

BEAULY DISTRICT
SALMON FISHERY
BOARD
**ANNUAL REPORT 2020 /
2021**

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DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

1.0 Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the Board's 2020/2021 Annual Report, including Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2020.

2020 was a difficult season due to the Covid-19 restrictions we have all become all too accustomed to. Early season fishing was prevented, with fishing only really getting going again in late June / early July. Despite this, the total salmon catch in the District for the year was up significantly at 947 (765 in 2019) and above both the five and ten-year averages. The number of fish going through the Kilmorack dam continued to show a reduction however at 3,374 (5-year average 3,417). This is a minimum count, due to problems with counter software and the true figure is thought to be higher. More on both these subjects later in the report.

2020 also saw the start of an exciting new era for the Board, with the appointment of our new full-time staff members: - Senior Biologist, Ruth Watts, and Fisheries Officer / Bailiff Ali Skinner. This represents a step-change in management and Board activities, heralding a sharper focus on research and projects to deliver enhancement of and work to protect the precious stocks of salmon and sea trout in our rivers.

We have continued with the eradication of non-native plant species as part of the wider Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) Project. This initiative is only possible by the help of our volunteers.

The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2020 has categorised the river as Grade 1. While this is obviously great news, we must all continue to ensure our Conservation Policy is still followed by all anglers.

Your Board met four times this year and I am grateful to the time and effort given by each of them. Also helpful to the running of this Board are the liaison meetings held each year with SSE and I thank them for their input.

Jock Miller
Chairman

It has been a very busy but enjoyable first 10 months with the Board. It has been good finding our feet as a team and working with Alastair, Jock, the Board, and proprietors. The recruitment of Ali Skinner (Fisheries Officer and Bailiff) and Bob Smart (Seasonal Bailiff) has meant that we have a good team with which we can move work forward. Their presence means that salmon and sea trout will be more protected from illegal exploitation activities than before.

We have built a local volunteer base to help us carry out our duties and to gain insight into the river. We are very grateful to them for the help they have provided since August 2020. Apart from monitoring and improving things for salmon and sea trout we have also spent time setting up facilities and engaging with those passionate about the river.

I look forward to continuing working with the Board so we can improve things for fish in the catchment.

Ruth Watts
Senior Biologist

2.0 Role of the District Salmon Fishery Board

The Beaully District Fishery Board is a statutory body responsible for the protection and enhancement of salmon and sea trout fisheries in the Beaully district, including the Rivers Beaully, Glass and Farrar. The Catchment extends from Glen Affric in the south-west to the mouth of the River Beaully at the Beaully Firth and includes Glen Cannich, Glen Strathfarrar and Strathglass. There is extensive hydro-electric development on the system, including principal dams at Loch Monar and Loch Mullardoch, Aigas and Kilmorack.

Salmon fishing rights in Scotland are private heritable titles that are registered separately from land. As such these titles can be bought and sold like any other property. In Scotland, the cost of the local administration, protection and improvement of the fisheries is privately financed by the proprietors. The District Boards finance their work by levying a rate on the salmon fishery owners in the district. Elected representatives of those owners provide the core of the membership of the Board. However, since 1986, the Boards are required also to include representatives of salmon anglers and salmon netmen in the District. A further revision to the constitution of the Boards was made in 1999 to allow for even wider representation on the Boards by other parties who may have an interest or stake in salmon stocks or fisheries.

Powers and duties

The powers and duties of a DSFB are summarised below:

Powers

- to act, undertake works and incur expenses for the protection and improvement of the fisheries within their districts, for the increase of salmon and sea trout and the stocking of the district with these fish.
- to impose financial assessments on each salmon fishery in the district, and to charge interest on arrears.
- to borrow funds, and to incur a wide range of expenditure in furtherance of their powers and duties.
- to appoint bailiffs to enforce the salmon fisheries legislation.
- exempt persons from certain provisions of the law for scientific or other purposes.
- to sue in the name of the clerk.

Duties

- to appoint a clerk
- to maintain a list of proprietors within the DSFBs district
- to produce an annual report and audited accounts and to consider these at an AGM
- to call a triennial electoral meeting

The Board meets four times per annum. Minutes are published on the Board's website <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>

3.0 Board Members and Staff

Board Members

Board members are elected triennially. The last elections took place in June 2018 and a new Board will be elected at the Annual Meeting of Proprietors on 10 June 2021. Board members are all volunteers and are non-remunerated for their time and effort. The elected Board members subsequently elect one of the members to be their chairman. The current Board members are as follows:

Representatives of Upper Proprietors: Jock Miller, Chairman, (Mandatory Beaully Fishing Syndicate)

Michael Spencer Nairn (Struy, Rivers Farrar and Glass)

Frank Spencer Nairn (Culligran, River Farrar)

Victoria Rotheroe (Mandatory, Balmore, River Glass)

George Purdie (Upper Glassburn, River Glass)

Representatives of Lower Proprietors: vacant

Co-optee of salmon anglers: Jim Braithwaite (Beaully Angling Club)

Clerk to the Board Alastair Campbell (Bidwells)

Although not a legal requirement, the Board invites further representation onto the Board in a non-voting capacity. Non-voting attendees are currently Lord Lovat (Lovat Highland Estates); Nick Jackson (Beaully Fishing Syndicate) and Neil Cameron (immediate past Chair Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust).

Board Staff

During the last year the Board has embarked on a new chapter through the direct employment of a full-time fisheries biologist and a full-time fisheries officer / bailiff. In addition, a seasonal bailiff has also been employed for the 2021 season. Current staff are: -

Senior Biologist Ruth Watts

Fisheries Officer / Bailiff Ali Skinner

Seasonal Bailiff Bob Smart

4.0 Fish Catches 2020

Catch returns are an important indicator of adult run size available for the system. Catch statistics are collected annually by Marine Scotland Science (MSS) for all fishery districts in Scotland. In addition to this, District Salmon Fishery Boards can collect data directly from proprietors twice per year. The size of the run can be used as a measure of its status by comparing the annual catch against long-term average catches. The data used in the graphs below are Crown copyright, used with the permission of Marine Scotland Science. MSS is not responsible for any interpretation of these data in this report.

Salmon Rod Catches

In the 2020 season, 947 salmon were reported to the Board as being caught. This differs very slightly from the official statistics recorded by Marine Scotland Science (MSS), who have recorded 948 salmon. Three proprietors failed to return a catch report to the Board.

