**Transcript**

Our project is called the Floodplain Meadows Partnership. We are hosted by the Open University but we're a big UK-wide multi- partnership project of all organizations that have an interest in conserving researching and restoring species rich floodplain meadows.

Species rich floodplain meadows are amazingly diverse grasslands that are created by allowing the grass to grow in the spring and summer, having an annual hay cut with aftermath grazing and they're found on floodplains so they're really interesting habitat to use a floodplain for, and over the past 15 years we've undertaken research into how floodplain meadows store carbon in their deep soils, how they remove nutrients from a floodplain system through the hay crop um and we're using that research to share with a whole range of stakeholders across the country. People who are managing floodplain meadows: land owners, organizations who are responsible for protecting them, and so the key bits of research that we have undertaken are now being used to feed into policy working with the scientists that are in the team and the research that they are developing to use that as evidence-based advocacy.

It's really useful, it gives a real world examples, it's trustworthy and what we're finding now is we've done research on various data to do with nutrient neutrality, with carbon, with water storage. They're all incredibly relevant, very active policy at the moment. It makes it quite exciting for me because we're a very compelling story and we've got you wouldn't think that these old fashioned hay meadows provide this what you know modern world solutions to the crises in biodiversity and society and climate change but they do and it depends on the research that's being done.

Those scientists and those plants have players who down on the ground are helping to solve how we then tackle issues like flooding issues. Like we're losing our pollinators, for example they're actually giving those solutions. We've all seen the recent extreme flood events that have happened across the country, well globally as well of course, and our project is all about how you can manage floodplains more sustainably so if you reduce the amount of arable land that is in the floodplain where you get lots of soil being washed off, lots of chemical being washed off into the river and change it to permanent grassland which is diverse and storing carbon it can store flood waters, still be an agricultural system. So it's still producing food, but it's really important for wildlife and ecosystems as well and actually what we're finding now is that recognition of actually historic traditional farming methods incredibly important for how you manage land. So this this beautiful thread golden thread backed right across the ages, and we're finding with some of our ancient meadows the vast amount of carbon they store, the wonderful structure of the soil, and how useful it is for various nature-based solutions.

We involve all the major conservation organizations in the United Kingdom, we have farmer representatives on our group who are the delivery end of our project and we have research organizations and education organizations, and we are a model that others are looking to emulate. We have influenced agricultural policy which is developing now about how we pay farmers to look after the land and deliver on various eco services and we've actually now through working with Defra, we now have our own option to pay farmers to actually deliver, manage, restore floodplain meadows and it's a good healthy amount as well which has come from the efforts that we've put in and the data and research we've done. We're also working with Natural England and Defra on nutrient neutrality, again can floodplain meadows be one of the ways that we can reduce nutrients within our water. Other ways that we're doing is we're looking at working with the Environment Agency and water companies again on flood management, flood storage so all this wave of different policies that we're now already starting to influence.