

Welcome to the newsletter from the North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA).

The spring and summer months have seen productive mussel fisheries and mixed landing of fish. The authority has also introduced measures to protect features within European Marine Sites and continued with the review of Authority byelaws.



Photo Courtesy of IFCO Joseph Moulton

Fisheries Update

Mussels

A steady mussel fishery has operated throughout the summer months on the Hard Acre skear in the Duddon Estuary near Barrow. In July fishermen were required to submit shellfish landings for the first time and 120 tonnes was recorded from the Duddon fishery whilst small numbers were recorded from other areas.



In August an authorisation to remove seed mussel from the Heysham Flat Skear was issued by the Authority. Strict regulations are in place to protect the Sabellaria alveolata bed which occur concurrently with the mussel bed. The bed is referred to as being ephemeral as it often washed away by severe storms.

In Late August 3 mussel dredgers prosecuted the South America Seed Mussel fishery, although poor landings were recorded compared to previous years. (Photo– Mare Gratia, By IFCO Joseph Moulton)

Shrimping

The summer months have so far seen poor landing of shrimps across the North West District.

Trawling

Steady landings of Nephrops have been recorded in Whitehaven with averages Of 20-30 stone per boat for a nights trawling. Good landings of Scallops have also been recorded into Silloth.

Potting

Good Landings of Lobster and Crab have been reported into Whitehaven and Barrow.

Angling

Mackerel are yet to reach the inshore waters and are proving elusive to the shore anglers.

Members training Day– July 2014

On the 17th of July Officers held a members training day in Whitehaven. The day was aimed at giving members of the authority a better understanding of the operational capacity of NWIFCA science and enforcement team.

The day began with presentations from IFCO Joe Moulton on enforcement and science activities which take place day to day and are carried out by officers across the district.

After lunch, members were invited to have a tour of the intertidal equipment which is used by officers such as the quad bikes and how these are used for checking on fishing activities such as netting. There was also a demonstration of the RIB, Protector Bravo which is based on a trailer in Whitehaven Marina. Members were then taken on a trip aboard the Solway Protector to visit St. Bees head and see the resident Auk's nest upon the cliffs. Whilst out on the boat a number of different fishing trawlers and other fishing vessels were seen giving members an opportunity to see the diverse range of fishing activities which occur in the North of the District.



Whitehaven Prawn Boat– Photo By IFCO Joseph Moulton

NWIFCA Member Vacancies

North Western IFCA is seeking to fill 3 vacancies on the Authority. Appointments are made through the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). Full details of how to apply are provided on the website below and is open to anyone who may wish to apply.

The MMO are looking for people with relevant knowledge, interest and expertise in commercial fisheries, recreational fisheries and the marine environment. The NWIFCA District includes all the coastline of NW England from the Welsh to the Scottish Borders. At present the south of the District, is less well represented.

Each IFCA needs members who will take a balanced approach to caring for the seas, assessing the priority and importance of all users and stakeholders. This vacancy is an opportunity for someone who wants to improve the quality of the inshore seas of the North West.

Please be aware that these are voluntary positions which involve attending meetings which expenses are paid for.

The deadline to apply is 9th September 2014.

Please find more information and application packs at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation/about/recruitment#current-vacancies-for-the-ifcas> “

Dave Dobson stepping down as MMO Appointee

In August Dave Dobson announced that he had resigned his seat as an MMO appointee on the NWIFCA Authority. Mr Dobson had previously been Chief Officer of Cumbria Sea Fisheries Committee and then Enforcement Director of NWIFCA until his retirement in 2012. Dave was well respected by the fishing community and his background as a trawler Skipper bonded him with fishermen and all those connected with the inshore industry.

Dr Judith Clark said "He was a valuable and extremely experienced member and his contribution to the work of the Authority will be very much missed."



Dave with one that didn't get away– Photo by Cath Dobson

National Grid- North West Coast Connections

On the 4th of September the consultation will begin on the preferred routing options for high voltage cabling from the proposed nuclear power station which will be built at Moorside, near Sellafield. The routing will carry cabling from the 3.2 GW power station as well as Irish Sea Wind Turbines and connect into the Nation Grid.

