Upper Cringle Brook Restoration

When: 03/02/22 – 31/03/22

Where: Lincolnshire

Site:	**Upper Cringle Brook**
Catchment:	**Upper Witham**
River basin:	**Anglian**
Waterbody ID:	**GB105030051560**

Pressures/drivers:

Main pressure: River restoration/habitat creation

Tick others that the project also addressed:

Coasts & estuaries	☐
Fish passage improvements	☐
Flow	☐
Groundwater	☐
INNS	☐
NFM	☒
River restoration/habitat creation	☒
Rural diffuse pollution	☒
Urban diffuse pollution	☐
Other *(state below):* Click here to enter text.	☐

What & why:

This project has created 1 ha of floodplain habitat and restored a 1km section of the Upper Cringle Brook. The Brook here had been historically straightened, deepened, and disconnected from its floodplain and the resulting habitat was poor.

Trees from site have been placed across the new floodplain and ponds, secondary channels and back channel have been added to create variation. Top soil has been used on the same site to create a 1.7 hectare wildflower area next to the next floodplain.

This forms part of the strategic priority within the Witham catchment partnership to restore Lincolnshire's important Limestone Becks. There are also anticipated to be water quality benefits as the new online wetland establishes in an intensively farmed catchment and downstream of a small rural Wastewater Treatment Works.

Who:

This project was managed by the Lincolnshire Rivers Trust with support and funding from the Environment Agency (EP and FBG), groundwork was delivered by J E Spence with site supervision from Dynamic Rivers. It was also dependant on good will and support from the Landowner.

Total project cost: £82,000 (£10,000 design and development and £72,000 delivery)

Outputs:

- 1000 meters of restored Limestone Beck with floodplain connectivity
- Creation of 1 ha of seasonally wetted floodplain habitat.
- 1.7 ha of site will be outside of floodplain sown with wildflower mix.
- Creation of two new large ponds within the floodplain.

Outcomes:

- Ecology more resilient to low and high flows
- Benefits for a range of wildlife across site
- NFM Upper Catchment site
- Limestone Beck restoration
- Water quality benefits
- Relationship built with key landowner in catchment.
- Carbon sequestration as wetland establishes.

Tips and lessons learnt:

Head waters should not be discounted as a place to look to restore even when restoration seems unfeasible due to current condition. The benefits can be significant.

When lowering floodplains, consider how the material generated can be landscaped on site and used for other benefits e.g., wildflower habitats but expect the site to look a bit ‘raw’ while this establishes.

The value of an experienced site supervisor and a skilled contractor cannot be underestimated.

Photographs:

View of top section of site before works
Credit: Andrew Chick

View of top section of site after works
Credit: Andrew Chick

Site before works with old channel to right
Credit: EA

Same view with newly connected floodplain
Credit: *EA*

Links to further information:

Link to Lincs Rivers Trust Press Release