

Guidance: Groundwater protection position statements

Updated: Updated The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection.

These position statements describe the Environment Agency's approach to managing and protecting groundwater. They update Groundwater protection: principles and practice (GP3).

This document helps anyone whose current or proposed activities have an impact on, or are affected by groundwater such as:

- developers
- planners
- environmental permit applicants and holders
- water abstractors

Many of the approaches set out in the position statements are not statutory but may be included in, or referenced by, statutory guidance and legislation.

Environment Agency staff use these position statements as a framework to make decisions on activities that could impact on groundwater. This clear approach aims to remove uncertainty and potentially inconsistent decision-making.

Press release: Project launched to protect the Ouseburn River

Groundwork North East & Cumbria is working with partners from across the region to protect and preserve the upper part of the Ouseburn River.

The charity has secured £200,000 from the Environment Agency to fund the Ouseburn River Restoration Project.

Working with partners including landowners, communities, schools and local businesses, Groundwork will carry out a number of enhancements to the river and the surrounding environment to improve water quality through a number of environmental improvements.

The project will implement several physical measures to slow the flow of the river, including widening it at strategic points, sculpting areas of the river bank, altering meanders and installing silt traps.

In addition to the physical work, the Ouseburn River Restoration Project will

also work with farmers and landowners about how to manage fertiliser and sediment run off, which causes high levels of phosphorus in the river, this diminishes invertebrate life and affects all aspects of river life.

Lesley Silvera, Senior Project Officer at Groundwork North East & Cumbria, said:

It's fantastic that the Ouseburn River Restoration Project is now off the ground. Over the next two years, we will be working closely with third parties to improve the water quality and ecology of the river.

We'll also be looking to survey and eradicate invasive species, remove litter, monitor wildlife and plant trees, which will keep the river cool, create riverbank habitats and help prevent bank erosion.

We will be working in partnership with Newcastle University, the Environment Agency and Tyne Rivers Trust to observe and measure water quality to gauge the success of the scheme, which will also inform future work on the river.

Lucy Mo, the Environment Agency's Project Manager responsible for funding this work added:

The health of our rivers is better than it's ever been with drastic improvements to water quality over the past 20 years. However, there is still more to do and by working with partners on projects such as the Ouseburn River Restoration Project we can play to different organisations' strengths and deliver more.

We're pleased to be part of this exciting project, which will improve in-river and bankside habitats, and will also give us more water monitoring data and analysis.

The work is funded primarily through the Environment Agency. Additional funding is from Groundwork NE & Cumbria, Northumbrian Water Ltd, Newcastle University. Partners include Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water Ltd, Natural England, Tyne Rivers Trust, Newcastle City Council and Newcastle University.

[Research and analysis: ACRE advice:](#)

application for a trial of GM Adenovirus 4 (16/R49/01)

This document is the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE's) advice to government in considering a [request from Imperial College London \(16/R49/01\)](#). The application is for a deliberate release of genetically modified virus (the vaccine) based on Adenovirus 4.

ACRE is satisfied that the trial will not have an adverse effect on human health or the environment.

News story: Focus on driving excellence in the nuclear sector

NSAN was established by nuclear employers and Government to address the skills challenges facing the nuclear sector. It provides a forum in which organisations can come together to discuss these challenges and develop solutions to address them. It currently has around 145 member organisations drawn from both the public and private sectors.

Ann McCall, Waste Management Director at RWM said: "Having worked closely with NSAN in recent months we are thrilled to be confirmed as a member. We are committed to maintaining and driving up skills within our organisation and we look forward to playing an active role within the Skills Academy."

NSAN works with employers in the nuclear sector to develop a range of solutions which can help train staff and support them in developing their skills. One example is the Nuclear Training Network, an online portal where staff can access a range of training courses.

RWM has recently produced a new e-learning training course which is now available via the NSAN portal. Aimed primarily at those involved in decommissioning and waste management, the course provides an overview of RWM, its role as the public sector delivery body for a geological disposal facility (GDF) and the support it provides to radioactive waste packagers. More than 150 people have already signed up for the course from across the nuclear industry.

Further information on the course can be found [here](#)

[Guidance: Higher Tier manual for 1 January 2017 agreements: Countryside Stewardship](#)

Updated: Passed 10 July deadline for late revenue claims and amendments.

Use the manual and addendum to understand the rules and conditions that apply to Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreements.

Use the options, supplements and capital items documents:

- to understand the rules for each option, supplement and capital item
- for advice on carrying out options, supplements and capital items

Mid Tier options, supplements and capital items which can be included as part of a Higher Tier application.

Use the terms and conditions document to understand the rules of the scheme.

Use the conversion guidance document to know how to convert land in year nine (of a ten year) Higher Level Stewardship to Higher Tier.

Use the record keeping document to understand what evidence you need to keep to show you're meeting scheme requirements.

Use the [Countryside Stewardship forms](#) to support your agreement.

The manual has been designed with portrait and landscape pages. To make sure these print correctly, select 'auto rotate' in your printer settings before you print.

Overlap of CS options with Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)

In 2018, you can overlap the following CS options with EFAs declared on your Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2018 application:

- [AB1 Nectar flower mix](#)
- [AB3 Beetle banks](#)
- [AB4 Skylark plots](#)
- [AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew](#)
- [AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble](#)
- [AB8 Flower rich margins and plots](#)
- [AB9 Winter bird food](#)
- [AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants](#)
- [AB15 Two year sown legume fallow](#)
- [AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix](#)

- [HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation](#)
- [OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture](#)
- [SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land](#)
- [SW3 In-field grass strips](#)
- [SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land](#)
- [SW6 Winter cover crops](#)
- [SW12 Making space for water](#)
- [WD3 Woodland edges on arable land](#)
- [WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land](#)

Your CS options that share land with BPS claims (known as 'double funding') will receive a reduced payment rate. You can find the rate in the page for each listed option, under 'How much will be paid', and in the manual (section 3.3.1).

From 1 January 2019, you will not be able to overlap the 19 CS 'double funding' options with EFAs declared for BPS. You can place the options and EFAs in the same land parcel but they cannot overlap.

You can include hedges in both CS options and EFAs without payment deductions.

Revenue claims

The deadline for Natural England to receive late revenue claims and amendments was 10 July 2018. Natural England will not accept any further revenue claims in 2018.

Contact

Contact Natural England for help with your agreement.

Enquiries

Natural England
County Hall, Spetchley Road

Worcester

WR5 2NP

Email
enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Telephone
0300 060 3900

Opening times: 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Find out about call charges at www.gov.uk/call-charges.