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EWGS & Regional Update

Update No 19 (26 October 2010)

Woodland Creation Grant 2010: We're staying open!

This is the headline given out by our National Office in an email Alert earlier this month to those of you on the National Office Alert list.

This marks a very good year for Woodland Creation applications particularly here in the North East and not only for woodland creation but also for the full range of EWGS grants.

We have now received applications and committed funds which exceed our budget of £2.2 million for 10/11 and are close to committing our 11/12 budget which has already been increased to £2.5 million!

Other regions have not been quite so fortunate and we are keen to help them out by spending their money in the North East. We are remaining open to receive Woodland Creation Grant applications primarily for planting in Autumn 2011 onwards, however if you have a scheme that you are confident that you can plant AND claim grant before March 2011, we are keen to hear from you. To do this the land must already be registered on the Rural Land Register.

This year we did extend the range of Additional Contributions for new Woodland Creation so that we now pay at least £2,800 for broadleaves and £2,200 for conifers, West of the A1 trunk road up to the Northumberland National Park and North Pennines AONB boundaries. You may be entitled to further funds if you are close to major centres of population as well as the Annual Payments for income foregone, these are payable on top of the Single Farm Payments on eligible land.

We extended the area and included conifer woodland as we recognised the potential for well designed woodlands to provide public benefit through carbon capture and timber as well as biodiversity gain.

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EWGS and Spending Review

Following discussions with Defra on the impacts of the Spending Review it is good to be able to report that the Forestry Commission will continue to deliver the current planned levels of woodland grants under this RDPE round up to and including Forest year 13/14.

Woodfuel WIG

Not only are we remaining open for our current grants but we are planning to launch a Woodfuel WIG (Woodland Improvement Grant) to support roading access and under-managed woods. This will support activity up to the point of timber sale and help bring more timber onto the market. We will publish more details in early 2011. If you have woodlands that have received little or no thinning attention in recent years you may wish to bring these to our attention.

We will continue to receive applications for all grant types until notified that all funds have been fully committed.

Please do contact us if you have any queries.

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