Despite COVID, the total number of salmon caught was 24% higher than in 2019, exceeded the 10 year average and was the best since 2012. July and the last week of the season saw peak catches on the Upper and Lower Beaully.

The ten-year average (MSS figures) is 896, continuing the decrease in longer-term average. The five-year average is 825; this continues the slight increase in rolling five-year average.

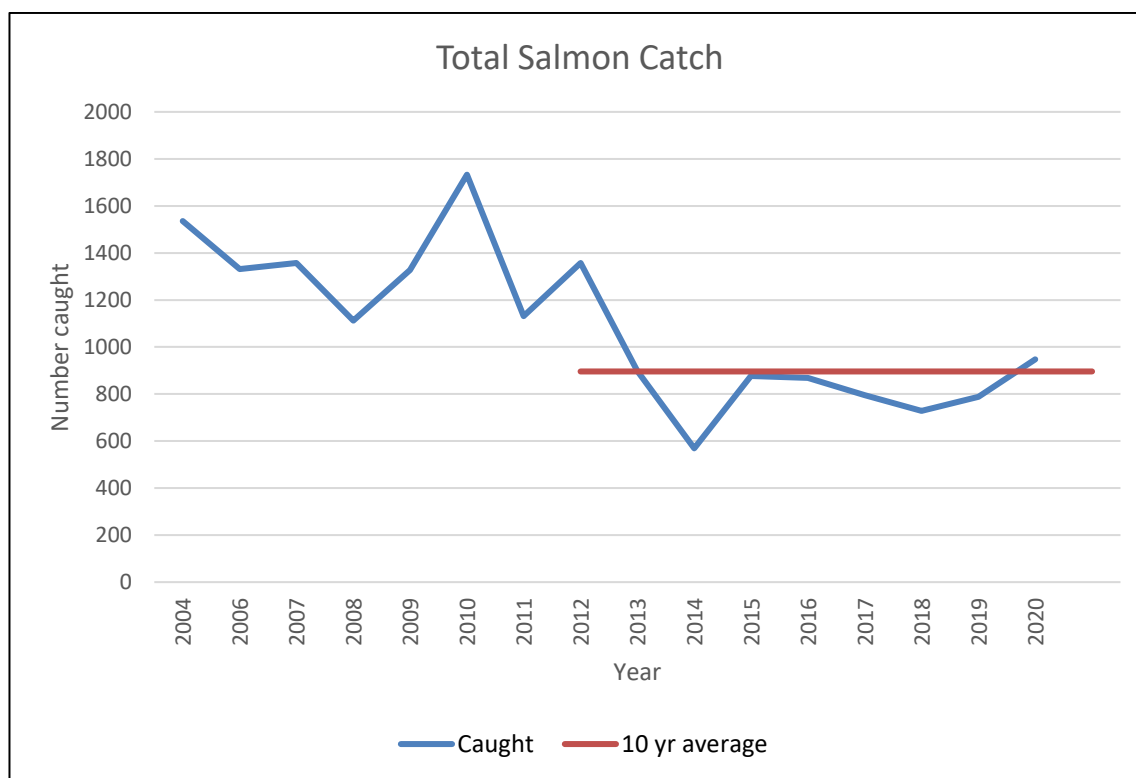


Figure 1 – Total Salmon Catch, Beaully District 1952-2019 (Source Crown copyright, used with the permission of Marine Scotland Science)

Sea Trout Catches

In the 2020 season, 571 sea trout and finnock were reported to the Board. The ten-year average is 548 and five-year average 758. This continues the increase on last year's rolling averages and confirms the increase in recorded sea trout catches in recent years. It is unclear how much this is due to better recording by anglers, but anecdotal evidence suggests that sea trout numbers in the Lower Beaulieu are healthy.

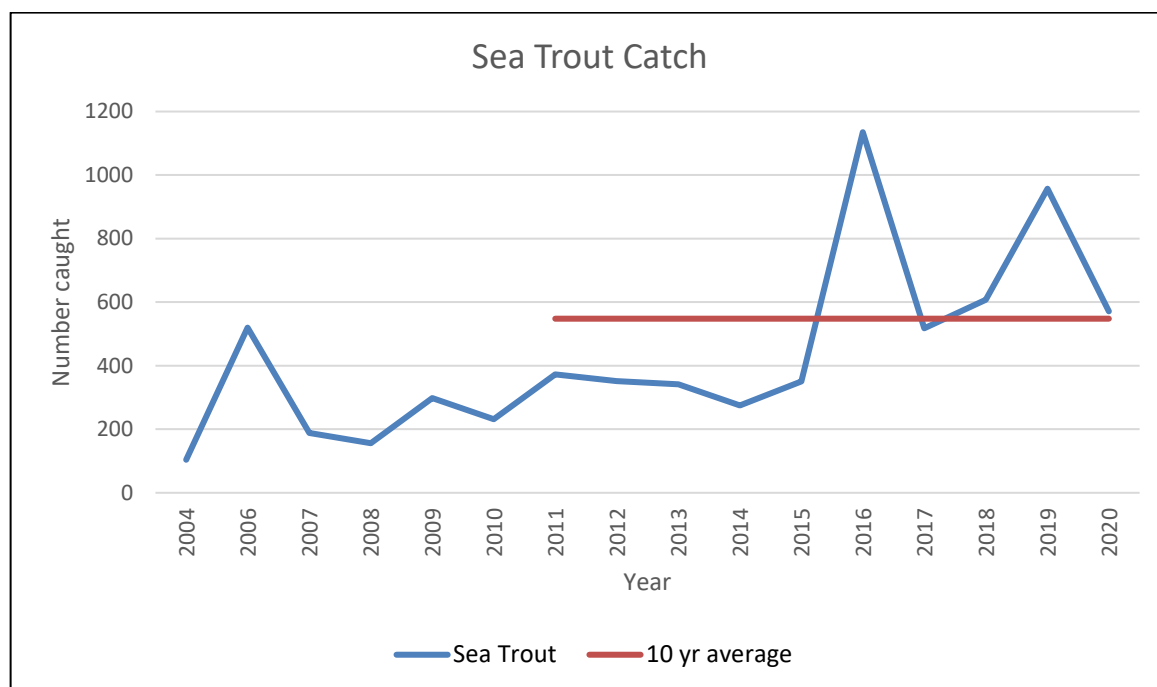


Figure 3 – Total Sea Trout Catches, Beaulieu District 1952-2019 (Crown copyright, used with the permission of Marine Scotland Science) N.B includes finnock.

