

TAY DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD

Minutes of the Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board meeting held at the Hatchery, Almondbank on Tuesday, 19th April 2016.

Present: William Jack (Chairman)
Alastair Munro
David Godfrey
Claire Mercer Nairne
Iain McLaren
Alastair Riddell
John Wood

In Attendance: Dr. David Summers – Fisheries Director
Inga McGown - Clerk
Will Lindsay
Nicki MacIntyre (SNH)

Apologies: Eric Starke
Brian Roxburgh
David Brown
Simon Furniss
John Apthorp
Gavin Clark
Cohn O’Dea
Steve Mannion

Will Lindsay Presentation:

The Chairman welcomed WL to the meeting, congratulating him on serving over 33 years on the Board, and in that time being wise counsel, as well as supporting the Board in its endeavours. He went on to state that Will had displayed a unique and exemplary effort and for this the Board wanted to record its huge appreciation.

WL accepted a token of appreciation from the Board before making a short speech, with very humorous anecdotes from his time on the Board.

The Chairman invited WL to stay for the meeting if he so wished. The Chairman then stated that he would have to vacate the meeting for 15 minutes at some point.

Declaration of Interests:

There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes of Board Meeting of 9th February 2016:

The Minutes were taken as read, approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

Horseshoe Weir:

DS explained that the Skene Group didn't think it would be feasible to pump concrete up to the weir, and that it would be advisable to transport the concrete by dumper truck instead., which would likely push their quote up to the region of £18-20k. As a result, we are now looking into the feasibility of carrying out the work ourselves. DG offered to help with the logistics.

ACTION: DS to advise when work could commence and DG to advise on logistics.

Website:

CMN stated that the website was complete, save for a couple of items which required DS input.

ACTION: CMN to liaise with DS with a view to getting the website online in the next week.

Parabolic Filter:

DS explained that he had contacted the filter's manufacturer, Gap Technology, and was awaiting a response from them as to whether they knew of anyone willing to purchase the filter.

ACTION: DS to continue trying to sell filter.

Health & Safety Report:

IMcG informed the Board that the Audit had been updated and returned from Greens of Haddington for final adjustments by DS/IMcG, and that there was nothing of significant new importance within the report.

ACTION: DS/IMcG to circulate final H&S report once it is received.

Garry Update:

The Chairman and DS had met with SEPA and SSE and had thought everything had been finalised for rewatering the Garry. There was to be a meeting at the end of April to finalise the finer points and put the matter in the public domain. The Chairman was impressed that both SSE and SEPA deferred to DS throughout the meeting, as he had actually suggested the plan some time ago.

Since the last meeting, however, SEPA have brought up an issue which they feel is significant. DS explained that their problem was that originally they were looking at a continuous flow of nearly one cumec all year, whereas now we are looking at SSE reducing the flow released somewhat when there is heavy rain. SEPA are unsure as to what minimum level the released flow can drop to. There is a disagreement as to what level will constitute the flow required. DS believes we should not get too hung up on this point and the plan as he

had always seen it was that SSE would use the remainder of this year to gauge flows and work out the engineering to make it happen in 2017.

ACTION: The Chairman to contact SEPA for clarification on when and where next meeting will be, and the agenda content.

Tummel Smolt Project:

DS and IMacL had spoken, but had mutually decided it was best to stick with the current tags.

WFR:

To be discussed later in the meeting.

Hatchery Update:

DS and AR had spoken and agreed to hold meeting with the Lyon proprietors, with the view to taking them out on a stocking and electrofishing day in the autumn.

ACTION: DS/AR to have a further discussion to finalise plan.

Eden Brood stock:

DS was visiting the Eden the following day to look at possible fish counter sites.

Financial Report:

Cash Account to 14th April 2016:

As at 14th April 2016, the Cash Account was showing a deficit of £28,283, which is normal for the time of year, as the Assessment invoices have only just been sent out at the beginning of the month. The overall bank balance stands at a healthy £300,645.

