

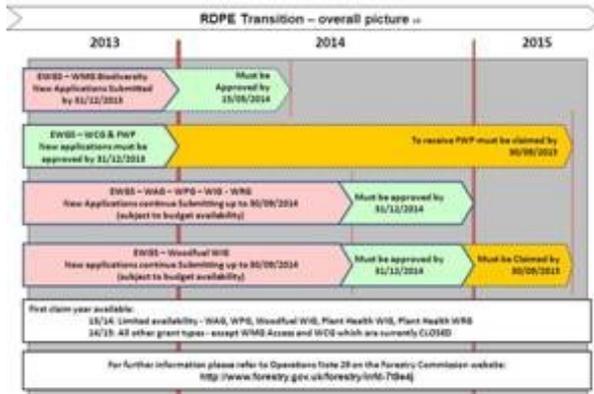


## 16 December 2013 Grants and Regulations National Email Alert

### Content

This email alert contains messages about:

- [Transitional Grants in 2014](#) including an RDPE Transition overall picture model (click on image below)



- [EU Payments](#)
- [European Protected Species Good Practice Guidance](#)

### Confirmation of Transitional Grant Arrangements in 2014

Further clarity can now be provided in relation to EWGS availability in 2014.

The following outlines the arrangements for the accepting and processing of EWGS grants:

- Woodland Planning Grant (WPG)
- Woodland Assessment Grant (WAG)
- Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG)
- Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG)
- Woodland Management Grant (WMG)
- Woodland Creation Grant (WCG)

### WPG, WAG, WIG, Woodfuel WIG and WRG

We are very pleased to confirm that we will continue to accept applications into 2014. We currently envisage applications continuing to be accepted, **subject to budget availability and any further updates**, until September 2014.

### WMG Biodiversity

Applications **will not** be accepted beyond 31 December 2013 and must be approved by 15 May 2014.

### WMG Access

Applications are now closed.

### WCG 2013

We are not accepting further applications. Those applications reaching Draft Contract (DCT) status by 31 December 2013, i.e. where we have offered a contract for the applicant's signature will continue to be processed to final approval. Where Farm Woodland Payment is included the claim must be made by September 2015.

### WCG 2014

The ability to offer woodland creation grants in 2014 is subject to clarification of the implications of the EC transitional regulations due to be approved on 16 December 2013 and Ministerial decisions arising from that. We will update you as soon as we know more.

### Updates

We will provide any further updates on the above arrangements as and when they become available. See [Operations Note 29](#) for more detailed transitional arrangements.



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## EU Payments

This week Ministers reached a decision on the way future EU payments are delivered in England by Defra and its delivery bodies. The decision has been made so that we can provide a simpler system with fewer organisations involved in the transactions, creating a more customer friendly process.

The key changes are that desk based transactional functions will move from Forestry Commission and Natural England (NE) to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), whilst technical functions on land-based schemes will be focused in NE.

The Forestry Commission will remain the principal source of expert forestry advice, with a core of expertise to deliver its policy aims to protect, improve and expand England's woodlands.

The Forestry Commission, NE and the RPA will work closely together to develop the detailed business processes for the new Environmental Land Management Schemes to ensure that the service provided to customers is as integrated as possible.

We expect the main changes for customers will take effect in 2015 and 2016 alongside the rollout of the new Common Agricultural Policy and a single IT system.

## European Protected Species (EPS) Good Practice Guidance.

We have been working on updates to the original 'draft' Good Practice Guidance for the EPS species. The update mainly takes account of changes to the law in 2012. We have completed revision of the guidance for Bats, Otters, Great Crested Newts and Sand Lizards and Smooth Snakes. These will be loaded onto our [website](#) before Christmas.

The guidance for hazel dormice has also been revised, but we are currently awaiting further information from Natural England colleagues before this can be released. We will continue to use the original draft until the revised one can be issued, hopefully in the New Year.

The pocket field guide that we are introducing will shortly be going for final design and then printing and again will hopefully be available in the New Year.





**16 December 2013**

**RDPE Transition – overall picture v4**

