

Eddleston Water Restoration

CASE STUDY

Landscape scale river and floodplain restoration to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.



LOCATION: Scottish Borders

STATUS: Current

 **NATURE POSITIVE**

Background

The Eddleston Water project is a long-term, nature-based restoration of a historically straightened tributary of the River Tweed and its and its 70 square kilometre catchment. The programme's primary aims are to reduce downstream flood risk, improve ecological condition and restore natural river and floodplain processes. Measures include re-meandering river sections, reconnecting the channel to its floodplain, creating storage ponds and small wetlands, installing leaky log structures, and extensive native woodland planting.

To date, delivery partners have worked with more than 20 landowners to re-meander over three kilometres of channel, remove 1,500m of flood embankment, install 135 high-flow log restrictors and create 41 flood ponds, alongside planting over 220 hectares of native trees to address flood risk and habitat degradation.

Extensive and detailed long-term monitoring indicates reductions in peak water levels downstream following rainfall events and delays in flood peaks of up to seven hours. In-channel physical habitat diversity has improved, alongside biological diversity as shown by studies of aquatic invertebrates in rivers and in flood ponds. The project has received national and international recognition, including designation as the UK's first UNESCO Ecohydrology demonstration site.

Delivery

The project is managed by [Tweed Forum](#) in partnership with the Scottish Government, SEPA and Scottish Borders Council. Other contributions come from universities (Dundee, Heriot-Watt and Edinburgh Napier), British Geological Survey, NatureScot, Forest



& Land Scotland, Forest Research and crucially landowners and the local community.

Governance arrangements combine landowner agreements with technical design and oversight from academic, consultancy and agency partners, ensuring that interventions align not only with river-basin, flood-risk management and biodiversity objectives, but crucially also with farm business plans and land use management options.

Investment

Funding has been provided primarily by the Scottish Government, with support through the EU North Sea Region Interreg '[Building with Nature](#)' programme, SEPA's Water Environment Fund, and other public and private sources (including Forestry Grant Scheme, Nature Restoration Fund, Woodland Trust, Scottish Power and CEMEX).

The project is operated as a 'living laboratory' with hydrological and ecological monitoring used to evaluate the effectiveness of natural flood management measures and to inform policy development and local authority guidance under Scotland's flood-risk management framework.