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Gyfunddithas Genweirwyr Eog y Brithyll Cymru
Welsh Salmon and Trout Angling Association

Dee & Clwyd Region Secretary

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Thursday, 13 August 2009

Mr.Mick. Bates AM
Chairman of the Sustainability Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Dear Mr Bates,

RE: Access to Inland Waterways in Wales.

The Dee & Clwyd Region have asked me to write on behalf of its fourteen member clubs to express its alarm at the proposed unlimited access by canoes and rafters to the rivers of North Wales.

The rivers of North Wales are unique hence why many of them have been made S.S. S.I and S.A.C. sites and as a result could not stand large access numbers of canoeists which would happen due to the easy road access from the large towns in England which are on average are only a two hour drive away.

The Scottish Model of access is not a fair comparison due to the fact that it does not take into account the six hour travelling time for the English paddlers to reach the rivers of Scotland. All angling clubs have rules restricting the number of members allowed to fish pools which protects the vegetation and fauna.

Many clubs have for years allowed restricted access to canoes and one club in particular has allowed ten events to take place on its water for the past 42 years and I was amazed that they have decided to cease making agreements and have encouraged openly on the inter net for paddles to trespass, yet the British Canoe Union has been quite willing to agree dates.

All ready clubs are loosing revenue which they plough back into maintaining foot paths, river banks, and restocking and I have received reports from several clubs of anglers after purchasing day permits finding illegal canoes on the water disturbing the fish with the result they have demanded re-funds.

All clubs are prepared to negotiate local agreements but will accept unrestricted access and will seek substantial compensation should unrestricted access be grant by the Welsh Assembly.

Yours sincerely

W.N.Elbourn

Regional Secretary

Cc Mrs Karen Sinclair, Martyn Jones MP