

Supporting guidance for Management of Floodplains

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A river floodplain is area where a watercourse floods naturally at times of high water level. The river sediment deposited on a floodplain following each flood event creates a mixture of drylands and wetlands, which support a rich and diverse range of habitats and species. In their natural state, floodplains store and slow the flow of flood waters, helping to reduce flooding further downstream. They can also reduce the extent of sediment deposition on the river bed and prevent bank erosion by reducing the energy of the water within the river channel.

The purpose of this option is to manage floodplains to benefit flood risk and biodiversity. It can be particularly useful where flooding downstream is a problem and the floodplain area available to store water is large.

This item will fund the removal of stock from the floodplain during times of flooding

This payment is additional to any payments to manage specific habitats within the floodplain.

What needs to be done?

The floodplain should be allowed to flood, at least in part, and stock removed during times of flooding. This may mean abandoning or removing an embankment. A diary should be kept detailing all livestock movements. Note that the floodplain should only be allowed to flood if doing so does not increase flooding to properties or infrastructure (roads, etc), upstream, downstream or on the other side of the watercourse.

Where the floodplain extends into a parcel of land owned by a neighbouring land manager / owner, you should seek agreement to apply for this option from that party. In such instances, you should consider seeking the help of a facilitator. Some facilitation fees can be paid for by the co-operative action fund.

How can you add value

Consider adopting this measure with the land management options:

- [Wetland Management](#)
- [Species-rich Grassland Management](#)
- [Converting Arable at Risk of Erosion or Flooding to Low-input Grassland](#)

Where you propose to allow the floodplain to flood through embankment removal, lowering or breaching, you should consider applying for additional capital payments to undertake this work.

Further information

Guidance documents

- [EU Healthy Catchments Manual](#)
- [River Restoration Centre – Manual of River Restoration Techniques](#)
- [The Scottish Rivers Handbook: A Guide to the Physical Character of Scotland's Rivers](#), Perfect, C., Addy, S. and Gilvear, D. (2013)

Case studies

- [Beckingham Marshes Washland Creation](#)
- [Farming Floodplains for the Future](#)
- [Insh Marshes on the River Spey](#)