



Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

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Information on the Black Sluice (South Forty Foot Catchment)

June 2019 Fluvial Event (to date)

The catchment received an unprecedented amount of rainfall (65mm on the first day and 109mm over three days at Swineshead, the average June rainfall is 52.7mm, therefore over a month's rainfall on the first day) resulting in twenty-eight pumping stations reacting to lift water into the EA controlled South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD), a high consequence Main River.

BSIDB have over the past two years through a PSCA with the EA been clearing (11Km) of the upper catchment end of the SFFD of heavy vegetation, bushing and tree growth then desilted (34,000m³) using a Cutter Suction De-Silting machine, pumping the silt into settlement lagoons before spreading the silt over agricultural land for regeneration.

The removal of the silt and bank obstructions in order to combine increased floodwater capacity and emergency fluvial flows has offered an increased conveyance rate to the outfall some 30 Km away into the tidal river Haven in Boston. At the Black Sluice Outfall Complex a partner decision plan with the EA has been agreed to open the navigation lock along with the gravity sluice when certain trigger levels are reached in the South Forty Foot upper catchments instead of using the about to be decommission pumps within the pumping station.

This is the second time this combined gravity fluvial evacuation method has been put into an emergency situation with great success. With the Boards pumps lifting 30 cumecs of water into the SFFD along with the eight uncontrolled highland carriers the flood water was successfully gravity discharged at a high enough rate (estimated 60 cumecs) to not have to stop any of our pumps running, therefore offering prolonged protection towards the 47,220-hectare lower catchment community.

The highest level recorded within the SFFD was on Thursday evening at +2.15m ODN which is 550mm below our Emergency Response Plan 'pumps switch off level'.

Ian Warsap
Chief Executive