

Angling Trust North East Forum
Morpeth
2nd November 2016
The Comrades Club

Meeting opened by John Cheyne, Angling Trust, National Regions Manager

**Environment Agency Update – Jon Shelley, Fisheries,
Biodiversity and Geomorphology Team Leader and Robbie
Stephenson, Fisheries Officer**

Environment Agency presentation – Available to download from:

<http://www.anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=834§ionTitle=North+East+Region>

Post presentation Q&A session with Jon and Robbie

Q – 60,000 sea trout were killed in district 1 last year, how is this allowed to happen when stocks are so low?

A – We have tried to reduce the fishing effort in district 1.

Q – How has the River Severn got £20,000,000 for improvements but we have no money to buy out the nets?

A – The Severn Rivers Trust has raised that money from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Europe. Defra have said there isn't the money available to buy out the nets. There are some wealthy individuals who have shown an interest in buying some nets out in acts of philanthropy!

Q – How can the EA say there isn't anything wrong with the NE Salmon Fishery?

A – We said levels post buy out were sustainable, but our views and position changes over time as new evidence arises.

Q – Netting has been stopped in Scotland, why not in England?

A – Scotland has been through a full habitat assessment for salmon stocks, unlike in England.

Q – Some buffer zone fencing is causing a hazard to get to the water!

A – When we install fencing for buffer zones, access points to the river are carefully considered and planned.

Q – Can we have a hatchery on the Coquet?

A – Our aim for the coquet is a sustainable fishery with good fish passage.

Q – What is happening to combat farming pollution on the coquet?

A – Buffer Zones and Fencing are used to stop cattle poaching.

Q – Since the Kielder Dam was switched on, the river has died!

A – The Hatchery at Kielder is used to replace the spawning sites that have been lost due to the effects of the reservoir. The EA is required by law to compensate for the loss of spawning sites.

Q – Why can't trout be stocked into the Coquet?

A – The genetics issue is a complicated one, but I would be prepared to have a discussion about fish stocking in the Coquet.

Angling Trust Update – Mark Owen, Head of Freshwater for Angling Trust

Post presentation Q&A with Mark

Q – What is the Angling Trust's view on netting salmon?

A – We don't believe there is any place for the netting of sea trout and salmon.

Q – Why can't our rivers trust raise £20,000,000 like the Severn Rivers Trust?

A – There is actually an official funding stream for rivers trusts to apply for Heritage Lottery Funding and from Europe.

Q – The rod licence is going up 10% next year, why can't this be used to buy out the nets?

A – We don't make the policies, DEFRA does.

Q – What support can the AT give to local anglers and clubs in the NE?

A – I hope very much we can help with that, it's much easier to get local money than from Europe. We run workshops all around the country on how to submit a successful funding bid and point out other funding opportunities like the plastic bag tax offered by supermarkets.

Fisheries Enforcement in The North East – Giles Evans, Angling Trust, Fisheries Enforcement Manager for the North East

Enforcement presentation – available to download from:

<http://www.anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=834§ionTitle=North+East+Region>

Post presentation Q&A with Giles

Q – Is netting allowed around the Coquet Conservation Areas?

A – The bylaws say there is no netting, however licensed T&J nets have an exemption.

Q – What do you say to the call handler when you report a theft of fish or fishing rights to the police?

A – Tell them you want to report a theft.