

Langford Lakes

Technique: improvement of in-stream habitat through a variety of methods

Project location: Steeple Langford

River: Wylfe

County: Wiltshire

Project start date: Autumn 2002

Project end date: Autumn 2002

Length: Approx 1km

Cost: Unknown

Upstream grid reference: SU 038370



Sediment trapping and some bank protection using brush-wood stakes



An upstream pointing v weir made from logs obtained locally with large cobbles placed upstream

Site background

This area comprises a series of large lakes with the River Wylfe, a chalk stream, flowing through the centre of them. Langford lakes and the River Wylfe are renowned for their popularity for angling but fish populations have declined over recent years. This has resulted in a partnership being formed between the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, English Nature, the Environment Agency and the Wild Trout Trust to address this issue.

Objectives

To improve the fisheries value of this section of the R. Wylfe. The site has, however, also been set up as an educational site to cater for everyone from school children to consultants. Part of this education initiative has focused on incorporating a range of habitat restoration techniques, primarily related to fisheries improvements (i.e. creating channel diversity), with a longer term view of ascertaining best practices.

Design

A range of alternative techniques have been implemented, mainly using natural materials in an attempt to trap unwanted sediment behind them and in doing so create geomorphological and ecological diversity in the river whilst at the same time creating a stable bank as exemplified in the photos on this summary sheet.



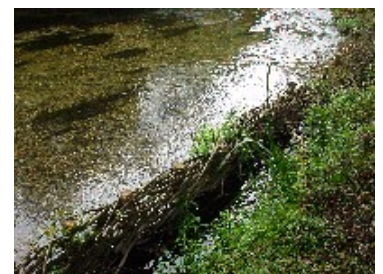
Sediment trapping using live willows pushed into the bank

Subsequent performance - RRC's views (2002)

Most of the examples of techniques in this river have only just been put into place (the official opening of the site was 28th September 2002). It is therefore, too early to establish which are likely to provide answers in terms of best practice and whether the increase in channel diversity will have a long term benefit for fisheries objectives.

Some concerns were raised during the site visit about the use of the v weir in this particular situation and it remains to be seen how successful/sustainable this will be compared to the more 'natural' diversity initiatives using on site materials over the longer term.

The faggots and pegs appear already to have trapped some sediment behind them. They are, however, very experimental and their height, in this case (approx 40-50cm), may ultimately be most critical to their long term success. Nevertheless they may provide a possible alternative to places where toe boarding or similar structural support has been used along other rivers.



Sediment trapping using live faggots and pegs

This is an excellent site for viewing and discussing a range of techniques, and evaluating their effectiveness and suitability along chalk streams and elsewhere.



the River Restoration Centre Case Study Series

This site was last visited by RRC staff on 27th September 2002

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