

On-farm reservoirs

Water use is a critical aspect of agriculture, it is used for irrigation, raising livestock and post-harvest processing. Motivated by climate change, water availability and soil husbandry techniques some farms are investing in innovative and collaborative small-scale sustainable water resources solutions.

Naish and Thoresby Home are neighbouring farms in Nottinghamshire which have worked together to develop and build two on site reservoirs. The first reservoir was built in the late 1990's as a response to a spell of dry weather experienced in 1995, and can be used to irrigate 100 acres of land within a 5km radius. The second reservoir is larger and was built more recently. Both structures discharge into the River Meden, which supports downstream re-abstracting. The reservoirs provide storage for unseasonably high flows, which may result in reduced flooding risk on downstream reaches.

Innovative water resources solutions like this are difficult to implement. The funding and licencing processes are not ideally suited to projects of this nature and the application system is complex to navigate, which further discourages wider uptake. Farms and agricultural water use are an integral part of WRW's future view for the region. Continued collaboration between farmers, regulators and water companies is needed to ensure solutions are found and support is provided where needed. We will continue to engage with the non-PWS sectors such as farming to identify viable solutions which can bring multiple benefits.

