

# RJCA NEWS

## No. 47

December 2018

Firstly, the new byelaws have been announced for Jan 2019. The E.A. Press Release is below:

### **Environment Agency announces new national salmon and sea trout byelaws**

Environment Agency's national salmon and sea trout byelaws, applicable in England, have been confirmed by Defra. This means that the byelaws will become law and come into force on 1 January 2019". The Environment Agency are introducing these restrictions on fishing in England in response to the international decline in migratory salmon stocks. Salmon stock numbers are currently among the lowest on record and are below sustainable levels in many rivers.

The byelaws will become law on the 1st January 2019 and will see the following restrictions being implemented:

- Closing all commercial net fisheries for 'At Risk' and 'Probably At Risk' rivers (some fishing for sea trout will still be allowed). This will include all drift net fisheries;
- Mandatory catch and release by anglers on the rivers that are classed as 'At Risk' to be introduced in June 2019. These are the Cumbrian Calder, Dorset Stour and Yealm;
- Mandatory catch and release by anglers on the rivers that are listed as 'Recovering Rivers'. These are rivers where salmon were effectively wiped out and small populations have re-established in recent years with improvements in water quality on mostly heavily polluted post-industrial catchments. Examples of these are the Mersey, Yorkshire Ouse
- Renewal of the 1998 Spring Salmon Byelaws. These protect the larger, early running salmon, and do not involve any new measures.

The new byelaws come into force following an Environment Agency consultation, which sought views on how to better manage salmon fishing in England and the Border Esk.

As part of new byelaws there will be voluntary catch and release expectation for salmon caught rivers classed as 'Probably at Risk' to ensure catch and release levels greater than 90%.

Reducing the taking of salmon by rods and nets is only one part of the Environment Agency's larger programme to protect salmon stocks. Actions taken by the Environment Agency and its partners that contribute to protecting salmon stocks include removing barriers, improving water quality and agricultural practices, and addressing unsustainable water abstractions.

Kevin Austin, Environment Agency's Deputy Director for Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment said:

"It is only through continuing to take concerted action, and through the co-operation of others, that we will successfully protect this iconic fish for future generations. We are not implementing these changes lightly and have consulted widely with those affected. There is no single solution to protecting salmon stocks; reducing the catch of salmon can only partly contribute to the recovery of salmon stocks."

ENDS

This means the Ribble is in the voluntary 90% catch and release category. In the last Newsletter I pointed out how difficult it was to attain a high c/r % . For example for every one fish killed by an angler nine other anglers must catch a fish and release it to get 90%. From the RFCA collected figures from what I will call the “regulated part of the river” the last few years have always seen us over 90%. However, the E.A. collected figures have never seen us over 88% so you can see attaining 90% is not as easy as we may assume. The RFCA is collecting salmon and sea trout figures from clubs again and it is vital that we get correct numbers given the sort of season it was. I am happy to report that the first 2 clubs who have sent in their returns are at 100% c/r. If we do not attain 90% plus, since the E.A. want rivers in our category to be pushing up the c/r, then on review we would end up in a 100% **mandatory c/r situation**. The future in these terms is in our own hands.

We have been told unofficially that the 2 fish kill bye law will be rescinded since we are on a 90% plus target for c/r. We are still waiting to be told officially that this is so. As soon as we are informed we will pass the information on to the clubs.

## Counter Movements

### Waddow/Locks Counts 2018

	Waddow		Locks	
	Up	Down	Up	Down
January	2	18	1	5
February	4	1	1	2
March	9	2	7	1
April	12	5	18	9
May	52	8	33	25
June	497	108	31	27
July	246	80	11	10
August	193	22	19	13
September	279	10		
October	616	22		
November	335	23		
December				
Totals	2245	299	121	92

## Pollution

If you are around the Catchment please keep your eyes open for any pollution and report to the EA on 0800 80 70 60. Please then report to Fred Higham on 01200 423314 (Ribble and Hodder) and Graham Parkes 07861 696813 (Calder)

## Poaching

We have been fortunate throughout 2018 that poaching has been at a very low level. The Ribble has a well-developed anti-poaching network which works well. If at any time you think you see something suspicious report to the E.A. on number above and then to Grant Hinks - RFCA Anti –Poaching Officer - on 07930 807 980 so he can follow it up.

## Avian Predation

Local site co-ordinators continue to report on a monthly basis so that we can maximise the impact of the licence. However it is important to mobilise the maximum number of reported sightings so as to build up an extensive database of bird numbers, without which we will not be able to increase our allocations.

We have also received requests from a further two clubs to become part of the area licence, but this may not increase the numbers – merely spread those available around even more greatly increasing the amount of work involved and the importance of regular reports to me as co-ordinator for the area licence.

## Our River

Since it is the festive season we thought it would be nice to include the following poem:

### *Our River.....Which River*

Our mysterious river that starts as a stream,  
High above Settle, a fell-walker's dream,  
It twists and it turns through terrains high and low,  
To a town steeped in history,  
Old Clitheroe.

Our welcoming river where I swam as a child.  
Oblivious of danger and thoughts running wild,  
Those days I will treasure but parts of me know  
That the threats from pollution  
Continue to grow.

Our bounteous river that rises and falls  
That beckons my loved one, from within the four walls,  
To fish in its waters and return with a catch,  
Just man ...versus river  
A time honoured match.

Our mischievous river that once cast a spell  
On a young Waddow housemaid, who was called Peg O'Neil,  
She drowned in its arms such a long time ago,  
But her spirit still lurks  
In the waters below.

Our intelligent river remembers such things  
As bathing-buts, Hipping Stones, boating and swings,  
Segholes, Pighill and King Henry the Sixth,  
Historical names  
It can add to the list.

Our elegant river I'm so proud to have known,  
Ecologically sound. It has watched as I've grown  
From a girl to a wife, to a mother and gran,  
You can confidently say,  
I'm its number one fan.

Our powerful river that flows to the sea,  
Through Preston to Lytham, where it ends its journey,  
Many miles it has travelled downstream from its source  
Our river .....which river?

**The Ribble of course !!**

Catherine I. Lancaster

Lastly can all at the RFCA wish you a Happy New Year and tight lines in 2019.

David Hinks,

John Whitham

John Rawlinson