

NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw Sub-Committee

17 May 2013: 10:00am

AGENDA

ITEM NO.

11

CUMBRIA SHORE SURVEYS

Purpose of Report

To update TSB on the annual Cumbria shore surveys and to discuss options for taking them forward in the future.

Recommendations

To make a decision on whether to continue the surveys through the science team, commission a consultant, or discontinue them.

Details

1. The Cumbria shore surveys carried out by Dr Jane Lancaster have been conducted every year at 11 sites since 1993. The original purpose of the surveys was to provide background data and information on natural changes, and to act as an early warning system to any possible detrimental anthropogenic (man induced) changes that may take place. At the meeting of the TSB on 21st June 2011 it was unanimously decided that this dataset should be continued and that the NWIFCA would contract Jane to survey and write a report every year, which she has done. Officers contacted Jane for all the raw data and GIS mapping so that it is now held within the Science Tem.
2. At the beginning of May Cath Dobson was informed by Jane that she is willing to undertake this year's survey, which she has already begun, but that she will not be continuing after this due to her heavy work load and family commitments. Abigail Leadbeater accompanied Jane on one of the surveys recently (Cunning Point, near Parton) in order to learn her methods which encompass a broadscale habitat description and species identification and abundance assessment.
3. The question now arises as to whether the NWIFCA wishes the Science Team to continue the surveys, pay an outside consultancy or discontinue the work. The Science Team have some intertidal species identification skills between us, and with the use of cameras and ID books would achieve the required standard, but it will be time consuming.
4. My question is whether or not it should be a priority for the Science Team with all the other demands on us, and the use of spring low water tides which are limited due to winter daylight restrictions anyway. There are 11 sites, and so with two officers' time that equates to 22 days' worth of tides that we could use for other more pressing work. Further time would also be required to process and analyse the data and write up the report.
5. I understand the Authority's view on the value of the long-term database and ability to assess change over time. Five of the survey sites are in the proposed Cumbria coast MCZ and 2 in the Allonby Bay MCZ.

**Mandy Knott
Senior Scientist
8th May 2013**