

# RIVER ELAN (AFON ELAN)

Rising on the slopes of Pen y Deunant, high on the moors of Ceredigion (known as Elenydd), the Elan gathers several small tributary streams before it enters Craig Goch, the first of a series of reservoirs built between 1893 and 1904 to provide water for Birmingham.

Thereafter, it flows through the Penygarreg, Garreg-ddu and Caban-coch reservoirs (also fed by water from the Claerwen tributary). After Caban-coch (some 20 miles from source), the Elan flows generally northeast for another 5 miles before entering the River Wye a few miles south of Rhayader.

## PROTECTED SITES

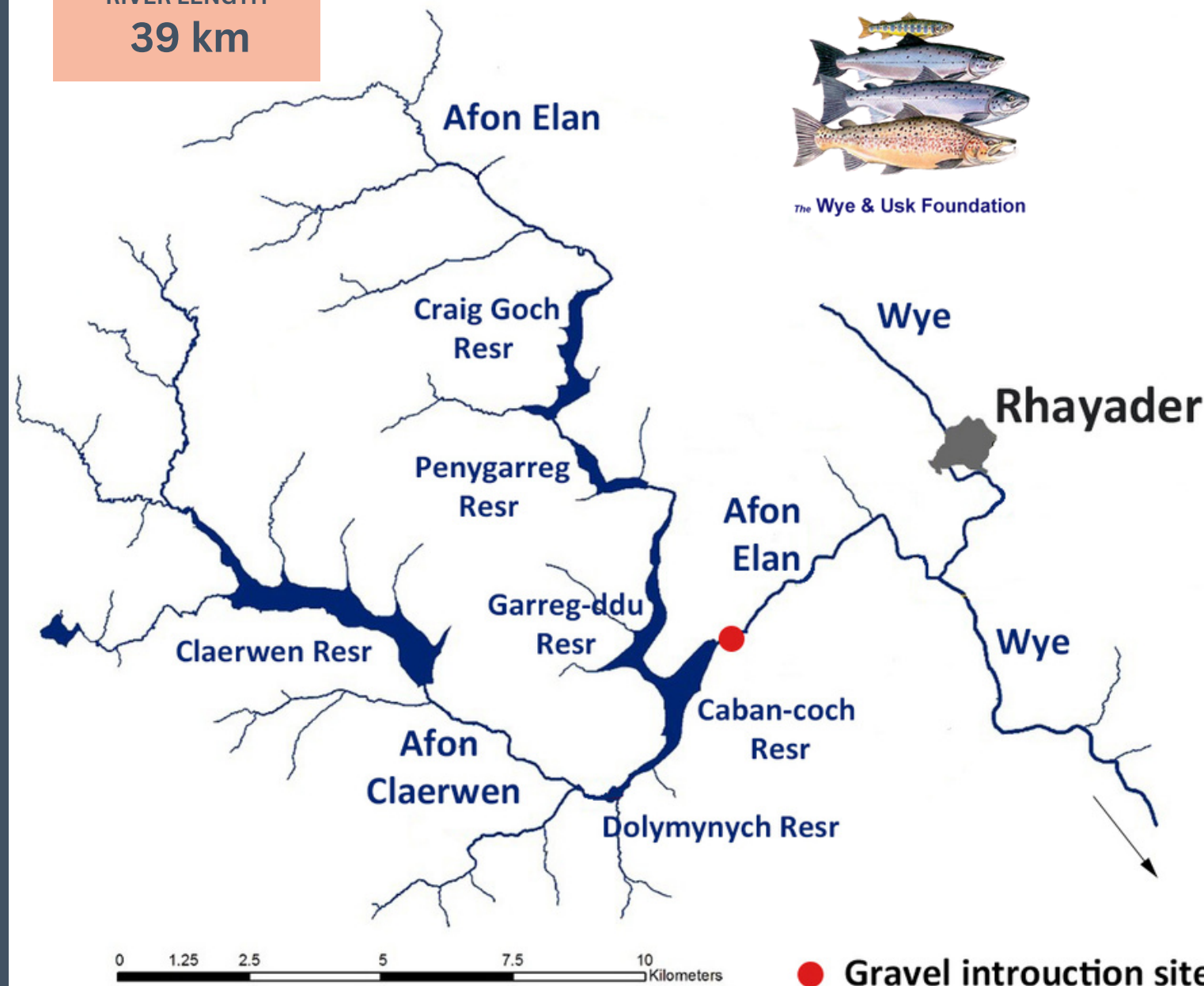
Above the Caban-coch dam, the Elan valley is host to numerous other protected sites, including part of the Elenydd-Mallaen Special Protection Area (SPA), designated under the European Wild Birds Directive.

This part of the catchment also has three other SACs under the European Habitats Directive, one designated for the woodlands and two for upland bogs. In addition, there are twelve Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the Claerwen National Nature Reserve.

## FISH SPECIES

The Elan is host to several fish species downstream of the Caban Coch dam, including Atlantic salmon, brown trout, bullhead and grayling. Brown trout is the main species in the reservoirs and in the upper reaches of the Elan.

RIVER LENGTH  
39 km



## NOT IN GOOD HEALTH



The health of our rivers is assessed using a range of ecological and chemical indicators. Under the Water Framework Directive, a river (or waterbody) can be classified as High, Good, Moderate, Poor or Bad.

The Elan is divided into six waterbodies, **none of which (2022 classification) are in good ecological status:**

Waterbody	Status	Driving Element (for failure)
Upper Elan, source to Pont ar Elan	Moderate	Fish
Claerwen - source to conf Afon Arban	Poor	Invertebrates
Claerwen - conf Arban to Caban-coch	Poor	Invertebrates
Rhiwnant - source to conf Claerwen	Moderate	Invertebrates
Claerwen - conf Afon Arban to Caban-coch	Poor	Invertebrates
Afon Elan - Caban-coch Rsvr to conf R Wye	Moderate	Acidification

## SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

The section of the Elan downstream of the Caban-coch dam (to the right of the red dot on the map above) is part of the River Wye SAC, designated for a wide range of habitats and species. This part of the Elan is host to several Annex 2 species, including:



Atlantic Salmon



European Otter



Bullhead