Fisheries Management in West Sutherland 2008 - 2011

The West Sutherland Fisheries Trust

•Established in 1996, we cover an area from the Hope in the north to Achilitibuie in the south, covering all loch and river catchments flowing west and north .

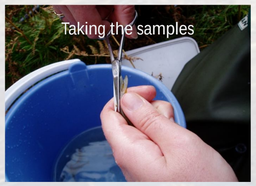
•Working closely with landowners and other stakeholders, we provide advice and assistance on all aspects of fisheries management within the area. This advice is underpinned by a research programme aimed at ensuring the best practice is followed.

•The Trust has a strong volunteer base and is also heavily involved in education through schools and public walks.

Education

The Trusts educational goals are:

- Teach the public about native wild fish in West Sutherland
- Raise awareness, interest and knowledge of the freshwater and marine environments
- Start them young – get the schools involved in fish conservation !



Focusing Atlantic Salmon Management On Populations

- A Scotland-wide initiative, looking at catchment scale genetic differences in salmon populations
- Examining the long term effects of a large fish farm escape on wild salmon populations in a neighbouring river

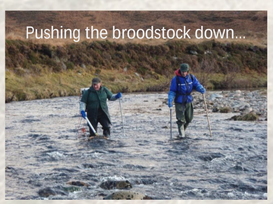
Eels

Projects have been undertaken to:

• Determine a protocol for the monitoring of elvers

•Assess the eel population within the area

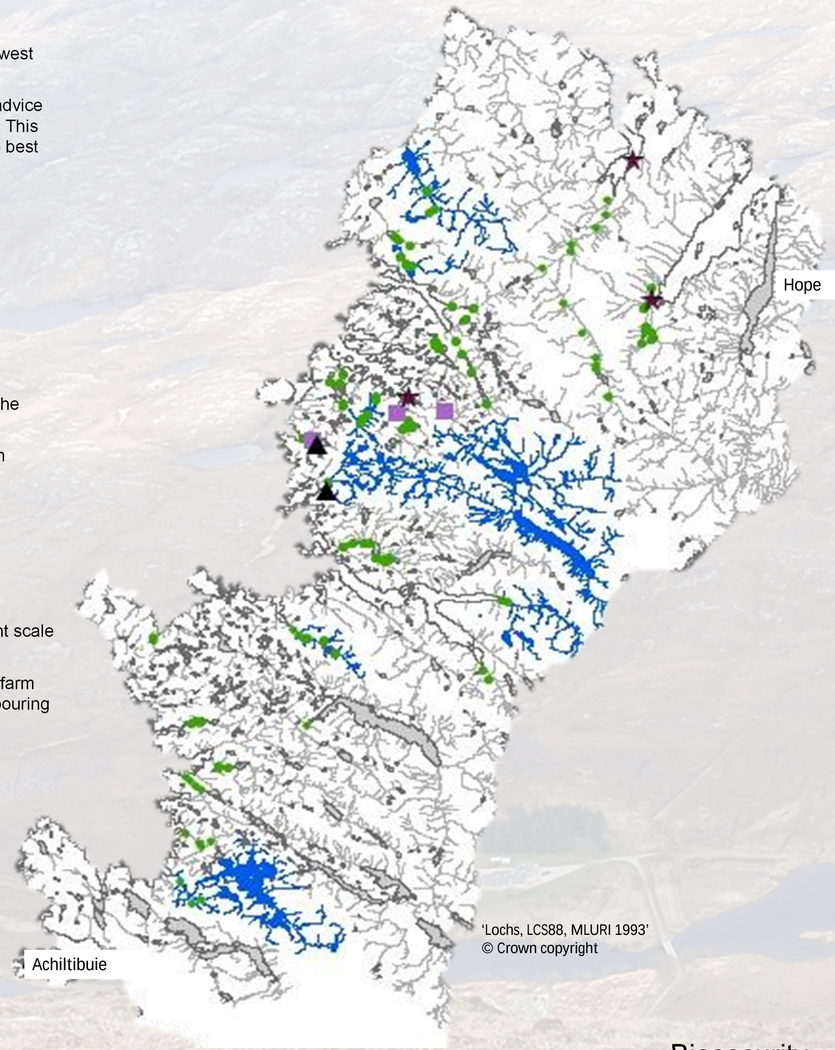
•Raise awareness of the status of the eel



Stocking assistance

• Help to ensure best practice in broodstock collection and hatcheries

• Ensure native stocks are used



'Lochs, LCS88, MLURI 1993'
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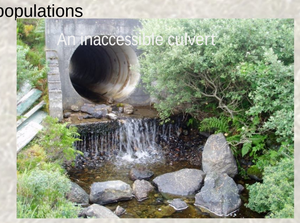
Habitat restoration

•Develop individual Catchment Management Plans

•Improve the habitat for juveniles and allow access to adult fish

•Achieve long-term sustainable benefits for fish populations



Biosecurity

•Devise and operate a Biosecurity Plan

•Remove Himalayan Balsam from water courses

•Assist with the monitoring of mink populations

•Provide education on stopping the introduction and spread of non-native species including *Gyrodactylus salaris*

The Fisheries Management Plan

Developed in 2008 as part of a national series of plans supported by the Scottish Government, the plan reflects local priorities for fisheries management and provides the basis for management of all fish species within the area. This plan has stimulated a range of different projects and research themes undertaken by the Trust and its many partners, both local and national. It has also allowed the identification of shared priorities with a range of initiatives, e.g. Water Framework Directive and conservation designations.

★Marine monitoring

- Establish marine growth rates
- Determine extent of migrations
- Monitor sea lice burdens, for comparison with neighbouring farms
- Establish timing of migratory fish runs
- Part of the Managing Interactions Project

Other activities

•Provision of data to SEPA to address the Water Framework Directive

• Advise estates on various activities, for example Forestry Planning

• Work with developers and owners on industrial developments

•Liaise with the aquaculture industry

•Examine the genetic structure of the trout populations throughout the area, including the relationship between brown and sea trout populations

•Respond to pollution incidences within the area

Fish surveys

•Determine the number of juveniles present and any changes

Assess the size of the smolt run

•Estimate the size of the adult run

•Collect data on growth rate and smolt age

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marinescotland The Scottish Government

THE CROWN ESTATE

SCOURIE & DISTRICT ANGLING CLUB

SEPA Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Loch Duart Ltd the Sustainable Salmon Company

RAFTS

RISPOND ESTATE

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Scottish Natural Heritage Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba All of nature for all of Scotland Nàdar air fad air son Alba air fad

North & West District Salmon Fishery Board