

Company: CEMEX
Location: Weser, Germany

Objective The aim of this project was to develop additional ecologically valuable habitats through raw material mining.

Context Gravel and sand have been mined in the gravel pit Leese located in the meadowlands of the Weser (south of Nienburg) since the 70's. Mining is meanwhile in the third approval segment. After the employees of the gravel pit completed the first mining segment in 1989, a 250 hectare water body developed. Embankment production measures and plantings led to its development into an optimal habitat for, among others, the lesser mouse-eared bat species.

Solution The District government of Hannover met the demands of this extraordinary number of species and structures in 1997 and appointed the entire mining area Leese 1 as a nature preserve "Domain Stolzenau/Leese". Leese 1 is located in the flood zone of the Weser and a linked plain with lakes developed due to the wet gravel extraction. Future gravel mining will supplement the plain of lakes via a few additional water areas, with the raw material mining resulting in the development of additional ecologically valuable habitats.

Result The location in the flood zone of the Weser, its vicinity to the internationally significant nature preserve Schlüsselburg river dam in North Rhine Westphalia, its numerous structures and various development stages give the region special importance as habitat. A number of species and symbioses of wild plants and animals living in the wild that require protection and are sensitive settle here on land and in the water. Ornithological statistics, that included the current mining area, counted 90 bird species such as the European plover, the penduline tit, marsh warbler and the common whitethroat as breeding birds, sedentary birds, feeding, migrant or winter guests. 25 of the registered species are on the Red List of the endangered animal species of Lower Saxony and 22 are on the Red List of the endangered animal species of Germany.

The existing plain of lakes and its vicinity are characterised by various water depths, diverse sectors for amphibians, long river embankments, reclamation areas, reed belts, tall herb grounds, forest lines and grassland on lean to nutritious locations. The entire restoration area has been identified as a European nature preserve (FFH area) since 2000. According to the flora-fauna habitat guideline of the European Community, it is a protected bat habitat.

Partners District government of Hannover

