

Network Rail begins work on Lynebeg's new ecology pond

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The ecology at Lynebeg in the Scottish Highlands is getting some support thanks to the construction of a new pond.

Engineers are preparing to create the new body of water as part of advance works for the A9 Dualling: Tomatin to Moy project.

Network Rail teams are carrying out the project on behalf of **Transport Scotland**. They will build a new pond and associated landscaping — the latter of these will include wetland planting.

The work will take about eight weeks. During this time, the area will be cleared and lined before the surrounding area is landscaped to create the 60 by 20 metre pond which will be left to mature for a year before the contents of an existing pond are relocated.

The above follows earlier works undertaken in autumn 2021, during which a Tunnel Boring Machine (Mole) tunnelled under the railway for approximately 33 meters through a mixture of sand, gravel and rock over a period of four days, to create an overflow outfall for the new pond.

Ecology assessment undertaken during the development of the project has highlighted the existence of a rare sub-species of the caddisfly. The new pond and landscaping will help protect the habitat that supports this rare species and enable its future translocation to this location.

Malcolm McGowan, Network Rail project manager for the work at Lynebeg said: “The construction of this pond will recreate the existing caddisfly habitat and, following a period of establishment, will support the relocation of the existing caddisfly to the new pond, which is considered to bring significant environmental benefits to the A9 project.”

“Promoting positive environmental impacts and supporting biodiversity is an important element of the overall A9 Dualling project and the work we will do in the coming weeks will continue to benefit the local ecology for generations to come.

“There will be a range of construction plant involved in the creation of the pond and though the location is relatively rural, we are advising local people to be aware of the additional activity and vehicle movements during this important work.”