



Know Your River – Gwendraeths Salmon and Sea Trout Catchment Summary

Introduction

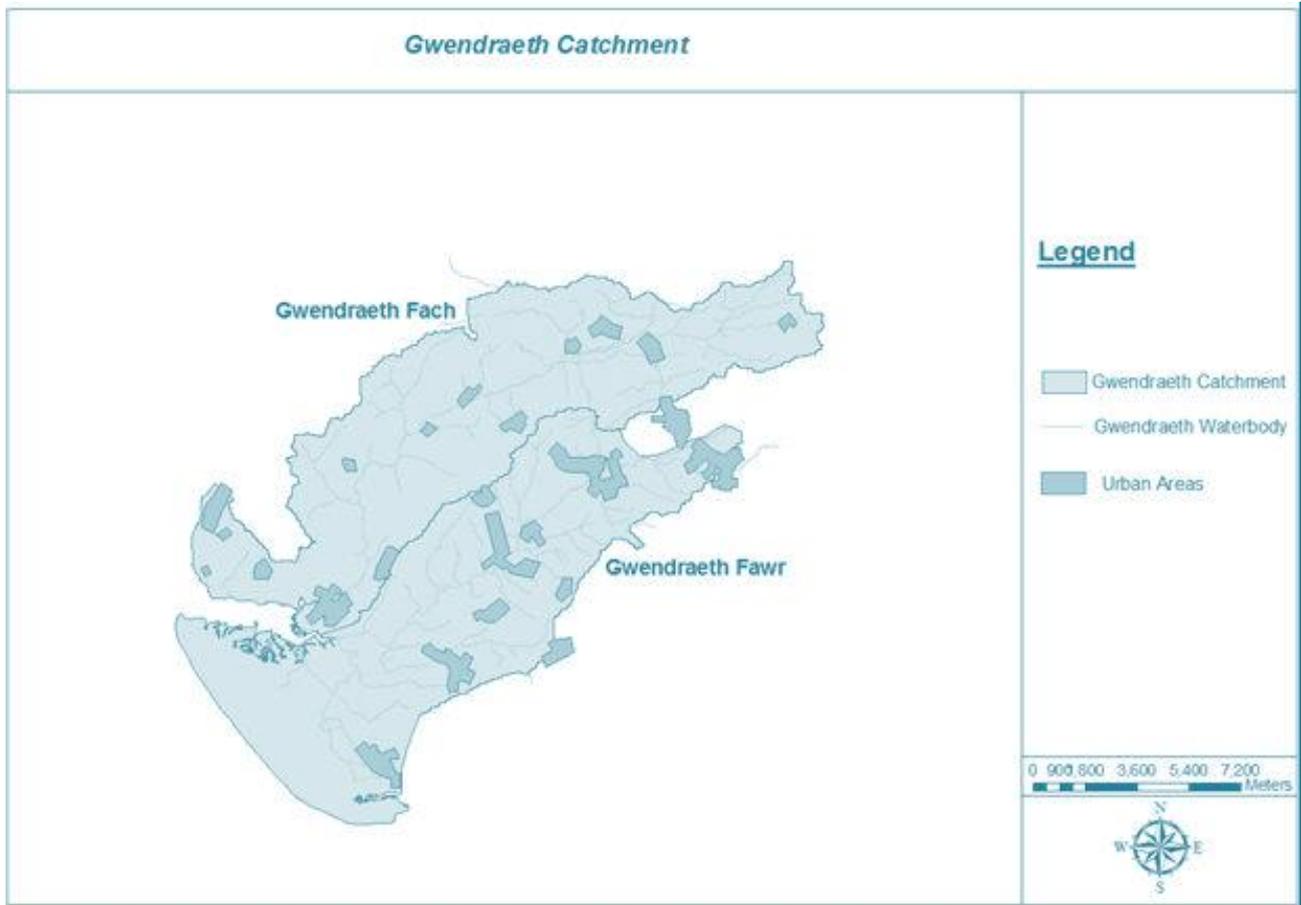
This report describes the status of the salmon and sea trout populations in the Gwendraeth catchments. Bringing together data from rod catches, stock assessments and juvenile monitoring, it will describe the factors limiting the populations and set out the challenges faced in the catchment.

