



Fisheries Annual Report 2017 to 2018

North East

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment.

We help people and wildlife adapt to climate change and reduce its impacts, including flooding, drought, sea level rise and coastal erosion.

We improve the quality of our water, land and air by tackling pollution. We work with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations. A healthy and diverse environment enhances people's lives and contributes to economic growth.

We can't do this alone. We work as part of the Defra group (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), with the rest of government, local councils, businesses, civil society groups and local communities to create a better place for people and wildlife.

Published by:

Environment Agency
Horizon House, Deanery Road,
Bristol BS1 5AH

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

© Environment Agency 2018

All rights reserved. This document may be reproduced with prior permission of the Environment Agency.

Further copies of this report are available from our publications catalogue:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications>

or our National Customer Contact Centre:
03708 506 506

Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Foreword

In each of our 14 areas we carry out a wide range of work in order to protect and improve fisheries. Below are some examples of what has been happening in the Northumberland, Durham and Tees (NEA) Area, much of which benefits fisheries from funding from both fishing licence fees and other sources. For a wider view of the work we do across the country for fisheries please see the national Annual Fisheries Report.

Contents

Fisheries Annual Report 2017 to 2018 North East	1
Foreword	3
Contents	4
1. Fishing Licence Checks and Prosecutions	5
2. Illegal Fishing	5
3. Incident Management	6
4. Fisheries Improvement.....	8
5. Monitoring	9

1. Fishing licence checks and prosecutions

During the 2017 to 2018 financial year (the last complete year of data) a total of 64,709 fishing licence checks were carried out by our fisheries enforcement staff across the country. Our checks show us that evasion was relatively low with a national average of 3.97%. Below are details from NEA:



39,189 rod licences sold



£822,225.25 income generated from rod licence sales



2,602 rod licences checked



96 successful prosecutions



£16,355 fines and costs imposed

2. Illegal fishing

Illegal fishing remains a threat to game and coarse fish stocks in England and the fisheries they support. The Environment Agency uses a combination of covert and overt patrols to deter and detect poachers, as well as responding to reports of illegal fishing where there is a credible threat to fish stocks and where we have a realistic chance of apprehending the alleged offenders. We cannot respond to every report of illegal fishing so we must prioritise where we focus our efforts. For NEA:

73 illegal fishing incidents were reported to our incident hotline (0800 80 70 60)



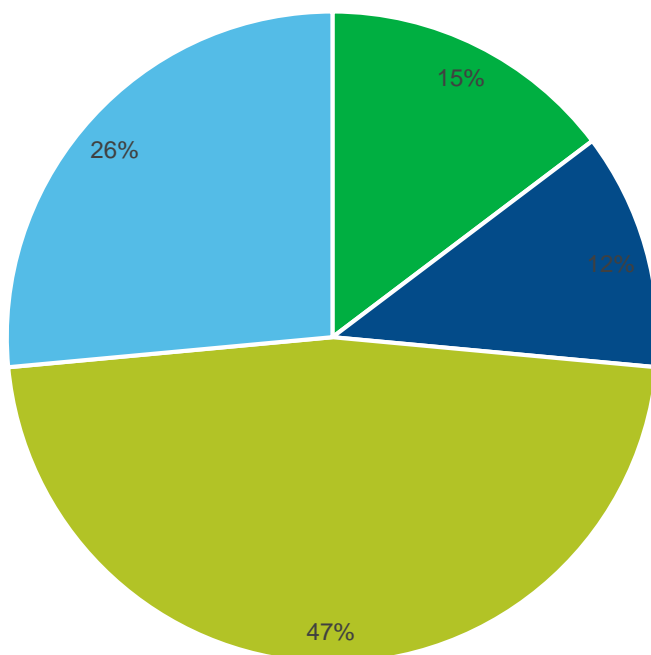
3. Incident management

Responding to fish kills and other environmental incidents is a vitally important part of what we do. We respond to thousands of substantiated incidents annually. Members of the public report incidents through our Incident Hotline (0800 80 70 60) and we are able to respond 365 days a year and on any day, at any time, providing an effective and proportionate response.

All incidents are categorised according to potential and actual impact on the environment and the impact on our resources. We can then break this figure down into categories of incident as shown below. Category 1 is the most serious and Category 4 is a reported incident with no impact.

