



British  
Hydrological  
Society

South East Section

# Low Flows in our Major Rivers – Assessing Perception vs Reality

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014

[6.30pm to 8.00pm](#)

The Institution of Civil Engineers  
One Great George Street, London

(Nearest tube: Westminster)

Low Flows and the impact of abstraction have been key features of the drive to improve the health of our rivers in recent years and this has ranged from small brooks with local interest to our largest rivers and has addressed significant ecological issues such as the apparent decline of Salmon migration in some of the rivers of south England. This meeting covers the issue of impact of abstraction on two of the most important rivers in southern England.

## 1. Lower Thames

[Rob Hinks, Cascade Consulting](#)

The Lower Thames and Tideway is one of the most intensively used river systems in the world, be it for abstraction for water supply, for navigation or for discharge of effluents. There has for a long time been a perception that the abstraction of water for London's water supply has been having an adverse impact on the ecology of the lower freshwater Thames and the Thames Tideway. The effects of discharges and the identified solution of a major new Thames-Lee tunnel have attracted a high profile in the media. This is a chance to hear the findings of the recent investigation into the impact of abstraction on the Lower Thames and Tideway following an in depth investigation undertaken in recent years.

## 2. River Test

[Phil Sutherland, Atkins](#)

The River Test and River Itchen are chalk stream rivers renowned for their fly fishing. As with many other rivers in England & Wales, a significant decline in the salmon populations was witnessed in both rivers in the early 1990's. The recovery in these populations has been fragile at best. At the time of the decline much of the spotlight fell on the combined impact of drought, low flows and abstraction. Although the scientific community now recognises that the health of the population is derived from a much more complex interaction of factors in both the marine and freshwater life stages of salmon, the perceived impact of abstraction and low flows remains very high in the minds of many stakeholders. A major study of the factors affecting salmon migration in the Lower Test has recently been undertaken in order to inform understanding of the potential impact of Southern Water's abstraction at Testwood. Some of the key findings and implications will be presented.

There is no charge to attend this meeting and both BHS members and non-members are welcome. No registration is required.

Enquiries: Vicky Finch, Tel.: (01372) 756813

Email: [vicky.finch@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:vicky.finch@atkinsglobal.com)