

Peatland Restoration and Natural Flood Management



Exmoor Mires Partnership: Morag Angus; Conrad Barrowclough, Dr Martin Gillard

Horsen Farm, September 2018

Horsen Farm is located in the southern moorland block within Exmoor National Park. The site is a mixture of modified blanket and valley mire within an upland farmed landscape. Historical features include Bronze Age barrows and cairns. Its landscape character is typical of Exmoor. The farmer's concern was that vast volumes of water and quantities of sediment were being washed from the mires into grassland fields and eroding away his land.



Left: Block made of peat to block exit point of a peat cutting.

We worked with the landowner to devise a programme of works that would start the process of addressing these issues. This involved using well known and established peatland restoration techniques to block peat cuttings and ditches at the top of the catchment.



At the interface of the valley mire and grassland low wooden blocks were constructed. Slowing the flow of water along the ditch, improving the water table in the adjacent peatland area, whilst not impacting on the grassland area or the farmers main access route.



Left: Gully prior to work: Photo credit Environment Agency



Below: Willow fascines installed in the gully.

As the grey willow fascines grow and root into the gully this 'Natural Flood Management technique' will begin the process of alleviating peat and sediment loss going downstream and create a small corridor of wet willow woodland.

The willow fascines were installed by the fantastic EMP volunteers and staff!

Right: Locally sourced grey willow was used. Cut and constructed by Heart Wealden Enterprise Ltd. Dimensions of the fascines 2500mm x 400mm., and stakes 1500mm.