5.0 Fish Counter Data – 2020

- Unvalidated count data suggests a minimum of 3,374 fish ascended at Kilmorack between April-November, this is slightly below the 10 yr average, but is higher than equivalent figures from 2017-2019. Peak migration was 14 August, later than 2019 where the peak was 1 July.
- Unvalidated count data received from SSE plc for Aigas Dam indicate a minimum run through the dam of 2,896 fish.
- Unvalidated count data received from SSE plc for Beannachran Dam indicate a minimum run through the dam of 169 fish.

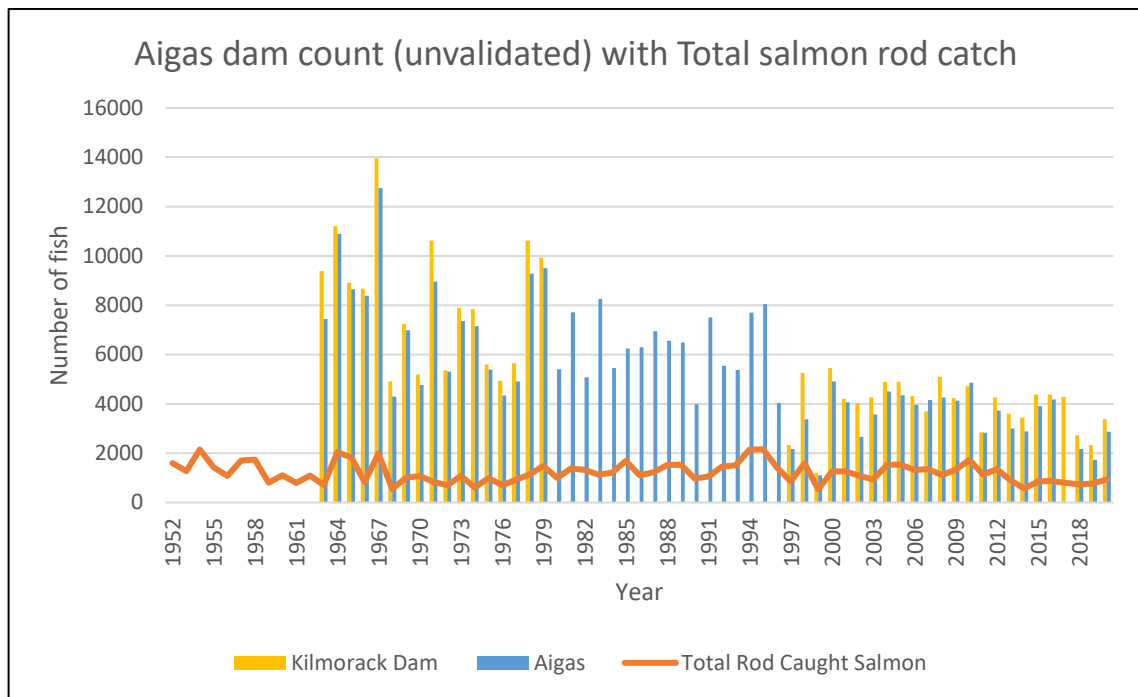


Figure 4 – Fish Pass Counter Figures, Aigas & Kilmorack Dams (source – SSE plc)

Data is gathered by SSE to show they are ensuring fish passage. For the Board it is a valuable source of information on adult salmon numbers returning to the Beaully and it (in combination with rod catch) also informs MSS's conservation limit assessment. The Mark 12 fish counters at the dams (and across Scotland) are known to under-record numbers of fish. SSE has appointed a contractor to help fix the problem, but it may take time to get a reliable solution.

A partial and replicable validation was conducted on the 2020 count data and this highlighted that multiple fish exits were more common at Aigas compared to Kilmorack, with a greater proportion of 'dithering' fish (non-kelts heading downstream) at Beannacharan. This made up 10% of the total Beannacharan count. Partial validation yielded an extra 0.9% more counts at Aigas, 0.5% at Kilmorack, and 0% at Beannacharan on top of the raw, unvalidated counts. A total validation would up these figures more. This validation was limited as it only covered fish that were recorded in the first place, and could not tell us how many fish were not recorded.

6.0 BDSFB Conservation Policy

The Board has a statutory duty to act for the protection and improvement of the fisheries and for the increase of salmon and sea trout within its District. The Board's recommended conservation policy in place during 2020 is attached at Appendix 1. The Board has approved an unchanged policy for 2021.

The recorded catch and release rate for salmon in 2020 was 98%.

Guidance on catch & release best practice can be found on the Board's website <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>

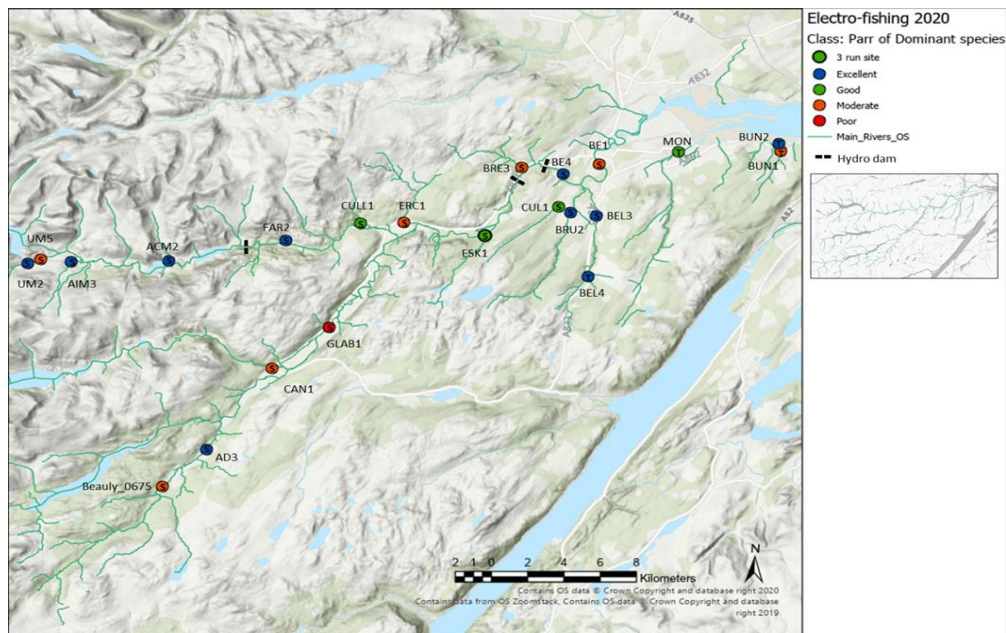
7.0 Salmon Conservation Status

The Scottish Government introduced The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019, placing the River Beaully in Grade 1. This represented a significant change in policy from previous years and has been maintained for 2021. The Board is currently engaged with MSS in trying to improve the Conservation Limit assessment data and methodology used for the Beaully.

