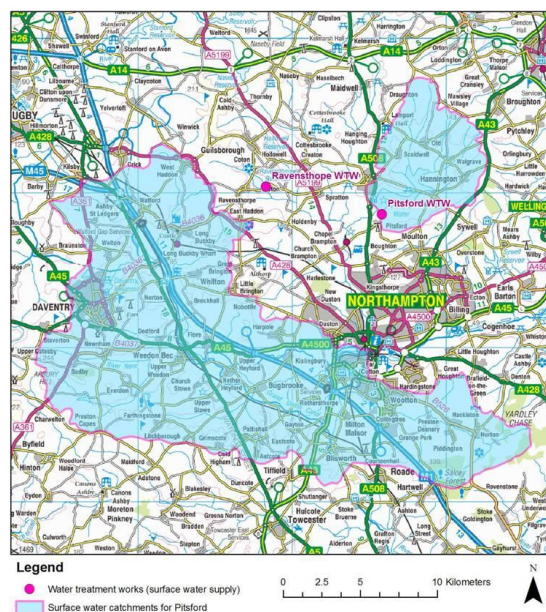


## Newsletter autumn 2010 - Nene Catchment Partnership

The Nene Catchment Partnership (Environment Agency, River Nene Regional Park and Natural England) aims to reduce diffuse pollution from agriculture using the Catchment Sensitive Farming approach. Over the last six months one to one visits continued and specialist visits were arranged where requested. Two major successes were the fencing of fields at Wilby and the farm walk at Upper Heyford meadows. The fields at Wilby were one of the last refuges for water voles in the county and the farm agreed to fence the fields on either side of the Swanspool Brook to protect the habitat from being damaged by the cattle.

The farm walk took place at Dovecote Farm, Upper Heyford and was one of the best evenings of the summer. Over 30 people attended and enjoyed a pleasant walk (see photo below) through the newly created wildflower meadow. This former arable field of 13.5ha has been divided into a wildflower pasture and wildflower meadow. The lower wet meadow is adjacent to the River Nene and during the last growing season as an arable field with a crop of oilseed rape in it, was flooded three times with the resultant sediment loss and run off of Metoldehyde. The site was sown with a native grass and wildflower mixture in April 2008 and this is the second year being cut for hay. The attendees saw the meadow in full flower which attracted thousands of bees and butterflies over the summer period. The walk was followed by supper and drinks in the garden of Dovecote Farm.



The third catchment steering group meeting was held at Pitsford reservoir and was followed by a very interesting visit to the water treatment plant. In 2009 Anglian Water's Pitsford water treatment works supplied a daily average of 35 million litres of drinking water to nearly 180,000 people living in Wellingborough, parts of Northampton, and the surrounding areas. The works draws in raw water from Pitsford reservoir, fed from the natural catchment of the Holcot Stream, Scaldwell Brook and Walgrave Brook; and from a pumped source at Duston Mill on the River Nene (see above). Most pollutants, such as pesticides, found in water sources are removed through treatment processes to ensure compliance with quality standards set by the Drinking Water Inspectorate. However, Anglian Water also plan to support local and national initiatives, such as the 'Pelletwise' campaign, intended to improve and protect water quality in catchments used for public water supply. It is hoped that environmentally sensitive and sustainable options will be identified to reduce the level of treatment at works such as Pitsford and nearby Ravensthorpe in the long term.

### **We need your help to protect metaldehyde**

The Metaldehyde Stewardship Group (MSG) are looking to enlist support from Pitsford arable farmers as part of the 2010 'Get Pelletwise' campaign to protect the vitally important slug pellet active ingredient metaldehyde. With metaldehyde having, previously, been found in raw water in the catchment at levels exceeding the stringent European drinking water standards, the 'MSG' alongside Anglian Water and the 'Nene Catchment Partnership' are working together and calling upon growers in the Pitsford reservoir catchment to offer their support and commitment to tackle the exceedances in raw water by raising the adoption of best practice and stewardship measures. The aim is to demonstrate that these best practice, stewardship measures do deliver results on a catchment scale, and if successful, could prove invaluable to the wider agricultural industry. BUT, to achieve results it's important to enlist help from every farm in the catchment area. The new best practice guidelines for 2010 have an annual maximum dose rate for the calendar year of 700g which has now also been set by the CRD (Chemicals Regulation Directorate) as the statutory maximum application rate.

A new recommended maximum single application rate of 210g metaldehyde/ha has also been set. Additionally there's been a significant reduction in the advised levels of metaldehyde that can be applied during the key autumn months with **a new restriction between 1 August and 31 December to 210g metaldehyde per hectare** – targeting the main risk period. For additional protection of water,



## A clear solution for farmers

ENGLAND CATCHMENT SENSITIVE  
FARMING DELIVERY INITIATIVE

suppliers/BASIS advisers may recommend rates reduced to 160g metaldehyde/ha or less. A further amendment has extended the buffer zone requirement when applying metaldehyde that has now been set at six metres, bringing best practice advice into line with other industry stewardship. Now is the time to act. We are into the key autumn slug pellet usage period so as well as adhering to dose rate recommendations, don't forget the foundation best practice advice – paying attention to application and set up practices along with threshold and wider pre application considerations, before even getting to the field.

### Forthcoming events

**November 17<sup>th</sup> (Wed)** NPTC Slug Pelleting Seminar (SPS) training event. Booking essential please contact: Sue Baker, ADAS. 01954 268 301 - [sue.baker@adas.co.uk](mailto:sue.baker@adas.co.uk)

- This event will cover slug pelleting, application updates and best practice use of slug control products. These events are part of the agricultural industry response to ensure the range of slug control treatments available for agricultural use from possible withdrawal. By completing this Slug Pelleting Seminar training (as long as you hold a PA1) you will be qualified to apply slug pellets

**December 8<sup>th</sup> (Wed)** Pesticide issues in the Rutland Water catchment. At NFU Regional Office, Uppingham, LE15 9NX, Free lunch provided, to book ring 01572 824250 or email [laura.harrison@nfu.org.uk](mailto:laura.harrison@nfu.org.uk)

- Topic covered include: water quality issues in the catchment, Sustainable Use Directive and topical updates

**January 25<sup>th</sup> 2011** Soil Protection Review Workshop. Booking essential please contact: Simon Draper. 01359 251 804 - [Simon@indagronomy.co.uk](mailto:Simon@indagronomy.co.uk)

- The aim of the Soil Protection Review is to help you accurately record soil damage arising from using heavy harvesting machinery on wet soils and how it may be corrected. These workshops are targeted at helping you identify any existing soil damage and how it can be remedied, and then how this may be entered into the new Soil Protection Review.



## A clear solution for farmers

ENGLAND CATCHMENT SENSITIVE  
FARMING DELIVERY INITIATIVE

The Nene Catchment Partnership will be targeting our free advisory activities at farms in the target areas of the Upper Nene and Upper Ise catchments. Farm advisory visits to assist with soil, nutrient, and pesticide management are still available.

*If you are interested in finding out more about the free advisory services available from the Nene Catchment Partnership please contact us at:*

Email: [RNRP@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:RNRP@northamptonshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01604-236764 Web: <http://www.rnrp.org/CSF>

Or return this slip to:

Freepost NN4 7BR  
River Nene Regional Park  
c/o Northamptonshire County Council  
PO Box 221,  
John Dryden House  
8-10 The Lakes,  
Northampton, NN4 7DE

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Address:

Post code:

Telephone:

email address:

I would like to have a visit please

