

RFCANews

No. 41

February 2017

Apologies for the length of time since the last Newsletter but it has been a busy time.

Fish Movement

2016				
	Waddow		Locks	
	Up	Down	Up	Down
January	4	2		
February				
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
Totals				

N.B. January figures for Locks still await verification.

Catch Returns

In the last Newsletter I said that there was a problem with the catch returns from anglers. The EA have asked us to get club and riparian returns for 2016 for the whole river and also for above Waddow. I am pleased to say that nearly all clubs and riparian owners have given us the figures.

NWATFCC

The problems facing declining salmon need regional, national and international action. The NWATFCC is a powerful voice for the NW and has initiated many actions over the last year. It organised the Salmon Forum at Lancaster in January which was well attended. We have two members on the national Angling Advisory Body set up by the AT and we keep up constant pressure on DEFRA and the EA to actually do something under the 5 Point Plan to save the Salmon. It is a frustrating experience to say the least but we keep at it.

We understand that there will be a national consultation on options relating to nets and rods as part of the process of the 5 Point Plan.

Ribble NLO

The above is part of the context of discussions on the Ribble NLO which finishes this year. We have objected strongly to the EA proposal to cut the rods to 1 fish kill per year. This is not because we are against catch and release but because it was put to us that it would placate the nets for their proposals on the lines that the rods were taking further cuts.

On the 2015 figures it would save precisely 4 fish so it is nonsensical from every viewpoint. We are awaiting news from DEFRA and the proposals will go out for consultation. In our view given the national scene it would make sense to extend the current NLO for one year since it is intended that there will be national proposals for 2018. We shall have to wait and see.

Pollution

It has been noticeable that reports on pollution have dropped off in 2016. Perhaps it is a sign of the times with less anglers on the bank. Attached is the EA "Response to pollution incidents". Please note the penultimate point on "multiple reports". If you do not report it then it will never be dealt with.

Remember, being the "eyes and ears" whenever you are on the river is a vital part of our overall strategy, so please be vigilant when out and about but remember to be safe as well. If you see any pollution report it to the E.A. on the hotline 0800 80 70 60 and then to Fred Higham (Ribble and Hodder) on 01200 423314 and Graham Parkes (Calder) on 07861 696 813. They will follow up and we get regular pollution reports from the E.A. at Council meetings.

We have for some time been asking the EA for clarification on in river works which cause a lot of problems. I am pleased to say they have responded and attached is "Standard Fisheries Bio Diversity Geomorphology requirements for in channel works (Main River)". It is something of a mouthful but valuable none the less in that allows anyone of us to look at what is happening in the river and come to the conclusion that this is not right and ring the hot line. One word of caution this is a generic document and there could be specific conditions in place. If in doubt ring the hot line and any RFCA Officer.

Anti-poaching

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Witcherwell Hatchery

In the last Newsletter we reported that Witcherwell had been sold. That I am afraid was a little previous in that the sale is still proceeding for an undisclosed sum.

Hydro power

This is a complete pain which takes up a lot of time. The whole business of hydro applications, planning and monitoring just does not work or at best is a stacked deck. We continue to monitor Settle closely and it has had its licence renewed so no surprise. There has been some slight modification which should not cause a problem if properly adhered to! Whalley is difficult to monitor since there is no access.

Please inform any RFCA Officer if you hear of any hydro application.

Avian Predation Licence

The Ribble has the largest area licence by area but not by the number of birds they give us to shoot. It is vital that cormorants and goosanders are reported to club secretaries. Of particular importance are roosting sites since these change.

On a personal note I will be retiring from the Chairmanship of the NWATFCC in April and the RFCA in June at the respective AGMs. Willing volunteers have been found in both cases so the fight to protect fishery interests and the environment goes on.

C.D.Hinks,
Chairman

Attached:
Standard Fisheries Biodiversity Geomorphology
E.A. Response to Pollution Incidents