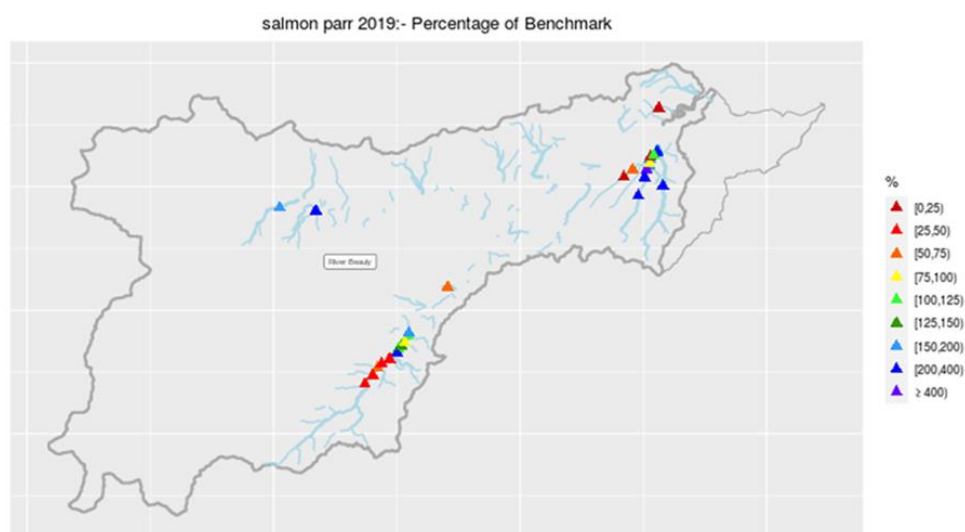
8.0 Juvenile Fish Survey Report

(Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist)

The Board carried out a total of 22 area-based surveys in September across the catchment to re-visit historic sites. Generally juvenile salmon and trout results were similar or better to previous years, but areas were highlighted for further assessment, habitat improvement and ongoing management (e.g. Uisge Misge, R. Cannich and Erchless burn). One fully quantitative site was done which suggested that capture efficiency was comparable to previous years, but further 3-runs will have to be done to get more reliable capture efficiencies. Nine volunteers gave us a total of 14.5 days help to enable this work to occur. Electro-fishing contractor, Ailsa, was also employed.



A short review of the 2018/19 National Electrofishing Programme for Scotland (NEPS) work suggested that sites on the Abhainn Deabhag (at the top of the River Glass) were consistently below carrying capacity and further habitat work is required here to ascertain why this is.



Funded NEPs work for 2021 is yet to be confirmed by MSS, but improvements to the sample frame have been made. i.e. updating MSS and SEPA with known natural and man-made barriers in the catchment.

With the production of the electro-fishing data analysis tool (the Shineyapp produced on the back of peer reviewed work done by MSS), a NEPs style monitoring programme is to be adopted by BDFB. This will give us an overall catchment assessment. This is likely to consist of 20 randomly selected core sites spread across the catchment (which should include some sub-optimal habitat) for survey every year with a further 10 sites per 'management compartment' (Farrar, Glass, Beaully) surveyed on a rolling basis, giving a total of 30 surveyed sites per year. A third of these will be fully quantitative to provide good capture efficiency information. Additionally, there should be time for further electro-fishing to take place to answer other questions we have and gather data to effectively assess the impact of management changes made.

Every 4 years or so the existing historic sites will be re-visited to ensure we maintain the integrity of this long-term data set. Coastal burns will also be surveyed.

The full electro-fishing report which includes recommendations is available on the Board's website.



9.0 Update on Conservation Work

(Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist)

Fisheries Management Plan

The current Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for the Beaully catchment for 2014-2020 was prepared by NBFT and approved by the Board in 2014. This forms a key part of the conservation and habitat improvement focus for the Board and Trust over this period. The full Plan can be found on the Board's website at: - <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/publications/>.

Main Pressures in the Catchment

An updated FMP is yet to be written but current work is generally compatible with the previous FMP up to 2020. The last ten months have provided valuable insight into the catchment which is essential to our understanding.

The Board engaged with MSS's funded pressures mapping work in the spring and identified many pressures in the catchment. The Board was grateful for receipt of £900 funding from Marine Scotland Science towards this work.

The main pressures were identified as:

Table 1: Main pressures identified in the catchment as part of Marine Scotland's pressure mapping work	
Main Pressures	Comments
Estuarine nets	Netting stations in the inner Moray Firth (Rosemarkie and Longman) are multi-stock, they take Beaully and Ness fish. Their operation was used for research purposes over the last couple of years but discussions in 2021 will occur with the Ness Board and Marine Scotland to see how we can progress to reduce this potential pressure.
Illegal exploitation	The Beaully has employed a part-time bailiff in the past but have a full-time and seasonal bailiff in place for the 2021 season.
Downstream passage	2018 saw approximately 10% of the catchment's smolts trapped and rescued from Aigas and Kilmorack dam gate slots. Mitigation and improved flow protocol appear to have reduced this pressure significantly. We are working closely with SSE to monitor smolt run timing to improve flows for smolts (see 'Assessing smolt run timing for improved flow management and smolt survival').
Loss of Riparian Vegetation	This is mainly due to high deer numbers in the catchment resulting in a lack of natural regeneration. We intend to secure funding for riparian tree planting in 2022 or 2023 (see 'Riparian Tree Planting'). Invasive, non-native plants also contribute to this pressure.

