

## 2017 UK River Prize Finalist

### Pearls in Peril Project - Rivers across England, Scotland & Wales *Partnership & Multiple Benefit Project*

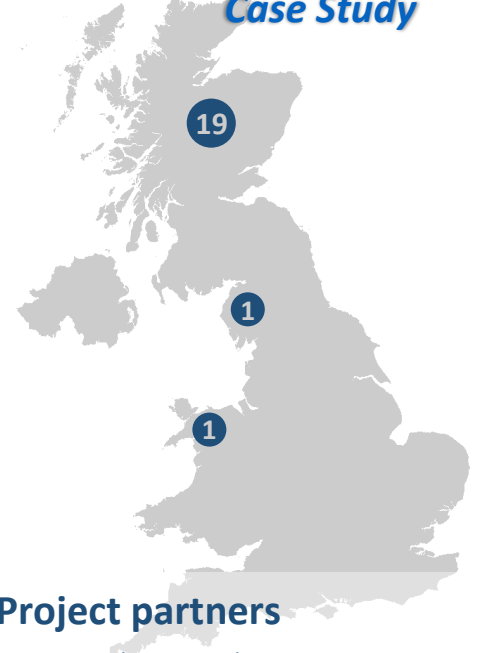
Pearls in Peril' (PIP) is a large and complex LIFE+ Nature project with 22 partners working together throughout Great Britain to restore river habitats for freshwater pearl mussels and their host salmonids. The UK holds many of the largest remaining pearl mussel populations in Europe. The project began in 2012 and finished in March 2017. Work extended across 21 rivers designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for pearl mussels.

The project is led by Scottish Natural Heritage, who began planning the project in 2010 with other partners. The catalyst for the project was a desire to undertake coordinated and carefully planned actions in several key catchments to restore the species habitats and, thereby, improve the conservation of pearl mussels.

Key to this aim has been an ethos of restoring natural river processes, co-ordinated at the catchment scale, and targeted at prioritised locations. This has included planting landscape-scale riparian woodlands, completing extensive in-stream restoration works, reducing diffuse pollution and creating and restoring riparian wetlands.

As well as restoration works, the project has communicated the importance of river and pearl mussel conservation with a range of audiences, particularly via our 'Pearls in the Classroom' initiative that has been attended by over 4,000 school children. In the long term, agreements and plans are in place to maintain, and build upon the achievements of PIP and to further improve the conservation of freshwater pearl mussels.

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#### Project partners

- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Forest Enterprise Scotland
- Environment Agency
- Natural Resources Wales
- West Cumbria Rivers Trust
- Rivers and Fishery Trusts of Scotland
- Kyle of Sutherland District Salmon Fisheries Board
- Esk District Salmon Fisheries Board
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Lake District National Park
- Dee Catchment Partnership
- Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Argyll Fisheries Trust
- Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust
- North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency
- Dee District Salmon Fishery Board
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- The Spey Fishery Board
- Snowdonia National Park Authority
- United Utilities
- River Naver Fisheries
- Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust

