

# Lincs & Northants Fisheries Update

NW&WAC Quarterly Update

21/10/2017

The following document provides you with 'Area' fisheries news together with details of our recent activities.

## Progress Update Fish Population Monitoring

The fisheries monitoring survey programme is almost complete for this year. The data collected will be available in the New Year. If you have any specific enquires about our programme or data collected please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Area fisheries staff are also playing a major role in supplying data for the New Boston Barrier, this will help to shape our knowledge of fish behaviour in the Haven. This is an important stretch of water for both migratory and transitional fish species. The new barrier may impact fisheries interests so by using a combination of seine netting and sonar work we will be able to gather evidence to better inform the advice and guidance we provide not least for mitigation.

Our brown trout monitoring programme continued this year with the collection of scale tissue samples from brown trout within the Welland Catchment. The scales will soon be sent for analysis and we hope will provide evidence of migratory behaviour.

## Look Forward

Next year we are due to monitor the Ancholme and Nene catchments and many of the Lincolnshire Wolds Rivers. The work on the Nene will focus on electric fishing on the tributaries and also sections of the main river including some of our mill channels. Where we are able we will be undertaking some monitoring work using new technology, this will investigate bream shoals in the reach above Water Newton, this will be a high definition side scan and should give us an insight into the numbers of fish present, this is something we have not been able to achieve before. This work will allow us to be able to count individual fish in large shoals without having to touch them. By achieving bream shoal baseline data we will be able to start a long term data set in the lower river that will help us to understand and improve fish population numbers.

On the Ancholme we will be doing a mixture of netting and hydro acoustics work over two nights. The Great Eau will be surveyed in detail and the results will be looked at in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Chalk Stream project.

## Fish Movement Permitting. - Summary of permitting works

Permitting work has continued this year with a steady flow of applications into the L&N fish movement's inbox. This year we have received an increase in crayfish trapping applications for the Nene and Welland. Each application is assessed and processed accordingly. Traps are only authorised when we are aware that signal crayfish are present and where there are no risks to protected species.

## Fishery Advisory Visits & Enquiries.

Fisheries staff have undertaken a number of fishery advisory visits this quarter as well as responding to fishery management advise over the phone and email. In particular we have recently responded to several enquiries relating to algae blooms and warm weather issues in a number of fisheries. There have also been several enquiries regarding KHV and biosecurity. Darren Randall has also been assisting a new customer with advice on developing a new carp fishery in Lincoln area.

## **Fishery Incidents. - Summary of fish related incidents**

Fisheries staff have responded to over 40 incidents relating to fish during the summer period. These have ranged from minor fisheries issues requiring some practical help and advice while we have also been able to deploy equipment to two very serious fisheries mortality incidents. The first was on the Kyme Eau in South Kyme, we aerated the river with hydrogen peroxide and venturi units for two days after thousands of fish were seen struggling for air. This reach suffered a serious fish kill seven years ago, as a result we knew direct action had to be taken. This intervention saved thousands of fish.

We had the serious fish mortality on the North Level where we again aerated the drain to prevent further fish loss. We have also agreed a plan of action with both the IDB and the angling club to prevent future fish kills. Part of this work will involve post monitoring with sonar to provide the angling club with some positive images to show on the social media. This is an important part of the recovery and demonstrates to the angling community that the fishery is still in business.

Unfortunately we have a confirmed case of KHV at Corby Boating Lake and have received a number of phone calls relating to this. If you have any concerns about KHV or need advice on biosecurity please do not hesitate to contact Hugh Bunker or Darren Randall. This brings the total of confirmed designations around the country to 21 this year.

Area staff have invested in some more incident response equipment. This includes four new splash aerators, three more venturi aeration systems and four dual fuel generators increasing our response capability. These will be on board a new dedicated incident response trailer that will carry stocks of hydrogen peroxide and will be dedicated to responding to 'Area' fisheries incidents. This equipment will be used by fisheries staff but can also be provided to clubs on loan when needed (This does not include the peroxide). Of course we can also respond to requests for mutual aid to adjacent areas when called upon.

## **Fisheries Management Workshops**

Environment Agency Fisheries Staff and Tutors from the Institute of Fisheries Management are holding a two day fishery management workshop at Ferry Meadows Peterborough on the 18th and 19th November.

Invitations have been sent to 20 clubs, associations and syndicates. The two day workshop will cover all aspects of fisheries management including habitat improvement, stocking, predator control, fish health and welfare, and water quality. The workshop will be led by the Institute of Fisheries Management experts with local support from the Environment Agency, all costs will be met by us through reinvesting income from rod licence sales. There are also places available for a workshop being held at our Brampton Office so if you are unable to make the 18th and 19th we may be able to fit you in for the 28th and 29th October. If you are interested in the workshops please contact Hugh Bunker on 02030 253 484

## **Fisheries Enforcement Update**

We welcome Fisheries Enforcement Officers Michael Wildash and Bryan Seagroatt to the FBG Team. Bryan has now completed all training and mentoring and will be fully operational in the next few weeks. During this period Bryan has been out and about getting to know his area of responsibility. Our enforcement officers now have full access to the Angling Trust secure reporting system enabling a more cohesive approach to intelligence gathering.