Loss of Sediment Transfer	Large hydro dams are known to have potential impacts regarding sediment transfer and flow regulation. This potential pressure needs to be assessed further in partnership with SSE where possible so that operational changes can be made if necessary.
Abstraction and Flow Regulation	
Predation	Fish- Pike (introduced, non-native) present in slack areas throughout the catchment
	Birds- Barriers can make fish vulnerable to predation. Further work can be done to update our understanding of sawbill impact on smolts in the catchment. Goosanders are generalist feeders and it would be good to assess if eel numbers are lower than expected in the Beaully. Improving eel passage may help reduce the pressure on smolts. We would like to do winter (as well as spring) bird counts to assess the potential impact on parr.
	Seals- It tends to be a few 'rogue' seals that enter the mouth of the river. SNH data shows total seal numbers are stable although Harbour seal numbers are declining possibly due to less abundance of sandeel. We have improved the monitoring of this pressure.
	Dolphins- Channonry point acts as a bottleneck

It is important to have an agreed management strategy and the Board intend to get the FMP written over winter 2021-2022.

Habitat Improvement

Invasives

Invasives work in the catchment is funded by the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI). In recent years very little plant control has been done. We are at a key point on the Beaully where we CAN actually eradicate invasives before they take hold and damage the fishery, so it is vital we act now and take the threat seriously



Skunk Cabbage at Mauld, Spring 2021

Key achievements:

- Biosecurity plan written which details our understanding of invasives in the catchment, the key threats, and work we want to carry out (on the website). We record any invasives sightings in a database.

The extent of invasive plants (especially in and around Beaully) is more than the Board alone can deal with and get on top of, however through working with volunteers we have:

- set up the 'Beaully Balsam Bashers' (a group of 9+ volunteers based in Beaully) and are supporting them and landowners to tackle Himalayan Balsam.
- started controlling skunk cabbage at Mauld and Kirkton burn through manual removal (2 of 3 known sites in the catchment).
- we also have 20 mink volunteers, co-ordinated by Ali. Mink are non-native voracious predators and can impact on the wider biodiversity of the river. 4 mink were dispatched between October 2020-March 2021.

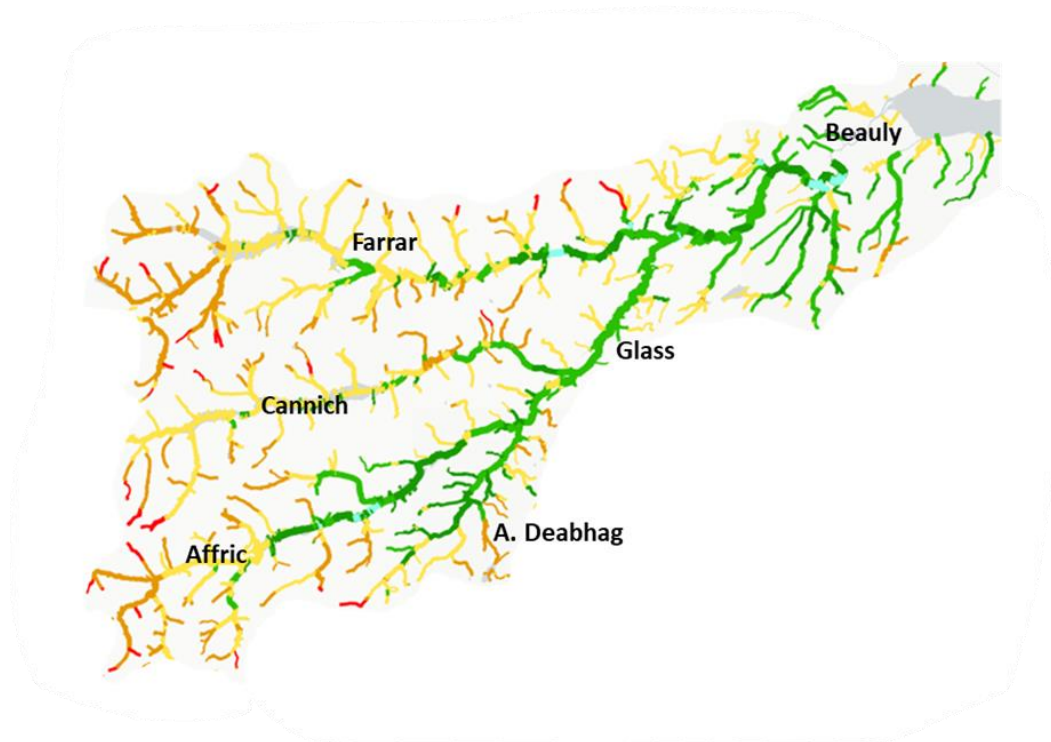
The Board is grateful to have received funding totalling £1,436 from the SISI to assist with this work.

Riparian tree planting

So far the Board have engaged with Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) on the topic of riparian trees, have got land-owner support at the top of the Farrar for carrying out future work, and have investigated potential funding, but as yet have not filled out any grant applications to get work done or linked landowners up with funding. However this will be a key priority for the Board going forward. Native, deciduous riparian trees can bring multiple benefits if planted in the right place and off deep peat:

- 1) Shade helps keep water cool for salmon and sea trout. Marine Scotland have published maps of forecast temperature on the river network which highlights priority areas (especially at the top of the catchment) where we should be encouraging natural regeneration and/ or riparian tree planting.
- 2) Trees can help improve fish productivity in rivers, where salmon numbers have declined.
- 3) Root systems and large woody debris can alter flows and improve habitat for fish.
- 4) Wider biodiversity benefits.

The Board hopes to progress with this in 2023 if not before.



Map 1: Scottish River Temperature Monitoring Network (SRTMN) Management Priority, Beaully catchment

Bird Counts

Ali Skinner co-ordinated the 2021 spring sawbill count to aid our 2021 licence application. This was carried out on the 25th April with the kind assistance of the Beaully Angling Club (and Bob smart, our seasonal bailiff). Bird count results, along with scaring and shooting activities will be submitted to SNH as part of a control licence renewal application.

Salmon Scale Collection and report.

With new ghillies on the Lower Beaully and the purchase of an electronic microscope for scale reading, scale collection has commenced. These, along with past scales, will hopefully be read as time/ the work programme allows.

