

# United Usk Fishermen's Association

*Newsletter No. 11 June 2008*



## FUNDING FOR IMPROVEMENT

Last year Ross Murray wrote an excellent article fronting our Newsletter highlighting the work of the Wye & Usk Foundation (WUF) using their accumulated knowledge of available and possible funding streams. They work with the bodies from which funding is available knitting the scientific and statutory disciplines to produce sound ecological solutions to improve our tributaries and main stem and then hand over to their project teams to carry out the ground work. Inside you will read what has been achieved since 2000.

Those teams have completed projects in the top half of the Usk but there is still plenty of work to be done there and on tributaries below Abergavenny. These lower streams are just as important as the rest and badly need our support. Other important aspects of our river may appear simple but are vital to its future. Here I refer to the amount of water transported down the river from Usk reservoir which is then abstracted near Usk and pumped to Llandegfedd reservoir or onwards for domestic use. We must be satisfied that the abstraction regime is managed so that reduced water levels will not adversely affect the ecology of the river and runs of migratory fish.

Abstraction at Brecon for the Brecon and Monmouthshire Canal is currently unregulated, though it will be later this year. This 'abstraction of right' is enshrined in law and until now has not been subject to the restraints placed on other water users. WUF are actively involved in ensuring these abstractions are maintained at levels which are consistent with the Special Conservation status of the river.

A successful outcome will increase flow in the middle river. A reduction here would bring a significant bonus to the whole river. John Lawson summarises his talk presented at our annual meeting in this issue.

Other work to kill invasive weeds and allow native riparian vegetation to thrive will contribute to the bankside stability and the biodiversity of the main stem and help to prevent erosion and sedimentation that adversely affects invertebrate populations.

As our towns grow with more housing and industry so waste increases and the infrastructure to cope does not keep pace, resulting in untreated sewage being discharged into the river at times of high local rainfall.

These are a few of the problems of managing a river with SAC status. Ten years ago we were aware of some but we were ineffective in dealing with them. We decided that help was needed and asked the Wye Foundation for that help. Today we have the largest and most respected river foundation in Wales and England improving our river. WUF consults widely with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Environment Agency Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Brecon Beacons National Park and many others. It represents our interests in the Water Framework Directive and the Review of Consents currently taking place within the Habitats Directive.

We benefit from that management to the extent that salmon numbers are gradually increasing and wild brown trout have already increased with fly life increasing rapidly. Results have increased the value of our fishing.

It is disappointing that both the UUFA and WUF regularly have to beg for funds needed from all our riparian owners to keep this high standard of management in place. Not much is asked - **10 pence per metre of single bank owned (5 pence above Brecon)**. It is a modest sum and miles cheaper than the rates we used to pay, none of which benefited the river.

We have seen the beginnings of a transformation and if we wish to retain a high standard of management we must pay, and must think in terms of paying over the long term. Equally we need to spread the news of WUF's achievements and persuade those non-contributors to contribute. That way we will continue to enhance and preserve a much sought after fishery apart from enjoying wonderful sport.

A Wye & Usk Foundation gift aid form is included with this Newsletter. Please spread the word.

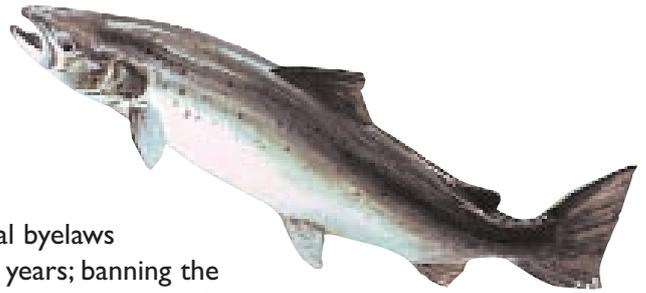
**Nick Brabner**



# FISHING BYE LAWS - CAN WE INFLUENCE THEM?

## Updated Sea Trout & Salmon Fisheries Strategy

Following extensive consultation, the new Strategy is due to be published in July. There will be further news at that time about its implementation



## Salmon & Sea Trout Regulatory Measures

We expect to advertise shortly (scheduled for 2nd June) national byelaws renewing the current spring salmon regulations for a further 10 years; banning the sale of rod caught salmon and sea trout and bringing in a carcass tagging and log book scheme for net/trap caught fish. There then will be a 6 week formal consultation period. As soon as the byelaws are advertised, further information will be posted on our website at:

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/fish/165773/1791055/1942427/?version=1&lang=\\_e](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/fish/165773/1791055/1942427/?version=1&lang=_e)

All being well, we plan to apply to Defra/WAG and the Scottish Government (as appropriate) to confirm these byelaws later this summer. We will include a summary of further river by river regulatory measures identified by Area staff on a local basis as part of the package.

