environment Agency (FRAP). Two new bridges will be built, one for the cycle path and one to replace the footbridge at Norwood.

At the trading estate there are a variety of flood protection measures planned including high kerbs, features on buildings and low embankments. An ancient woodland next to 20 Pound Close is providing a challenge as flood protection features need to have as little impact on the woodland as possible.

The 'gold standard' potential fish and eel passage improvements at Kingsway Culvert have been demonstrated to increase flood risk. So investigations are ongoing as to what measures can be fitted to improve fish and eel passage but not affect flood risk.

Natural Flood Management features are planned at Black Burn, Target Woods and Low Urpeth farm. The last two sites are a good fit for biodiversity net gain (BNG), have only one landowner but the lack of guidance on BNG is holding these projects up.

The proposed works at Lamesley have been demonstrated to have minimal flood risk reduction. There is scope for environmental enhancement for example reinstating historic meanders and placing NFM features such as leaky dams. There are many constraints on this site as found by NWL who are building a rising mains and been faced with several challenges. The archaeological work is likely to cost many hundreds of thousands of pounds and work has stopped over the winter to avoid disturbing birds. Archaeology surveying quotes for the TVFAS work are due imminently. The work at Lamesley will focus on the left bank and Scott Mackenzie has suggested some minimal interventions which would not impact the archaeology.

Hedley Hall and Ridley Gill schemes are impacted by the delay for BNG guidance however discussions are ongoing about other aspects of these interventions. Other initial NFM sites are currently ruled out but funding may be found in the future. It is hoped that the full business case will be submitted in April, with construction starting in the summer. Detailed designs for Eslington and TVTE defences have been sent to BAM for pricing, National Highways have agreed a £650k contribution and sources of private funding are being explored by the project team.

DISCUSSION

- Archaeology on Lamesley
- Flood protection on the sides of Trading Estate buildings
- Engagement
- High cost of carrying out the baseline surveys for FPM, baseline BNG metric completion and assessment of the increase in BNG by consultants as compared to delivery of the interventions themselves

8. AOB

❖ *Naturally Native update from Steve Brend, DWT*

Steve is the Programme Manager for Naturally Native which is a 3 year National Lottery Heritage Funded Water Vole conservation project run as a partnership between Durham, Tees Valley and Northumberland Wildlife Trusts.

There are two main elements to the project:

- Habitat Improvement
- Mink control

The habitat management has three elements:

- Open up drainage canals that are too overgrown and create habitat suitable for water voles
- Create ponds adjacent to the Derwent and Tyne, there is some evidence which suggests mink travel along water courses and tend to ignore ponds. These could become a 'safe' space for water voles
- Several existing ponds have liners that prevent water voles from burrowing, the project intends to trial islands on these lined ponds where water voles can create burrows

In the spring summer of 2023 water vole surveys will be carried out across the 3 catchments. The project will be recruiting volunteers for this.

DISCUSSIONS

- Location of ponds on the Derwent
- Results of mink control carried out by the project
- Future plans for water voles in the region – short term maintenance project followed by a regional mink eradication project

❖ *Groundwork event Tyne Estuary sub-catchment partnership meeting 9th March*

❖ *Next TCP meeting 12th September*

❖ *CaBA end of year spreadsheet to complete with partners*