Fish Passage – Working with SSE

The Beaully system is heavily affected by hydro-electric schemes operated by SSE plc. The Board has a good working relationship with SSE and recognises that through working together improvements for fish can be made. For a number of years members of the Board have held twice annual liaison meetings with representatives of SSE plc. The Board views these meetings as important in maintaining a good relationship with SSE enabling discussion on any specific concerns regarding the impact of the hydro-electric schemes within the catchment.

Smolt trapping: Assessing smolt run timing for improved flow management and smolt survival

Based on relative numbers of smolts seen trapped in gate slots between 2018-2020 it was identified between the Board and SSE that pinning down precise smolt run timing could help SSE

further refine flows for smolts in the catchment and could further improve smolt survival when negotiating Aigas and Kilmorack turbines.

SSE's 'Hydro Aigas and Kilmorack Salmon Smolt Protection protocol' (WI-HYDR-COMN-007) was updated with input from SEPA and the Board. The protocol improved on the previous year and introduced a two-stage regime.

1) April-May: "where reasonably practicable, only the G1 machines shall be run if the load is less than 10MW".

2) During the smolt run as identified by the Board, enhanced smolt flows: "where reasonably practicable, if either Culligran or Fasnakyle main machines are generating into the evening then they must maintain generation such that the load at Aigas is not reduced during the hours of darkness".

The smolt rescue part of the protocol was also updated and SSE have procured smolt rescue kit for the Board to be used in emergencies. Any smolt rescue was agreed to be done in partnership.

Smolt run timing was assessed for the first time at the top of the Glass. SSE provided a smolt trap and this was checked by the Board every day (as flows allowed) between 16 March and 30 May. The Board reported smolt numbers to SSE on a daily basis, and enhanced smolt flows were in place between 22 April and 1 June. 13 volunteers gave us a total of 11 days help to enable this work to occur.

Apart from run timing, this work will also provide us with valuable information about smolts. It has also been a useful engagement tool and apart from local volunteers, several proprietors came down to see the smolt trap in action.

The Project Outline is on the website. A short summary report will be produced in due course and will be made available on the website.



Fish Lifts

A third daytime lift (up from 2) was agreed with SSE to aid fish passage at Aigas and Kilmorack dams, and this will be in operation this season.

Kelt monitoring above the dams

This is regularly carried out by Board staff when they are out patrolling the catchment. As COVID restrictions ease it is hoped that improved access to the dams may be gained for this monitoring purpose. Several (>3) kelt releases occurred through March and April this year.

Flows and sediment management

Future work will include an assessment of flows and sediment management in the catchment to see if there can be any improvements made for fish. So far initial observations have been made and these will need further discussion with the Board and SSE before discussing assessment options with a hydromorphological consultant.

10.0 Fisheries Protection

(Ali Skinner, Fisheries Officer / Bailiff)

I have now been in post for just over 4 months and am enjoying the challenge. I have a varied role, and this includes working with the Senior Biologist, Seasonal Bailiff, Ghillies and volunteers.

It has been good to meet with some proprietors and anglers and learn about the River Beaully, Glass, Farrar, and the Beaully Firth. Bob, our Seasonal Bailiff has many years' experience on the Beaully and his knowledge is very useful. We are now starting to receive valuable information from local anglers regarding poaching activity in the catchment.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any issues on the river. In the meantime, I will continue to patrol the catchment, and work from home and can be contacted by email or phone.

River Patrols

	Patrols conducted. (11 Jan-24 May)	Warning letters issued
Lower and Middle Beaully	72	1
Glass	43	2
Farrar	8	0
Beaully Firth	24	0

Lower- Middle Beaully

72 patrols have been conducted on the lower and middle beats of the Beaully since the beginning of 2021. One angler was removed for fishing without a permit and fishing with the wrong tackle. He was issued with a warning letter and all fishing equipment was seized. He had no salmon in his possession.

The bailiffs met with members of the Beaully Angling Club and discussed fisheries issues they have regarding poaching incidents on the river, they have also introduced themselves to several syndicate members while on patrol in the area.

Glass

The bailiffs targeted the river Glass during May 2021 due to information received about poaching in the area. 43 patrols were conducted on the river Glass. Two anglers were removed from the river for fishing for salmon on a Sunday and fishing with the wrong tackle. They were issued with warning letters and all fishing equipment was seized. They had no salmon.

The bailiffs have found several Pike fishermen while on patrol in the area. These Pike fishermen have permits issued by the proprietor.

Farrar

8 patrols have been conducted on the river Farrar and no fisheries issues have been found so far in 2021. The bailiffs have met with several persons in the Farrar catchment and handed over their contact details.

Firth

24 patrols were conducted within the Beaully firth and no fisheries issues have been found so far in 2021.

Offences Reported

No incidents have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal during the past year.

11.0 Statutory Duties

Stocking Applications

Under the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2007, the Board has a duty to consider any application for stocking of any life stage of salmon or sea trout. Written consent must be obtained from the Board before any such stocking takes place.

No applications for stocking were received by the Board during 2020. The Board does not currently operate any stocking programme of its own.

Compliance with Good Governance

Meetings

The annual meeting of qualified proprietors was held on 4th June 2020. This meeting was publicised by means of the Board's website and direct notification to proprietors and a copy of the notice sent to the Scottish Government. The minutes from the annual meeting of June 2020 can be viewed at <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>.

Unfortunately, an annual public meeting was not possible due Covid-19 restrictions in place in December 2020.

In addition, meetings of the Board were held on 4th June, 23rd September and 8th December 2020 and 30th March 2021. These meetings were publicised by means of the Board's website. The minutes from these meetings can be viewed at <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>.

Unfortunately, wider public participation was not possible at either the annual meeting of qualified proprietors, or the Board meetings due Covid-19 restrictions in place throughout the year.

Annual Report and Accounts

This annual report will be published at <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>. The annual report for 2019-20, including approved accounts for the year to 31 December 2019, was published on the same website and a copy sent to Scottish Government. Draft Annual Accounts to 31 December 2020 are attached at Appendix 2.

The annual report 2020-21 and accounts for 2020 will be published on the website once approved.

Complaints

The Board has set up and maintains a complaints procedure which can be viewed at <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>. The procedure was reviewed at the Board meeting of 4 December 2014 and remains unaltered. This policy was notified to Scottish Government.

