

# RFCA NEWS No. 12

December 2009.

We put our last Newsletter out in August so this is long overdue. We can only plead pressure of events since the pace of consultations, problems in all directions and the feeling of angling being under threat from all sides has kept us very busy. The RFCA is now dealing with so many things both at local, regional and national level that we really need a full time secretariat.

## Entrepose

Despite the best efforts of Fish Legal the solicitors for Entrepose will not play. Given the summing up of the Judge it left little room for negotiation. Entrepose pleaded guilty but the clubs and the anglers who found it impossible to fish get nothing in compensation. Entrepose are due to come back, probably in May, to do some work. Rest assured they will be closely watched.

## Pollution

Council members get a pollution report every meeting. Since September very few pollutions have been reported and all have been dealt with by the E.A. Pollution Teams. Relations between the E.A. Pollution Teams and the RFCA are excellent and they do much good work. If you believe there is a pollution incident ring the hotline **0800 80 70 60** and then let Fred Higham, Pollution Officer for the RFCA for the Ribble and Hodder, know on **01200 423314** and Grahame Parkes for the Calder **07861 696813**.

## Poaching and River Watch

Our poaching officer reports that he believes there have been approximately 10 netting incidents this year. The high water levels throughout the year have made it difficult for poaching. The E.A. have done more anti poaching patrols this year than for a long time and for that we thank them. Please report anything suspicious to the E.A. hotline **0800 80 70 60** and then let our poaching officer, Bruce Spedding, know on **07766441952**.

## Hydro power

This is one of the problems facing angling and the environment. The only Hydro project we have on the Ribble is the one at Settle Weir. This is almost ready to become operational. It has taken much longer than the organisers hoped to get it to this stage thanks to a spirited opposition by the RFCA, reported in previous newsletters. It is massively over budget and they have had to arrange a large loan. Anybody who took shares in it seduced by the thought of some easy money is likely to be in for a shock.

During the building there have been all sorts of problems, which has led us to complain to the E.A. on more than one occasion. Building was stopped to allow fish to run up the fish pass without hindrance. More problems have broken out with the E.A. adjusting the hands off flow to less than stipulated in the abstraction licence. This has been done on no evidence and with an initial absence of communication. This issue is now been looked at both at local and national level and we thank the Salmon and Trout Association for their help. This story is set to run and run since the Ribble is the first major salmon river to have a hydro. Indeed the RFCA has done a case study of the scheme from day one, which has been sent to national organisations and provided Lord Dear with a list of questions in his hydro debate in the Lords. The only problem is that the case study shows no sign of ending and is getting longer and longer.

## Canoeists.

This item should really be called Water Related Recreation Activities North West Strategic Priorities. This is the name of a document out for consultation until the 12<sup>th</sup> Jan. It deals with a lot more than access for canoeists, but there is plenty of that in the draft. **It is vital that you join in the consultation and make your views known.** Apathy and failure to let Brighton University and the E.A. know your views spells big trouble for angling. This is a deeply flawed document and you must say so. It is no basis on which to plan water related activities in the North West. You can find the draft plan at [www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation/](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/waterrecreation/). A specimen letter for you to adapt to your purpose has been circulated separately, if you didn't receive it please let John Whitham know and one will be sent either by e-mail or post. If you want to read the full RFCA submissions go onto our website [www.ribblefisheriesca.co.uk](http://www.ribblefisheriesca.co.uk) and ask for one via the email link. Send a copy of your letter to your M.P. and make sure they understand your feelings on this issue.

## IT'S UP TO YOU

Our fellow anglers in Wales have been fighting a similar fight since this WRRRA is being put into operation throughout the regions. Brighton University and a Professor Ravenscroft were given the consultancy by the E.A. to produce these draft plans.

## IT'S UP TO YOU

### State of the River and Counter figures

The season is over and we certainly could not grumble at a shortage of water near the end. Indeed quite the opposite as the fish poured through. Let us hope that the constant high water will not damage any redds that have been laid.

	Waddow		Winckley		Locks	
	Up	Down	Up	Down	Up	Down
January	5	17	95	4	-	-
February	5	2	23	4	-	-
March	18	9	42	12	-	-
April	37	2	84	30	-	-
May	163	8	309	31	-	-
June	837	43	2190	237	-	-
July	776	56	1773	134	-	-
August	733	58	1306	72	95	37
September	466	21	214	34	87	20
October	1768	51	909	134	369	34
November	166	22	429	33	167	74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4974</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>7374</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>165</b>

P.S. The Locks counter began recording on 5/8 after installation and recorded throughout August and September. However, between 1/10 and 20/10, the counter system failed completely and was replaced on the 20th, fortunately just before the main run of fish as it had been a dry month previous to this day.

