

Subject: Beauly District Fishery Board Meeting  
Date: 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
Location: The Lovat Arms Hotel, Beauly  
Present: J Miller, F Spencer-Nairn, M Spencer-Nairn, N Barker & C Conroy (Ness & Beauly Fisheries Trust), P Pacey (Beauly Angling Club), A Campbell (Clerk),  
Apologies: G Purdie, V Morley

## MINUTES

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ITEM	ACTION OWNER
<b>1.0 Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017</b>	
1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. In relation to Item 5.3 of that minute reference to C Conroy should be amended to read C Daphne.	<b>Clerk</b>
1.2 Subject to the above correction the minutes of the last Board meeting of 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and approved for publication.	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>2.0 Matters Arising</b>	
2.1 In relation to Item 2.3 of the previous minute, C Conroy confirmed that the report on PIT tagging of the returning fish on the Conon system was complete. He was asked to pass a copy of the report to the Clerk for circulation.	<b>CC/Clerk</b>
2.2 In relation to Item 2.7 of the previous minute, C Conroy confirmed that Marine Scotland had completed their report in relation to the tracking receivers placed in various north rivers, including the Beauly. C Conroy was asked to pass a copy of the report to the Clerk for distribution.	<b>CC/Clerk</b>
2.3 In relation to Item 5.2 of the previous minute N Barker was asked to forward a copy of the final report into the invasive non-native species programme for circulation amongst proprietors.	<b>NB/Clerk</b>
2.4 In relation to Item 5.4.2 of the previous minute, the Clerk confirmed that he had spoken to SNH concerning their programme for trapping beavers. SNH reported they had tracked and relocated most of the family of beavers at Carnoch, there remained one to catch. They were also aware of one animal reported around Beauly though the precise location was unknown. It was their opinion that neither of the two remaining beavers would be capable of breeding successfully. Should any proprietors or fisherman have any further evidence or knowledge they should contact SNH on 01463 725364.	
2.5 In relation to Item 5.4.3 of the previous minute, arrangements were still to be made for the new ghillie on the lower Beauly to undertake a seal control training course.	<b>Clerk</b>
2.6 In relation to Item 5.4.5 of the previous minute, NB confirmed that a review of habitat in the Black Burn had been undertaken. This had confirmed the burn was not eligible for funding under the SEPA water environment fund. Any costs for the removal of the weir were likely to be prohibitive and not cost effective for the benefit gained. It was agreed that this matter should be removed from the agenda.	
2.7 In relation to Item 5.4.6 of the previous minute, NB confirmed that the proposed scale of work on pearl mussels would not be of sufficient scale to qualify for the SSE Sustainability Fund. In	

relation to repairing fencing on the Belladrum burn a maximum of £10,000 funding might be available, this is thought to be inadequate and the land owners concerned would be unlikely to be willing to contribute significantly to the costs themselves. It was suggested that works might form part of Agri-Environment Scheme Applications. It was confirmed that NBFT has the contact details for the landowners concerned.