No complaints have been received in the last year.

Members' interests

The register of members' interests can be viewed at the offices of Bidwells, Elm House, Cradlehall, Inverness. We have included a standing item at each Board meeting inviting Board members to declare new/amend existing interests and all such instances are recorded in the minutes of these meetings.

12.0 Priorities for the Forthcoming Year

In addition to the delivery of its core statutory function, the Board, proposes to progress the following key objectives over the coming year: -

Salmon Conservation Measures

Smolt trapping work is intended to continue alongside temperature monitoring, and it is hoped the Farrar will be included in future years as run timing may differ between these two arms of the Beaully. Trap efficiency will also be assessed in 2022 and future years.

For 2021 we aim to carry out validation work at the dams in August 2021 to help refine the fish pass counts by looking at the actual numbers of fish exiting the fish passes and compare this to the fish counts.

It is intended to trial drone work on the Glass in November 2021 and early in 2022 to assess redd distribution in relation to regulated flows.

It is intended to make initial observations of adult fish below Beannacharan on the Farrar in October to see if the freshet schedule may need updating to allow improved fish passage.

Habitat Improvement

We intend to start controlling Japanese knotweed through stem injection in a top-down catchment direction from August 2021. Two of our volunteers will be attending SNH funded training in June for pesticide spraying and injection by water.

We will continue to participate in the SISI project, action the Biosecurity plan and support volunteers in the catchment.

Salmon Scale sampling

Information will continue to be gathered to assist future conservation policies, particularly in relation to spring salmon.

Electro-fishing

For 2021 the board intend to participate in the NEPs work.

If NEPs work does not get funded then surveys will consist of 20 new core randomly selected sites, and 10 focused on the Uisge Misge (top of the Farrar). If time allows then further mainstem sites downstream of dams may be added.

To get a good capture efficiency it is anticipated that between 10-30 3 run sites will have to be completed to ensure data can be analysed using the shiney app tool and general data robustness.

A short electro-fishing report will be produced summarising the work done.

Barrier Removal

In conjunction with the Beaully Fishing Syndicate, tributary burns on the Lower Beaully will continue to be regularly checked for debris blockages.

Predation

The Board will continue to gather evidence to inform applications for lethal control of sawbill birds. We will also continue to press for an update to the existing seal management plan.

Report prepared by: -

Alastair Campbell, Clerk to the Board

Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist

Ali Skinner, Fisheries Officer, Bailiff

APPENDIX 1

BEAULY DSFB CONSERVATION POLICY 2020

BEAULY DISTRICT FISHERY BOARD

SALMON & SEA TROUT CONSERVATION POLICY

2020

The Beauly District Fishery Board has a statutory duty to act for the protection and improvement of the fisheries and for the increase of salmon and sea trout within its District. With declining rates of marine survival, the conservation of stocks should be of prime importance to all anglers. This Conservation Policy represents a minimum requirement all anglers should adhere to.

SALMON

11TH FEBRUARY TO 31ST MARCH - STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

Under **The Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Time and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014**, it is an offence to retain any salmon caught before 1 April. By law, all fish must be released. Every effort should be made to ensure no harm is caused to fish prior to release.

1ST APRIL – 30TH JUNE

- **100% catch & release**

To protect vulnerable spring salmon stocks, it is the Board's recommended policy that all salmon be released

1ST JULY – 15TH OCTOBER

- Release all hen fish of any size and all cock fish over 7lbs (66cm/26 inches)
- Retain only one cock fish under 7lbs per angler per week with a maximum of three per season
- All coloured and unseasonable fish should be released. Please see illustrative guide overleaf.

SEA TROUT

- Release all finnock of 1 pound (35cm/14 inches) or less
- Release all sea trout of 3 pounds (50cm/20 inches) or above
- Retain only two fish per angler per week with a maximum of six per season
- All coloured and unseasonable fish should be released (smolts, kelts, over-wintered finnock)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Fishing should be by Fly only. To facilitate the release of fish barbless or crimped hooks should be used. Treble hooks should not be used.
 - Under the provisions of The Conservation of Salmon (Prohibition of Sale) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 the sale of rod caught salmon or sea trout is illegal.
 - When releasing fish, try to keep them in water at all times and under no circumstances should fish be lifted clear of the water by their tails.
 - Guidance on catch & release best practice can be found on the Board's website <http://beauly.dsfb.org.uk/>
 - The use of 'knotless' mesh landing nets is a legal requirement and will help prevent the fish from being damaged.
-

How can salmon be recognised at the different stages of their life?

Fresh-Run

Recognised by the pristine condition and bright silver flanks. Fish straight from salt water have loose, easily detached scales and many carry sea lice which drop off within a few days. Hen salmon (illustrated) have a tiny kype on the lower jaw, but unlike cocks they retain normal head proportions while in the river.

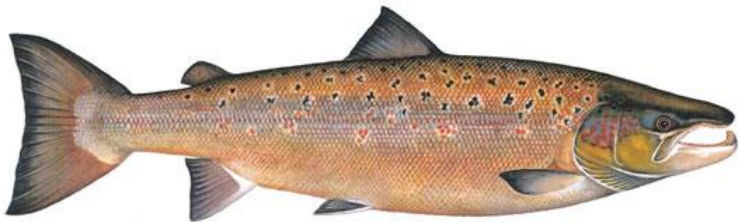


Salmon

Maturing 'coloured' Cock & Hen

Cock: The combination of "tartan" colours is typical although shades vary - the fully developed kype, used in fighting rivals, and the enlarged adipose fin, are the most consistent indicators of maturity.

Hen: These are usually less coloured than cocks of similar age and they never have enlarged jaws. This one will have spent a few weeks in river or estuary - note the coloured head and lack of true silver flanks.



'Unseasonal' Cock & Hen in Breeding Dress

Cock: The combination of 'tartan' colours is typical although shades vary - the fully developed kype, used in fighting rivals is the most consistent indicator of maturity.

Hen: This is a summer fish – 'springers' are often darker by spawning time while late entrants may still be silver flanked. Fully mature hens have soft, swollen bellies and spawning is imminent if they also have protruding vents.



'Unclean'

Kelts are salmon which have spawned. Usually identified by the thin shape, distended vent and presence of "gill maggots" on the red gill filaments, they are often encountered by anglers in spring when they regain a silvery appearance and can be mistaken for fresh run 'springers'. Kelts must be returned unharmed.



