



Analysis & Reporting

Monitoring ecosystems; identifying pollution causes & impacts

Major issues over the last three months:

- Eel barriers
- Revised monitoring programme
- Water Framework Directive (WFD) review
- Bangor University tour

Eel barriers

During 2010 we have been implementing the Eel Management Plans (EMP) throughout North Wales by assessing the extent of barriers to eel migration. We are currently working closely with our hydrometry team, RSPB and Welsh Water to improve access to a number of water bodies in North Wales.

Revised monitoring programme

We have worked closely with head office to create a monitoring programme that delivers the needs of all involved. The new programme will give us better coverage and a better understanding of fish stocks through out North Wales. This will be implemented from this season forward.



Alwen reservoir barrier



Habitat sites visited with Bangor University

WFD review

Work is ongoing to look at areas where we will need to carry out further investigation to understand the reason for WFD failures. A number of extra surveys will be carried out in 2010 on the Dee and Conwy to investigate the reason for failures on these catchments.

Bangor University tour

Students from Bangor university have been taken around North Wales to look at a number of habitat sites, spawning areas and issues locally. This is to show the work that the environment agency does throughout the area and the possibility to follow a career within the organisation. This is the second year that this work has been carried out, and this continues our close relations with Bangor University

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Environmental Crime

Reducing illegal fisheries and waste activities in North Wales.

Major issues over the last three months:

- **Illegal activity in North Wales**
- **Rod licence compliance**

Illegal activity in North Wales

In December two Caernarfon men were ordered to pay more than £160 in costs at Pwllheli Magistrates Court after being caught netting for salmon. Following a covert surveillance operation at Criccieth, Environmental Crime officers confiscated a net from Stephen Evans of Caernarfon.

Also in December a man was caught poaching with a lamp and a gaff on a tributary of the River Dee. We also caught six licence holders using illegal techniques to take cockle from the Dee Estuary.



Nets seized by EA Officers



EA Officer on routine patrol

Rod licence checks

This year we have checked 2680 anglers and have reported 94 anglers for fishing without a licence. This equates to an evasion rate of 4%. We have also visited 24 angling clubs where we discussed the role of the team and how we can work together better to tackle fisheries crime.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months

- Bream stocking in the Dee
- Improvements to fish screen
- Spawning signs on Conwy
- Fish removal from great crested newt sites

Bream stocking in the Dee

Five thousand, four inch bream were stocked at Eccleston Ferry; as part of a re-stocking program for the river Dee, after the pollution incident 10 years ago. This is the final stocking in a series which has seen 200,000 river coarse fish stocked. The river is showing much improved coarse fish numbers.

Improvements to fish screen

The Huntington water treatment works, near Chester, abstracts a large amount of water daily from the Dee. An APEM report showed some juvenile fish were being 'sucked in'. Work begins later this year to improve efficiency of the screen, helping to reduce fish losses.



Bream stocked in Dee



Sign on Conwy at Ysbyty Ifan

Spawning signs on Conwy

'Know Your River' information boards have been placed in 12 locations on the Rivers Conwy, Lluwgy and Lledr. The main purpose of the signs is to raise awareness of spawning salmon, sea and brown trout in vulnerable areas during the spawning months of October to January.

Fish removal from great crested newt sites

To help newt numbers increase, fish have been removed from a number of designated great crested newt sites across North Wales. These fish, after suitable health checks, are then donated to community fishing lakes.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- **MP visits Rhyl Cut**
- **Acton Park Lake**
- **Llyn Maelog eels**
- **Environment Agency Wales border change**

MP visits Rhyl Cut

Early in February a meeting took place at Rhyl Cut involving Chris Ruane MP, Environment Agency Area Manager, David Edwell and Eric Price from the Denbighshire Major Projects Unit. All present were updated on the progress of this Community Fishery and Green space project.



Chris Ruane MP visits Rhyl Cut

Acton Park Lake

Following the re-establishment of a fishery at Acton Park Lake in Wrexham, a community Angling Club has been formed. Consequently, the Local Authority has proposed developing the site to further improve the lake. Fish from local conservation sites have been used to further stock the site.



Maelog Eels

Llyn Maelog eels

The outfall stream from Llyn Maelog, Anglesey has been blocked for some time, preventing eel passage. Fisheries staff raised this concern with Ynys Mon County Council, who have cleared the blockage, improving eel passage and aiding migration of sea trout.

