



## PEARLS IN PERIL, ENGLAND SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Pearls in Peril (PiP) is a nationwide project to secure the future of the freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) in Great Britain. The River Ehen is one of 21 rivers (the only river in England), involved in the project coordinated by Scottish Natural Heritage.

West Cumbria Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency have been responsible for delivering the PiP project in England with partners Lake District National Park and United Utilities.

The project is now finished and the following is a summary of the work delivered over the 4 years of the project.

Work was delivered under three project objectives:

### **To RESTORE the habitat of freshwater pearl mussels and salmonids in selected river catchments within Great Britain.**

Working with 19 different landowners, 45 projects have been completed including:

- 10,000 trees planted
- 350m of willow spiling across 6 sites
- 7km of riparian stock fencing (including 3 wetland areas fenced off to be left to naturally regenerate)
- Alternative watering installed
- Problem tree blockages removed from main river
- Hedgelaying
- Coppicing
- 8 green engineering projects (approx. 550m of riverbank protected in total) on both the main river and a tributary using techniques such as log and Christmas tree, bank re-profiling, brash bundles
- Gateways and heavily poached stock crossings have been graveled
- 27 volunteer days (approx. 530 people) – tree planting, coppicing, willow staking.

### **To SECURE the long-term survival of existing freshwater pearl mussel populations and prevent their further degradation.**

- 3 years of successful Artificial Encystment. This has not previously been attempted in England and it has been a fascinating learning experience. The PiP Project has been sharing this experience with other mussel projects.
- 4km of mussel surveys
- 3 years of electrofishing surveys and water quality data



## **To COMMUNICATE with local, national and international audiences to raise awareness of freshwater pearl mussel conservation issues**

- PiP postcards, leaflets and posters professionally designed and printed
- PiP Information Panel designed and produced and has been installed on the front of the Community Pub in Ennerdale Bridge
- 12 local community presentations (420 people)
- Presentation to EU LIFE Conference in Ireland
- Successful End of Project Conference held in local village hall at Lamplugh
- A Community Event with food and live music was held in Community Pub Fox and Hounds to thank volunteers and landowners for their support and involvement
- Hosted the final visit to the PiP Project by the EU Monitor in Ennerdale which was very successful and he used the words 'excellent' and 'brilliant'
- 4 short films have been produced by volunteers and been circulated far and wide
- 10 press articles
- Appearance in ITV Countrywise
- 4 Ennerdale Shows
- Delivered Pearls in the Classroom to 600 children in total, and such a success that funding has been secured to continue an education role in the area.

For more information, to see copies of publicity material, view films, see before and after photos of projects etc. click on attached link to take you to the PiP Pages on WCRT website. <http://westcumbriariverstrust.org/projects/pearls-in-peril>

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