Yorkshire Peat Partnership Research and Monitoring Funding opportunities

Yorkshire Peat Partnership has always been led by data and evidence in the work it carries out, we use evidence provided by other members of the peat practitioner community but also strive to develop our own projects to answer the questions and problems we have carrying out our peatland restoration work in our Yorkshire patch.

In the last few years YPP has developed its own research, evidence, data and development team whose work is to support and guide the restoration staff and develop innovate ways of carrying out our work. Below are some of the projects we are looking to fund.

Species reintroductions

Missing mosses Sphagnums Austinii and Fuscum (Project Austinii Powers and the fabulous Fuscum)

There are mosses missing from our peatlands, these Sphagnums have been present for thousands of years and have disappeared recently most likely due to man's activities. Elsewhere these species are indicators of high-quality bogs and if we want fully functioning peatland we need to bring them back. We need funding to go and collect these Sphagnums from Wales or Scotland and bring them back to Yorkshire, buy kit to propagate the mosses in polytunnels before reintroducing them to trial sites and monitoring which conditions they do best in. The aim will be to have these species planted across the peatland in the North of England, getting us a step closer to the pristine blanket bogs of the past.

Ask- 2-15k

Reintroducing insects (White faced darter dragonfly and large heath butterfly)

We are looking to carry out scoping work to investigate if it is possible to re-introduce these two insect species, looking at where we would put them, assessing the habitat, gaining consents, understanding the relocation process and identifying partners to work with (students and universities for instance). Costs now are for staff time to carry out surveys and this work. Pending the results of those surveys we may have a project of reintroducing them to fund next year.

Ask- £800-8000

Monitoring

Eyes on the Bog

This is a national IUCN citizen science programme that YPP has been rolling out across our sites in Yorkshire and working with partners in the wider Great North Bog to get sites out across the operational area. It is a simple monitoring method, including looking at peat depth, water table, vegetation and taking photos, that anyone can do. Volunteers, local groups, schools, land owners or stakeholders can all monitor their own plots. The kit is relatively cheap but still has a cost so we need to fund kit for the plots and volunteers and ideally staff time to help set up plots. The plots out so far were funded by People's Postcode Lottery in 2021, but we have so many volunteers keen to get involved we need more kit and time to do it.

Ask- £100-5000

Restoration Monitoring

We carry out restoration but rarely get any funding to return to sites we have restored and check how successful the restoration has been, which needs to be done regularly and over various sites so we can get an idea of how long our dams work or how successful the vegetation planting is. This information would directly influence what our future restoration work by allowing us to identify what works where and for how long. However, it takes staff time and we do not have funding for it. With funding we would also be able to analyse our data, write reports and present them to the peatland community.

Ask- £800-8000

Research

Flow monitoring

Peatland restoration slows the flow of water and reduces flood peaks, however there is almost no research to prove it. Our funding relies on us showing this fact, so we need to be monitoring the flow of water as it comes off our peatlands. The Environment Agency is willing to provide what funding it has for such research but it is a small amount and we need to expand this project to more sites. The project involves installing little V-notch weirs or blocks in gullies and using automated loggers to monitor the water flowing through this fixed gap so we know exactly how much is moving through the gully. The more we are monitoring flow of water off our peatlands the better we'll be able to show our restoration is good for water and people.

Ask- 2-15k

Shrinking Gas Monitoring

Measuring the fluctuations of the gases carbon dioxide and methane across peatland habitats is key for understanding the carbon emissions from these landscapes. Therefore identifying how successful restoration and rewetting is at decreasing emissions and making bogs that absorb carbon rather than emit it. Our current gas monitoring kit weighs over 25kg and must be carried long distances in a stretcher across sites which means we do very little gas monitoring. Our colleagues at Manchester University have shrunk all but the methane sensor onto a tablet sized unit costing around £200 to make, which would mean we could make lots and train anyone to use them, allowing us to get lots of data. But we need to finish the development, manufacture and trial using them.

Ask- 5-15k