North East Incident Management Categories

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4



Fish rescue at Haydon Bridge River South Tyne

In July 2017 we rescued approximately two hundred fish, including salmon, eel, trout, bullhead, stone loach, Minnow, lamprey from the South Tyne near Haydon Bridge. Undertaken as part of a gravel removal scheme to help alleviate flooding in the town, the fish were removed from an access route to be used by plant and relocated a safe distance downstream. Ensuring fish passage was maintained and water quality monitoring were amongst other measures put in place to safeguard stocks during the course of the works. A similar number and range of fish species were also rescued from the Cockshaw Burn near Hexham in order to facilitate installation of a temporary access route across the watercourse for a Northumbrian Water project on the main Tyne nearby.



Haydon Bridge



Rescued salmon parr

The Long Nanny Burn

Fisheries staff attended a major fish kill and pollution incident killing 8,500 brown trout, eel, stickleback, stone loach and flounder over a 9.4km reach from source to sea in a small Northumberland coastal stream. Deployment of four fisheries technical officers to undertake the fish kill assessment over two days.



Findings at Long Nanny Burn incident

4. Fisheries improvement

The table below lists many of our environmental improvement projects that have helped to deliver benefits to fisheries; many in conjunction with our partners. We have included the time of our fisheries officers in the funding considerations for the projects as their posts are funded by fishing licence income. Considerable amounts of their time and expertise has been provided for the projects. Many projects have also received funding from government or from other parts of the Environment Agency e.g. flooding, the Environment Programme or Water Framework Directive budgets however where contribution has included fishing licence income, this has been noted.

£301,300 + £6,800 = £308,100

EA Funding

Match Funding

Fisheries Improvements

In 2017 to 2018 North East installed 2 fish passes and opened up 22km of habitat or spawning ground for fish.

Project Title	Outcome or benefit	Partners	EA Funding (£)	Match funding (£)	Total Cost (£)
Brancepeth Beck Rock Ramp Easement	Dutch ford made passable to fish	Wear Rivers Trust	£34,000	£3,000	£37,000
Scur Beck, weir bypass channel feasibility and design	Fish passage improvement. Design option to bypass a listed weir	Tees Rivers Trust	£12,000	£1,800	£13,800
Durham City Angling Club, River Wear Habitat and Angler Access Improvements	Angling club fishery improvement	Durham City Angling Club	£7,300	£2,000	£9,300
Stanhope Fish Pass	Over 20km of improved access for salmonids to spawning grounds in upper Weardale.	EA FCRM Water Resources	£248,000	£0	£248,000
Total			£301,300	£68,00	£308,100

5. Monitoring

Monitoring of all fish species is vital to our assessment of the condition of the environment. Surveys of fish populations, including coarse fish, are used to assess the status of stocks and contribute to the overall assessment of ecological status of a water body. In NEA:

202 Waterbodies
assessed for
fish 2016/17

50% of waterbodies
assessed were at
good status or above
for fish

You can look at our Catchment Data Explorer for more information.

Our fish count data is now available [online here](#)

For information on what we are doing across the rest of the country read our other Area reports

Monitoring the River Team

A surprise result from monitoring in 2017 was on the River Team, once one of the most polluted rivers in the North East, where salmon have been recorded for the first time after being absent for more than a century. Electric fishing surveys of the river, undertaken to inform a flood alleviation scheme, also indicated that our programme of trout restoration bearing fruit, with good numbers of fish from recent Kielder salmon centre stockings, not only surviving but apparently thriving, in the Urpeth area. In addition to the ongoing improvements to water quality, we are working with partners such as the Tyne Rivers Trust and Wild Trout Trust on a range of other measures, such as removing barriers, towards the goal of the Team once again supporting breeding populations of migratory salmonids and other species.



Fish Monitoring

Would you like to find out more about us or your environment?

Then call us on

03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)

email

enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

or visit our website

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

incident hotline

0800 807060 (24 hours)

floodline

0345 988 1188 (24 hours)

Find out about call charges (www.gov.uk/call-charges)

Environment first:

Are you viewing this onscreen? Please consider the environment and only print if absolutely necessary. If you are reading a paper copy, please don't forget to reuse and recycle.