

AUTOMOTIVE

BMW grants audiences remote access with 'Recharge in Nature' rollout

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Began in October 2022, BMW's collaboration supports biodiversity and natural restoration while expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure in national parks. Image credit: BMW

By ZACH JAMES

German automaker BMW is embracing the outdoors as a multi-year partnership gets off the ground.

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The company's Recharge in Nature Project aims to support the ecological stability and balance of the United Kingdom's national parks, allowing drivers to explore even the most remote regions of Britain. BMW is uplifting five new initiatives supporting sustainable exploration, biodiversity and the expansion of EV charging infrastructure across the U.K.'s national parks, in a second wave of one of its most crucial campaigns to date.

"This blueprint is really important for all of the national parks in the U.K. to demonstrate what can be done to improve electric vehicle charging in what are often deep rural locations but very well-visited locations," said Richard Leafe, CEO of Lake District National Park, in a statement.

Taking charge

BMW's undertaking with all 15 of the properties comprising the National Parks U.K. network was originally announced in October 2022.

Fast forward a few months and a large-scale electric charging station expansion ensues at these legally protected sites throughout the country. Complete power systems will eventually be built into all of the parks, but Lake District National Park, England's largest and most visited, serves as the initiative's starting point.

BMW immerses viewers in nature via a series of digital sensory experiences

Locales with scarce charging opportunities are being prioritized as far as upcoming stations go. Coastal areas such as bluffs, which Mr. Leafe described as "charging deserts," are especially of note.

Big picture, maintaining biodiversity and habitat restoration are additionally funded by BMW's Recharge in Nature Project, part of the partnership with the national park system.

"The partnership is really important because it reinforces our commitment to work with local communities and local

projects to improve biodiversity," said Sue Orme, environmental manager at BMW UK, in a statement.

The partnership was announced with a video from BMW UK

All of the projects are selected from the existing national parks' natural restoration programs, all of which will be bolstered by the partnership.

In 2023, five specific initiatives are to be funded.

The first to be funded is the dew ponds restoration of South Downs National Park, a project that will address the degrading integrity of essential wetlands, damaged by livestock practices and the changing climate. A whole 70 percent of the ponds are considered in "poor" condition or worse, have disappeared entirely.

This devastated ecological area's work will include the creation of new ponds, the aim to offer better water quality for visitors and local animals alike.



Livestock grazing at South Downs National Park. Image credit: BMW

Another beneficiary this year is Snowdonia National Park's Llyn Tegid, a lake suffering from algal blooms caused by harmful agricultural and forestry practices. BMW is supporting the implementation of responsible flood management such as hedgerow planting, to keep toxic water at bay.

Community engagement programs, conservation volunteer opportunities and carpooling options will also be included in 2023's programming around the commonwealth.

Greater purpose

BMW is no stranger to environmental action, making progress in overarching sustainability goals throughout 2023 so far.

In May, BMW announced it would join the pack of luxury automakers offering vegan interiors to their upcoming models ([see story](#)). These new leather options are considered to be far more sustainable in the long term, bringing the company ever closer to a goal of going carbon neutrality by 2050.



2023 has proven fruitful already for BMW's green efforts, the company exploring clean energy options in various forms. Image credit: BMW

A few months before in March, the brand announced the creation of a fleet of 100 hydrogen-powered vehicles ([see story](#)).

While far from public release, and only available for demonstrations and trials, the concept cars are completely emission-free in a sampling of the green fuel's possibilities for the market in the coming years.

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