Action tables set out habitat improvements to restore freshwater productivity of salmon and sea trout populations. These tables also include some work which will be carried out by our partner organisations, not just Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

NRW has a duty, defined in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to have Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) at the core of everything that we do. By applying the principles of SMNR in all of our activities - from agriculture, forestry and flood defence to development planning - we are undertaking catchment-wide initiatives that will deliver for fish stock improvements. Our reports highlight the importance of considering the whole catchment when identifying and addressing fisheries issues; and of working with partners.

NRW is committed to reporting on the status of salmon stocks in all of our principal salmon rivers for the Salmon Action Plans and condition assessments under the Habitats Directive in SAC rivers; all fish species in all of our rivers are reported for the Water Framework Directive (WFD). This report will fulfil these commitments and provide an informative and useful summary of stock status and remedial work planned, for our customers, specifically anglers, fishery and land owners; as well as our partners.

Gwendaeths



The River

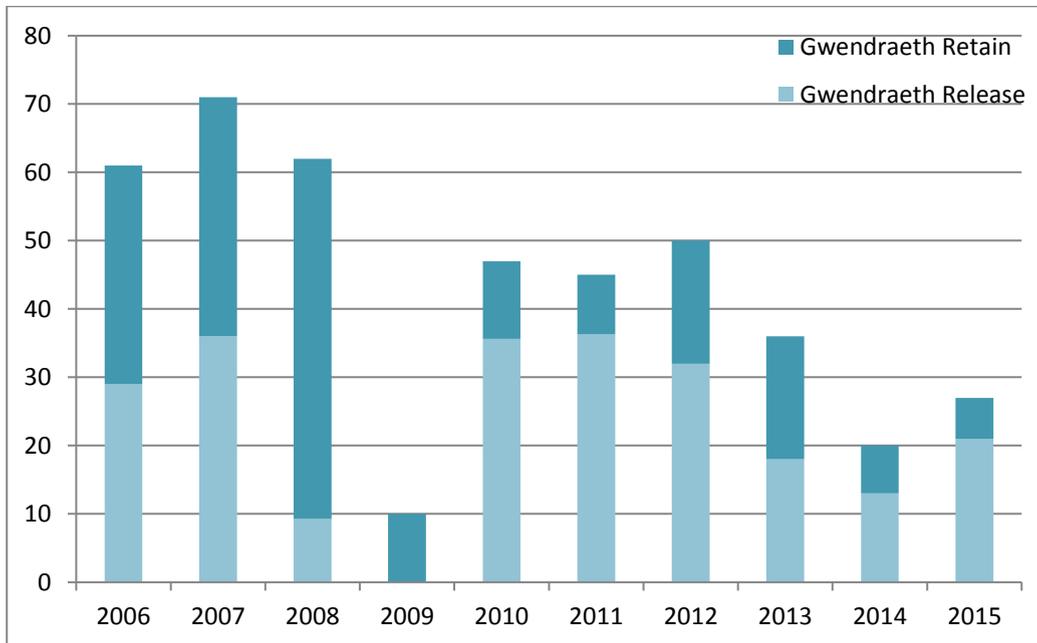
The Gwendraeth Fach and Fawr support a small sea trout (sewin) fishery. Sea trout are the principal salmonid. The most recent reported rod catch figures (2015) were 27 sea trout and no salmon.

Rod Catches

The following graphs show the total declared road catches, including numbers released or killed for sea trout on the Gwendraeth Fawr. 2014 was the first time in over 10 years that salmon were declared in rod catch, only 2 were caught but both released.

Declared sea trout rod catches are variable over the 10 year period. The average proportion of the salmon catch returned alive for the period shown is 52%. The release rate in 2015 was 78% which is above the Wales average of 72%.

