

## Fears over Southend Airport deicer going into brooks

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deicer going into brooks

AN ENVIRONMENTAL group set up to protect the fishing industry along the Thames estuary has raised “serious concerns” over the discharging of de-icer into two streams, by [Southend Airport](#).

The Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority says the practice of discharging up to 5,273 cubic metres into Prittle and Eastwood Brooks could lead to “increased pollution”

and have a damaging effect of marine life, such as oysters.

Airport operator, the [Stobart Group](#), has applied to the Environment Agency for a permit to continue discharging the deicer, a practice it has been doing for two years.

Responding to a public consultation exercise about the permit application, Joss Wiggins, conservation officer for the authority, wrote: “I write to express serious concerns that this authority has, with regard to the application to discharge de-icing chemicals in the form of potassium acetate into the water courses known as Prittle Brook and Eastwood Brook, which in turn discharge into the receiving waters of the River Roach and Crouch.

“As you will be aware the Roach and Crouch support commercial fisheries for molluscan shellfish, including native oysters, rock oysters and clams. The estuaries also support commercial and recreational fisheries for a range of fin fish species and supports an important diversity of marine species and habitat.”

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He added: “Our serious concerns relate to the potential impact of increased pollution resulting from the input of these de-icing chemicals into the watercourse.

Concerns have been expressed in the past with regard to pressures upon these waters from effluent discharges, which impact upon natural marine populations and shellfish production within this area.

“It is considered that any increase in effluent or contaminant discharge into these waters would be totally unacceptable and that serious efforts should be made to reduce or eliminate any existing discharges.

“This authority would appreciate your very serious consideration of these concerns which it is felt should result in your refusing this application.”

A spokeswoman for the airport said: “Extensive ecological monitoring has taken place during this period, and the Environment Agency reports little or no impact on water courses and wildlife.”