

Cornwall Beaver Project

A fenced trial re-introduction

Woodland Valley Farm

Chris Jones

January 5 2018

Motivation

- Flooding in Ladock
- Requirement (perceived by me at any rate) for using essentially free natural actors to produce or enhance ecosystem services
- Fits right into my philosophy of land management for the widest range of ecosystem services

Partners

- Woodland Valley Farm
- Cornwall Wildlife Trust
- Exeter Uni
- Coast Project
- Southampton Uni
- Derek Gow Consultancy



Chronology

- 2012-13 Ladock flooded twice (actually floods every 10 years or so)
- 2013-14 Ladock came within a whisker of flooding twice again
- February 2014 visit to the farm of EA geomorphologist
- June 2014 first visit of CWT and Derek Gow to the site to discuss suitability of the farm for release
- June 2015 Exeter Uni agree to commence hydrology monitoring
- September 2015 monitoring commences, every 5 minutes – water depth and turbidity
- Spring 2017 – crowd fund planned and executed – target and stretch target reached.

Beaver Released June 16th 2017

- A 3 year old male (from Devon) and a 2 year old female (from Wales) European beavers.
- Released in front of an audience of stakeholders and supporters with BBC and ITV film coverage.



June 18th to 25th

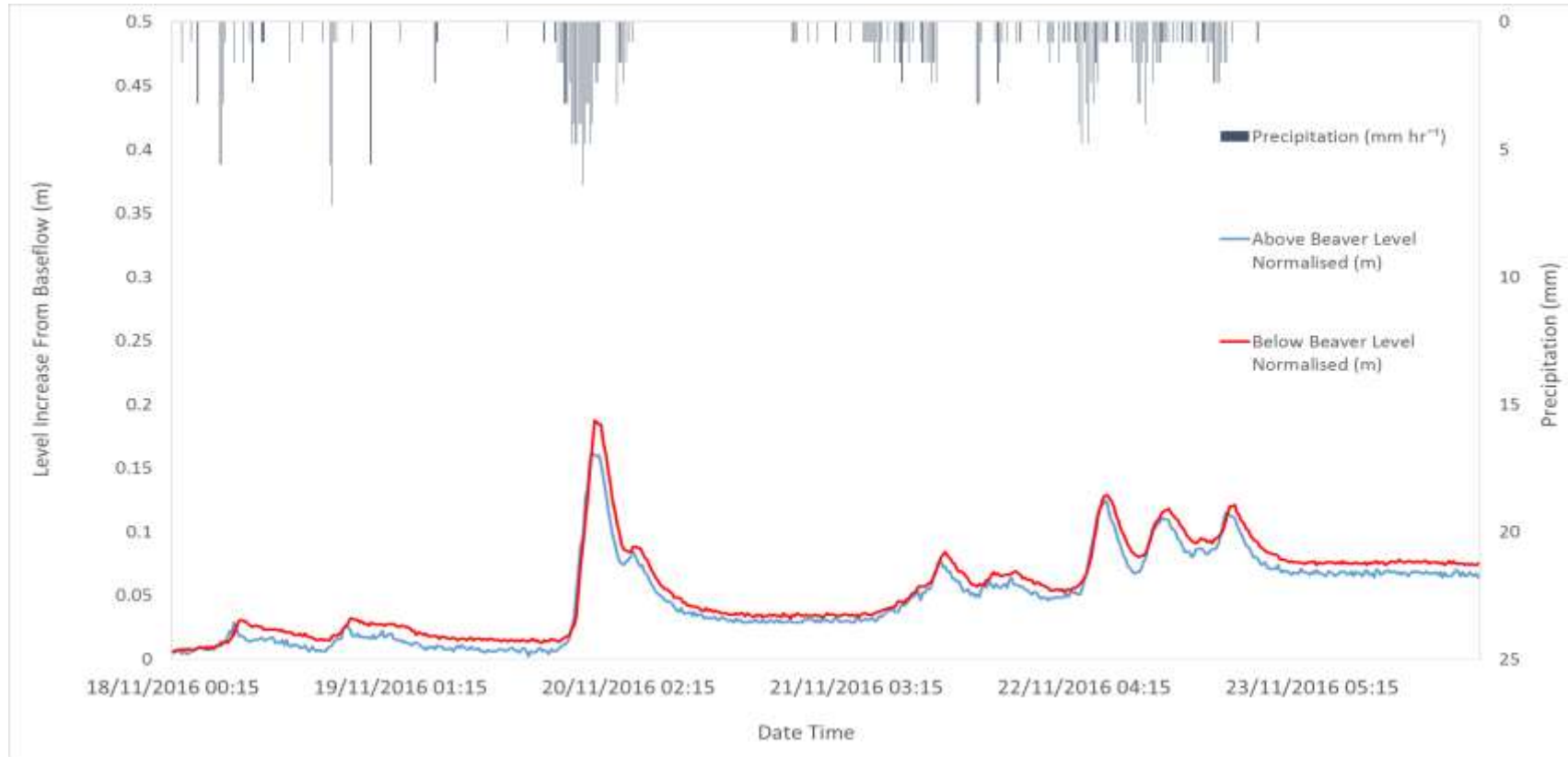


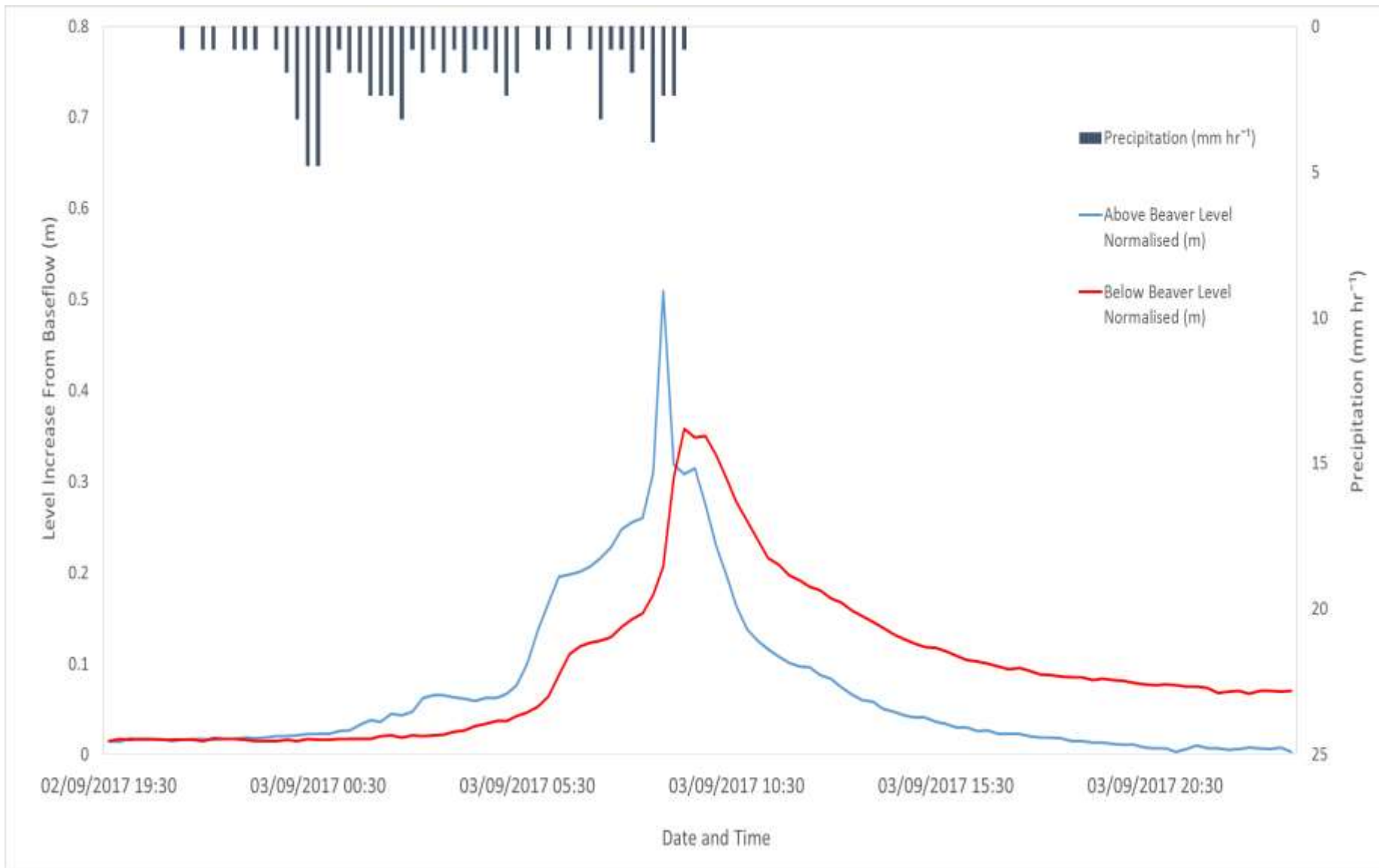
Results 26 weeks in

- 4 dams built
- Lodge building commenced
- Original pond now tripled in volume
- 2 further ponds created and inundated wetland
- 2 stream channels where there was once one
- Hydrograph of water leaving the site is now visibly separating from the hydrograph of water entering the site.

