South Egremont Groundwater Scheme

Egremont, Cumbria

KMI+

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Small scale permanent

Project overview

The project is a 13km raw water pipeline route connecting four groundwater borehole sites in Egremont to Ennerdale Water Treatment Works.

Approximately 5.4km of the route is located within the Lake District National Park and the entire route is within the catchment of the River Ehen Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The route of the pipeline crosses floodplain, upland agricultural fields, forestry land and also includes approximately 1km of street works. The project has been in construction since April 2014 and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2015.

The project value is around £16 million and at its peak, the project employed a labour force of around 65.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

The route of the pipeline crosses floodplain, upland agricultural fields, forestry land, hedgerows and watercourses.

Photo: Bird box

All the watercourses are tributaries of the River Ehen SAC and SSSI and around half of the route is located in the Lake District National Park.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

The project was subject to a full Environmental Impact Assessment and associated scheme of mitigation, which has been implemented on site.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The project team are using off cuts of wood, which would have been disposed of as waste, to create bird boxes and bat boxes to put up along the pipeline route during the reinstatement phase of the project.

Suitable locations for bird boxes and bat boxes have been identified through review of the ecological surveys prepared for planning and through consultation with ecologists and agreement with the landowners.

So far, two watercourse crossing locations have been identified where there are mature trees and a clear flight path in for birds/bats so boxes will be erected in these locations.

A bird box has also been put up in a secluded location behind the storage containers at the main site compound. This box was immediately used by a blue tit for nesting.

The project also applied for a U3 waste exemption from the Environment Agency, so that waste pallets and other materials could be donated to a local school to build a bug habitat on their community field.

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.

Further information

Bird and bat boxes were built from off cuts of wood. The joiner referred to published guidance on how to construct the boxes and made a range of boxes to suit different species. These will be put in suitable locations identified by an ecologist.

The landowners have been consulted and are aware of the bird and bat box locations so they can be monitored to see if they are used. The bird box erected at the site compound is already in use.

Pallets and materials were donated to the school for them to create bug habitat themselves. Pictures and guidance were provided to help them construct a suitable habitat.

Photo: Bat box

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Being employed as an Environmental Supervisor on the project, the aim is to prevent or minimise the environmental impacts of the project on the surrounding environment.

The site team was encouraged to create bird and bat boxes and donate materials for a bug house to minimise the amount of wood waste generated by the project and to leave an environmental benefit behind once the project is completed.