

## A New Wetland Habitat

Anglian Water has determined that it needs to find additional water supplies in order to be able to meet the increasing demand from new homes in its region. Since Rutland Water has never been used to its authorised capacity, it has been decided that the predicted shortfall can be satisfied by increasing the volume of water pumped out of the reservoir and processed by Wing Water Treatment Works. This is likely to cause the water level in the reservoir to be drawn down more often and for longer periods, thus decreasing the habitat for the large numbers of water birds that are attracted to the reservoir. Rutland Water is an internationally important nature conservation site, and strict legislation states that bird numbers must not be allowed to decrease through habitat loss.

In order to ensure that there is adequate wetland habitat even when the reservoir water level is low, additional lagoons and wetlands will be created at the western end of the reservoir, within and adjacent to the present nature reserve area. The additional amount of wetland habitat required has been determined from data on the densities of birds using the three existing lagoons (1, 2 and 3 on the map). This will be created

by building dams and by excavating a series of new wetland areas.

The new dams across Manton Bay and Fishponds Bay will create new lagoons (A, D1 and D2 on the map) by preventing these areas from drying out when the rest of the reservoir is drawn down. The dams will be under water when the reservoir is full and will become visible only when it is below 85 per cent of its full capacity, and then only from the reservoir side.

The new shallow lagoons and improved wetland areas (B1 and C1 to C5 on the map) will be created on existing agricultural land and within the reserve. Water will be piped into these and the existing lagoons to maintain water levels, even during drought periods, and the new lagoons will be screened by hedges, trees and banks to ensure that birds are not disturbed by human activity. New walking and cycling routes will be created round and through this area.

Additional civil engineering works will be required to install a new raw water pipeline between Empingham pumping station and Wing Water Treatment Works, and a new treated water pipeline between Wing and the Hannington service reservoir in Northamptonshire.

This work is due to commence in 2008 with construction work on the new wetland habitats taking place during the spring and summer over a three-year period (see Chapter 24 – Tim Appleton MBE – Thirty Years of Rutland Water Nature Reserve).

*The new wetland habitat, based on information provided by Anglian Water (RO)*

