

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.

South Cumbria Rivers Trust through Conserving Coniston & Crake 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.

Beck Crossings and Tracks

Agricultural benefits of beck crossings and tracks

- Installing a sheep/quad bridge to move livestock to and from the farm more easily, reducing erosion of the beck's banks and sediment run-off.
- Improving tracks help to you move about the farm more easily so saving time. It also reduces compaction and damage to soil.
- Installing even the simplest crossing points helps to reduce erosion of land and banking, protecting grazing land.
- There is less chance of livestock picking up water borne diseases or injuries from slipping on muddy banks. And in deep ruts.
- Reduce damage to farm vehicles and resultant maintenance costs and time.
- Addition installation of cross drains if appropriate.
- Less worry for you about complying with the new Farming Rules for Water 2018



Stream Crossing point installed on a small beck. Prior to installation the banks were steep and eroding from livestock and farm traffic. The banks were regraded to be less steep thereby improving ease of access and vehicle traction whilst reducing sediments entering the beck.

Improvements to existing tracks

- Installation of cross drains. These are particularly beneficial in preventing fast flowing water scouring and eroding trackway materials, creating potholes and ruts.
- There are several options for the installation of cross drains which can be assessed on a case by case basis working with the location, and the amount and type of traffic.

Beck Crossings and Tracks

Environmental benefits of beck crossings and tracks

- By diverting the flow off the track allows for sediment to settle out in the adjacent land, rather than running directly into water courses
- Reduction of bank erosion and sediment runoff, improving water quality and fish spawning areas downstream.
- Avoids damage and compaction of soil, reduces areas of poaching and sediment runoff.



A selection of solutions for improving tracks, improving access, livestock health and reducing sediment movement that were delivered to farms in South Cumbria



Points to Note

- Small reduction in productive land but improves many other aspects of farming practices.
- May affect RPA payments as the installation may be classed as a permanent ineligible feature.

Conserving Coniston & Crake/South Cumbria Rivers Trust will

- Advise, plan and project manage the installation of appropriate crossings and tracks, including water course consent, planning permission and contractor liaison for free.
- Install additional improvements such as fencing if appropriate.



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

South Cumbria Rivers Trust through Conserving Coniston & Crake 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*
- *Fencing and gates*
- *Bank erosion and EWS (engineered wooden structures)*
- *Feeding and drinking areas*
- *Reducing water loss and clean water separation*



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The Farmer Network - www.thefarmernetwork.co.uk

National Farmers Union - 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.

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