

Cleaner water in river Mullsjöån

The municipality of Mullsjö created a wetland alongside a sewage treatment plant. Inputs of phosphorus and nitrogen to the River Mullsjöån were consequently reduced. This has improved the prospects of brown trout reproducing.

The River Mullsjöån is a successful example of how it is possible to improve water quality. The brown trout has long been an important symbol of the ecologically sustainable community of Mullsjö. But because of a poor aquatic environment brown trout stopped reproducing. The deterioration in water quality is due to releases from industry, stormwater discharges and nearby sewage treatment plants. With support from the Local Investment Programme (LIP), the municipality of Mullsjö has created infiltration ponds and has utilised old fish ponds as a wetland next to the sewage treatment plant. The measure was implemented in 2002–2004.

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- Inputs of phosphorus to water have decreased by 210 kg/year.
- Inputs of nitrogen to water have decreased by 6 000 kg/year.
- Historic fish-breeding ponds have been recreated.
- Increased biodiversity.

Photograph: Lars Grehn



IMPLEMENTATION

The aim of the project was to recreate historic fish-breeding ponds, clean the water in the ponds, create footpaths and information boards to improve the environment and attract tourists to the River Mullsjöån. Approximately 3 000 trout fry have been released into the river. The re-establishment is monitored through electric fishing checks.

The municipality implemented the project in cooperation with several voluntary organisations, including the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, the Association for the Promotion of Outdoor Life, the Stråken fishery conservation association and organisations for the disabled and pensioners. Information about the project has been disseminated through courses, study visits, newspapers, local radio, a website and information sheets. The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation has taken responsibility for dealing with the continued dissemination of information about the project.

POTENTIAL AND FUTURE BENEFIT

It is important both for the infrastructure of society and for the environment efforts to create sustainable and ecocycle-adapted water and sewage systems. Biological and technical system solutions can complement one another to create cost-effective solutions with good environmental effects. Natural and created wetlands act as treatment plants, reduce flooding, reduce eutrophication and account for a significant part of biodiversity. They also have an important water-managing function.

WHY BEST PRACTICE

The project has contributed to reduced inputs of phosphorus and nitrogen into the water of the River Mullsjöån. Historic fish-breeding ponds have been recreated and conditions have improved for brown trout reproduction. The municipality has established paths for the disabled and information centres in order to increase tourism.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Vägverket Produktion/Svevia AB

The project on the Internet:
www.mullsjo.se

Further information on Best Practice
www.swedishepa.se/bestpractice
www.naturvardsverket.se/mir

FACTS
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Action 1
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