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Method Plan.

Fish Rescue – Newsome Ponds, Huddersfield

5 Star Fisheries has been commissioned to evaluate the removal of all the fish from Newsome Ponds, Huddersfield prior to the draining and infilling of the ponds.

In these circumstances there are various options available to us to remove the fish from a pond prior to and during a draining operation. The choice of an exact method is dependent on a variety of on-site factors, particularly the depth of the water and the presence of in water obstructions such as woody debris and weed growth. Therefore a site visit and initial survey will be required to assess the ponds and decide on a suitable method to remove the fish. This sample survey will also allow the removal of some of the fish for a health check prior to the removal and relocation of the fish.

There are two main methods that can be used

Seine Netting

Seine netting is a method of drawing a large net through the water. The net has a lead line on the base to hold the net down against the bottom of the pond and a float line on the top to hold the net at the surface of the water body. The method essentially creates a curtain of net across the whole lake and this curtain can then be drawn across the lake, corralling the fish in the ever decreasing net until they are held in a bag of netting and can then be removed to holding containers using hand nets.

This method requires the lake to be relatively free of underwater obstructions and aquatic weed.

Equipment used

8mm mesh seine net 100meters in length and 5 meters deep. Multiple nets are joined together when required.

Hand nets

Electrofishing

Electro-fishing has been proven to be a highly efficient technique for monitoring fish populations in rivers and lakes, and performing rescue and relocation work of fish stocks.
Electro-fishing is the process of catching fish by creating an electrical-field through water, around an anode (on a hand held pole) and cathode (trailing in the water behind the operator). This electric-

field develops a voltage along the length of fish exposed to it, such that 'galvanotaxis' stimulates their nervous system, and they are forced to swim towards anode (the source of the field). At a point approaching the source of the field, the fish enters the hold-zone, where the field is then of sufficient strength to temporarily immobilise them and they can easily be netted by the operatives from the boat.

This method requires the pond to be relatively shallow – less than 2 meters deep – and the water clarity to be good so that the affected fish can be seen by the operative.

The Equipment used is an FC 4000.

Safety Features

- 2 Axis tilt switch - the unit switches off if the unit is tilted forward or sideways.
- Optical immersion - the unit switches off if the bottom of the unit is submerged.
- Internal Thermal - the unit switches off if the unit becomes too hot.
- The unit has single large, red off switch at the top if the unit.

Notes
For use of the equipment other than rod and line to remove fish from a controlled water body, consent is required from the Environment Agency under Section 28 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act. All consent will be in place before work commences.
All staff have been trained (internal training) to use equipment.
All the equipment used has an annual service via the manufacturer.
All staff wear specific, maintained PPE (waders, dry suits and gloves) to insulate them.
All staff wear life jackets whilst in the boat.
All staff have biosecurity training.

Plan.

5 Star fisheries are responsible for applying for the FR2 equipment consent with the Environment Agency before any work takes place. The first day will involve catching a sample of fish that will then be health checked to ensure the fish stocks are free from any sign of disease or parasites that could be transferred to the receiving water. Once the health status of the fish is confirmed (usually within a week) we can start the fish removal. We would use seine nets to catch the bulk of the fish initially when the water is still at normal level or above 1.8 metres. Then when the water level is dropped we would use a combination of seine netting and electric fishing. Despite these tactics it is still almost impossible to catch every fish so hand netting them out when the ponds are drained right down is the final stage of removal. It is important to maintain contact with us on the levels of the water during the drain down process as it will help us be more efficient during the removal and saves wasted time if we arrive to the water being too deep or too shallow. All the fish will be relocated to suitable habitat based on size, species and health status.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me-

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