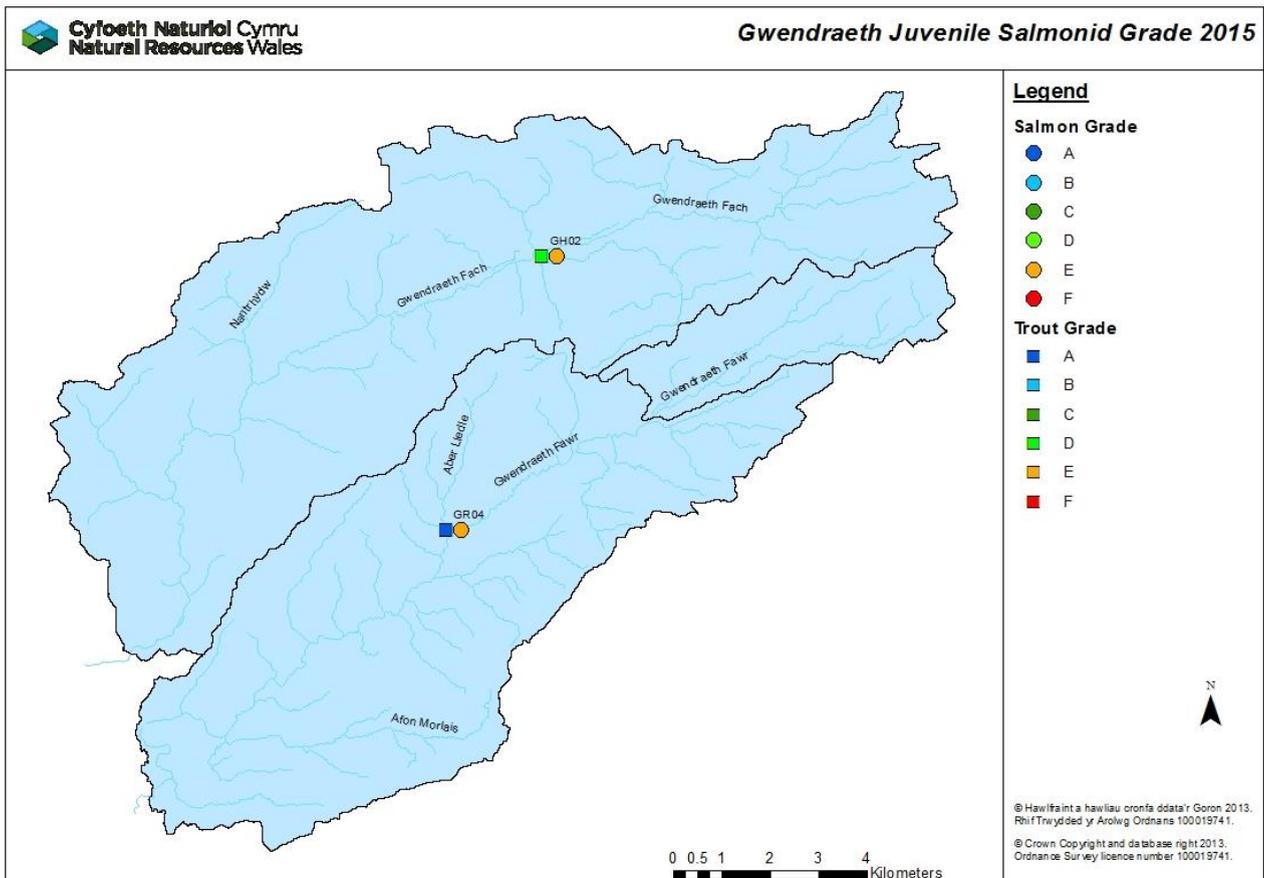
Gwendraeths declared sea trout rod catch