Kelt

(Illustrations used with permission from the Atlantic Salmon Trust www.atlanticsalmontrust.org)

APPENDIX 2

DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

Beaully District Fishery Board

Audited financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2020

Beaully District Fishery Board

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Beaully District Fishery Board

Independent auditors' report

To the members of Beaully District Fishery Board

We have audited the financial statements of The Beaully District Fishery Board for the year ended 31 December 2020 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the board as at 31 December 2020 and the surplus for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.

Basis of our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the members' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the members with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditors' report (continued)

To the members of Beaulieu District Fishery Board

Other information

The members are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of members

Section 44 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 requires the board to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the board and of the surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those accounts, the board's members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the board will continue in operation.

The board's members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the board. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the board and hence for taking reasonable steps in the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are detailed below.

Independent auditors' report (continued)

To the members of Beaulieu District Fishery Board

Identifying and assessing risks related to irregularities:

We assessed the susceptibility of the entity's financial statements to material misstatement and how fraud might occur, including through discussions with the members, discussions within our audit team planning meeting, updating our record of internal controls and ensuring these controls operated as intended. We evaluated possible incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements. We identified laws and regulations that are of significance in the context of the entity by discussions with members and updating our understanding of the sector in which the entity operates.

Laws and regulations of direct significance in the context of the company include The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.

Audit response to risks identified:

We considered the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items including a review of financial statement disclosures. We reviewed the entity's records of breaches of laws and regulations, minutes of meetings and correspondence with relevant authorities to identify potential material misstatements arising. We discussed the entity's policies and procedures for compliance with laws and regulations with the members responsible for compliance.

During the planning meeting with the audit team, the engagement partner drew attention to the key areas which might involve non-compliance with laws and regulations or fraud. We enquired of management whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud. We addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and identifying any significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. We assessed whether judgements made in making accounting estimates gave rise to a possible indication of management bias. At the completion stage of the audit, the engagement partner's review included ensuring that the team had approached their work with appropriate professional scepticism and thus the capacity to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Beaully District Fishery Board

Independent auditors' report (continued)

To the members of Beaully District Fishery Board

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the board's members, as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the board's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the board and the board's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Eunice McAdam (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Saffery Champness LLP

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors

Date:

Kintail House
Beechwood Park
Inverness
IV2 3BW

Beaully District Fishery Board**Income and expenditure account
For the year ended 31 December 2020**

			2020		2019
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Income					
Levies receivable	2		60,011		42,220
Other income			40,560		-
Interest receivable			36		28
			<u>100,607</u>		<u>42,248</u>
Expenditure					
Fisheries Management Scotland		1,775		1,617	
Wages and salaries		15,114		-	
Insurance		1,723		1,273	
Small tools and equipment		1,576		-	
Administration costs		10,829		5,755	
Contribution to Ness & Beaully Fishery Trust		-		10,000	
Advertising		509		-	
Telephone		363		-	
Computer costs		473		-	
Vehicle running costs		3,394		-	
Legal and professional fees		5,264		-	
Accountancy		2,790		1,750	
Bank charges		189		70	
Staff clothing		457		-	
Sundry expenses		201		94	
Anti-poaching costs		2,668		4,000	
Subscriptions		678		620	
Irrecoverable VAT		2,866		1,506	
Depreciation of plant and machinery		1,224		-	
		<u></u>	<u>(52,093)</u>	<u></u>	<u>(26,685)</u>
Net surplus for the year			<u><u>48,514</u></u>		<u><u>15,563</u></u>

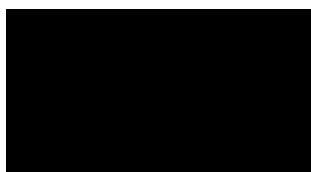
Beaulieu District Fishery Board**Balance sheet
As at 31 December 2020**

		2020	2019
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	3,672	-
Current assets			
Trade debtors		2,007	558
Prepayments		2,539	1,332
Cash at bank and in hand		96,088	39,386
		<u>100,634</u>	<u>41,276</u>
Current liabilities			
Trade creditors		13,673	3,480
Other creditors		1,011	-
Accruals		4,590	1,278
		<u>19,274</u>	<u>4,758</u>
Net current assets		81,360	36,518
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>85,032</u>	<u>36,518</u>
Capital account			
At 1 January		36,518	20,955
Surplus for the year		48,514	15,563
At 31 December		<u>85,032</u>	<u>36,518</u>

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 27 February 2017, we approve the financial statements set out on pages 5 to 8. We acknowledge our responsibility for the financial statements, including the appropriateness of the accounting basis as set out in note 1 to the financial statements, and for providing Saffery Champness LLP with all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

So far as the members are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. Additionally, the members have taken all necessary steps that they ought to have taken as members in order to make themselves aware of all relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

On behalf of the board



Date :

Beaully District Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements For the year ended 31 December 2020

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.

1.2 Compliance with accounting standards

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities), which have been applied consistently (except as otherwise stated).

1.3 Income

Levies represent amounts receivable from the proprietors in order to finance the work of the board.

1.4 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Plant and machinery	25% straight line basis per annum
---------------------	-----------------------------------

2 Levies receivable	2020 £	2019 £
Glass	14,317	10,065
Farrar	3,151	2,218
Beaully	42,543	29,937
	<u>60,011</u>	<u>42,220</u>

3 Employees

The average monthly number of persons employed by the entity during the year was:

	2020 Number	2019 Number
Total	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

Beaulieu District Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements (continued) For the year ended 31 December 2020

4 Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £
Cost	
At 1 January 2020	-
Additions	4,896
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2020	4,896
	<hr/>
Depreciation	
Charge for the year	1,224
	<hr/>
At 31 December 2020	1,224
	<hr/>
Net book value	
At 31 December 2020	3,672
	<hr/> <hr/>

5 Control

The board is controlled by the elected proprietors.

6 Related parties

Members of the board represent proprietors who pay levies to the board. Levies are paid in accordance with assessed rateable values. The members of the board are assessed at the same rate as proprietors who are not members of the board.

7 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

The company had total guarantees and commitments at the balance sheet date of £9,275 (2019 - £nil).

