CRAYFISH PLAGUE OUTBREAKS
UPDATE NO 3
MARCH 2018

Information note issued by National Parks and Wildlife Service and Marine Institute. The purpose of this note is to provide an update on the Crayfish Plague Outbreaks and associated information. These will be produced as, and when, significant new information is available. This is the third update following on from those issued in October 2017 and December 2017. For more detailed information on the outbreak and advice on biosecurity, please refer to the pages on Crayfish Plague on the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) web site http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/invasive-species/crayfish-plague/. If you have any other questions please contact Brian Nelson, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) at Brian.nelson@chg.gov.ie.

Crayfish Plague is recognised as a very significant threat to the survival of the globally threatened White-Clawed Crayfish in Ireland.

The disease is considered fatal to all infected native crayfish and the experience in other countries is that where outbreaks occur there is complete extermination White-clawed Crayfish populations.

The disease is spread invisibly in water and the infectious stage may be moved to other river and lake systems on equipment, boats and machinery.

If White-clawed Crayfish is to survive in Ireland, then the threat and impact of disease must be contained. This requires all water users taking all practical measures to prevent its spread to unaffected catchments.

1. Update on the known outbreaks
There are currently five outbreaks in Ireland affecting the Bruskey/Erne rivers, the lower River Suir, the River Deel, the River Barrow and the Lorrha. Maps showing the extent of the outbreaks are displayed on Biodiversity Ireland webpage.

There is no new information on the known outbreaks. A mortality close to Lough Owel reported by Waterways Ireland was rapidly tested and proved negative.
2 NPWS recommendations on resumption of activities

A voluntary ban has been in operation on the affected catchments.

NPWS is now recommending that this is lifted from 1st March but with the strong advice that all water users continue to exercise vigilance and adopt procedures to minimise the risk of further spread of the disease.

The single most effective action is to use the Check, Clean, Dry protocol this should be done routinely before and after visiting a river or lake.

NPWS is working with the Marine Institute and other agencies in preparing further advice and information on the Crayfish Plague outbreaks and these will be provided in due course.