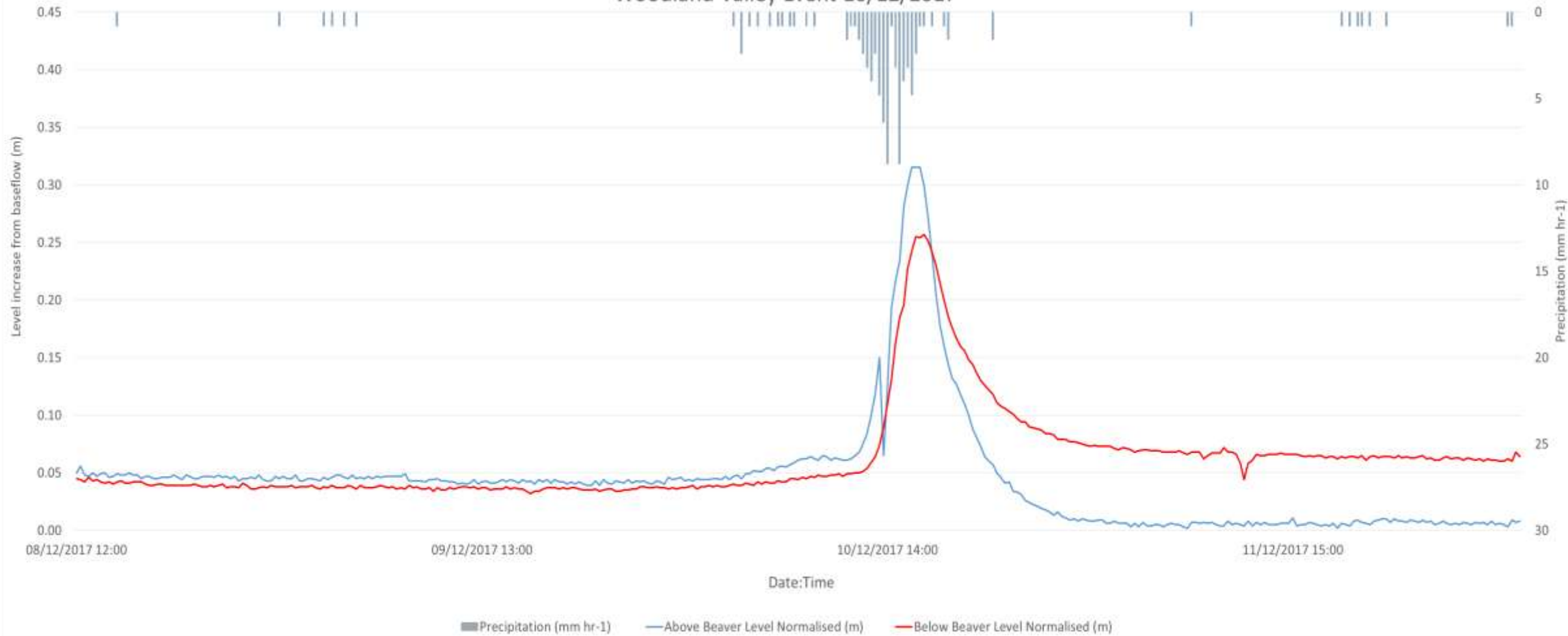
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Pre-beaver





Woodland Valley Event 10/12/2017



Future Prospects Short Term

- Dam building and lodge building will progress
- Kits born next spring?
- Rapidly increasing abundance and diversity of wildlife
- Hydrographs will show increasing attenuation of flood peaks.



Long Term Aspiration

- They become an accepted and vital part of the Cornish Countryside helping to reverse the environmental damage of centuries of abuse.
- That beavers are adopted legally as a native species.
- They become sufficiently well established to slash flood risk across the county.



<https://www.facebook.com/cornwallbeaverproject/>