- 2.8 In relation to Item 6.1 of the previous minute, it was confirmed that discussions still needed to be held with SSE in relation to the speed of any water rises on the River Glass. **Clerk**
- 2.9 In relation to Item 7.4 of the previous minute, the potential issuing of a bailiff card to the new ghillie on the lower Beaully remained pending.
- 2.10 In relation to Item 8.3 of the previous minute, P Pacey confirmed that Beaully Angling Club had written to a local MSP in relation to the conservation regulations. At the time of the meeting, the Angling Club was awaiting confirmation of a meeting date with the MSP.
- 2.11 In relation to Item 9.2 of the previous minute, it was confirmed that Beaully Fishing Syndicate and Upper Beaully Fishing Syndicate had appealed the new increase in the Valuation Roll. No other appeals were confirmed.
- 2.12 In relation to Item 11.1 of the previous minute, an approach was still to be made to SSE in relation to funding of a potential analysis by UHI Rivers and Lochs Institute of numbers of breeding salmon using genetic sampling. *Subsequent to the meeting, the matter was raised with SSE who remain in favour of such a study, but progress with the project has been slower than hoped.*
- 3.0 General Data Protection Regulations**
- 3.1 A copy of the Board's proposed Data Handling Policy was circulated amongst Board members. This was approved by those present.
- 4.0 Register of Members Interests**
- 4.1 There were no declarations made by those present in relation to the agenda items.
- 5.0 Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust Report**
- 5.1 NB confirmed he was chasing SSE for software required to process the raw fish pass data expected to be received in the future from SSE. **NB/CC**
- 5.2 NB confirmed that a final copy of the 2017 electrofishing report was now available. The Clerk was asked to arrange publication on the Board's website. **Clerk**
- 5.3 NB confirmed he had received a list from Marine Scotland of proposed sites to form part of their national electrofishing programme. This was designed to help inform ongoing development of conservation regulations. NBFT has been commissioned to undertake the surveys on the Ness and Beaully.
- 5.4 NB confirmed that a report on the 2017 scale sampling had been drafted, but required to be finalised and published. **NB/Clerk**
- 5.5 NB confirmed a reasonable number of scale samples during the spring of 2018, but in previous years autumn scale samples had been sparse and more were needed. **All Proprietors**

5.6 C Conroy gave a presentation on behalf of the Trust, originally given to the Lower Beaully Fishing Syndicate, entitled 'Current Status of Beaully District Salmon Populations'.

## 6.0 SSE Liaison Committee Report

6.1 The Chairman and the Clerk gave a brief report on the recent smolt trapping incident in which several thousand smolts were trapped in chambers in Aigas and Kilmorack dams. A copy of SSE's statement in relation to this incident was circulated.

6.2 The Clerk was asked to write to SSE, copying in SEPA, requesting an initial meeting between the Board and SSE as soon as possible and requesting that the Board be fully involved in ongoing discussions on a potential future preventative solution.

Clerk

6.3 NB/C Conroy confirmed that around 8,500 smolts had been rescued. This compares to an estimate of around 69,000 smolts likely to be produced by the catchment above Aigas dam.

6.4 Those members of the Board present expressed their gratitude to Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust and the Ness District Fishery Board for their assistance in the rescue operation.

## 7.0 Salmon Conservation Regulations

7.1 The Clerk reported on an email exchange with Marine Scotland relating to the operation of netting stations within the Inner Moray Firth, it being understood these netting stations were entitled to operate from 1<sup>st</sup> July due to the Grade 2 status of the River Ness, in contradiction to the Grade 3 status of the River Beaully. *Subsequent to the meeting a response was received from Marine Scotland indicating that although the River Ness is classified Grade 2, the wider Ness district remains Grade 3 and accordingly the netting stations are not entitled to retain any fish.*

7.2 It was noted that the habitat working party set up as part of the FMS/Marine Scotland Salmon Liaison Group had not met since April 2017. The Board expressed dismay at that, given the importance of improving habitat assessment as part of the conservation regulations. It was agreed that both FMS and Marine Scotland should be chased in relation to this matter. *Subsequent to the meeting the following response was received from FMS: "Alan attended the Salmon Liaison Group, where a number of potential developments to the underlying model were discussed. These included the development of a range of stock recruitment curves, which will allow different egg targets (rather than a single, Scotland-wide egg target) to be set for different rivers. A different approach to estimating adult abundance was also discussed and local biologists were asked to reflect on these potential changes."*

Chair/Clerk

7.3 In relation to the proposal that the habitat maps showing potential spawning areas be reviewed once again by local fisheries trusts, NB confirmed that the online maps had still not been made available by Marine Scotland. He was asked to chase this.

NB

7.4 NB also confirmed that Marine Scotland had not yet provided information on the methodology on assessing average fish sizes. He was also asked to chase for this.

NB

## 8.0 Enforcement and Bailiffing

8.1

[REDACTED]

 *Redacted – sensitive information*

**9.0 Date of Next Board Meeting**

9.1 It was agreed that the next Board meeting would be held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 3pm, to be followed by an Annual Public Meeting at 6pm.

**ALL**