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Asiantaethyr Amgylchedd Cymru Environment Agency Wales

Mr J L Burton (Hon. Sec.)
Groe Park and Irfon Angling Club
Angle House
Pentrosfa Crescent
Llandrindod Wells
Powys
LD1 5NW
Our ref: Your ref:L/FRCN/JNF/05/09

Date:27 May 2009

Dear Mr Burton

CATCH & RELEASE BYELAW

I refer to your letter dated 26th April 2009 and our subsequent telephone conversation.

Following a preliminary review of our records, I can confirm that the consultation process took place in 2003. The Byelaw proposals were advertised in January 2004 with closing date for objections being 6th February 2004. In response to this advert various representations were made by interested parties including the Wye and Usk Foundation. Following liaison with Defra and WAG, at which time representations received were considered, the Byelaws were signed by the Secretary of State on 28th June 2005 and by the National Assembly for Wales on 16th June 2005. The Byelaw subsequently came into force on 1st July 2005. The procedure for passing the Byelaw does not require that minutes are kept and as far as I'm aware there are no such minutes. Finally, the initial intention of the byelaw was to amend the close season for the tributaries that enter the Wye downstream of Llanwrthwl bridge, to commence on 17th October 2003. The Byelaws were passed in their current form following consideration by Defra and WAG of the various representations.

I am sure you will appreciate that Catch & Release now forms a very important part of the culture of salmon fishing on the Wye. This is because the stock is still seriously depleted, and without widespread and effective Catch & Release, amongst other measures, it is unlikely to recover in the near future. As you will note the 2003 byelaws require all salmon caught in tributaries of the Wye downstream of Llanwrthyl in the period October 17 - 24th to be released alive. This statutory requirement for Catch & Release complements the recently renewed national spring salmon byelaws that require all salmon caught anywhere prior to June 16th to be released. In terms of informing the angling public we have published our fishing byelaws guide for anglers, the byelaws were advertised and as you will be aware it is the responsibility of each angler to familiarise themselves with the same. That said we accept that there may have been more EAW could have done in terms of informing angling clubs directly affected by the Byelaw and with hindsight, following the Byelaw coming into force, it may have been appropriate to have written to the clubs affected requesting that they advise their members. We hope that your members will take comfort from the fact that EAW are not intending to take retrospective enforcement action in respect of salmon taken from your club waters between 17th and 25th October (in seasons prior to 2009) that were otherwise taken lawfully.

I hope this letter satisfactorily answers your queries and in the meantime should you have any questions, queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Evans', with a stylized, overlapping initial 'R'.

Rob Evans

Fisheries Policy Advisor

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