Assuming the byelaws are confirmed, we plan to update the **“Buyer Beware Leaflet”** which covers the handling and purchase of wild salmon and sea trout to reflect these changes. In the meantime, there are only a limited number of these leaflets left. If anyone would like an electronic copy of the English version of this leaflet, please contact Chris Rees.

## Welsh Fisheries Byelaws Review (general measures to provide overall protection for threatened sea trout and/or salmon stocks based on stock performance)

We want to ensure that we have an appropriate package of measures that protects all of our Salmon stocks. The proposed national (England and Wales) byelaws are intended to continue the protection for early-running "spring" Salmon, and will ban the sale of rod caught Sea Trout and Salmon.

In addition we need further measures on many rivers that are continuing to perform poorly and where Salmon stocks are "at risk".

We currently intend to consult on new measures in 2009.

**River Usk** - The status of the Salmon stock is "probably not at risk - improving" and although we do not plan to seek any further regulatory measures at this time, we are keen to hear the views of stakeholders. We are also keen to look at voluntary protection measures that will be supported by stakeholders and other fishery interests.

## Genetic Stock Identification

Over the coming two summers we intend to sample as many of our salmon populations as possible, in order to establish a "genetic map" of English and Welsh salmon. Sampling guidance is now being developed and our electric fishing teams will soon be notified of this. Sampling will be fitted in to our routine monitoring sites and be tailored to fit our sampling programme as far as possible.

This work will build on the previous ASAP (ATLANTIC SALMON ARC PROJECT) project and will contribute to the European SALSEA Merge programmes

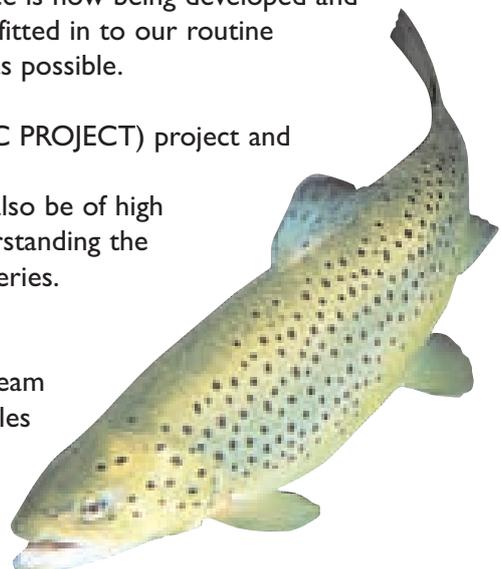
(<http://www.nasco.int/sas/salseamerge.htm>). The genetic analyses may also be of high resolution to allow us to better manage local salmon fisheries by understanding the distribution of our breeding populations and their contributions to fisheries.

Contact Chris Rees for further information.

**Further information** on the byelaws is available from Chris Rees Team Leader Fisheries Management South East Area Environment Agency Wales  
[chris.rees@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:chris.rees@environment-agency.gov.uk)

## Chris Rees,

EAW Team Leader Technical Fisheries & Recreation



# CANOE



## ARRANGEMENTS

As you know the Welsh Canoe Association has resisted the renewal of our Canoe Access Agreement dating back to 1984 which was made on behalf of the riparian owners by the UUFA for the benefit of canoeists. During that period it worked reasonably well over the relatively small part of the river which they favoured. It is pleasing to note that the WCA approach to access all water all year seems to have fallen out of favour. We, and I mean the Usk and the Wye, felt it was time to negotiate with those that actually used the river and so WUF set up a steering committee representing the two rivers with the blessing of those riparian owners involved and including representatives from the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales, local canoe groups and outdoor centres, the British Outdoor Professionals Association, Stephen Marsh-Smith, David Jones-Powell, Norman Tyler, Nick Brabner, Richard Tyler, and others. The CCW and EAW made funds available to produce a format that would satisfy fishermen and canoeists alike so that proper signage, maps, water heights and other essential information are easily available to help all those who are unfamiliar with the area.

The outcome provides for arrangements which might well be copied elsewhere in Wales. It may have the effect of easing pressure on our rivers. It was launched by the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Jane Davidson on 19th October 2007 in Builth Wells.

The detail can be found on <http://www.wyeuskfoundation.org/navigation/index.php>

## River Usk Fisheries Crimewatch Project

Last year in our Newsletter we reported an initiative by the EAW's Senior Enforcement Officer Steve Barker, keenly supported by the UUFA. It is a project to reconnect the EAW enforcement staff with riparian owners, fishermen, and the public against the very stringent budgetary discipline that the department works within.

It is worth reminding you that it was launched at Usk Show last September and included an Usk Fisheries Crimewatch Information telephone number **0800 055 6971**. It is call free, leave a message, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition the Environment Agency emergency hot line number is **0800 80 70 60**. This service works throughout the country and logs calls and passes the information on immediately to the specific area and covers the full gambit of environment crime.

