

Site Improvement Plan

Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site

Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) have been developed for each Natura 2000 site in England as part of the Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS). Natura 2000 sites is the combined term for sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protected Areas (SPA). This work has been financially supported by LIFE, a financial instrument of the European Community.

The plan provides a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the Natura 2000 features on the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features. It does not cover issues where remedial actions are already in place or ongoing management activities which are required for maintenance.

The SIP consists of three parts: a Summary table, which sets out the priority Issues and Measures; a detailed Actions table, which sets out who needs to do what, when and how much it is estimated to cost; and a set of tables containing contextual information and links.

Once this current programme ends, it is anticipated that Natural England and others, working with landowners and managers, will all play a role in delivering the priority measures to improve the condition of the features on these sites.

The SIPs are based on Natural England's current evidence and knowledge. The SIPs are not legal documents, they are live documents that will be updated to reflect changes in our evidence/knowledge and as actions get underway. The information in the SIPs will be used to update England's contribution to the UK's Prioritised Action Framework (PAF).

The SIPs are not formal consultation documents, but if you have any comments about the SIP or would like more information please email us at IPENSLIFEProject@naturalengland.org.uk, or contact Natural England's Responsible Officer for the site via our enquiry service 0300 060 3900, or enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

This Site Improvement Plan covers the following Natura 2000 site(s)

UK0030126 Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC

Site description

Middlesceugh Woods and Pastures SSSI and Skelton Pastures SSSI are the two sites that form the Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC, and are located within 5km of each other and 15km north-west of Penrith.

These sites support a complex habitat mosaic of damp Purple moor grass / rush pasture, neutral fen, and upland oak and ash woodland contributing to the sites' botanical interest. The Marsh fritillary relies on a strong population of the larval food plant, Devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* which is abundant at these sites.

Plan Summary

This table shows the prioritised issues for the site(s), the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The list of delivery bodies will include those who have agreed to the actions as well as those where discussions over their role in delivering the actions is on-going.

Priority & Issue	Pressure or Threat	Feature(s) affected	Measure	Delivery Bodies
1 Habitat fragmentation	Pressure	S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Reintroduction at Skelton. Investigate nearby suitable habitat for reintroduction potential	Natural England, Butterfly Conservation
2 Inappropriate scrub control	Pressure	S1065 Marsh fritillary butterfly	Remove and control excess tree and scrub cover on both sites	Natural England

Issues and Actions

This table outlines the prioritised issues that are currently impacting or threatening the condition of the features, and the outstanding actions required to address them. It also shows, where possible, the estimated cost of the action and the delivery bodies whose involvement will be required to implement the action. Lead delivery bodies will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the action, but not necessarily funding it. Delivery partners will need to support the lead delivery body in implementing the action. In the process of developing the SIPs Natural England has approached the delivery bodies to seek agreement on the actions and their roles in delivering them, although in some cases these discussions have not yet been concluded. Other interested parties, including landowners and managers, will be involved as the detailed actions are agreed and delivered. Funding options are indicated as potential (but not necessarily agreed or secured) sources to fund the actions.

1 Habitat fragmentation

The Marsh fritillary is a sedentary species that requires extensive suitable habitat and networks. Opportunities to manage land in between Middlesceugh and Skelton under HLS should also be explored to increase the connectivity between these two sites, although this is limited by the availability of suitable habitat for restoration in this area. Suitable habitat exists at Whale Gill and Lamonby Verges west of Middlesceugh / Skelton.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
1A	Plug planting at Skelton to increase existing larval food source availability.	£1,000	2015-18	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	Butterfly Conservation

2 Inappropriate scrub control

There has been some loss of Marsh fritillary habitat (Purple moor grass and rush pasture) due to encroachment of the adjacent woodland in the south, eastern and northern areas of the main site at Middlesceugh, and the eastern boundary of Skelton. This results in loss of habitat and shading to part of the remaining habitat available to the Marsh fritillary.

Action	Action description	Cost estimate	Timescale	Mechanism	Funding option	Delivery lead body	Delivery partner(s)
2A	Phased removal of trees and scrub, and follow-up management to maintain cleared areas in an open state.	£6,300	2014-20	Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE): Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS)	Rural Development Programme (RDPE)	Natural England	n/a

Site details

The tables in this section contain site-relevant contextual information and links

Qualifying features

#UK Special responsibility

Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC S1065 *Euphydryas (Eurodryas, Hypodryas) aurinia*: Marsh fritillary butterfly

Site location and links

Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC

Area (ha) **22.96** Grid reference **NY400409** [Map link](#)

Local Authorities Cumbria

Site Conservation Objectives [European Site Conservation Objectives for Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC](#)

European Marine Site conservation advice [n/a](#)

Regulation 33/35 Package [n/a](#)

Marine Management Organisation site plan [n/a](#)

Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides the main framework for managing the water environment throughout Europe. Under the WFD a management plan must be developed for each river basin district. The River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) include a summary of the measures needed for water dependent Natura 2000 sites to meet their conservation objectives. For the second round of RBMPs, SIPs are being used to capture the priorities and new measures required for water dependent habitats on Natura 2000 sites. SIP actions for non-water dependent sites/habitats do not form part of the RBMPs and associated consultation.

Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC

River basin

[Solway Tweed RBMP](#)

WFD Management catchment

Eden and Esk

WFD Waterbody ID (Cycle 2 draft)

n/a

Overlapping or adjacent protected sites

Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC	Skelton Pasture SSSI Middlesceugh Woods & Pastures SSSI
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	
Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC	n/a
Ramsar	
Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC	n/a
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)	
Cumbrian Marsh Fritillary Site SAC	n/a

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1.0	23/10/2014	

www.naturalengland.org.uk/ipens2000

