

# THE GREAT NORTH BOG

The time to invest in our peatlands is now. We recognise that healthy peatlands are vital to helping tackle the climate and biodiversity crises. The peatland restoration programmes of northern England have developed a vision to match the scale of this ecological challenge.

The Great North Bog is an ambitious, grand-scale peatland restoration initiative being developed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, the Yorkshire Peat Partnership and the Moors for the Future Partnership. The Great North Bog is a landscape-scale approach to upland peatland restoration and conservation across nearly 7000 square kilometres of peatland soils in the Protected Landscapes of northern England, currently storing 400 million tonnes of carbon. The programme aims to develop a working partnership to deliver a 20-year funding, restoration and conservation plan to make a significant contribution to the UK's climate and carbon sequestration targets.

## Partnership

By joining up of some of the most successful peatland restoration programmes in Europe we can bring about a massive and urgent step change in saving the majority of England's upland peatlands before it is too late. The Protected Landscapes of the Great North Bog represent around 92% of the upland peat in England. The Great North Bog includes four National Parks, three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the proposed South Pennines Park, and represents a significant opportunity to implement the peatland restoration objectives in the 25 Year Environment Plan.

In the last two decades, the three leading peatland programmes have restored about 1,100km<sup>2</sup> (YPP – 323km<sup>2</sup>, NPAONB – 350km<sup>2</sup>, MFFP – 454km<sup>2</sup>). This is a great start but despite this massive effort it is still less than 20% of the total area and, with a climate and biodiversity emergency, now is the time to pool our skills to make a revolutionary change in the rate of restoration of England's upland peatlands.

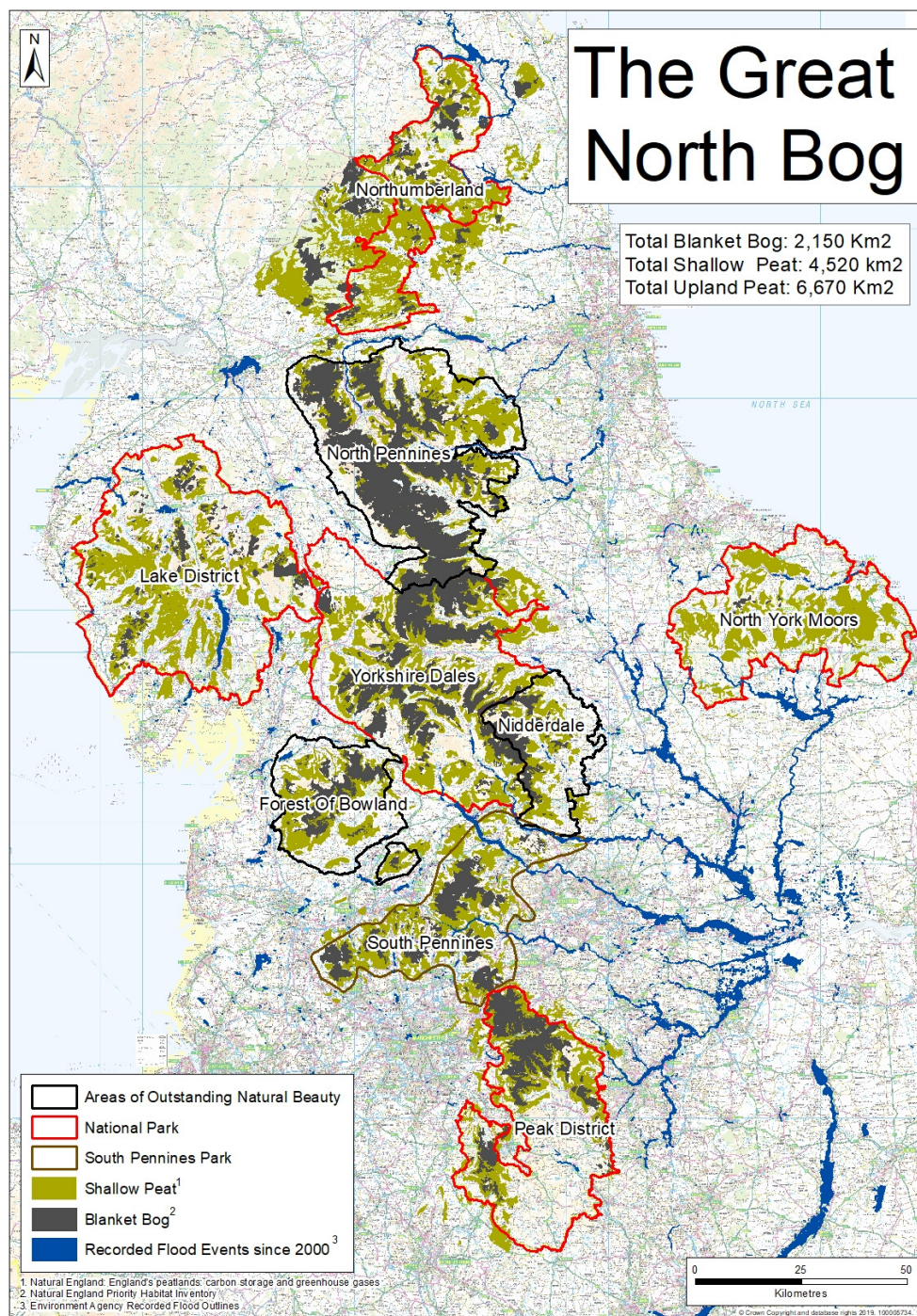
## Benefits to society

- Peatlands are the UK's rainforests, storing vast amounts of carbon. Restoring them will also reduce carbon emissions released by damaged peat and enable it to sequester more in the future. It is estimated that 4.4million tonnes of carbon is released annually by damaged peat in the Great North Bog.
- A healthy peatland slows the flow of water from the hills, reducing the risk of flooding and the impact of storm water, directly benefitting towns and major cities downstream.
- Peatlands in the Great North Bog provide drinking water to 15 million properties in the area. Eroding peatlands discolour water, increasing cost of water treatment. Restoration reduces the costs of providing safe drinking water.
- Healthy peatlands support a wide range of wildlife. Restoration will help to reverse the trend of decline in upland species (identified in the State of Nature 2019 report).
- Healthy peatlands are strong, resilient and ecologically diverse habitats that provide multiple benefits for people.

## Costs and carbon

To restore the remaining damaged peatlands in the Great North Bog, the partners are seeking blended investment from both public and private sector sources of approximately £200 million over 20 years. Once restored, the Great North Bog will safeguard the increased carbon it stores and will avoid annual carbon losses estimated at 3.7 million tonnes per year.

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