

BEAULY DISTRICT
SALMON FISHERY
BOARD
**ANNUAL REPORT 2021 /
2022**

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Appendix 1

BEAULIEU DSFB CONSERVATION POLICY 2021

Appendix 2

DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2021

1.0 Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the Board's 2021/2022 Annual Report, including Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2021.

2021 was also affected by Covid-19 restrictions but not nearly to the extent of 2020. Although there was some early fishing in April it didn't really start until Covid restrictions were lifted in May. It was a hot dry summer with very little rain until the end of September. The total salmon catch in the District for the year was down at 639 (947 in 2019) and below both the five and ten-year averages. The number of fish going through the Kilmorack dam continued to show a reduction however at 3,075 (10-year average 3,583). 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.

2021 saw our two full-time staff members: - Senior Biologist, Ruth Watts, and Fisheries Officer / Bailiff Ali Skinner supported by seasonal staff and volunteers to do more to protect our salmon and sea trout but more on these activities can be found later in the report.

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 2021 has categorised the river as Grade 1 for the 2022 season. 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, in particular, Alastair Stephen who has recently retired.

Jock Miller
Chairman

2021 into 2022 has been a productive period with a significant amount learnt about the catchment from juvenile fish surveys and smolt monitoring with the help of seasonal staff and volunteers. The **Draft Fishery Management Plan** has been produced highlighting the main pressures faced by salmon and sea trout in the catchment and details how we intend to reduce these pressures. This is a key document and ensures that the work we are doing is clear and that those invested in the river have a chance to be consulted on what we are doing.

We are currently carrying out **hydro-morphology surveys** (substrate and fish habitat) on the Cannich and Affric rivers to start to look at whether improved sediment management in relation to the large hydro dams could be an option for improving spawning and fry habitat on the lower parts of these rivers. It will be a priority to gather more fish data and survey the Farrar in due course.

With our trainee Louise, we are currently conducting an **Oral history project** where we are listening to those who have lived most of their lives by the river and gathering a broad range of perspectives. Old photos accrued during this process are also highlighting changes that have occurred in the catchment over the last century and in combination with **juvenile fish data** (and survey work) are helping us build a picture of where we need to focus our restoration efforts.

Our **smolt-run timing monitoring** (in conjunction with temperature monitoring) is being used to improve flow management in the catchment by SSE for improved smolt survival and we hope to build on this monitoring in future years.

Our work with volunteers and the **Beaully Balsam Bashers** has seen a significant amount of work on reducing the prevalence of invasive plants in the catchment in 2021 and we will continue to carry out and support this work until these invasives are eradicated (as part of the SISI project) to ensure these plants do not start to threaten fish in the catchment.

Ali (Fisheries Officer) and Bob (Seasonal bailiff) along with a network of ghillies, bailiffs and vigilant locals have been **protecting the catchment from poachers** and their presence alone should help deter illegal fishing. We are also very grateful for the support and continued good relations we share with our neighbours in the Conon and Ness catchments.

I look forward to another busy year ahead, working for the board and the 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 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) Tom Waring (Mandatory, Lovat Highland Estates)
Representatives of Lower Proprietors:	vacant
Co-optee of salmon anglers:	Jim Braithwaite (Beaully Angling Club)
Invited Attendees:	Nick Jackson (Beaully Fishing Syndicate) Neil Cameron (Ness DSFB)
Clerk to the Board	Alastair Campbell (Bidwells LLP)

Although not a legal requirement, the Board invites further representation onto the Board in a non-voting capacity. Non-voting attendees are currently; Nick Jackson (Beaully Fishing Syndicate) and Neil Cameron (current Chair Ness District Salmon Fishery Board).

Board Staff

The Board currently directly employs a full-time fisheries biologist and a full-time fisheries officer / bailiff. In addition, a seasonal bailiff has also been employed for the 2022 season. Current staff are: -

Senior Biologist	Ruth Watts
Fisheries Officer / Bailiff	Ali Skinner
Seasonal Bailiff	Bob Smart

