



A clear solution for farmers

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Priority Catchment Targeting Summary March 2011 – March 2014

River Basin District: Solway Tweed
Catchment: Rivers Waver and Wampool

Total Area: 359km²

Reasons for designation

The River Waver and Biglands Bog has been a priority catchment since the establishment of Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) in 2006. The area expanded to include the River Wampool in 2008.

The Rivers Waver and Wampool enter the Solway Firth to the north of the Silloth bathing water sampling point. Without intervention the bathing water is at risk of failing European standards and shellfish waters are failing to meet guideline standards due to faecal indicator organisms (FIOs). FIOs have been identified from a number of sources including diffuse pollution from agriculture.

Priorities

Bathing Waters –The bathing water at Silloth is projected to be classified as poor under the revised Bathing Waters Directive. In 2008 a DNA identification technique introduced at Silloth acknowledged that FIOs impacting on bathing water quality were from a combination of sources including agriculture.

Shellfish Waters – The Solway and Silloth shellfish waters meet mandatory standards, but not the guideline standard for faecal coliforms in flesh.

SSSI – Biglands Bog is in unfavourable condition, due in part to agricultural runoff including sediment and nutrients.

Where there is overlap with the above priorities, CSF will also address:

Waterbodies failing to achieve Good Ecological Status

Under the Water Framework Directive the majority of the catchment is classified as moderate.

Objectives

- ❖ Work with farmers and Environment Agency officers to identify sources of pollution
- ❖ Endeavour to produce workable solutions to mitigate sources of pollution, utilising the capital grant system where applicable
- ❖ Reduce the transmission of FIOs through encouraging appropriate changes to slurry and manure management, and stock management
- ❖ Increase the capacity for storage of slurry through the redirection of clean water
- ❖ Encourage the exclusion of stock from watercourses
- ❖ Increase understanding of soil issues and management techniques to improve soil structure, and reduce runoff from land surface
- ❖ Continue to train farmers within the catchment to appreciate the benefits of nutrient management planning, maximising the use of manures and slurry
- ❖ Highlight the importance of working together to achieve the Water Framework Directive Standards by 2015.

Delivery

Intervention in the form of training and capital grants will initially be targeted in sub-catchments and on watercourses adjacent to the Solway Coast to target Bathing and Shellfish Waters. In addition resources will continue to focus on Biglands Bog SSSI which is currently in unfavourable condition.

Delivery will focus on 1:1 training of farmers through the CSF specialist advice, including good slurry, manure and nutrient management, whole farm appraisals, infrastructure reports and slurry/manure handling and storage reports, highlighting the risks and pathways for pollutant transfer to watercourses. As a result of requests from farmers within the catchment slurry analysis and reports will also be introduced.

Events in the form of farm walks, presentations and workshops will be planned incorporating partners and associate organisations i.e. The Farmer Network, Dairy Co, West Cumbria Rivers Trust and the National Farmers Union. The intention is to run events and also to join other organisations hosting appropriate topics to get the message across to a wide audience within the catchment.

The Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer will visit farmers in the target area to discuss the key issues and work with them to ameliorate any potential pollution issues through encouraged good management practice, suggested improvements to the infrastructure and promotion of the capital works grants.

Catchment Map