### The project now covers:

- A dedicated phone number for information, as above
- Intelligence cards, giving guidance on submitting information
- An Education forum, to inform anglers and owners of their rights
- Signage for all fisheries involved in the scheme
- Support for Angling participation events
- Three "Trout Home Coming" projects for schools within the community.

Finally it is worth noting that the Police are much more willing to become involved in river crime. This can sometimes go astray as in one recent case of Police driving town centre youth crime out of the centre to river meadows with consequent riverside litter pollution.

If you want information of any of the above contact Steve Barker on 02920 245254.

## Final Newsletter

### cost v cheaper alternative – the web

This is our final Newsletter. As you know we now have a website [www.uskfishing.org](http://www.uskfishing.org)

Our intention is to publish articles of interest to the web as they occur. In addition I hope the membership will use the site to contact our Committee. If any of our members are appalled by this decision please let me know as I am sure we will be able to help in some way. Sadly the cost of a Newsletter plus the postage is our largest expense. The cost of running a website is small in comparison.

**Nick Brabner**

## Increase in cost of membership

At our annual meeting in 2007 it was proposed and agreed to increase the annual membership fee from £5 to £10. We incorrectly assumed that we collected by Direct Debit. Not so, it is by Standing Order. Our Bank does not allow Direct Debit for small Associations like ours. The alternative sadly is to ask you to fill in the Standing order again for the current membership of £10. The form is included in this Newsletter. If you bank on line it is easy enough to change but please could you inform the Hon. Treasurer Jonathan Carthew by email [jo@smoked-food.co.uk](mailto:jo@smoked-food.co.uk) Thank you.

# EELS are they doomed?

Sophie Arbuthnot of the EAW Ecological Appraisal Team kindly sent the following for we who are alarmed by the lack of eels:

The latest scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concerning European eel is that the stock is outside safe biological limits and current fisheries are not sustainable. Recent recruitment of eel (glass eel) has been as low as 1% of historic levels (measured on a European scale), and adult eels that are migrating to the sea to spawn suffer high mortality rates. In the case of the UK the decline in recruitment is estimated at about 70% of base line (prior to 1980). It is therefore necessary to protect this resource in order that the river basins are populated with adequate numbers of recruiting eel, and that adequate numbers of eel survive to spawn.

The Environment Agency has a responsibility to protect the eel stocks of England and Wales and is in the process of producing Eel Management Plans on a river basin district scale. The river Usk falls within the Severn RBD, along with the Wye and the Welsh Valleys rivers as far west as the Ely, as they discharge into the Severn Estuary. It is currently estimated that eel stocks in the Severn RBD are close to or failing their escapement target (number of eels escaping the rivers to spawn at sea). There are a number of factors which will be involved with this failure to reach the target, and these include, but are not limited to, reduced access to habitat, reduced habitat quality, reduced survival at sea, parasite infections (*Anguillacola crassus*), increased predation and fishing.

Much research is in process to try to understand these influences, and to determine ways to mitigate. Several projects are underway to improve access and habitat, e.g. all EA fish passes are now designed as suitable for use by eels as well as salmonids.

On a RBD level, it is currently not thought that eel fishing is the major factor in the decline of stocks, and that improvement of habitat and access to this habitat would be the most significant positive influence. That is not to say that eel and elver fishing may not have a significant local impact, and we would welcome any information that anyone would have on catches specific to a river, or even a beat.

The Severn Eel Management Plan is going to the EU to be signed off by the end of the year and hopefully we should be able to publish it shortly afterwards. In the meantime, we are working towards improving eel stocks on a local level, as well as improving the data that we have.

Steve Barker, our Senior Enforcement Officer reports that elver runs have been particularly sparse this season reflecting a market price of £230 per kg. He also reports that fewer than 150 eel licences have been sold this year in Wales, the majority in the Severn Estuary.

## THE SEVERN BARRAGE a potential threat

At the WUF AGM in Ross-on-Wye at the Royal Hotel on the 17th October, Martin Harper of the RSPB will present a paper outlining a study proposing that a barrage across the Severn will irretrievably wreck a unique wildlife sanctuary by the loss of wetland and its associated ecosystem that supports the invertebrate food from which the bird populations survive. The RSPB has widened its study to include migratory fish and asked that the WUF, ACA, UUFA and the Wye Salmon Fishery Owners Association join them contributing £8k of the £80+k likely cost of their study. We will contribute £1k. In addition WUF will submit evidence suggesting that the fisheries of the Usk and Wye could be lost to migratory species and that much more evidence needs to be collected to support their survival. They will do this by the specified date of 11th July 2008.