## **Summary**

During this period we have checked 2,684 rod licences with 197 offence reports being issued. We have successfully prosecuted 132 individuals with total fines in excess of £17,500.00. 24 warning letters have been issued with 3 individuals receiving cautions. A breakdown of these statistics can be provided on request with a full report being available in the 2016-17 Annual Fisheries Report.

The Environment Agency and Angling Trust have produced some new multi lingual fisheries legislation leaflets. These are available from the Angling Trust web site or you're local Fisheries Officers.

<http://www.anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=1178&sectionTitle=Building+Bridges+Project>

customer service line  
03708 506 506

incident hotline  
0800 80 70 60

floodline  
0345 988 1188

[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

## Water Situation Reports

During the last meeting I was asked if we could include some information on our local water resource condition. Our Hydrology and Operations team produce a monthly summary which is freely available from the Environment agency .GOV webpages. Please follow this web link for the monthly report.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/650516/Water\\_Situation\\_Report\\_Lincolnshire\\_and\\_Northamptonshire\\_September\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/650516/Water_Situation_Report_Lincolnshire_and_Northamptonshire_September_2017.pdf)

## Research

We are active in two areas of research with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and Brunel University, the first is looking at pollutant build up in fish tissue using a sample of ten roach from the river Welland. The second is looking at the impact of endocrine disruptions in fish from the River Nene around Sewage Treatment works. Both will provide important information on the impact that anthropogenic influence is having on the fish stocks in our rivers.

We are working in partnership with Hull University and Witham 4th IDB to make improvements to water level management practices to assess the impact these will have on improving silver eel migration. This work may have national implications to the eel management plan and could help to improve eel numbers returning to the Sargasso.

## Additional News Items

We were sad to say cheerio to James Askham this summer. James has moved to our National Fisheries Service and will be leading the staff working in our fish lab and permitting teams. Good Luck James! We are pleased to welcome James Hooker from our Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire area office who will be taking our Welland and Nene Technical Specialist Role. I am sure you will have an opportunity to meet James in future months and we welcome James to the Team. Good luck new James!

### Lincolnshire Fisheries Enforcement Workshop

Darren Randall attended a fisheries enforcement workshop on Saturday 14th October and provided a short presentation on Environment Agency fisheries enforcement work. Darren also provided a short talk on nets, long lines, traps and other methods of taking fish that angling club bailiffs might encounter. All our Enforcement Officers have been set up on the Angling Trusts secure reporting system. This enables them to view all the information that the VBS have logged, leading to a more targeted approach.

### Grantham World Rivers Day

The FBG Team based in Lincoln hosted a Grantham World rivers day event held to celebrate the past four years of work on the Witham. Over the last four years we have carried out 11.5km of habitat improvements on the Upper Witham above Grantham which includes improved flood water storage, bypassing weirs opening up 9km to fish migration. We also used woody material and natural processes to slow down the movement of flood water. In Grantham we have developed the Grantham Urban Plan which we are now looking at delivering over the next 5 years in partnership with South Kesteven District Council.

## Area Fisheries Habitat Improvements

We carried out 200m of habitat improvements at Wyndham Park in the River Witham at the centre of Grantham. We created a narrower two stage channel using brushwood mattresses and marginal vegetation while replacing the fine sediment loaded river bed with fresh spawning gravels. Within days of completion coarse fish were seen spawning on the new gravels which was outside of the usual spawning period. Together with the improved river habitats we provided areas for the public to access the river for recreation including an area for dogs to cool off.

### Phase 3 Maxey Cut Habitat Improvement Project

Following successful projects in 2015 and 2016 additional fisheries habitat improvement works have been completed in the Maxey Cut Flood Relief Channel between Maxey and Eton this summer. The project includes the installation of timber and hazel faggot flow deflectors. This work is funded by our FCRM colleagues and is an exciting change to traditional flood channel management. The works will mitigate low flow and drought conditions and will improve river habitats for fish, eels and lamprey.

### Belton Park River Restoration Project c.700m of enhanced river channel.

This year we have completed 700 meters of river habitat enhancement on the River Witham at Belton Park National Trust site. We introduced several hundred tons of gravel to create riffle habitats for spawning while also undertaking channel narrowing and marginal fish refuge areas. This project builds upon channel narrowing work completed last financial year. This was close partnership working with the National Trust, and we these partnerships will continue in future years.

**Please be vigilant at your fisheries this autumn, continuing warm temperatures and low water levels can have a significant impact on water quality and fish health. If you are concerned about your fishery and fish are in distress please call our Incident Line 0800 80 70 60.**

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