

29<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Dear Sirs,

**Re; Proposed Compulsory Release of all Sea Trout**

I wish to object to the above proposal.

I have carefully read the consultation document and I cannot agree with its recommendations. The River Eden in Cumbria has many similar problems to the Annan catchment with many spawning becks subject to pollution of different types. However, the scientific work carried out by the Eden Rivers Trust has clearly identified the problem areas and they have sought to address these issues. In the Annan report there does not appear to be the same degree of scientific input to warrant or justify the compulsory catch and release of sea trout.

Since the introduction of compulsory catch and release of spring salmon on the River Eden I would suggest that the fishing effort has reduced by about 80%. The worrying thing about this policy is that we have seen no significant increase in the numbers of returning spring fish. I feel the Annan River Board proposal will have a similar detrimental effect on the number of visiting anglers and a substantial loss of income to both riparian owners and the tourism trade in general.

I would also like to take issue with the report regarding a hatchery. For many years on the River Eden we had two hatcheries to make up for the loss of headwater streams caused by the damming of the Haweswater valley. Some years ago these were sold off by water authorities and since then there has been a gradual decline in the numbers of returning salmon. I would not disagree that work of these hatcheries may have masked the problems in the Eden catchment but at least they gave nature a helping hand. By contrast, the River Tyne retained a hatchery at Kielder and this river has improved and has become the principal Salmon and Sea Trout river in England and Wales. There can be no better evidence than this that these measures can improve angling whilst the necessary ongoing improvements are made to natural habitats.

I feel that the Annan River Board is heading in the wrong direction with these proposals and respectfully suggest that more careful scientific investigation be carried out before these draconian measures are implemented.

Yours faithfully,