

Eden Autumn news 02.11.17 A round up of things that have happened happening..... or progressing

Skitwath Beck pollution event - the second anniversary of the Sept 2015 event passed without resolution of this incident. REDFA in conjunction with an Eden Club with direct fishing interest downstream engaged Fish Legal (the legal arm of the Angling Trust) to obtain disclosure from the Environment Agency on a decision timetable announcing their intention to take or not take legal action over those responsible. The EA responded to this with an expected date (end of October) and we now awaiting final confirmation of their decision process.

Eden Area Predation Licence - REDFA coordinate the Licensing operations on the Eden and with this seasons (winter 2017-18) Licence approval a number of conditions and restrictions were applied by Natural England (the licensing authority) to quota allocations in the lower 10 km of Eden sites.

These were applied on the basis of a precautionary principle that goosander and cormorants in these waters were part of an unstable population in a proposed and newly defined marine special protection area in the outer Solway Firth and coastal zone just north of Whitehaven including Allonby bay.

REDFFA and CAA have combined with Derwent fisheries to oppose these restrictions and a solicitor with Fish Legal is currently working representing our interests.

Fish damage - REDFA archive - the Secretary now maintains a register of notable cormorant & goosander sightings in the catchment as well as photo evidence of fish damage.

Please forward any material by email to oneoffdesignandbuild@hotmail.com



Photo submitted by Paul Proctor of an Upper Eden trout with cormorant marks

Solway Firth Net Limitation Order and Esk & Eden River byelaw reviews - there have been a series of Steering meetings between rod & net Fisheries interests and the EA & NE to form agreed proposals to submit to the Defra minister for final public consultation this winter.

This has been a lengthy and frustrating process with the EA & NE adopting a strong conservation approach and being required to take account of proposed new national Byelaws that may be introduced as part of the recent National Consultation on exploitation and C & R measures.

We expect to receive notification of the final NLO & Byelaw proposals by the end of the year with the intention that there would be a public consultation in the New Year.

At present there is still some distance between the proposals that REDFA carefully considered and submitted with those contained within the EA preferred Option.

Rod Angler and Fishery migratory returns - the independent Eden rod fisheries returns collated by REDFA since 2013 have highlighted significant under reporting of declared angler salmon catches in the published EA reports for the 2015 & 2016 years. This was quickly brought to the attention of the EA in the spring of both 2016 & 2017 and as a result Eden spawning stock assessment were revised to the REDFA estimates. The EA subsequently applied corrections to rivers nationally – an uplift of 23% to earlier estimates.

Due to these concerns REDFA & NWATFCC coordinated a sample study of 39 NW anglers across Eden, Border Esk, Derwent, Lune & Ribble so that the EA could audit their angler return processing systems.

Thank you to those that participated.

The initial feedback from the EA is that it helped identify areas where improvements can be made and recommendations to strengthen the completion of angler returns within the reporting window.

For the Eden, with the failure of the Corby counter and disruption to electro fishing programmes, we are increasingly reliant on accurate rod returns to assess stocks. This is within our hands to manage effectively and we need to keep pressing the message home to anglers that it is in their interests to make their returns

2018 Scottish Inquiry into Impact of Salmon farming on Wild migratory stocks

REDFA & NWATFCC have been lobbying through national and international conservation organisations whilst working closely with the S&TCUK in its long running campaign.

We will be making a detailed submission to the Rural Economy & Connectivity Committee and MSP's in the new Year.

If you have evidence or observations of impact to your Fishery please contact the Secretary, or may like to assist in any way (reading and making notes of research reports etc)



A rod caught herling from the Eden in 2016 with 12 sea lice on one gill cover – sufficient to kill smolts and fish of this size

River stock status salmon classifications

Stock classifications are increasingly likely to set future C & R measures, whether these are voluntary or mandatory. In the light of this REDFA & NWATFCC have submitted detailed proposals to the EA for strengthening classification reporting systems. We hope to report further on this in the New Year.

Dalston (River Caldwel) hydro proposal

REDFA, CAA with the assistance of the AT/Fish Legal and other organisations made strong and timely objections to this proposal for a scheme at Buckabank weir early this year.

This resulted in a higher level of scrutiny being applied to the developers proposal and we are awaiting the final EA Habitat Regulations Assessment of this scheme which will guide Natural England and the planning bodies in the final determination of this project. This has delayed the separate Abstraction Licence process that is being sought through the EA's Permitting procedures.

Winter 2017-18 fish stock Monitoring events

We are looking to get up and running very quickly :-

***Redd counting** of selected favourable and accessible spawning reaches for presence of salmon/trout during end of November – December window. Short briefing session and allocation of sites and pairing up of observers to walk over sites is envisaged.*

***Grayling and coarse fish weekend event** – January 2018 given suitable water conditions.*

Purpose to uncover distribution of little fished for species.

Anyone Interested ? or can assist with getting these off the ground - please contact the Secretary

Eden Monitoring Report 2016

The 2016 report is being compiled by REDFA this year and we hope to have this circulating end of this year. With all the flood impacts resulting in additional workload and diverted efforts to fisheries staff, Riparian Owners and Clubs we hope the report will shed a little light on how fish stocks and habitats have survived !

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