If you have had your catch return from the E.A. you will note that the Ribble had another excellent season in 2008 overtaking the Derwent for the first time and being level with the Lune with only the Eden and the Tyne in front in terms of salmon caught. The catch and release figures for the Ribble were far superior to any other major salmon river and that is good news. However before we get to congratulatory it must be noted that the % figures for the catch and release on the Ribble are down as they are nationally. **Now is not the time to lower our efforts in getting the Ribble to meet its targets.**

## Webcam

This has been the first year of our webcam at Waddow Weir and it has worked well and received much praise. We have gained more members and that means more income. It is our intention to put more up at Winckley Weir and at Jumbles once we have the money. Then anglers could see the state of the Ribble at Waddow, below the confluence of the Hodder and similarly below the Calder. It is simply a matter of money since not only are the cameras costly to install they incur running charges also. Remember we have a special rate of £7-50 per member if a club makes all its anglers members.

## Diploids and Triploids

This has been a long running saga but the end is nigh. We have fought a good fight along with the Lune and Wyre but the E.A. will not change its position of stocking only with triploids with a 25% increase in triploids each year until it is 100%. Officers from the RFCA and the Lune went to the Institute of Fishery Management Conference where Professor Ferguson was speaking. He is the gentleman who proposed this scheme to the E.A. The bottom line is that the E.A. will not change its policy or make the N.W. a pilot scheme. So the question is where we go in the future. At the last Council meeting, Dr. Kyle Young, was asked to prepare some options for clubs to think about. These are attached to this Newsletter. If you have views on this make sure you get them to your club's committee.

## Byelaws

There are some important national byelaws coming in April. We will let you know about them in the next Newsletter.

## Changes at the EA

As always the merry go round of personnel at the E.A. continues. Richard McIlwain, previous Team Leader Fisheries, who had gone to be Regional Strategic Fisheries Officer, has moved on secondment to Keep Britain Tidy. Jackie Swires, current Team Leader Fisheries, has taken on some additional tasks and Lee Preston will be responsible for day to day running of the Team.

Liz O'Neil, Environment Manager is on a six-month secondment to Head Office, Bristol. Her replacement is Jeremy Westgarth from Penrith. All of this makes our job more difficult in keeping communications going, which is vital. Fortunately we have very regular meetings with the E.A.

We wish all the above the best in their new roles.

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL.**

# AN INCOMPLETE LIST OF OPTIONS FOR THE TRANSITION FROM DIPLOID TO TRIPLOID STOCKING, 2010-2015

Because stocked fish move all but the first option will be best implemented at the catchment scale...

**Amendment (09/02/2009):** At the meeting a number of people mentioned the 'no stocking' option. For some water bodies/angling goals this may be the cheapest/best option, for others not. I leave the rest as incomplete and inaccurate as before!

Kyle

1. **Goal:** Comply with policy.  
**Action:** Begin purchasing and stocking more triploids.  
**Effort:** None.  
**Benefit:** Maintain status quo.  
**Risk:** Continued harvest of wild born trout.

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2. **Goal:** Selectively harvest stocked triploids.  
**Action:** Mark all stocked triploids with ventral dye or adipose fin clip.  
**Effort:** Minor cost increase, requires examining fish before harvest.  
**Benefit:** Harvest only fish unable to reproduce, facilitate transition to eventual selective harvest fishery.  
**Risk:** Increased kill rate of wild born trout if the plan is poorly communicated, understood or implemented.

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3. **Goal:** Selectively harvest stocked triploids and diploids.  
**Action:** Mark all stocked fish with ventral dye or adipose fin clip.  
**Effort:** Minor cost increase, requires examining fish before harvest.  
**Benefit:** Harvest only stocked fish, increased protection of wild stocks, facilitate transition to eventual selective harvest fishery.  
**Risk:** Increased kill rate of wild born trout if the plan is poorly communicated, understood or implemented.

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4. **Goal:** Assess fishery value of stocked triploids and diploids.  
**Action:** Uniquely mark stocked triploids and diploids.  
**Effort:** Minor cost increase, requires examining fish and recording data on capture method, location, 'fight quality'.  
**Benefit:** Provide needed information on the relative 'fishery value' of hatchery triploids and diploids; if combined with the selective harvest of only stocked fish, the option will also increase protection of wild stocks and facilitate the transition to selective harvest fishery; chance prove EA wrong by showing that triploids provide worse sport than diploids.  
**Risk:** A substantial investment of time could be wasted if anglers do not diligently record (increased kill rate of wild born trout if the plan is poorly communicated, understood or implemented).