[www.uskfishing.com](http://www.uskfishing.com)

**At last we have a web site which I hope will give our members the information that they want apart from news of the current subjects which are relevant to our river. We hope that you will use it to ask questions and express your views.**

**Help to safeguard  
the future**

**The United Usk  
Fishermen's Association  
needs your support**

**Join us now!**

# The Usk Project

**The Usk Project finished in March 2008 – What was achieved and what's next? Stephen Marsh-Smith and Simon Evans discuss what has been done and what is still needed on the Usk and most importantly.....why.**

It took nearly twelve months to construct the Usk Project (UP!) with its funding package and complex partnership arrangements and it wasn't until January 2004 that we were given the go ahead. Since a third of the Usk was outside the funding zone, the middle in one funding area (Transitional) and the uppermost section in Objective 2, separate project documents, each with their own budget and specifications had to be drawn up and submitted. Originally it was planned to run for 3 years but an extension to the upper Usk project allowed work to continue to March 2008.

This type of approach built on the previous successful Foundation /UFA initiative which had, with the Wye Owners, bought off the Estuary nets and putchers. However, until UP! Usk fishers, owners or the Agency always had to meet the full cost of any restoration activity and invariably work was put in the hands of relatively costly contractors.

The UP! partnership formed enabled the contributors (please see ahead) to draw down substantial matched funding from the EU and so combined with the WUF labour force at cost, there was now a possibility of tackling issues on a catchment wide scale. There were many similarities with the neighbouring Wye. Brown trout stocks had declined and typically there were larger, but substantially fewer fish – not a good sign. However, Salmon were just “holding their own” but notably the Spring run had declined disproportionately to other similar rivers.

An initial survey of the tributary system took three months and a substantial number of both natural and manmade barriers to migration were recorded. On top of that, there were some horrendously despoiled sections on many formerly productive streams. In all about 28% of the catchment was lost behind removable barriers and most of the tributaries had one or two sections that were completely trashed.

The main tenet of WUF's fisheries restoration is that improvements should be permanent and holistic as well as benefiting the whole river system. If the river historically produced both trout and salmon in large numbers, but no longer does so today, it is probable that some factor has affected fish production within the river system itself. Artificial stocking is therefore not the solution as this will not affect the cause(s) nor alter the productive capability of the river itself.

Simply allowing fish to spawn in streams that were formerly denied to them takes advantage of the salmonid's considerable fecundity: when the total number of eggs is laid in a greater number of tributaries, more fish will survive. This is not simply because the risk is spread but there will be more individual territories available for the crucial parr stages of both salmon and trout. That's one reason why fish passes or barrier removal is so effective. The other is that their relatively low cost and long term durability places this action at the top of our priorities.



