

Patterdale Water Meeting, Glenridding Village Hall 23rd August 2010

Present

Jeremy Barlow – National Trust
Maggie Robinson – Natural
England
Suzy Hankin – Lake District
National Park Authority
Hilary O'Rourke – Goldrill Cottage
Mel Kilner – Hartsop Society
Duncan Wishart – Jacobs
Ruth Williams – National Trust
John Malley – National Trust
Christian Grammer – Ullswater
Steamers
Steve Sykes – Glenridding Sailing
Centre
Eric Wear – Howe Green Farm
Heather Jackson – Noran Bank
Farm
Tom Iredale – Greenbank Farm
Veronica McGloin – Patterdale
Parish Council

Mike Taylforth – Side Farm
Peter Iredale – Greenbank Farm

Apologies

Mike Fell – Environment Agency
Mike Harrison – Environment
Agency
John Pring – National Trust
Rob Lawley – Cumbria Highways
Carl Scrivens – Glenridding
resident
Paul Phillips – United Utilities
Andrew Herbert – Lake District
National Park Authority
Jimmy Hodgson – Hartsop Hall
Farm
Ian Metcalfe – Sykeside Campsite
Alan Metcalfe – Sykeside Campsite
Colin Jongman – Sykeside
Campsite

After introductions, Jeremy welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially those who had not taken part before, and set the scene by recapping action from the group to date. This focuses on three key areas:

- Repair to the breach between Horseman and Cow Bridges by the National Trust, which was identified by the group as the highest priority in the valley.
- The development of a gravel management plan to support the management and consenting processes.
- The condition audit of the catchment, which Mel proposed at the last meeting and has since taken forward.

Jeremy stated that good progress is being made towards an agreed and sustainable way forward for the valley.

Update on Horseman to Cow Bridges repair

John Malley provided an update on the repair, saying that the contractors have been putting the timbers in and the boulderstone has now arrived on site. Work had been difficult with the recent high water. John reminded the group that the works are in a very raw state at the moment and will bed in over time. He reassured the group that he was taking on board Eric and Mel's concerns that the line of the repair was right. The work had been delayed by poor weather and the loss of the first contractor due to ill health, but the consents for working in the river run until October, so will be plenty of time. Some silt had gone downstream but it should be flushed through the system now. When the contractors put in the boulderstone they will divert the beck away from where they are working.

Concerns were raised that using wood with boulderstone was not as effective as using all stone. John reassured the group that there are many examples of where wood has been used effectively, that it would have been too expensive to just use boulderstone, and that stone was being used at the most pressured points. Jeremy added that the Trust have been doing the best job possible within the resource available, and that in the future, with the longer term plan which takes in to account the whole valley, perhaps there will be the opportunity to get in more funding.

Veronica asked what funding might be available for future work. John Malley confirmed that the Environment Agency would not have funding for this kind of work, and that the flood funding had been spent.

Update on the catchment condition audit

Mel Kilner updated the group on progress with the catchment condition survey. He said that there had been a lot of support for this work as a direct contribution from the community to the work of this water group. Mel said that 10 volunteers had come forward and been trained, and are now working in four groups. Stage one is to survey the main stream and then phase two to look at the tributaries. Mel hoped the group would finish both phases by the end of September and said they would soon start to feed the information through to John Malley who would map it using GIS. The group have been using the system developed by John for work in Borrowdale which involved identifying the type of bank, its scale and condition, taking photographs, identifying points of gravel, scouring and erosion, and a tree survey. Mel stated that this audit is a one-off for now, but that he would be keen for it to be repeated perhaps three times per year, or at least after a flood event. Mel said that he has had good cooperation from all the land owners and no access problems.

Jeremy thanked Mel and his team for all their work so far.

Mike asked if there would be any funding for doing repairs once the condition had been assessed. Jeremy said that the information from the survey would help to prioritise what work needed doing and would help if there are funding sources available.

The group moved on to discuss the impact of trees on water management, and the rules from the Forestry Commission which govern tree management. John Malley said that Steve Dowson (NT Ranger) is keen to develop a tree management plan with this group once the results of the catchment audit are in. Jeremy suggested that the National Trust could clarify the Forestry Commission rules on tree management and update the group at the next meeting.

Glenridding end of the catchment

Veronica McGloin raised concerns that the group hadn't yet looked in detail at the southern end of the catchment and said this is why she was keen for the invitation to this meeting to go out to everyone who owned land there. Peter Iredale confirmed that there was a big and growing breach on his land.

Veronica said she was concerned about the spread of reeds, water going on to Heather Jackson's land, increasing gravel beds and growing breaches.

Hilary O'Rourke raised concerns about kids staying at the Youth Hostel building dams in the beck which then changed the flow of water. She said she has 3 acres of land which floods.

Veronica raised concerns that the one of the popular footpaths was also interrupted by a breach.

Eric Wear asked if Natural England would fund work in the valley.

Maggie Robinson said that any funding would need to be through the HLS scheme as ESA funding is now closed. She said the prescriptions for HLS were based on enhancing biodiversity or protecting historic features. These are all agreed at a European level and so can't just be changed to suit this valley.

Hilary suggested it would be useful to look at a future projection of what the valley might look like, comparing this to an existing and past image. Jeremy suggested the Landscape Character Assessment would help with this. (A link to this will be put on the Patterdale/LDNPA website).

Christian Grammer described the problems they face at Ullswater Steamers with silt and gravel being deposited at their site which may cut them off. Christian pointed out that they are an important business locally, employing approximately 50 people in peak season. He said that Eden District Council also own some of the bank there. The Environment Agency had done some work in this section of the catchment, but when they stopped they left on-going problems. Steve Sykes said he was working closely with Christian as this impacted on his business too.

Veronica said she was very concerned about this and would as a member of the Parish Council contact Eden District Council.

Presentation of draft gravel management plan

Duncan Wishart from Jacobs presented his draft findings for the gravel management plan. This was followed by a Q+A session and discussion of how people can input in to the report. Concerns were raised as to whether the report covered specific sites or the whole valley, and whether people could comment on the work already done to add in their local knowledge of sites. Jeremy and Duncan are keen to get wider input in to the report and see the current version as a draft for the group to comment on. Jeremy asked John Malley to discuss specific sites with individual land owners/farmers. The wider group can also comment on the draft. This will inform the final draft which will be for discussion at the next meeting. Once the gravel plan is completed, this can be combined with the catchment audit to look at options for each site.

Agreed actions

- NT to research Forestry Commission rules on tree management and update the group at the next meeting.

- Suzy Hankin to put a link to the Landscape Character Assessment work on to the Patterdale Today/LDNPA website.
- Veronica McGloin and Jeremy Barlow to follow up with EDC on problems at Ullswater Steamers site.
- John Malley to circulate the draft report and coordinate input in to the gravel management plan.
- Group to meet ASAP after report has been commented on.

Recent update: Sept 2010

1. The work to fix the breach on Hayeswater Gill has been completed.
2. Work to remove a limited amount of gravel from beneath Horseman`s bridge has been undertaken
3. A proposal for limited gravel removal from the mouth of Glenridding Beck has been drawn up and submitted to the Environment Agency for comment.