

news release

22 November 2010 ST/PR316/10/N



Working together to bring wetland back to life

Photo opportunity

When Friday 26 November 10.30am

Where Cheyne Walk at jct with Ise Road

Who Environment Agency, Borough Council, Revital-ISE and supporters

A Northamptonshire wetland is to be recreated as part of an exciting project to Revital-ISE the River Ise and its surroundings.

The restoration, in the Ise Valley Park, Kettering, is being carried out by the Environment Agency as part of the Revital-ISE project. The works will include re-engineering a meandering part of the river through Cooks Spinney, a small woodland.

Cooks Spinney was once designated a Local Wildlife Site but as the meander disappeared, so too did important wetland plants. The Environment Agency will recreate the wetland habitat by coppicing trees and shrubs and reintroducing the lost plant species during the works which are due to start on 18 November.

Nikki Loveday, of the Environment Agency's Fisheries, Recreation and Biodiversity team, said: "The works have been timed to cause minimum disturbance to wildlife. They are an important part of a very exciting project that will help to transform the area and which we are proud to be involved with.

"There are a further four sites upstream from these works where old meanders will be reconnected to the river. Trees will be coppiced or pollarded and unwanted material removed. These traditional management techniques should greatly benefit wildlife and help with the overall biodiversity of the area."

Revital-ISE Project Manager Dr Robin Field said: "It is important to restore these valuable habitats as they will help form part of the link down the Ise Valley from Warkton to the A14."

Kettering Borough Council is currently developing the area around Cooks Spinney into the Ise Valley Parklands.

Valerie Hitchman, Head of Community Services at the council, said: "As part of parks and open spaces management, we are committed to habitat protection and enhancement and to working towards the county's Biodiversity Action Plan.

“This is a major scheme towards this end and we are delighted with both the work that the Revital-ISE project is doing and the major works the Environment Agency is to undertake.”

It is hoped local community volunteer group Natural-ISE and environmental and community regeneration charity Groundwork North Northamptonshire will take over the ongoing management of the Cooks Spinney site.

Nikki Glazebrook, Community Development Officer for Groundwork North Northamptonshire, said: “Local people who use and love this area are thrilled with this project. It will undo much of the damage that has been caused to the river over the years and really help to restore vital habitat areas.

“The volunteers are looking forward to helping restore and maintain such a beautiful part of the Ise Valley Parklands that is enjoyed by so many people.”

Plans for the project can be found on the new Natural-ISE community notice board. The board was paid for by Northamptonshire County Councillor Carolyn Maxted and is located at the footbridge near to Deeble Road.

ENDS

Media enquiries: Contact Rita Penman or Catherine Burbage on 01733 464357 (during normal office hours, also for emergency service only, 24 hours).

All Environment Agency news releases, both regional and national, can be found on our web site: www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Notes for editors

The Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is the leading organisation for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. We are responsible for making sure that air, land and water are looked after by today’s society, so that tomorrow’s generations inherit a cleaner, healthier world.

Revital-ISE Project

The Revital-ISE project provides an outstanding opportunity for partnership working between landowners, land managers, local authorities, Government Agencies, environmental groups, and local communities to re-establish a high quality environment throughout the Ise Valley that meets the needs of a 21st century community. The Revital-ISE Project Manager post is part funded for three years by the Environment Agency and hosted by the River Nene Regional Park.

Other infrastructure works funded by the Revital-ISE project over the last couple of years includes habitat improvements at Southfield Farm Marsh SSSI, community training events at Newton Field Centre and restoration of the meanders at Tailby Meadows, Desborough.

The next planned projects for Revital-ISE are the restoration of the Water Meadows and Castle Field Scheduled Ancient Monument at Wicksteed Park which will link directly to the Ise Valley meanders.

Organisations or groups with projects within the Ise Valley which they believe could link with Revital-ISE should contact the Project Manager, Dr Robin Field, on rfield@northamptonshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 01604 237243.

The River Nene Regional Park (RNRP)

RNRP is a Community Investment Company that is hosted by Northamptonshire County Council and can hold assets and land on behalf of the community. It is an independent organisation that was constituted under the framework of the Treasury's Green Book and is recognised as a Treasury model for the environment in relation to sustainable growth area funding delivery.

RNRP Vision

“By 2016 the RNRP partnership will be an independent, inclusive, reciprocal and beneficial partnership of public, private and third sector members. It will be nationally and internationally recognised as the centre of excellence for the piloting, co-ordination and delivery of regional sustainable development, addressing strategic issues such as Climate Change, the enhancement of local biodiversity and the innovative development of the environment as an asset for social development, education, leisure & recreation, heritage and cultural activity, and as a primary vehicle of economic regeneration.”