

## THREE MILE WATER RESTORATION PROJECT

### PROJECT OUTLINE

This project is designed to restore the Three Mile Water as a trout river with self sustaining populations of both sea trout and brown trout, providing angling for both the local residents and Visitors to the area.

Some preliminary work has been carried out involving a general clean up of the channel, bank clearance and some basic re-stocking. The Association now intends to complete the programme restoration through implementation of a range of measures:

- Habitat development
- Improvements in fish passage
- Improvements in access for angling
  - Re-stocking programme
  - Promotion & Development

#### **1 Habitat Development**

The survey carried out in 2000 revealed that the productive length of the Three Mile Water is relatively short with a fairly high gradient over much of its length. The survey also indicated that there is an abundance of nursery habitat throughout the course of the river, but a shortage of spawning gravels and in particular holding water. The Association has already addressed the issue of holding water through the construction of a series of groynes with associated deepening of pools. It is their intention to continue this work through the creation of further pools and the construction of a series of spawning beds at strategic locations in proximity to suitable nursery stretches.

#### **● Holding water- pool construction**

During the survey a series of sites were selected for development as holding pools for adult fish (see report). Five of these have been successfully completed leaving a further five for construction under the current application. Plumb stones will also be required in some pools to develop and enhance fish "*lies*", while modifications are required to improve some existing pools.

Estimated costs:

Construction of five new groynes with associated bank protection and deepening @ 1200 each..6000

Placement of plumb stones 1500

Modifications to existing pools (2) @ 500 each ...1000

**8500**

● **Spawning area development- gravel beds**

Productivity is limited through a lack of spawning gravels and this will be addressed by the creation of a series of gravel retention beds at selected locations in close proximity to existing quality nursery stretches.

Estimated Costs:

Construction of 10 gravel retention structures @300 each ..3000

**Total 11,500**

**2 Improvements in fish passage**

When the club was formed in 1999 there were two major obstructions on the river in the form of two weirs (See consultants report)

*Monkstown Weir (Grid 345840)*

The construction of a fish pass at Monkstown weir as outlined in the report has been completed by Rivers Agency with support from Newtownabbey Borough Council. This structure is now operating successfully with significant numbers of sea trout observed ascending the fish pass during spate conditions in the last 2 years. The effectiveness of the pass could be improved through the addition of a groyne downstream of the wier to raise the water level beneath the downstream entrance to the pass.

*Estimated costs:*

Construction of 1 new groyne with associated bank protection and deepening @1200 each...1200

*Carnmoney Weir (Grid 333848)*

Until recently this weir was a complete obstruction to the upstream passage of migratory fish. The river has now cut a channel around the weir allowing movement of fish both up and downstream. However the fish pass route could be improved in tandem with habitat development if the weir structure was completely removed. The stone recovered from the weir could be used as substrate and bank protection for the restoration of the original channel.

*Estimated cost:*

8000

**Total 9,200**

### **3 Improvements in access for angling**

The Association have spent considerable time clearing both the channel and the banks of the river to remove obstructions and to improve access for angler's. However there remain considerable sections which are heavily overgrown and generally inaccessible. A major part of the project will consist of the opening up of these areas so that access will be provided along the entire course of the river.

*Estimated costs:*

Scrub clearance and path construction:

(1) Three Mile Water Conservation Park footbridge - Bridge Road

(Grid 343841-353835); 500m @ 10 pounds/m..... 5000 pounds

(2) Monkstown Road - Viaduct;

(Grid 343841-353835)

1200m @ 10 pounds/m...12000

**Total 17,000**

### **4 Restocking Programme**

Small scale stocking of the river has been carried out since 1996 using sea trout, brown trout and salmon. The nature of the Three Mile Water as a short spate river with limited holding water is probably more suited to sea trout than salmon. Any salmon entering the river are likely to be very late running, possibly after the season has closed. Furthermore, discussions with local anglers would suggest that in the past, sea trout did feature in the river with only occasional salmon appearing.

With the river flowing through a more densely populated area at its lower end there is likely to be some level of poaching activity. For various cultural and traditional reasons the presence of salmon inevitably leads to more intense poaching activity; sea trout on the other hand, will still be pursued illegally, tend not to attract the same level of activity.

In consideration of these factors we would recommend that future efforts to enhance the river should be centered on sea trout rather than salmon. It is likely that occasional salmon will still run the river and may figure in anglers catches from time to time.

It is recommended that the Association secure a reliable source of sea trout ova or fry and initiate a 4 year stocking programme to cover the full life cycle of the species

*Estimated costs;*

- 25,000 sea trout ova/fry per year for four years @ 65 pounds per 1000...6500 pounds

**Total 6500**

### **5 Promotion and Development**

Promotion and development will be key elements of the project and will include a range of measures aimed at:

- Promoting of the river as a natural asset and a recreational facility
  - Providing accurate and up to date information
  - Provisions of a ghille service

The proposed measures are:

- **Signage** - attractive and informative signs at key locations in the catchment

*Estimated cost:*

6 new signs at angling beats @ 300 each.... 1800

- **Litearature** - Information leaflet outlining the work of the Associaton in restoring the river - fish species, angling methods, ghillies/guides, local hospitality outlets etc

*Estimated cost:*

500 pounds

- **Website** - design and management of dedicated website with up to date information on the Association and development activities on the river

*Estimated cost:*

1500

- **Training programme** - for 2 guides/ghillies to assist visiting anglers

*Estimated cost:*

1800

**Total 5,600**

**6 Summary**

- Habitat development-----11500 pounds
- Improvements to fish passage-----9200 pounds
- Improvements to access for angling-----17000 pounds
  - Re-Stocking programme-----6500 pounds
  - Promotion and development-----5600 pounds

**Total (exc vat) 49,800**

**7 Proposed Schedule:**

|           |                          |      |
|-----------|--------------------------|------|
| Spring 04 | 3 new groynes            | 3600 |
|           | Plumb-stones             | 1500 |
|           | 25,000 sea trout ova/fry | 1625 |
|           | Website development      | 1000 |

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|              |                                      |      |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|------|
| Summer 04    | 5 gravel retention structures        | 1500 |
|              | Carnmoney Weir                       | 8000 |
|              | Monkstown weir, add groyne           | 1200 |
|              | Scrub clearance, path construction 1 | 5000 |
| Winter 04/05 | 2 new groynes                        | 2400 |
|              | Modifications to pools 2             | 1000 |
|              | Information leaflet                  | 500  |
| Spring 05    | 25,000 sea trout ova/fry             | 1625 |
|              | 6 new signs                          | 1800 |
| Summer 05    | 5 gravel retention structures        | 1500 |
|              | Scrub clearance, path construction 2 | 1200 |

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|           |                          |      |
|-----------|--------------------------|------|
| Autumn 05 | Ghillie/guide training   | 1800 |
|           | Website management       | 500  |
| Spring 06 | 25,000 sea trout ova/fry | 1625 |
| Spring 07 | 25,000 sea trout ova/fry | 1625 |

**Total.....49,800**