**Absolute barrier to trout and salmon on the Cynrig**



**Completed Cynrig fish pass November 2006**

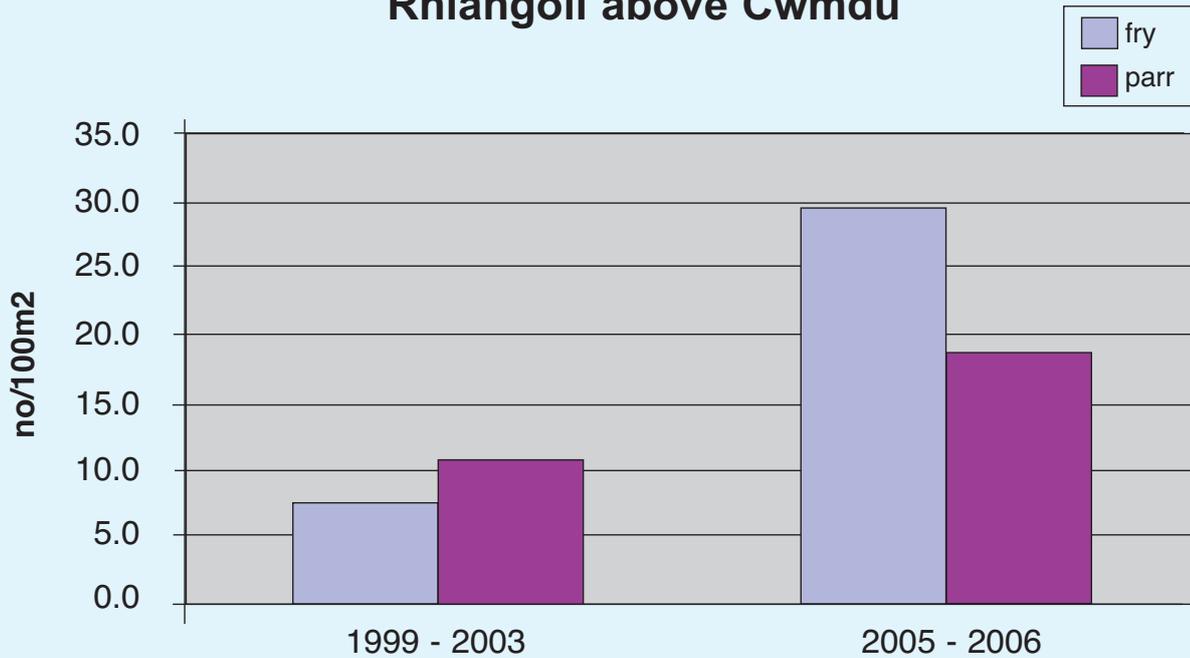


**Trampling and erosion that needs management on an Usk tributary**



**Fish passes completed on Rhiangoll at Cwmdu. Salmon now spawn successfully here for the first time in decades but larger trout can return with results shown on following page.**

## Juvenile Trout Rhiangoll above Cwmdu



Our habitat restoration – tree management and farm stock exclusion – allows more fish to survive in any given area. Without trampling and grazing animals, the growth of riparian vegetation allows banks to reform at their natural (ie narrower) width, greater depth and more equitable flow for salmonids. Light as opposed to shade on riffles increases invertebrate production. As a bonus, silt is trapped by the riparian growth during floods and is stabilised by plants. There are benefits for a whole range of other species too: birds, invertebrates such as crayfish, mammals – otter and all the Usk’s fish species



That’s the theory of why our project will deliver more fish, but how much did the projects actually manage to complete? The “nuts and bolts” of the project outputs in respect of fisheries and the river are summarised below:

- 13 Fish passes or access projects. When we started 28% of the catchment was blocked off; now only 8% remains inaccessible
- 42.1km double bank Habitat Restoration
- New marketing scheme
- A trial litter collection scheme
- PhD Understanding of sediment impacts on the Usk

It cost **£1,106,478** spent over four and a half years and the funding came from:

● UUFA (members, riparian owners and fishermen)	<b>£72,892</b>
● WUF	£111,363
● Statutory Bodies EAW, CCW, FCW, BBNP	£354,363
● University + others	£96,312
● ERDF (EU)	£471,548
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,106,478</b>

This was spent in the following broad categories:

Surveying and Consents	£17,886
Habitat Restoration	£550,392
Fish Passes	£193,272
Marketing etc (Passport, website, newsletters, litter collection)	£76,260
Monitoring	£57,731
Research (PhD student)	£103,850
Support Costs	£94,530
Insurance / Accountancy	£12,557

**Total** **£1,106,478**

Referring to our earlier point on the scale of the project, it can be seen that the “seed corn” contribution by UUFA has been multiplied fourteen fold to make a very substantial project. If only life was that simple. The EU funding was given against certain targets that are not directly related to fish. In order to secure this, it was essential to relate the environmental improvements to gains in the rural economy. UUFA members will be only too aware of the value of fishing and the benefits that can accrue to local businesses such as hotels, pubs accommodation..... provided of course that visitors come to the area. Fishing has a long season and from March or April until mid October visitors can come to the Usk Valley during crucial times for the tourist industry.

The Wye and Usk Passport is the method we developed to link improvements to fisheries and make fishing available to visitors, thus drawing down gains in the rural economy.... and hence employment. Full details of this can be found at <http://www.wyeuskfoundation.org/fishing/passport.php>. There are now 16 Usk beats available through our booking office and online service and proving very popular judging by the feedback we receive. Please see <http://www.wyeuskfoundation.org/fishing/feedback.php>

That's the theory but the essential question is what are the issues still facing the river. “In the bank”, as it were, are the improvements previously made to the water quality in the estuary at Newport, where deoxygenated summer flows frequently limited migration and the reduction in exploitation made with the net buy offs in 2000. Additionally, there is cause for optimism for the fisheries of the Usk, because the majority of the benefits of UP! are still to filter through. One generation of salmon takes five years. The first post project salmon will return in 2009 and in subsequent years more of the improvements will kick in. Trout stocks are still building.

That the River remains the best salmon and wild trout river in Wales is however largely thanks to the competition. All rivers are under threats of one sort or another but there are some very specific issues facing the Usk. Firstly there is an increasing thirst for Usk (and Wye) water. A complex but far from efficient system for storage and abstraction exists and the whole issue is under a critical review as 2008 is the 10 year review of Usk (SAC) Special Area Conservation consents. WUF has been extremely fortunate in securing the services of John Lawson, a career Water Resources engineer to advise us on what needs to be done. Elsewhere in this magazine he explains where the Usk and Wye water comes from.....and goes to and what we should expect from the Review of Consents currently taking place.