Juvenile Monitoring

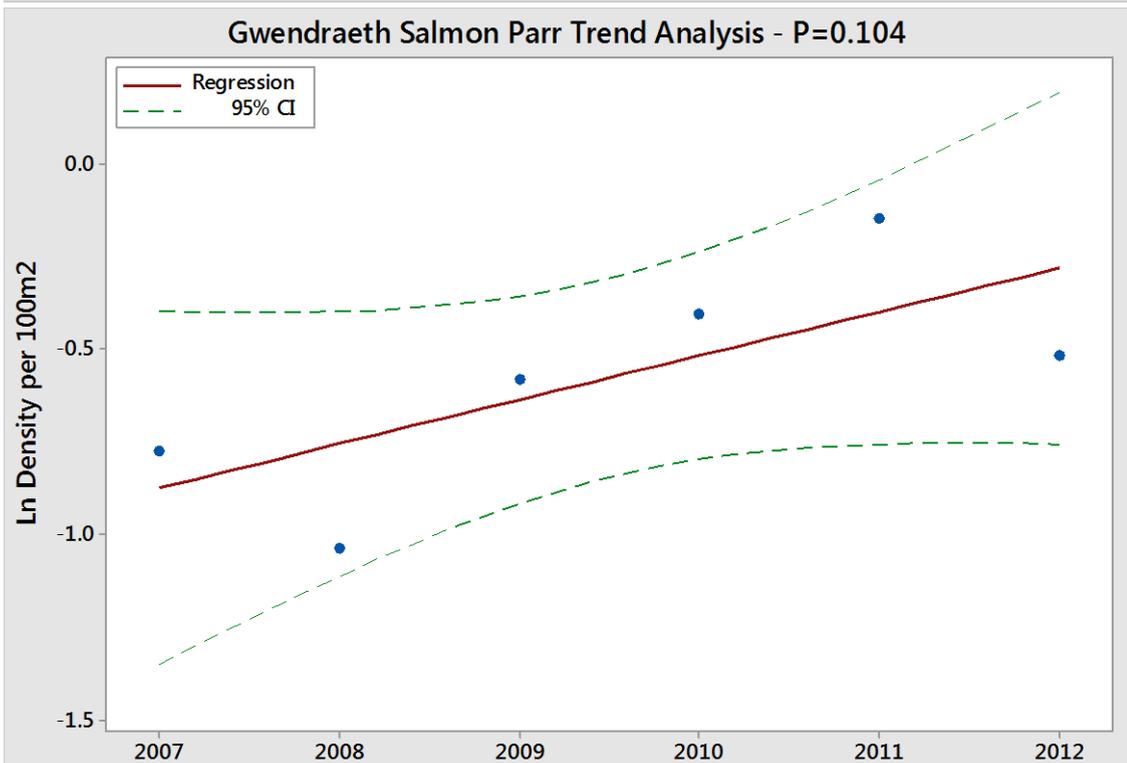
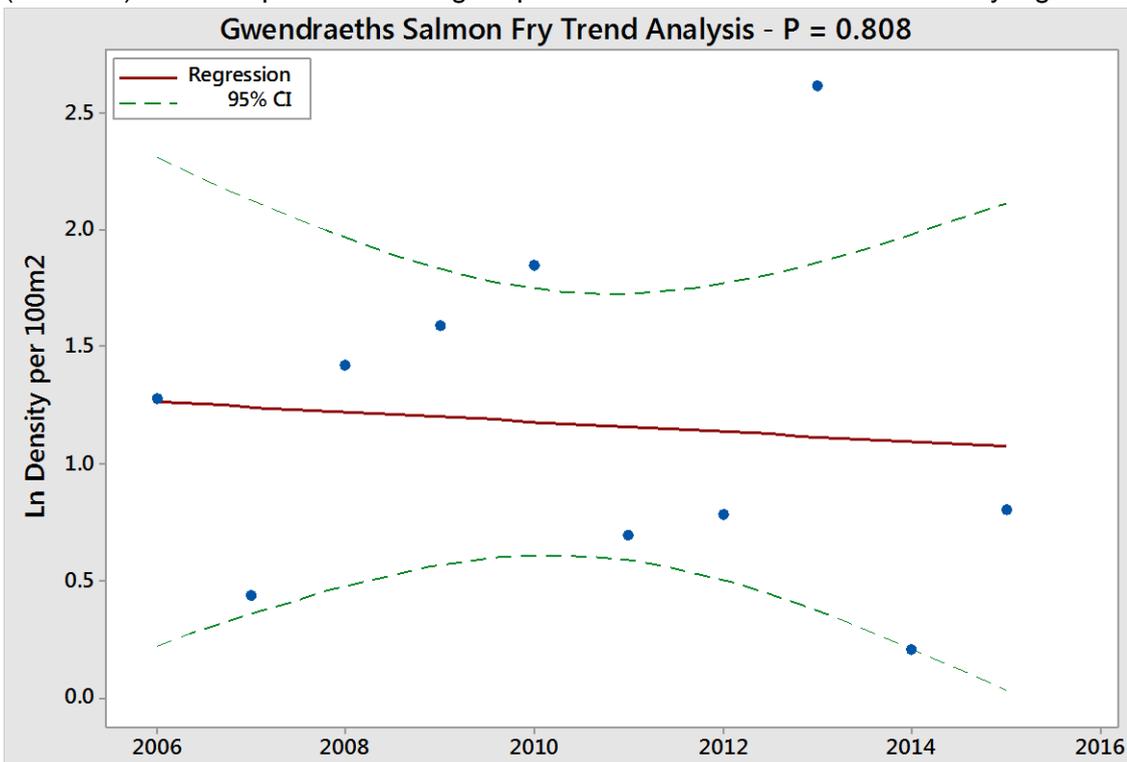
The following maps show results of the 2015 juvenile salmonid populations gathered from electro fishing surveys. They display the National Fish Classification (NFC) grades which have been developed to evaluate and compare the results of fish population surveys in a consistent manner. The NFC ranks survey data by comparing fish abundance at the survey sites with sites nationally where juvenile salmonids are present. Sites are classified into categories A to F, depending on densities of juvenile salmonids at the site. The following table shows the values and classification of NFC.