Income

Most of the prior year assessments have now been paid, and legal notices will go out to those outstanding.

Appeals figure is zero at present, however it should be noted that there may be some appeals this year for the Earn and Eden proprietors, given that their Category Three status may lead to a loss of income for some. The Assessor will be contacted shortly for more information.

The rent income forecast has fallen for the year to £2,833, as the budget assumed the tenants would be in by 1st April, but this looks more set to be 1st July this year.

Expenditure

Health & Safety Expenditure includes a £1,253 payment for the H&S Audit recently undertaken.

Again, it should be highlighted that we have still not received a rent invoice (now £82.5k to the end of 2015, with further £18.5k for 2016). A provision is made in the statutory accounts, and we have easily enough funds to cover the cost should we be invoiced anytime soon.

To date, the Kelt Reconditioning Hatchery has cost £7,820, of which £6,072 is salary related.

The spend of £1,113 in Projects relates to the smolt trap and associated costs. This covers anaesthetic and equipment to tag the smolts, with further expenditure on a shed and sundry costs to be added.

Overall, the Forecast stands at £2,377 behind budget at present.

Health & Safety Report:

DS informed the Board that an audit had been undertaken by Greens of Haddington and that the he and IMcG would go through the results ASAP. There were the same issues as in previous years and the smolt trap risk assessment had now been undertaken. The main point was that we require to look into lone worker options.

ACTION: DS/IMcG to give a full report at the next meeting.

River Garry Update:

Covered under Matters Arising.

River Tummel Smolt Project:

DS explained that the operations manager and the bailiffs had used fyke nets to try to trap smolts in the Errochty Water briefly prior to the screw trap arriving, but had only caught 3 indicating that we had not been missing many smolts at this point. The trap was now in place, after some adjustments to account for water flow, but had not caught any smolts as of yet (the Spey was not catching many either). This was due to the water temperature in the main, and the smolts should start their descent once the temperatures rise.

DG asked whether all smolts caught would be tagged, to which DS replied that they would indeed, with the earliest appearing back in 2017. JW enquired how many tags had been purchased to which DS replied 2,000. It is proposed also to release 500 above Pitlochry Dam and 500 below, depending on numbers caught. The first year would largely be a trial run.

DS then asked JW whether the Tay Foundation would be keen for more tags could be ordered, to which JW replied in the affirmative.

ACTION: DS to order a further 1,000 tags which will be funded by the Tay Foundation.

CMN asked how often the trap was checked, to which DS replied it was checked daily.

IMacL asked what the capacity of the smolt holding box was, to which DS replied at least 1,000, with the option of checking the trap more frequently should it be felt necessary.

Kill Licence Update:

DS reminded the Board that this was enacted as of 1st April 2016, with 100% catch and release for both the Earn and the Eden. There was also a Conservation Plan to be drawn up, and a first draft template had been circulated to river biologists. This template was however, still in a basic form and needed more work before it could be used generally.

DS went on to state that a Biologist sub-group had been set up and would look into the issue, amongst other things. As he understood it, the group was made up of about 6 biologists who would represent a wide geographic coverage. The TDSFB would feed into Ron Campbell from the Tweed, who would represent us at the meetings.

Wild Fisheries Review:

DS informed the Board that the response to the most recent consultation paper had been circulated and discussed in detail both with the Tay Foundation and that DS, IMacL and CMN had met as a sub-committee regarding the Board's response and DS had drawn this up, circulated it, and proceeded to explain the content.

There followed an in-depth discussion surrounding the consultation paper, where most points were agreed upon, with a couple of amendments to be made.

AM left the meeting at 11:40am

The Chairman left the meeting briefly.

<p>ACTION: DS to finalise the response, circulate round all and submit to Scottish Government for the 2nd May deadline.</p>

Hatchery Update:

This was not discussed.

AOB:

There was no other business raised.

The Chairman closed the meeting and asked that only the Board remain for a closed meeting.