

newsletter

• Issue 1 May 2006



Strategic Partnerships in River Corridors

In this Issue

- What is SPARC?
- SPARC Objectives
- SPARC Partners
- Future Events

What is SPARC?

The Strategic Partnerships in River Corridors (SPARC) project is designed to promote the integrated management of river corridors in northern Europe. It will provide advice and understanding for regenerating river corridors and enhancing their natural, cultural and historic environments. Led by the Environment Agency of England and Wales, SPARC has a variety of partners across the United Kingdom, Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden. The project will run until June 2008.

SPARC Objectives

- To develop transferable approaches for increasing co-operation between stakeholders, including the general public, in the management of river corridors at all scales (local to trans-national).
- To identify organisations and individuals appropriate to the scale of work being undertaken, and to elaborate on the mechanisms for these organisations and individuals to meet, reach consensus, and exercise control over river corridors.
- To demonstrate and communicate the practical application of integrated management strategies through a series of partner-led river basin restoration or regeneration projects.



SPARC Partners at the Langenhagen trans-national meeting - February 2006.

Today there is a general acceptance that the integrated management of river corridors is necessary. Indeed current European legislation, the Water Framework Directive, requires such an approach. However, practical application of truly integrated management across all relevant interests (local authorities, landowners, government agencies and the general public) is very difficult to achieve. We are undertaking a series of projects in various northern European countries which will all demonstrate approaches to integration appropriate to the river corridors concerned.

This integrated approach seeks to re-establish the natural processes that work within river corridors. In turn this will provide a means to redress problems such as declining biodiversity, as well as loss of historic landscape character, resulting from previous inappropriate water management policies. Flood plain development pressure as well as the increasing demands of agriculture will be addressed. These problems have all been observed in the major river corridors of northern Europe.



Project co-funded by European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg IIIB North Sea Region programme.

SPARC Partners



Environment Agency: Lead Partner - UK

Activities:

- Project management for the SPARC project.
- Development and implementation of a communications strategy.
- Co-ordination of partner input to the SPARC project.



On Trent - UK

Activities:

- Creating a rich diversity of linked wetland habitats along the Trent.
- Conserving and enhancing the river valley's rich history, archaeology and culture.
- Encouraging environmentally sustainable recreation and tourism.
- Promoting the value of wetlands.



River Nene Regional Park Initiative - UK

Activities:

- Development of Green Infrastructure.
- Wide spread consultation including organisations, communities and landowners.
- A Stakeholder Steering Group has been set up to support and guide this process.
- Alongside nine initial demonstration projects, groundbreaking "signature" projects are currently being developed.



for birds
for people
for ever

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Beckingham Marshes - UK

Activities:

- Wet Grassland, creation and monitoring of bird habitats.
- Established 65 hectares of grassland on what were previously arable fields. This will enable us to graze the area using cattle that will provide the right conditions for the breeding waders.
- Managing the hedgerows around the 94 hectare site which involves coppicing hedges to ground level and planting a completely new hedge.



Nordjyllands County - Denmark

Activities:

- Creation of wetlands; Promotion regeneration schemes.
- New ways of maintaining/restoring the natural habitats.
- Creating new wetlands and retention areas.
- Removing physical blockages in the rivers.
- Investigating the phenomena of oxygen deficiency in the rivers.
- Reducing the load of nutrients from diffuse sources.



Ringkjobing Amt

Ringkjobing County - Denmark

Activities:

- Use of Economic Instruments to regulate activities; catchment modelling.
- Recreation of wetlands, re-meandering rivers, spatial planning, public participation.
- Review of aquaculture, promoting environmentally friendly agriculture, forest creation.
- Establishment of ochre cleaning facilities.
- Improving nature recreation.

provincie Drenthe

Drenthe Province - Netherlands

Activities:

- Novel public involvement in a small urban scheme, integrated spatial planning.
- Developing proposals for the area between the Postweg te Barger Compasuum and Ter Apel in the province.
- Integrate the new waterway connection between Erica and Ter Apel in the construction of a new village and develop a design for a river/road channel crossing.



LANGENHAGEN

City of Langenhagen - Germany

Activities:

- Decision Support Systems; Wetland creation.
- Restoration of the Weitz Stream north east of Langenhagen.
- Develop dry farmland into wetland and wet meadows with periodical inundation.
- Footpath creation.



City of Göteborg

City of Göteborg, Gunnared District - West Sweden

Activities:

- Improvement of water quality through reed-bed creation at the Larjean Gardens.
- Public participation.
- Use as an education resource.



Institute for Geo and Bio-archaeology - Netherlands

Activities:

- Provision of archaeological input to SPARC partner projects.
- Inventory of different historical landscapes in the areas of study.
- Monitoring sites for below-ground sediment changes.
- Evaluating all available data regarding the degradation of all kinds of archaeo-materials in different soil types.

Future Events

To ensure trans-national learning a series of technical seminars have been planned and these are shown in the table below. For further information on these events and the rest of the SPARC project log on to: www.sparc-project.org

Schedule of Technical Seminars

Date 2006	Location	Theme
June 19th-20th	Sweden	Improvement of water quality through novel solutions (reed beds etc); public participation.
Sept 11th-13th	Denmark (double seminar)	Creation of wetlands; promotion of, and information on, regeneration schemes and Use of economic activities to regulate activities; catchment modelling
Nov 21st-22nd	Amsterdam - Netherlands	Monitoring of sites for below ground sediment changes
Date 2007	Location	Theme
March	Germany - Langenhagen	Decision support systems; wetland creation
Sept	East Midlands - United Kingdom	Creation and monitoring of bird habitats; Green Infrastructure