GRADE	Descriptor	Interpretation
A	Excellent	In the top 20% for a fishery of this type
B	Good	In the top 40% for a fishery of this type
C	Fair	In the middle 20% for a fishery of this type
D	Fair	In the bottom 40% for a fishery of this type
E	Poor	In the bottom 20% for a fishery of this type
F	Fishless	No fish of this type present

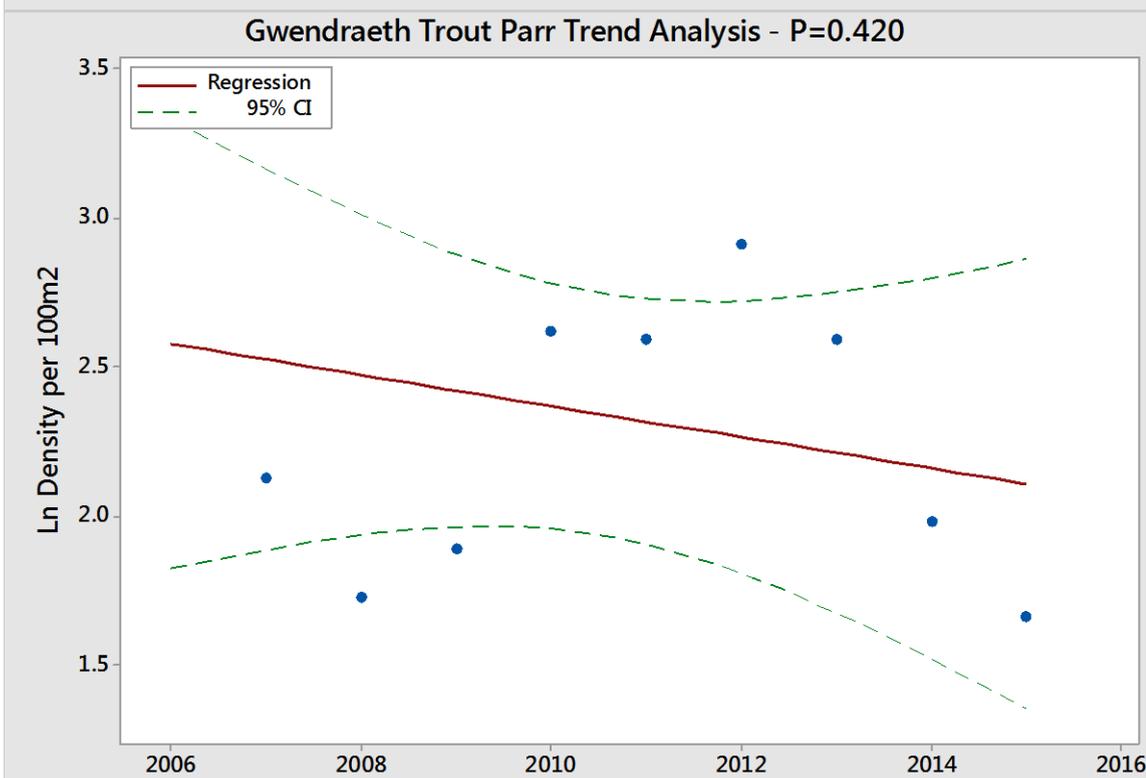
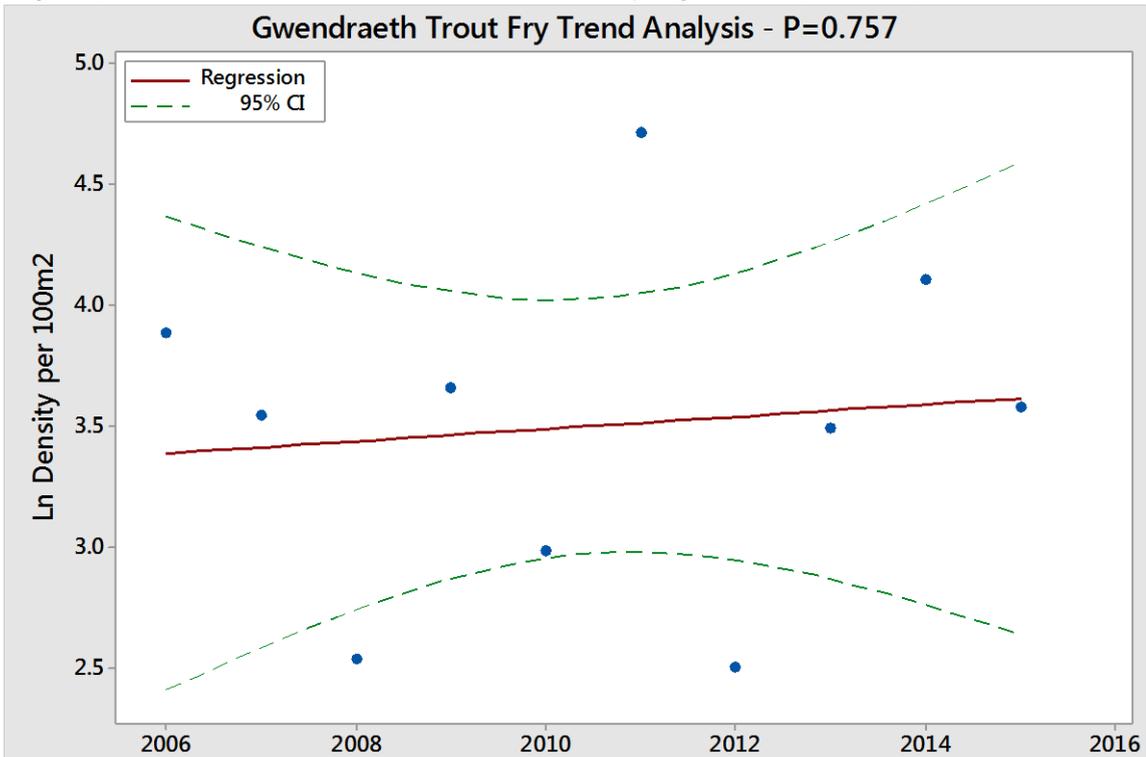


