

MINUTES
of the
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board
Held at Bruce Hotel, Newton Stewart
On Wednesday 26th November 2014 at 5.30pm

Present

(a) Board Members

Terence Flanagan – Chairman
Duncan Baillie
Jim Davidson
John Galloway
Norrie McIntosh
Steve Smith

(b) Attendees

Murdo Crosbie – RCHHT
Billy McHarg - Treasurer
Matthew Pumphrey - Clerk
Jamie Ribbens - GFT

The Chairman welcomed Norrie McIntosh to the meeting as an NSAA mandatory in place of Johnnie Johnstone.

Apologies:-

1. Apologies were received from Dougal Evans, Jonathan Haley and Tom Kenyon.
2. Minutes of the Meeting held at 3rd September 2014.

These were approved without demur. They were proposed by John Galloway and seconded by Steve Smith.

3. Matters arising not specifically on the Agenda.

a) Letter to Alex Salmond.

The Chairman said that this would have to now go to Nicola Sturgeon. Steve Smith agreed to take responsibility for this. He would liaise with the Chairman and Jim Davidson.

b) Declarations of interest.

It was accepted that there should be reference to Declarations of interest on the website.

c) Catch Returns

The Chairman reported that according to returns made to him there had been 168 salmon and grilse caught by rod and line. Steve Smith said that another fish could be added to this.

d) Bird count.

This was happening on November 30th.

4. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman did not have anything further to report.

5. Financial Report.

Mr McHarg raised the question of a non-payer going back to 2010 and one other person who had not paid but possibly because he had not been successfully contacted as there had been no problem in the past. So far as the 2010 non payer is concerned it was suggested that A B & A Matthews write a 28 day letter threatening Small Claims action if payment had still not been received. Otherwise Mr. McHarg reported a reasonably healthy financial situation with outstanding bills having all been paid.

6. GFT Report

Mr Ribbens circulated a printed report and spoke to it. Mr Ribbens mentioned that aluminium killed fish not merely low ph killed as such.

They were getting on with the Glenhead Burn project.

7. RCHT report.

A written report was circulated to Board members and Murdo Crosbie spoke to it.

All in all the situation was not too bad.

8. Proposed application to the Scottish Ministers for an extension of the Rod and Line season in the district or part thereof to 31st October.

The Chairman explained that this had been proposed by Andrew Stewart. The procedure for an alteration of this sort was very cumbersome. He read out the amendment to the 2003 Act as introduced by the 2013 Act. This involved formal notification for 2 successive weeks in a newspaper and then further formal notification irrespective of whether any representations had been received or not.

However Duncan Baillie said that he had learned from Mr Stewart's representative that Mr. Stewart was hostile now to the extension of the season because of the paucity of the fish. All Board members present agreed that there should be no application for an extension for this reason alone. The Chairman had indicated that if an application for an extension was granted it would probably only be a temporary extension usually for 5 years.

It was resolved to make no application.

9. Changes to conservation code.

a. With particular reference to circle hooks it was resolved that there would be no worm fishing before 1st June in any year. Worm fishing would only be permitted in the months of June, July and August, using a hook with a minimum size of 1/0.

b. By reason of The Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Time and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 catch and release would be mandatory in the month of March in any year (1st to 31st inclusive) and any salmon caught would need to be returned to the water immediately to cause it as little harm as possible. Even if the life of the salmon could not be preserved it would still have to be returned to the water during this period. It would be a criminal offence if that did not happen.

There would be a change from the current recommended restrictions of 6 fish per week and 2 fish per day to 2 fish per week and 1 fish per day.

10. Fisheries review

Members had seen the document which had been circulated with the Agenda. The Chairman proposed that as neither the ASFB nor the Scottish Government had paid any attention to any representations made in the past there was little point in going through the document in any detail. He did feel however that the ASFB was meant to be the representative body for all fishery boards including the River Cree Board and if they were prepared to support something which was clearly not in individual Board's interests then disaffected Boards such as the Cree should threaten to resign. This was agreed.

The Chairman also mentioned the helpful contribution made by Alex Fergusson (local MSP) and the telling points that he had made to Andrew Thin.

AOB

Steve Smith raised a point about stocking policy. The Chairman indicated that he could not alter the 5000 figure for autumn fry without seeking the permission of Marine Scotland and that it would be better to stick with the original figure.

Date of next meeting

11th February 2015.

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Chairman