

**Biodiversity South West  
Woodland and Forestry Working Group Minutes**

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May at EA**

Present: Justin Milward (Chair), Emma-Rose Herrera (EA), Naomi Brookes (BioSW)

1. Apologies	Actions
Matt Boydell, Simon Tame, Sally Glass, Lynne Kenderdine, Steve Russell, Mick Bracken, Brian Muelaner, Colin Hawke, Deborah Elton, Matt Hamilton	
<b>2. Minutes and Matters arising</b>	
Minutes signed off as correct. Emma was welcomed to meeting as new Chair of BioSW, along with Simon Brenman of the South West Wildlife Trusts.	
<b>3. Exemplar Case Studies</b>	
Case studies on BioSW website – Action not progressed. <b>JM will update the Bovey Valley case study and forward to NB. NB to follow up progress with BM, ST and SR so case studies can be prepared for launch of BioSW website in July. All case studies to be received by June 27<sup>th</sup>.</b> The importance of a comprehensive set of links to and from website was emphasised – <b>NB to ask DE about FC and SW Ancient woodland and JM to approach CONFER. JM also to ask if Chris Roberts of CONFER would like to join group as industry representative.</b> implications of targeted funding.	<b>JM BM, ST,SR, NB NB JM</b>
<b>4. Regional HAP Targets – Native Woodland and Wood Pasture/Parkland</b>	
Discussion about regionally disaggregated targets proposed by NE on behalf of the England Biodiversity Group and in particular the Woodland Targets as circulated by FC. NB has to prepare comments from BioSW on these targets. The Woodland Trust have some particular concerns with approach 2, which sets targets for less wooded regions in inverse proportion to the ancient woodland area. If looking to enhance native woodland and reduce fragmentation, then it would be better to focus in areas that already have concentrations of ancient woodland. If approach 1 used and added to maintenance and restoration targets, then the figure of 17,000 hectares target for 2015 slots in well in-between 2010 and 2030 targets set by BioSW (which was based on NIWTS data). NB will summarise this discussion and submit along with other comments to NE.	
The Wood Pasture and Parkland figure for restoration/creation in the NE seems high. National Trust are doing quite a bit of work in region, but not this much, <b>NB to investigate what level of work they might achieve.</b> NE are updating the Wood Pasture database – WAPIS, and a pilot may be undertaken in the West Midlands. The way the target has been set in the paper is on the basis of very little data, and seems arbitrary. There is concern that it would be hard to defend. However suggest that this target is adopted and refined as and when more information is available.	<b>NB  NB</b>
<b>There was a national Wood Pasture and Parkland HAP group meeting held recently, if anyone from the group attended can they please feed back.</b>	<b>All</b>
BioSW will be signing up to national targets on basis that they are the bare minimum that we want to work towards, however the regional targets set in 2006 will be those that are actively promoted and used in this region. Definition of restoration needs to kept wide, particularly in terms of reporting, to capture the intent to restore at the outset of a project, as well as the outcomes at the end. There needs to be better links with BARS and reporting woodland projects.	
FC are releasing targets and policy relating to open ground over the next few months. NB to ask DE for more information. This will be a future topic for the group to discuss how this can be taken forward.	
<b>5. Wet Woodland Project</b>	
Woodland Trust are producing a literature review of woodland and its role in water management at the end of May ( <a href="http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/water/index.htm">http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/water/index.htm</a> ),	

<p>alongside a position statement. Woodland Trust are happy to talk about this research at a workshop. They are also investigating where trees can help improve water quality, eg Ancient Woodland site restoration can help water quality along water courses as it reduces chemical impact. There was also discussion about wet woodland at a recent water and landscapes conference.</p> <p>Wet woodlands have a role in River Basin Management Plans (as part of the Water Framework Directive and compiled by the EA). These will go out for consultation by end of December. Key for this group to get involved in this and sift out where these plans have an impact in wet woodland or where it can play a role. This could be the basis for a workshop to be hosted by this group in the autumn. The EA also drawing together Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans which identify mid and upper catchment tree planting as important. The Natura 200 network of alluvial forests consents are also being reviewed to see if there are any impacts on these habitats.</p> <p>The idea of a workshop was discussed further, this could help identify 'win win' situations for wet woodland and other land uses/activities, for example angling clubs. It could also be used to identify potential areas for woodland riverine planting where there are no other restraints. Other topic areas to explore –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with climate change impacts, is this a real risk for wet woodland? There may be positives in encouraging in providing resilience and buffering capacity for other species such as bats/lichens.</li> <li>• River Parrett catchment case study output. <b>ERH to research outputs/current activity.</b></li> <li>• Debate about Culm grassland and wet woodland.</li> <li>• Examples of wet woodland projects or other opportunities could be captured.</li> <li>• What are the risks and issues that could be the focus of any future work.</li> <li>• Salmon/bat contacts could be invited.</li> <li>• Re-intro of beaver might feature in the debate as Defra are looking at feasibility of re-introductions and are identifying 3-4 trial sites in country (possibility of one in SW).</li> </ul> <p>The workshop would be an ideal way both to raise the profile of water &amp; woodland whilst also enabling the group to collate consultation feedback on the SW River Basin Management Plan, with other key organisations/individuals. <b>ERH will discuss consultation timetable with Ben Bunting (EA lead).</b></p> <p><b>ERH will book a room at EA for the event on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November for workshop. Group to discuss timetable and invitees at next meeting, all to consider possible focus and items etc.</b></p>	<p>ERH</p> <p>ERH</p> <p>ERH ALL</p>
<p><b>6. AOB</b></p>	
<p>When RSS consultation comes out group (expected July?) will need to check that the woodland policy remains plausible. This will be completed by email and comments forwarded to Planning and Development Group who will be leading on this work for BioSW. <b>NB to action.</b></p>	<p><b>ALL - NB</b></p>
<p><b>10. Date of next meeting</b></p>	
<p>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September at Renslade House 10.30am – 1pm.</p>	