

Water Management Team
(Strategy Consultation Response)
Canal & River Trust
Canal Lane
Hatton
Warwick
CV35 7JL

24th October 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

NATURAL RESOURCES WALES RESPONSE TO CANAL AND RIVER TRUST WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Canals and Rivers Trusts Water Resources Strategy. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) recognise the complexity of removing the licence exemptions for historically exempt abstractions that provide water supply to CRT operated waterways. We look forward to continued close liaison with CRT to maintain the economic and environmental sustainability of waterways operated by CRT. The consultation issues and questions that are relevant to water management and the remit of NRW are covered below.

Question 5

We agree on a programme of work to continue and enhance your understanding of water supply and demand within CRT water systems. This will allow a water budget within the water system to be realised, and ensure the sustainability of future abstractions.

Question 6

We agree the use of Environment Agency and DEFRA guidelines are suitable to determine the strategic resource requirements for water systems managed by CRT. The ability to estimate headroom within a canal system is important and the consistent use of published methodologies will allow accurate water resource modelling.

Question 7

NRW is working with Welsh Government to progress the implementation of the remaining elements of the 2003 Water Act. This will remove the abstraction exemption for the purpose of navigation. Following implementation of the regulations, NRW will licence abstractions that take place wholly within Wales, and this will be completed in line with the final policy issued by Welsh Government. Table 2 in the consultation document is a useful illustration of the time line and actions of how CRT intend to model future water pressures on canal systems. This is a logical and phased approach that will aid to understand water budgets within canal systems and ensure that abstractions are sustainable.

Question 13

We support an approach to ensure lock leakage is managed and prioritised. The reduction of leakage within canal systems ensures that abstractions into a canal system are efficient, consequently maintaining the efficient use of water resources.

Question 14

We agree with a five year cycle for reviewing the Water Resource Strategy. This will enable changes to the water budget within water systems to be assessed and actions prioritised. This will allow CRT to maintain economic and environmental sustainability within canal systems and ensure that priority issues are identified and managed.

Other comments

Appendix 2 outlines the priority for canal systems that will undergo modelling within the first five years of the Water Strategy. We fully support the inclusion of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal in this first cycle.

We look forward to working with you as your Water Resources Strategy is developed.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Jenkins

Knowledge Strategy and Planning Manager