

**NWIFCA Technical, Science and Byelaw
Committee**

8th August 2017: 10:00 a.m.

**AGENDA
ITEM NO.**

9

RELAYING SEED MUSSEL IN RAVENGLASS ESTUARY

JULY 2017

Purpose: Report the proposal to relay seed mussel in Ravenglass estuary and associated issues.

Recommendation: Receive the report

Background:

1. In 2006 Kingfisher Seafoods carried out preparatory work for relaying of seed mussel. Relaying commenced in November 2009 but has taken place only very occasionally.
2. Prior to 2011 the Ravenglass Estuary, (part of Drigg Coast SAC, was not included within the Cumbria SFC boundary. IFCA brought the sea fisheries resources of such areas under the jurisdiction of this Authority. The land is owned by Muncaster Estate.
3. Kingfisher have an agreement with the estate to relay seed mussel on Muncaster land. The Estate has SSSI consent from Natural England for relaying and harvesting of mussels. In 2011 Kingfisher relaid 20 tonnes seed mussel dredged from South America Skear (Morecambe Bay) in Ravensglass Estuary. Mussel was transported in net bags by road and spread by hand raking. The stock did not survive probably due to hot weather and being rather too far up the shore. There are reports that in the past relaid intertidal seed in this area grew quickly to about 35mm but did not reach the MLS of 45mm.
4. In 2014, Muncaster Estate has indicated they had a claim to fishery rights in Ravensglass Estuary and the Authority requested evidence to support the claims. No evidence was received and therefore the Authority treats the area as within the public fishery.
5. In the course of routine discussions in July 2017, NE informed the Authority that the Muncaster SSSI consent for mussel operations is being renewed. Also that Kingfisher again intended to relay seed mussel from Heysham Flat on intertidal areas in Ravensglass Estuary. The Authority was concerned that it had not been consulted on the SSSI consent renewal.
6. The proposed operation to be carried out by Kingfisher Director Mr Benson and NWIFCA member Dr Andrews would include transport by road, relaying by hand using quad bikes. No boats would be used. CEFAS as the consenting body for Aquaculture Production Business (APB) have the duty to carry out the HRA.
7. The role of this Authority in such an operation is to ensure that the gathering and relaying of seed is carried out under Byelaw 3 permits and that harvested seed is above the MLS of 45mm. It was agreed to inform NWIFCA TSB of the proposal.

CEO

July 2017