An Invasive weed project (“Giving Up the Weed”) is already under way and we are receiving information from all parts of Usk and Wye as to the whereabouts of Hogweed and Knotweed. Please report any stands you know to [weeds@weuskfoundation.org](mailto:weeds@weuskfoundation.org) Reports from Usk are not as prolific as on the Wye. If this issue is left unmanaged any longer, it may prove impossible to rectify.

For the first time in decades, the cost of food is rising ahead of inflation, putting in jeopardy years of work to reduce the effects of the farming industry. This upsurge in prices is likely to kick start intensification of activity and once again we can anticipate loss of conservation areas, more overgrazing and more pesticides in the water. On top of this is the spectre of climate change: generally hotter with prolonged wet and dry periods. For the salmon, the sea is becoming a less friendly place and survival rates remain low or are possibly still in decline.

Clearly, our aim must be to maximise smolt output for salmon (as well as increase trout production.) This is the best defence against a declining sea survival rate. To do this, the Foundation is committed to increasing the available area of nursery habitat by opening yet more blocked tributaries and continuing to restore damaged fish habitats which will also raise output.

How much restoration work (for that is what the Foundation does in reality) is or was needed on the Usk and how much more should be tackled? We suggest that our goal should be to remove all manmade barriers to migration for both salmon and trout, and as a bare minimum, habitat restoration should embrace all sites where stock poaching (the hoof damage sort!) is affecting habitat, where shading is reducing productivity, and in addition manage anywhere to diffuse pollution can be simply remedied.

In order to carry out these plans the Foundation is bidding for several funding sources. We plan to raise and spend £700,000 over the next three years. Some bids have already been successful: the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation is providing the bulk of the money for the weed eradication programme; the National Grid will fund some habitat restoration as part of its enhancement policy. Bids have also been submitted to the Brecon Beacons National Park Sustainable development fund, Interreg IVB, The Review of Consents fund and a large scale bid is underway for funds from the EU Fisheries fund, which in Wales has been earmarked for improvements to the river stages of migratory fish - salmon, eels and sea trout

That all leads to the next three year Usk work plan: there are six manmade obstructions that we are aware of that could be improved with simple fish passes. This is our number one priority for future work.

Next is the restoration of habitat problems. We have completed 41km and we estimate that a further 65km is needed on the Usk catchment. Some of the catchment is as illustrated in the photo here.

On top of that we will need to reserve some funding for maintenance of existing work and ensure we have the capability to lobby effectively.

Finally, it should never be understated how well the statutory bodies have supported and will hopefully continue to support the Foundation's work on your river. We now have enough experience to know that we are completing projects at a substantially lower cost than can be achieved by commercial contractors and realise that we are perhaps the only vehicle through which these cost effective actions can be taken. Their support is crucial.

You've guessed the last stage: if these bids are successful, the planned work and maintenance requirements will need further assistance from owners and fishermen to provide matched funding and we make a plea for your continued support for this entire package over the next three years, while thanking you all for your support in the past.

**Stephen Marsh – Smith and Simon Evans**



**Two complete stoppers: A weir on the Gavenny and a pipe bridge on the Ethrim. Allowing access upstream of these barriers will increase both salmon and trout production. They are priorities for action.**