National Grid see this as an important step towards modernising and extending the countries existing energy infra structure.

Two cable routes are proposed in the consultation which are North to Carlisle and South to Heysham. The northern preferred route does not directly affect the coastal or marine environment; the south preferred route involves a tunnel under Morecambe Bay which starts and ends inland will tunnel through the bedrock and incorporate either one or three ventilation / escape towers. This route is the result of many years of consultation appears to provide the least impact upon fisheries and the environment.

National Grid will be holding a series of road shows around the proposed area providing more information. Officers would like to encourage all those who are interest to attend and contribute towards the responses.

More information can be found at - <http://www.northwestcoastconnections.com/> or by following the twitter account @NGNWCC.

Senior Scientist Mandy Knott will continue to represent the authority at meetings and contribute towards discussions where there may be potential interactions with fisheries.

In short.....

- On the 7th of August two mussel gatherers Mr D. and Mr P. Bednarczyk from Morecambe were convicted at Liverpool Magistrates of gathering undersized mussels from the Foulney Mussel bed near Barrow-in-Furness. Mr P. Bednarczyk was caught gathering undersize on the 19th of November 2013 and then both concealed undersize mussels from IFCO's on the 4th of December 2013. Upon attending court both men pleaded guilty and were each handed fines of £325 plus costs of £75 as well as a victim surcharge of £32.50.
- Also on the same day the Case of Mr Wayne Wilson was heard by the magistrates. Mr Wilson pleaded not-guilty to two charges of obstructing IFCO's from carrying out their relevant duties. A case management hearing is scheduled for the 20th of August at Lancaster Magistrates Court to determine a date for trial.

Sustainability principles

In September 2011 the NWIFCA adopted a Set of Principles for Sustainable Fisheries which are being used as a standard intended to guide the work of the NWIFCA in managing sea fisheries resources in its District. The Principles were adapted from those developed by the Marine Stewardship Council who used an extensive, international consultative process through which the views of stakeholders in fisheries were gathered.

- The Principles reflect a recognition that a sustainable fishery should be based upon:
- The maintenance and re-establishment of healthy populations of targeted species;
- The maintenance of the integrity of ecosystems;
- The development and maintenance of effective fisheries management systems, taking into account all relevant biological, technological, economic, social, environmental and commercial aspects; and
- Compliance with relevant local and national laws and standards and international understandings and agreements.

The Principles are further designed to recognise and emphasise that management efforts are most likely to be successful in accomplishing the goals of conservation and sustainable use of marine resources when there is full co-operation among the full range of fisheries stakeholders, including those who are dependent on fishing for their food and livelihood.

The NWIFCA further recognises the need to observe and respect the long-term interests of people dependent on fishing for food and livelihood to the extent that it is consistent with ecological sustainability, and also the importance of fisheries management and operations being conducted in a manner consistent with established local, national, and international rules and standards.

The Principles are intended to guide the efforts of the NWIFCA towards the development of sustainable fisheries within its District. They were developed assuming that a sustainable fishery is defined as one that is conducted in such a way that:

- it can be continued indefinitely at a reasonable level;
- it maintains and seeks to maximise, ecological health and abundance;
- it maintains the diversity, structure and function of the ecosystem on which it depends as well as the quality of its habitat, minimising the adverse effects that it causes;
- it is managed and operated in a responsible manner, in conformity with local, national and international laws and regulations;
- it maintains present and future economic and social options and benefits;
- it is conducted in a socially and economically fair and responsible manner.

Although the primary focus is the ecological integrity of the District's fisheries, the Principles also embrace the human and social elements of fisheries. Their successful implementation depends upon a system of management which is open, fair, based upon the best information available and which incorporates all relevant legal obligations.

The full set of Principles can be obtained from the Science Team on request or downloaded from the website.

From the Science Team, August 2014.

The next authority meetings are scheduled for the 19th September and 12th December 2014.

Newsletter by IFCO Joseph Moulton

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