



Conservation Code for 2018 Season

Midlothian Esks

The Forth District Salmon Fishery Board, in consultation with the River Forth Fisheries Trust, are issuing the following conservation guidelines for the forthcoming season. It is expected that all anglers will follow these in order to protect and conserve stocks of migratory fish.

These Conservation Codes supplement Regulations issued by the Scottish Government and referred to in the Conservation Limit (CL) setting evaluation below. Under the Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Time and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 **no fish to be retained before 1st April**. Under the Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017, the Esks has been given an assessment category of **3**

Category	Probability of Meeting CL	Effectively CL Met in:	Advice
3	Less than 60%	≤ 2 out of 5 years	Exploitation is unsustainable therefore management actions required to reduce exploitation for 1 year i.e. mandatory catch and release (all methods).

The Board is aiming to achieve 100% catch and release of salmon and sea trout within this catchment.

Salmon:

1st Feb – 31st Oct - All salmon and grilse should be returned.

Sea trout

1st Feb – 31st Oct - All sea trout should be returned.

Rates of catch & release: The Board has set an aim of 100% catch & release for salmon or grilse and 100% for sea trout for 2018. This will be reviewed annually and used to inform Conservation Codes for following years.

Baits & lures: Barbless hooks to be used.

Between 1st February and 31st May and between 27th August and 31st October: No organic baits to be used.