Environment Agency Wales border change

From 1st April, the new boundaries of the Environment Agency will change from catchment areas, to follow the political boundary between England and Wales. For North Wales, this means we will lead on Salmon Action and Eel Management Plans; while North West Region, will lead on management of coarse fish. Both regions will continue to work closely together.

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Technical Fisheries

Maintaining and improving fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- Afon Prysor - Glan Llafar
- Angling club visits
- Glaslyn habitat
- Deaf and Blind Association

Afon Prysor - Glan Llafar

A habitat scheme has been completed on the Llafar, a tributary of the Prysor. This will be the fourth fisheries project on this catchment which has been identified as having a very poor trout parr population. The scheme will involve introducing parr habitat - woody debris, boulders and fencing.

Angling club visits

Over the autumn and winter months Fisheries Technical and Environmental Crime officers have been meeting a number of Angling Clubs across North Wales. This was to introduce new team structures, invite feedback on any issues that concern them or discuss where they would like to improve their fisheries. The meetings were well received.



Afon Prysor – Glan Llafar



Glaslyn Habitat Project

Glaslyn habitat

Repairs have been carried out by the Sustainable Fisheries Project on four Habitat schemes in the upper Afon Glaslyn area. The work involved replacing 'swing gates' and fencing that had been damaged during high winter floods, and will ensure continued protection of the habitat from farm stock.

Deaf and Blind Association

Coaches from the Federation of Welsh Anglers have recently been trained in delivering the sport to Deaf and Blind People. This will give those people who are often isolated through this double impairment an opportunity to experience angling.

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Fish Culture

Mitigating damage to fisheries

Major issues over the last three months:

- Red Vent Syndrome in adult salmon
- Maerdy incubation unit refurbishment
- Chris Mills visits Mawddach hatchery
- Hatcheries lay down 480,000 ova

Red Vent Syndrome in adult salmon

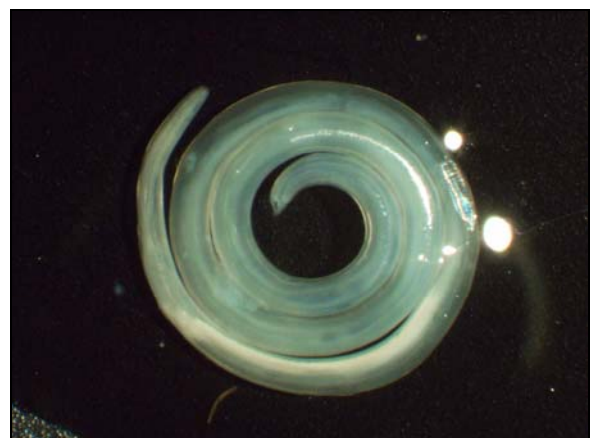
Since 2006, returning salmon have increasingly been reported showing swollen and haemorrhagic vents. This is caused by high numbers of the larval nematode *Anisakis simplex* and the associated host reaction. In February, Fish Health Officers from Bampton sampled 12 fish from the Mawddach and Dee. Infestation ranged from 8 to 89 worms in the vent area.

Maerdy incubation unit refurbishment

The 50 year old incubation unit at Maerdy has recently been refurbished. Twenty new hatching troughs, with a capacity for 300,000 ova have been installed. The new troughs will provide first feeding facilities in the incubation unit, and should ensure a greater survival at the ova/alevin stage.



Launch of River Basin Management Plan



Anisakis simplex

Chris Mills visits Mawddach hatchery

In January the River Basin Management Plan was launched at Mawddach Hatchery. Environment Agency Wales Director, Chris Mills attended as well as representatives from Dwr Cymru, Afonydd Cymru and the Countryside Council for Wales. Visitors saw freshwater pearl mussels and Arctic charr ova as well as a demonstration of microtagging.

Hatcheries lay down 480,000 ova

At Maerdy this spawning season the total number of eggs laid down was 280,600. Broodstock were obtained from anglers on the Dee and the Celyn and Chester traps. Mawddach hatchery has laid nearly 200,000 eggs down. For the first time Arctic charr have been stripped of eggs from Llyn Padarn and brought to Mawddach.

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