

# Cumbria Flood Bulletin

## Farming edition I

Information for flood affected farms in Cumbria - Monday 25 January  
Brought to you by all public sector organisations in Cumbria

Since Monday 23 November, Cumbria County Council has taken the lead in co-ordinating the recovery operation for flooding in Cumbria. The Farming Community is being supported by the Environment Recovery Subgroup which includes membership from local authority, Natural England, The Environment Agency, The National Farmers Union (NFU), as well as a range of other appropriate bodies.

The farming flood bulletin will be produced regularly to help keep you informed. We are aware that you have already had a lot of information and we apologise for any duplication in this first issue of the farming flood bulletin.

The aim of this, and future bulletins, is to provide you with one clear source of information. If there are any topics that you would like to see covered in future bulletins then you can suggest these via the flooding helpline on 0300 060 4523 / 0977.

In addition there has been a series of three detailed flooding fact sheets entitled Post flood clean up guidance, Available support, and Flooding frequently asked questions. All of this information can also be downloaded from [www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods) or by contacting the flooding helpline.

### Update on actions to date

- ✓ Flood affected Agri-Environment Agreement holders contacted and asked to contact Natural England with details of damage.
- ✓ Destroyed boundaries funded by Agri-Environment Schemes can be restored through live schemes. 40 farmers have contacted Natural England providing evidence of damage to their land. This work is ongoing and farmers without schemes are to be given the opportunity to enter a Higher Level Stewardship scheme which can fund the restoration of flood damaged boundaries where they meet scheme targets and criteria.
- ✓ Cumbria flood helpline opened.
- ✓ 147 farmers affected by the flood waters in the Cocker and Derwent catchment invited to 2 meetings at Threlkeld Cricket Pavilion on 15th December and Cockermouth Auction mart on 17th December. The 110 farmers who attended took part in discussion around the flooding and had the opportunity to speak to advisers and arrange visits where necessary.
- ✓ Affected farmers have been contacted by the Environment Agency to determine the scale of their problem and to advise what immediate and more long term restoration work can be carried out. Many farmers issues were dealt with over the phone but some also wanted follow up site visits to discuss issues in more detail. To date 40 farmers have been visited and 18 remain. Progress has not been as quick as we would have liked as the adverse weather conditions over the Christmas and New Year period has delayed meetings. If you have not been contacted by the Environment Agency and would like a visit please call 0870 8506506.
- ✓ During these site visits, where possible, approval for emergency works has been given and recorded.
- ✓ Environment Agency funded aerial photographs and LIDAR taken to identify major river channel changes including debris and gravel deposition, erosion and destruction of river banks.
- ✓ EA analysis of LIDAR data to be completed by 22nd January will provide detailed info on the quantities of material deposited on the floodplain and the amount of land lost by erosion. This will allow a number of costed options to be evaluated.
- ✓ Since the announcement of the Debris Recovery Grant for the most severely affected farms on 14 December 2009, 36 applications have been submitted.
- ✓ Farmers have until 26th February to submit their Debris Recovery Grant forms. See Available support factsheet.
- ✓ Cumbria County Council (CCC) and the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) working closely together have identified major damage to public footpaths and bridleways and made safe where required. There has been extensive damage – 253 bridges missing or needing repair. 51 paths with surface damage and some routes “lost” to flooding. Some priority works will take place within the national park before the end of March, then both CCC and LDNPA are working with Government departments to secure funds to assist in the rights of way recovery. This is important given the value countryside access adds to the tourist economy of Cumbria. The Government is underwriting £250,000 of works within the Lake District National Park.

# Stabilising and restoring major river changes

From 25th January 2010 Jacobs, an independent geomorphological consultancy, will conduct surveys on all seriously damaged river section on the Derwent and Cocker to produce 'flood management' plans. These surveys will take 5-10 days. At present 18 farms will be included in the survey though this may change. All farmers have been contacted for permission to access their land.

Discussions between the farmer, Environment Agency and Natural England will work up acceptable techniques

to stabilise and restore the flood plain and river banks using soft engineering techniques, such as tree planting and use of deadwood to stabilise the river bank and tailored field management.

Where scheme targeting and eligibility criteria can be met, entry into Natural England's High Level Stewardship Scheme could offer more annual payments on flood affected land where there is potential for environmental benefit as well as fund capital works to repair boundaries destroyed by the floods.

## Farm flooding factsheets available for download at [www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods)

The following flooding factsheets have been produced and are available for download at [www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/floods). Alternatively you can request hard copies by calling the flooding helpline on 0300 060 4523.

### Post flood clean-up guidance

Produced to identify some of the regulatory controls that apply to certain activities taking place in the clean-up after the floods.

### Available support

An introduction to the various forms of EU and charitable sources of funding and support available to flood affected farmers.

### Flooding frequently asked questions

A list of frequently asked questions and answers for flood affected farmlands. This will be updated on a regular basis.

## Key contacts and helpful telephone numbers

### Cumbria Flood Helpline

0300 060 4523 & 0977

### Natural England

0300 060 6000

### Environment Agency

0870 8506506

### Lake District National Park

01539 724555

### Cumbria County Council

01228 606060

### Allerdale Borough Council

01900 702702

### South Lakeland District Council

0845 0504434

### Cumbria Highways

0845 609 6609

### Trading Standards

01539 713137

### NFU Cocker mouth

01900 823 066

### Rural Payments Agency

0845 603 7777

### Local Action Group:

Cumbria Fells & Dales 01768 869533  
Solway, Border & Eden 01697 349212