

MINUTES
of the Meeting of the
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board
Held at Bruce Hotel, Newton Stewart
On Wednesday 13th April 2016 at 5.30pm

Present

(A) Board Members/Mandatorys

Terence Flanagan – Chairman
Duncan Baillie
Murdo Crosbie
Jim Davidson
Jamie Hyslop
Norrie McIntosh
Iain Service
Gene Fryatt

(B) Attendees

Matthew Pumphrey – Clerk
Jamie Ribbens – GFT

(C) Members of the Public

There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Dougal Evans, Jock Galloway, Billy McHarg, George McShane and Steve Smith.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 27th January 2016

These were approved subject to the deletion of the third paragraph on page 3 under “GFT Report” and the correct spelling of Duncan Baillie.

3. Matters Arising from said meeting not otherwise on the Agenda

The Chairman mentioned the absence of Declaration of Interest forms. However these were being attended to.

4. Chairman’s Report

The Chairman reported that five salmon had been caught on the Cree so far this season.

5. Treasurer’s Report

In the absence of Billy McHarg the Chairman reported that the Lottery Grant application (HLF) had not been progressed because HLF required the Board to have a specific Bank account. At the moment there was no separate Bank account for the Board as all financial transactions went through A B & A Matthews. The Chairman suggested that the Board opened up an account with the Bank of Scotland and that he the Treasurer and the Clerk should be the authorised signatories two of whom would be required to authorise payment at any given time. This met with general agreement.

6. GFT Report

(A) Liming Works. Jamie Ribbens circulated various photographs showing the extent of the liming works and the effect of same.

(B) Conservation Limits. Jamie Ribbens circulated a handout on conservation limits and work to improve them. There was considerable discussion on this subject which included the question of the acceptance of the Electrofishing Data and the acceptance of grilse error. Murdo Crosbie thought that it would be too demanding to ask anglers to obtain scale samples from a caught fish as well as measuring the length of the fish caught and weighing it and considered that it was making the catch and release requirement for anglers that much more difficult. Jamie Hyslop could not see why it was necessary to both weigh the fish and measure it and thought that weighing would be sufficient given that the girth of the fish was no less significant than its length. Duncan Baillie thought that it was not always easy for anglers to distinguish between salmon and grilse, the rule of thumb being that any fish over 5.5lb would be salmon while under that weight would be grilse. Sometimes grilse are heavier.

Despite the various misgivings the Board decided that it should support the project and that the funding proposed within the paper should be approved. Mr Ribbens mentioned that the cost would include payment for scale packets and tape measures. It was accepted that despite the difficulty of measuring salmon in a net both weight and length were going to be required for the project.

(C) Salmon Conservation Plans. Jamie Ribbens circulated a further handout on Salmon Conservation Plans and spoke to it.

The general view was that the Scottish Government were ensuring that any enjoyment that people might get out of the sport was diminished.

7. RCHHT Report

Murdo Crosbie circulated a handout and spoke briefly to it. There were no questions on the report. The Chairman thanked Murdo Crosbie for it.

8. Wild Fisheries Reform

The Chairman apologised to the Board that due to some technical problems not all members of the Board received all the attachments to the papers for the Agenda that they should have received though he hoped that everyone had now received them albeit belatedly.

The Chairman mentioned that although the Consultation document extended to 78 pages it was still only "half a Bill". It would not become law until the end of the 2017 Parliamentary Session and FMO's would not be up and running until 2018.

The Chairman proposed that because of the complexity of the proposed legislation and the time consuming nature of the Consultation process – notwithstanding that in all probability the Scottish

Government would ignore any representations made – there should be a sub-committee to consider the provisions of the Bill and provide responses. A sub-committee consisting of himself, Murdo Crosbie, Gene Fryatt and Jamie Hyslop was appointed.

Mr Service emphasised that for representation to have any effect there would have to be as many separate representations as possible. Quantity was more important than quality in that a very good set of representations from one source albeit representing a large number of people or organisations would be less effective and listened to than a multitude of individual representations which perhaps would not always be of the same quality.

The representations would look at all aspects of the proposed legislation. There were timescales set for submission of representations on the present draft Bill and there were proposed to be “mini-consultations” for subsequent parts of the Bill thereafter.

9. River Management Plan

(A)

The existing plan dated February 2015 had been circulated as had a letter from Steve Smith.

The Chairman spoke to certain manuscript amendments that he was proposing to make to the Management Plan. These were agreed. The detail of these changes would appear in the revised Management Plan.

He asked for support for the bird count for the purposes of the licence to kill fish-eating birds. It was pointed out that the Tay Board had been given a licence for the autumn as well as the spring.

He said that it was generally thought that both pike and perch did affect salmon numbers and that control of these fish was both necessary and desirable.

The justification for stocking parts of the high Cree was that it was so acidified that eggs/alevins would not survive but hatchery-reared fry would.

Electrofishing results would be required by mid-August to inform the Stocking Policy Document.

(B) Steve Smith's Letter

The Chairman thought that the Board should deal with the four points raised by Steve Smith in his letter in the order mentioned viz:-

1. State of the art hatchery:

There was some discussion as to how the licensed broodstock numbers were calculated. Jamie Ribbens explained that this was done by Marine Scotland and they were concerned that there should be no impediment to the breeding of wild salmon as for one thing it was known that there was no problem with in-breeding of wild salmon though no-one quite knew why this was.

2. Identification of fry:

The proposal by Steve Smith would not be possible because there would be no funding for it. There was some discussion about the Electrofishing done by the RCHHT and Murdo Crosbie felt that GFT had not been particularly helpful with this. It was generally agreed that more flexibility was required. Jamie Ribbens agreed that he would go up the River within the next week and would liaise with Murdo Crosbie about that.

3. The stocking of High Cree:

Dealt with already.

4. The stocking of the Palnure Burn:

GFT used to stock the Palnure Burn but in more recent years a licence to capture broodstock for stocking this burn had been refused. The Chairman had arranged to meet the local SNH manager to ascertain whether SNH would object to future stocking.

10. Rating Revaluation

All members should now have received forms and they would have to be filled in and returned.

11. AOCB

There was none.

12. Date of Next Meeting

15th June 2016 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

.....
Chairman