

Westcountry Rivers Trust - Report to TTEF 28th April 2025

On the Taw, we have recently won funding through the Water Restoration Fund of approximately £665k for a project called 'Teign and Taw Fisheries Management'. Our partners on the Taw include North Devon Biosphere. We shall be working with Maize growers in the catchment to trial best practice approaches to reduce soil loss. We will do this in collaboration with Engie Anaerobic Digestion and build a farmer collective/feedstock group, assess maize performance, and deliver 100ha of alternative management or cropping.

Also on the Taw, we have recently been successful in some upcoming funding from Devon Environment Foundation to carry out an eDNA study of fish species, particularly shad. We will be working with River Taw Fisheries and Conservation Association to collect water samples across the catchment and process these with an expert geneticist, Jamie Stevens, and the Exeter Sequencing Service. We hope to have results by the end of the year.

The Barnstaple Yeo project is ongoing: we have been working with the EA and other stakeholders to look at future improvements to fish passage. The work has included habitat walkovers and fish passage assessments. We shall soon be working on some initial designs.

Mark Haworth-Booth
28/4/25