Beavers and the National Trust

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What outcomes do we want?

Deliver our LON objectives: Better, Bigger / More & Joined by 2025

- Have more of our land accessible, especially close to where people live
- Create/restore, in partnership, 25,000ha priority habitat beyond our boundaries

Be Net Zero by 2030 Including:

- Establish 20m trees
- Have 50% of our woodland in active management
- Restore our carbon rich peatlands and wetlands

Our land management decisions are climate informed
Global state of freshwaters

Living Planet Index
All biomes

Living Planet Index
Freshwater
Loss of England’s wetlands

Historic extent

Current extent

Wetland Vision, 2008
“Slow, Store, Filter”

Flood and drought resilience
Habitat creation and renewal (dynamic systems)
Landscape connectivity
Blue/teal carbon
Access opportunities
Downstream beneficiaries
Beaver reintroductions

Two National Trust sites in Porlock and one in South Downs (other NT projects in progress – Purbeck, Wallington, Wild Ennerdale)

Why?

- Unparalleled wetlands and pond habitats created through beaver activity
- Other benefits (water management, fire and drought resilience, water quality…)
- Huge public interest
Are beavers better at building wetlands?
A Biodiversity Boost From the Eurasian Beaver (*Castor fiber*) in Germany’s Oldest National Park
Visualisation showing site immediately post restoration
Visualisation showing site several years post restoration
Working with beavers…

- Wild beavers
- Process-led river restoration
- Catchment & strategic approach

- Larger rivers and working within constraints
- ‘Zoning’ our catchments
- Wetlands & Headwaters
Final thoughts

1) Freshwater biodiversity crisis needs all the tools we have available.

2) Emerging evidence suggests beaver activity can create wetland complexes of high ecological value (but beaver benefits will only be realised if we address all pressures e.g. poor water quality).

3) There is space for beavers in our landscapes, we have a clear process for reviewing projects. We just need to get on with it!