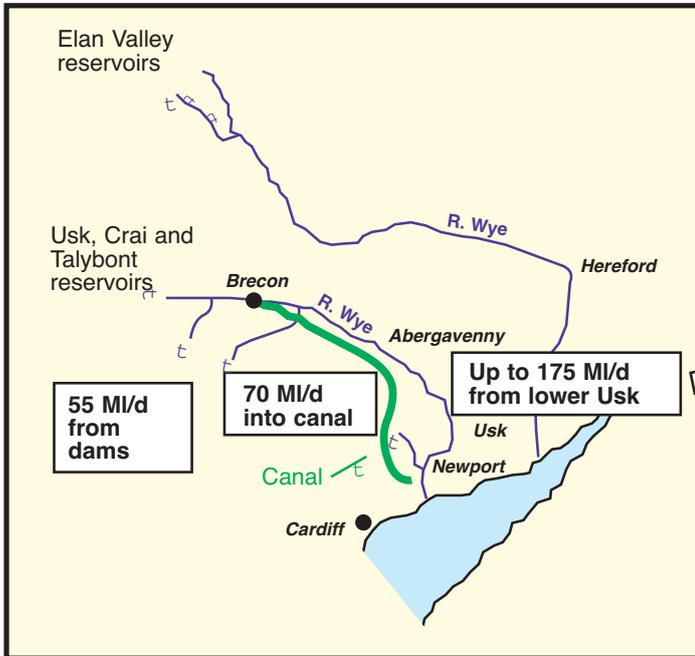


**The Bad and Ugly and the Good  
Honddu and Hydfer in pristine condition**



# WATER ABSTRACTION

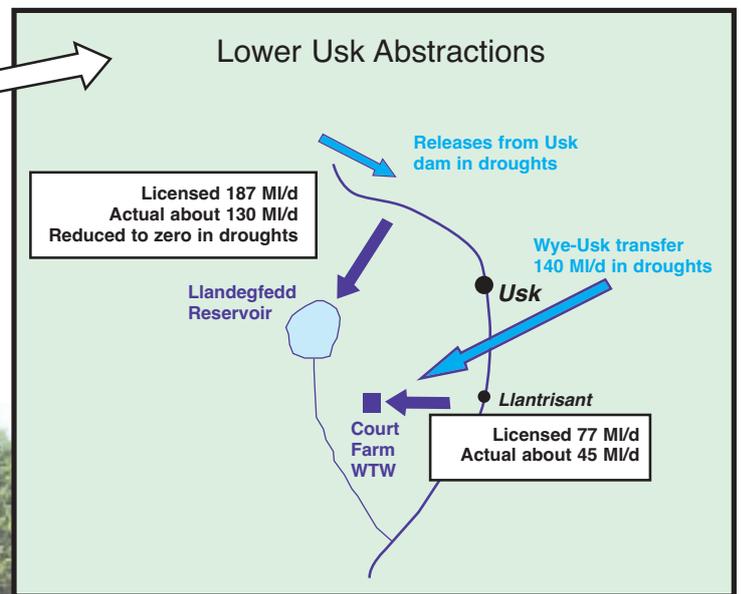
The Wye & Usk Foundation believes that over-abstraction is adversely affecting the fisheries of the River Usk. Welsh Water's main abstractions are from Usk, Crai and Talybont reservoirs in the upper valley, and from around Usk town to Llandegfedd reservoir and Court Farm treatment works. In addition, British Waterways take water for the Brecon canal from the main river at Brecon and from several tributaries.



The total abstraction averages about 300 million litres per day (300 MI/d) in normal years, reducing to about 150 MI/d in dry years, when restrictions apply. When River Usk flows are low, water is instead taken from the Wye, through the Wye-Usk transfer pipeline, but this reduces dry weather flows in the Wye.

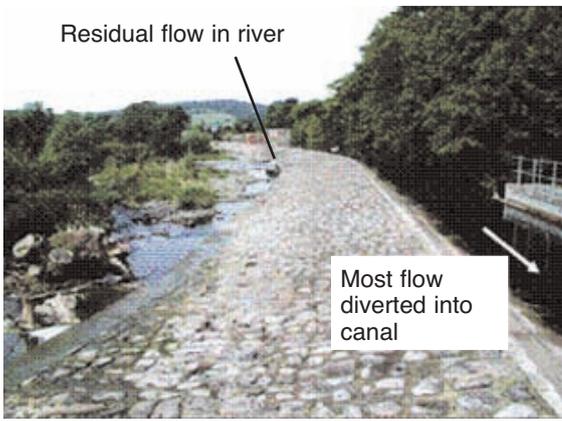


Typical summer flow at Gliffaes - 200 MI/d

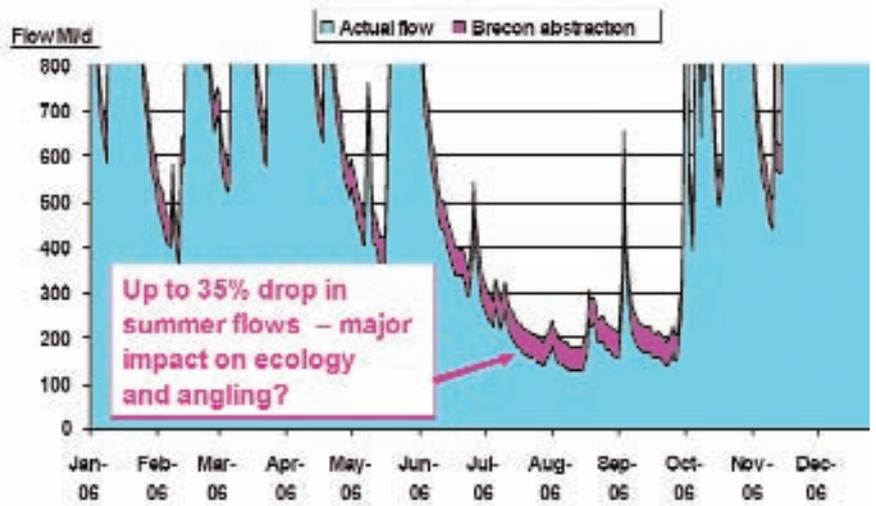


Abstraction from Usk, Crai and Talybont reservoirs has relatively little impact on river flows, because during dry weather compensation releases from the dams are greater than natural flows would have been, thereby slightly increasing flows in the main river. However, there are concerns about the temperature of the released water having an adverse effect on the streams which are important spawning and nursery areas for trout and salmon.

