



We all have a part to play in looking after our becks, rivers, lakes and their surrounding habitats and as a land manager you can do much to make a difference to the quality of water.

The Conserving Coniston & Crake Project and South Cumbria Rivers Trust are working with farmers and managers across five catchment areas looking at ways in which positive changes can be made to how land is managed for healthier watercourses. These changes benefit farmers and their livestock as well as local communities and the surrounding environment. They will also help in compliance of the new *Farming Rules for Water 2018*. Carrying out improvements could enhance the capital value of your holding and increase opportunities for further grants in the future.

***Through the Conserving Coniston & Crake Project, South Cumbria Rivers Trust can advise, plan, project manage and fund a variety of practical options for you, saving you time and money and making improvements for your livestock and the environment.***

## Fencing and Gates

### Agricultural benefits of fencing

- Preventing loss of land by bank erosion. Plants that colonise the riverbank and are allowed to grow up have root systems that spread rapidly through the bank profile acting as a net which holds the bank together. If these plants are not allowed to grow up then, the root structures and soil anchoring net do not develop as well. This leaves the banks vulnerable to erosion and a loss of land. Fencing the water course allows the vegetation to grow up, a network of roots to develop slowing or halting the rate of land loss. This also reduces sediment runoff.
- Reduced health issues for livestock. If poaching along the soft riverbanks becomes severe, livestock are forced to wade through deep mud and soft soil to access the water course. This type of ground can cause injury or lameness in the livestock. Fencing the water course removes this problem. Water access points with hard material at their base can be installed as part of the fencing project to allow a safe access point or better still a water trough can be supplied away from the water's edge. This can also reduce the treat of water borne diseases.
- Livestock management. Fast flooding rivers can cause a problem for young livestock. Young lambs can easily be washed away downstream if they are caught in the torrent of flowing water. Additionally, some of the land owners and farmers we have worked with have found that fencing helps to corral livestock.
- Grazing on opposite river banks. Water course fencing can also provide a good barrier between you and your neighbours land and livestock on the opposite bank. Keeping livestock from other farms separate from those of your own can prevent the spread of disease between farm holdings.
- This can of improvement work can have a positive affect on applying for further environmental/ agricultural schemes and grants.



### Environmental benefits of fencing

- Reduces sediment inputs to the river so reducing sediment reaching downstream water courses resulting in the survival of more fish eggs and invertebrates downstream.
- Allows natural vegetation and bank habitat to develop.
- Tree planting to stabilise the bank and keep the river cool.

## Fencing and Gates

### Points to Note

- Small reduction in productive land but done in order to prevent significant loss into water courses.
- Possible loss in payments, though the work will be done as far as possible in a way so as not to affect payments from RPA. However, by creating an area of biodiversity interest environmental payments may become available.

### Conserving Coniston & Crake/South Cumbria Rivers Trust will

- Advise, plan and project manage the fencing and gate installation including any water course consent, planning permission and contractor liaison **for free**.



### Farming Rules for Water 2018

**From April 2018** all farmers in England will need to follow some new rules to protect water quality. The rules will ensure that farmers use fertilisers efficiently and avoid water pollution through surface runoff and soil erosion, standardising good farm practices that many will already be performing. There are eight new rules; five for managing fertilisers and manure and three for managing soil. The Environment Agency will be responsible for managing compliance with these new rules and will be carrying out checks.

### Catchment Sensitive Farming

Your local Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) Officer can also give training and advice on practical solutions tailored to you and your farm.

The CSF Officer can talk to you about the availability of grants, business solutions that save money & time as well as the environmental benefits to making positive changes.

### Here to Help You

Conserving Coniston & Crake and South Cumbria Rivers Trust can discuss options and offer solutions that meet you and your needs as long as there are benefits to the watercourses on your land. Installations have, on other farms, saved the land manager/farmer time and money and improved conditions for livestock and the wider environment.

We can advise, plan, project manage and fund a variety of practical options for you, on a one-to-one basis so will look at any other bespoke options for farming improvements that impact positively on water quality.

Together, we will review your current situation, identify potential opportunities and then develop an action plan.

More information sheets are available for:

- *De-culverting & beck re-naturalisation*
- *Stream crossings and tracks*
- *Bank erosion and EWS (engineered wooden structures)*
- *Feeding and drinking areas*
- *Reducing water loss and clean water separation*



### Contacts

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The Farmer Network - [www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk](http://www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk), National Farmers Union - [www.nfuonline.com](http://www.nfuonline.com)



Conserving Coniston & Crake is a 3 year HLF project with the aim of improving water quality, habitat and biodiversity in the catchment area, through conservation activities and community engagement. The project is supported by South Cumbria Rivers Trust, the Coniston & Crake Catchment Partnership and other partners - the National Trust and the Lake District National Park Authority. South Cumbria Rivers Trust, The Clock Tower Business Centre, Low Wood, Ulverston, LA12 8LY Office: 01539 530047 Registered Charity No.1114682

