

SWEDEN

Biodiversity's restoration, preservation & enhancement

Location

Hedemora commune

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P4 – Ecosystems
management

Measure

M07 – Basic services
& village renewal

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 354 000
RDP contribution 239 000
Private 80 000
Other 35 000

Project duration

2017 – 2020

Project promoter

Hedemora kommun

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Support from the Swedish Rural Development Programme helped improve accessibility for visitors in a restored municipal nature reserve.

Summary

Stadssjön ('City Lake') is located in the county of Dalarna. It is a municipal nature reserve consisting of a coastal pasture and leafy swamp forest that was not properly managed until recently. Despite being located close to a city centre, the lake was not accessible as it was overgrown and surrounded by leafy trees and bushes and there were no roads or paths.



The project was set up to increase the accessibility to and within the reserve whether by hiking, cycling, or with a wheelchair. It also created attractions such as the viewing tower and picnic areas.

Results

Even without marketing, there has been an increasing number of local visitors coming to the area. As soon as the restoration is complete and the area starts being advertised, it is estimated that it will attract approximately 5 000 visitors per year.

The project has also an education and training function. Students from the area's secondary school did their internships with one of the construction companies that built the tower, the bridge and the footbridge. In addition, schools in the municipality now have the opportunity to organise educational activities in the area. Visitors can experience different types of nature while learning about it.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ When carrying out such investments, one should keep in mind that things can take much longer and be more expensive than initially planned. It took two years to get approval for the EU-support. The nature reserve is designated as a Natura 2000 site, which made the process more complicated and required additional permissions for the restoration activities.

Context

Stadssjön ('City Lake') is a municipal nature reserve and consists of a coastal pasture and leafy swamp forest. Before the restoration project, it was poorly managed. Despite being located close to a city centre the lake was not accessible as it was overgrown and surrounded by leafy trees and bushes. In addition, the adjacent land was in poor condition and dominated by a large amount of regrowth species. The result of this overgrowth was that animal and plant species that thrive in open and well-managed coastal pastures/meadows became scarce or even disappeared.

Before restoration of the area, the nature reserve was not accessible to visitors as there were no roads or paths to the reserve. Only dedicated birdwatchers wearing waterproof boots were able to find their way to Stadssjön.

Objectives

The project aimed to support the restoration of the coastal pastures and thus improve the habitat for bird, animal and plant species that thrive in open areas, for instance curlews, and in well-managed vegetation, while also creating a new tourist destination.

Activities

The area was designated as a nature reserve in 2011. Previously in 2009, a private individual restored part of the reserve into open coastal pasture. This person leased the land from the municipality and applied for EU-support for the restoration. Since approximately 2012, the land has been grazed by cattle and in 2014 the first part of the restoration was finished. The land restoration resulted in 32 hectares of well-managed coastal pasture.

In the winter of 2017/2018, the project started under the leadership of Hedemora municipality. Building the hiking trails on the soft land required the construction of a winter road on which a trail was then laid. During 2018/2019 a large birdwatching tower, a 300-meter-long wooden deck and a large bridge were built. In addition, a parking lot for cars and buses was prepared. During 2018, a mosaic wetland was established along the hiking trail to support birdlife but also to provide visitors with an exciting experience along their hike.



Main results

The activities to improve accessibility resulted in an increasing number of local visitors coming to the area - even without any marketing. As soon as the restoration is complete and the area is advertised, it is estimated that it will be attracting approximately 5 000 visitors per year.

The project has also an education and training function. Students from upper secondary schools have had their internships with one of the construction companies that built the tower, bridge and footbridge. In addition, schools in the municipality now have the opportunity to organise educational activities in the area. Visitors can experience the different landscapes while learning about the variety of nature in the reserve.

Key lessons

When carrying out such investments, one should keep in mind that things can take longer and be more expensive than initially planned. It took two years to obtain the approval for EU-support. The nature reserve is designated as a Natura 2000 site, which made the process more complicated and required additional permissions for all the restoration activities.

It is also difficult to build narrow hiking trails. They are not made for heavy machines. However, they require heavy machines to be built.

Additional sources of information

n/a