



www.blueprintforwater.org.uk

Time running out to “Save Our Waters”

For immediate release

Countryside lovers have a last-chance opportunity to ensure that local rivers, streams, lakes and beaches remain clean, full and healthy long into the future.

An Environment Agency consultation is asking local people to comment on draft plans that set out how to protect the water environment – but it closes on 10 April. Blueprint for Water, a coalition of environmental charities, has developed a website – www.saveourwaters.org.uk - to make it easy to respond to the consultation and is calling for everyone to have their say before it is too late. Local residents can fill in a questionnaire giving their views on how healthy they think their river is, and what could be done to improve it.

Rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, estuaries and beaches are essential for people and wildlife – providing a vital habitat for iconic and precious species like the Otter, Water vole and Salmon, as well as being many of the country’s most-loved beauty spots. But many are coming under huge pressure to provide more water for drinking, industry and sanitation.

Since Save Our Waters launched in October 2014, over 700 individuals have added their voice to the campaign.

Rose O’Neill, Water Policy Manager, WWF, and member of Blueprint for Water, said:

“It’s clear that we are failing our rivers and their wildlife. We need to see government action to restore these rivers, for example by reducing abstraction and tackling pollution from sewage works, farms and roads.

“There has been fantastic work carried out by wildlife groups, rivers trusts, water companies and others to make improvements but we must go further with this effort.



“There’s still time to add your voice. I’d urge everyone to respond quickly as the consultation ends in just a few days.”

Janina Gray, Chair of Blueprint for Water, said:

“We all need water to survive but currently only 17% of England’s rivers are in good health. So it is more important than ever that everyone gets involved with this consultation. We’re urging everyone to take two minutes and tell the Environment Agency which river, lake or stream matters to you via the Save Our Waters website.

“It might be a place that’s special to you or one you’re planning on visiting as the summer months approach.”

Every response on the Save Our Waters website is sent directly to the Environment Agency to include in its consultation. It also offers an option for those who have a little more time to contribute their views. For more details, visit www.saveourwaters.org.uk

ENDS

1. The Blueprint for Water coalition is a unique coalition of environmental, water efficiency, fisheries and angling organisations which call on the Government and its agencies to set out the necessary steps to achieve “sustainable water”. The Blueprint for Water is a campaign of Wildlife and Countryside Link. More information is available at www.blueprintforwater.org.uk
2. River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) provide the framework to understand and manage the pressures facing our water environment in an integrated and cost-effective way. After the current consultation on RBMPs closes on 10 April, Defra and the EA will review the consultation responses for final Ministerial signoff in December 2015.
3. Individuals and organisations are being encouraged to respond to the current consultation via www.saveourwaters.org.uk. All responses are sent directly to the Environment Agency.



The following eleven organisations support this press release:

- Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
- Angling Trust
- Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
- Friends of the Earth
- Institute of Fisheries Management
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- The Rivers Trust
- The Salmon & Trout Association
- Woodland Trust
- Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
- WWF - UK