



A guide to the higher payment rate available to create and manage 'woodlands for water' in target areas of Scotland

Woodlands for water and the Forestry Grant Scheme

In the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) woodlands for water are those that are located within target areas, and planted and managed in a way that maximises their benefit to both flood management and water quality. Woodlands for water can be on smaller parcels of land, integrating with the business that is already there. Having these well designed and managed woodlands on your land can generate income, complement agricultural activities and make a lasting contribution to local water quality. It does not mean the land stops being productive.



This factsheet explains what you need to consider before applying for the woodlands for water higher payment rate, which is only available as part of the FGS.

Target areas for woodlands for water

You can see the target areas on the FCS Map Viewer at scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/communication-consultation/map-viewer-guidance. Activate the 'Woodlands for water' layer in the FGS folder, and target areas will appear in blue hatch. Be aware that the 1:10 000 scale mapping needed for a FGS application can't be reproduced on this layer (it only goes to 1:25 000 scale). The Forestry Commission Scotland woodland officer assessing your application will be able to determine if your application is eligible.

Woodlands for water higher payment rate

The higher payment rate is available as grant support for all woodland creation options except 'Conifer' and 'Native Broadleaves in Northern and Western Isles'. It is available for initial planting and annual maintenance payments in the specified target areas.

You can see below how the total payment rates in target areas compare to standard areas. Capital items within the target areas such as fences and gates remain at the standard payment rates.

Woodland creation option	Total payment rate in standard areas (£/ha)	Total payment rate in target areas (£/ha)
Diverse conifer	3 840	4 320
Broadleaves	5 520	6 210
Native Scots pine	3 200	3 600
Native upland birch	2 480	2 790
Native broadleaves	3 200	3 600
Native low-density broadleaves	1 040	1 170
Small or farm woodland	4 400	4 950

There is more guidance about the eligibility criteria and woodland creation options on the Scottish Government website at <https://www.ruralpayments.org>. Your local woodland officer can also offer one-to-one advice.

The benefits of woodlands for water

As well as the higher payment rate for eligible applicants, there are many other **benefits**:

- Business integration
- Investment for the future
- Better water quality
- Natural flood management

Characteristics of woodlands for water

The Woodland Operational Plan that you submit as part of your application for the higher payment rate must incorporate forestry measures that will help secure multiple benefits for water. This means that the woodland planted must be of a type and design likely to deliver benefits for both natural flood management and water quality. Generally this means:

- Larger than 0.25 ha and with an average width greater than 15 m.
- Capable of establishing with little and infrequent input of fertilisers and pesticides.
- Capable of generating a good canopy and root system.
- Well-structured and diverse, using species that are likely to deliver multiple benefits (refer to species and types listed in payment rates table above).
- Designed according to the landform, so that it targets pathways of water flow and reflects ground conditions.
- Using the least intensive cultivation methods possible to reduce soil compaction and rapid run-off.

They can be planted in a riparian zone (along rivers and streams), on a floodplain or in the wider catchment.

There is more information at www.forestry.gov.uk/scotlandgrants and from your local woodland officer.

The woodlands will also need to meet the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard (2011), Water Guidelines (5th edition) and Scottish legislation such as the Controlled Activities Regulations and associated General Binding Rules (www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/water).

For more information about the Forestry Grant Scheme visit www.forestry.gov.uk/scotlandgrants or call 0300 067 5000.

This factsheet has been produced through a partnership of Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, National Farmers Union of Scotland, and Scottish Land & Estates.

