

This summarises key work tasks completed since the last written biologist update (3 Sep 2020). September's focus was completing Electro-fishing surveys. October's focus was getting mink rafts out in the catchment. November's focus so far has been data entry and writing the electro-fishing report although only a few days have been spent on this so far. Please refer to the work programme gant chart for more information. The Fishery Management Plan is due to be written over the winter. Monthly meetings occur between myself and Jock.

A Better BFB

Truck- Arnold Clark lease truck received (Oct)

Kit- NBFT electro-fishing kit cost agreed.

Office building- Shelving erected. Architect visit with NC.

Interim logo so we could support the #OurSeas initiative (at top of page) any feedback? <https://www.ourseas.scot/>

Fisheries Officer interviews complete (Oct).

H & Safety- quotes gained. Risk Assessments for activities being written as and when required.

Chats had with proprietors and stakeholders: NJ, HY, PS, TW, DE, Nairn Fishery Board, Trees for Life.

Other meetings and learning: FMS AGM. IFM Atlantic Salmon event and Scottish update. Mapping river habitats webinar (IEEM).

Future: H&S audit and manual to be drawn up by Greens of Haddington (Feb 2021). Arc GIS training (Dec). Sorting facilities out for the new Fisheries Officer (Dec/ Jan).

People: Community engagement, participation and heritage

Photo depository- some fab photos already in there, some shared on Facebook! Please keep using it.

Facebook page: To make engagement easier Mike and Mary are now editors of the page too (a rep from the Glass would be good as well). Content is mostly controlled by us and is consistent with a set of social media principles to ensure it is informative/ friendly/ doesn't damage relations with our stakeholders. Any feedback welcome. <https://www.facebook.com/Beauly-Fishery-Board-105666444600082>

Future: Logo competition involving the Junior angling club and local schools. Charleston academy would like us to do some engagement with them (i.e. electro-fishing demo/ river ecology talk) at some point.

Furthering our understanding

Electro-fishing- A total of 22 electro-fishing sites were completed mostly with volunteers. Data entered into SFCC database. Am currently writing the report.

SSE- Access granted to unvalidated fish count data, will discuss further with SSE. **SSE catchment visit-** 15-16 September, **SSE Liaison meeting-** 17 Sep.

Other meetings: Marine renewables, Moray Firth Predator Management group

Future: Data analysis will be done as part of the FMP. An initial catchment intro with new SSE staff member Naveed. A day with drone pilot Sally (CNPA) postponed til January. Conservation limit chat requested with Marine Scotland. Chat requested with River and Lochs institute. Two main knowledge gaps and future projects are smolt migration, and hydromorphology in relation to sediment movement in the catchment.

Improving ecosystem processes

SISI- We get funding from SISI to control invasives including Mink and plants. The board (in conjunction with NF) is helping a keen volunteer in Tomich get his air pistol licence and an air pistol to support ongoing mink work.

For more info on why getting rid of mink helps our fishery and general biodiversity:

<https://www.invasivespecies.scot/mink-control-project>

Prev volunteers 're-instated'	7 (5 dispatchers)
New active volunteers	5 (1 dispatcher)
Volunteers 'on-hold' until more rafts are made/ Fishery Officer in post	9 (3 dispatchers)

Forestry Land Scotland is aware of a large patch of Japanese knotweed at the top of the catchment (Plodda, Guisachan). This is due to be treated by contractors summer 2021. One keen volunteer has been put forward to get trained in invasive plant control next year (SNH funded). There are also 2 existing volunteers in the Ness catchment who might be able to help.

Future: Write biosecurity plan (Dec-Jan).

Old beaver gnawings found near Cannich whilst dropping off a mink raft