Abstraction to supply water to the Brecon canal is a major concern. British Waterways have a licence of right which allows them to abstract as much water as they think necessary to operate the canal. Ten years ago British Waterways signed an informal operating agreement with the Environment Agency limiting their abstraction at Brecon to 25 MI/d. However, until recently there has been no reliable means of measuring flows into the canal, so it has been impossible to monitor the effectiveness of the agreement. In late 2006 a new flow gauge was installed and recently obtained records show that abstraction in 2007 was typically about 50 MI/d, double the agreed amount. There are also uncontrolled abstractions into the canal from several tributaries, notably the Afon Crawnon, whose potential as a spawning and nursery area is seriously curtailed. The overall effect of abstraction to the canal on flows in the Usk is substantial:

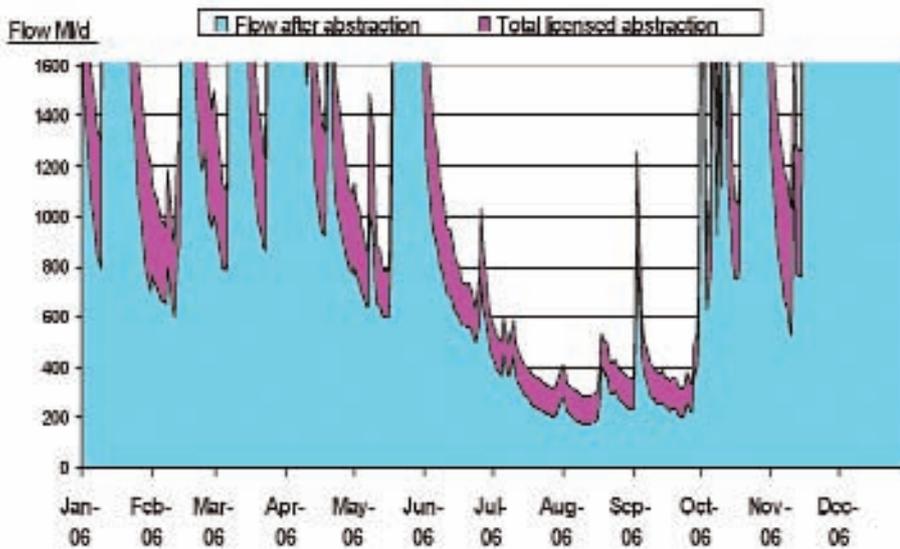


In a severe drought, most of the natural 85 MI/d flow at Brecon was diverted into the canal



At Llangynidr, about 10 miles below Brecon, flows in 2006 were reduced by up to 35% by canal abstractions

The abstractions from the lower river take an average of about 175 MI/d at present, but this will rise to about 265 MI/d when Welsh Water take their full licensed entitlement. This could have a substantial impact on fish migration, angling and ecology.



Below Llantrisant, abstraction at the fully licensed rate would reduce flows by up to 50% during low flows and when spates are running off.

Potential solutions to over-abstraction include rigorous monitoring of abstractions into the canal, reduction of canal leakage and using alternative sources for water supply. These could be using water pumped from the rail tunnel under the Severn estuary, sewage effluent re-cycling or, in the longer term, enlargement of the Craig Goch reservoir in the Elan valley in the upper Wye catchment.

New European Union legislation, the Water Framework and Habitats Directives, are providing a unique opportunity to address over-abstraction. Welsh Water and the Environment Agency are currently assessing the amount that abstraction may have to be reduced and possible solutions to be built into Welsh Water's business plan for 2010 to 2014. However, the Wye and Usk Foundation is concerned that the extent of the problem is being under-estimated and that the opportunity provided by the EU legislation may be missed. WUF is closely scrutinising plans as they emerge and intensifying its lobbying of the Environment Agency and Welsh Water.

### John Lawson

John Lawson is a water resources engineer advising the Wye & Usk Foundation on a voluntary basis. This article summarises his talk at the UUFA annual meeting on 4 April 2008

# UNITED USK FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Year from 1st September - 31 August

INCOME	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Membership	1170	1197	1222
Donations	252	160	
Interest	39.85	17.23	30.13
Dinner money			522.5
Total Income	1461.85	1374.23	1774.63

## EXPENDITURE

Sub's ACA	15	15	15
Sub's & T	90	90	90
Postage	79.1	81.03	151.24
Newsletter	885	895	906
Rule book reprint	0	75	
Dinner agm			550
Total Expenditure	1368.43	1156.03	1712.24
Excess/deficit	432.75	218.2	62.39

## OFFICERS & COMMITTEE 2008

### Chairman

Nick Brabner  
Gliffaes Lodge,  
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