Juvenile Trend Analysis

Juvenile salmon data shows a slight downward trend for fry which is not statistically significant ($P=0.808$) whereas parr show a slight upward trend but this is not statistically significant ($P=0.104$).



Numbers of juvenile trout show high variation in densities. Fry data shows a downward trend with a slight increase in 2014 but this is not statistically significant ($P=0.431$). However parr show a slight upward trend but this is also not statistically significant ($P=0.892$).



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Fisheries Mitigation Plan

Site	Mitigation action	Benefits	Lead	Partner(s)	Timescales for delivery
Gwendraeths	Habitat improvements: We will investigate where there is opportunity to improve habitat for fish through improving access over barriers, restoration of riparian and instream habitat, including control of invasive species	More natural river system, reduced siltation, increased flow diversity, improved spawning gravels and juvenile habitat. Improved fish numbers.	NRW		Ongoing
	Water Framework Directive: We will continue to work to ensure no deterioration, monitor the status of the environment and investigate the causes of failures. Together with our partners we will look to put in place measures that protect and improve the status of the water environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterbodies protected and improved WFD waterbodies achieving Good Status/Potential 	NRW	NRW Wildlife trusts Local Authorities Landowners DCWW	Ongoing
	Enforcement: Action to reduce illegal activity on information provided and investigations.	Reduce illegal activity, more fish remain in the system.	NRW	Stakeholders SW Wales Police	Ongoing