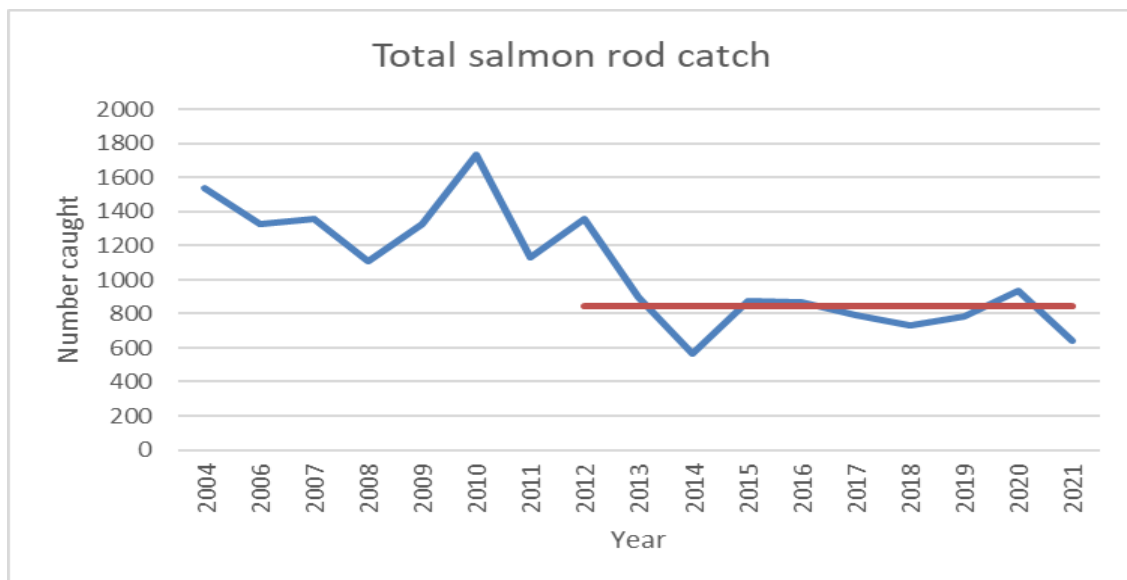
4.0 Fish Catches 2021

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 2021 season, 639 salmon were reported to the board as being caught. This differs slightly from the official statistics recorded by Marine Scotland Science (MSS), who have recorded 630 salmon. Three proprietors failed to return a catch report to the board.

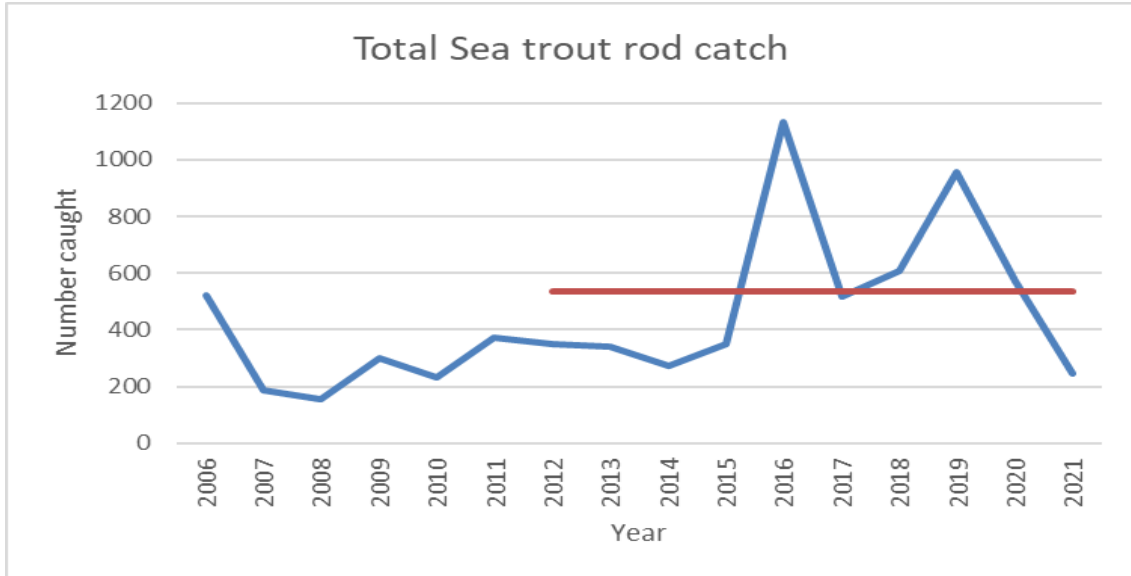
The total number of salmon caught (according to the board's figures) was 70% that of 2020, and sits below the 10 year average (846) and 5 year average (778). This is likely due to low water and warm conditions from June onwards. Middle of June and the last week of the season saw peak catches on the Lower Beaully.



2021 salmon rod catch with 10 yr average (in red)

Sea Trout Catches

In the 2021 season, 246 sea trout and finnock were reported to the Board (this compares to 93 sea trout plus 2 finnock reported to MSS). The ten-year average recorded by the board is 535 and the five-year average 580. This is the lowest recorded catch since 2010. Sea trout numbers on the Beaully can vary widely and the low number caught may be due to the low water levels during the 2021 season or wider movements of sea trout around the Moray Firth.



2021 Sea trout rod catch with 10 year average shown in red

5.0 Fish Counter Data – 2021

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 Beauly 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 thought to record approximately 75% of fish (based on the counters at Pitlochry), but a full validation (manually comparing actual numbers of fish ascending at the dams with what is recorded) for the Beauly catchment dams has not been conducted.

- Unvalidated count data suggests a minimum of 3075 fish ascended at Kilmorack dam between April- November 2021 (counts missing between key migration period 4-11 Aug). The 10 year average for Kilmorack is 3583 counts. Assuming approximately 480 fish counts were missed between 4-11 Aug (an average of 60 per day) this would put the Kilmorack count at 3555, slightly below the 10 year average.
- Unvalidated count data for Aigas dam indicate a minimum run through the dam of 2864 (missing counts 1-10 Aug).

Unvalidated count data for Beannacharan dam indicates a minimum run of 123 fish.

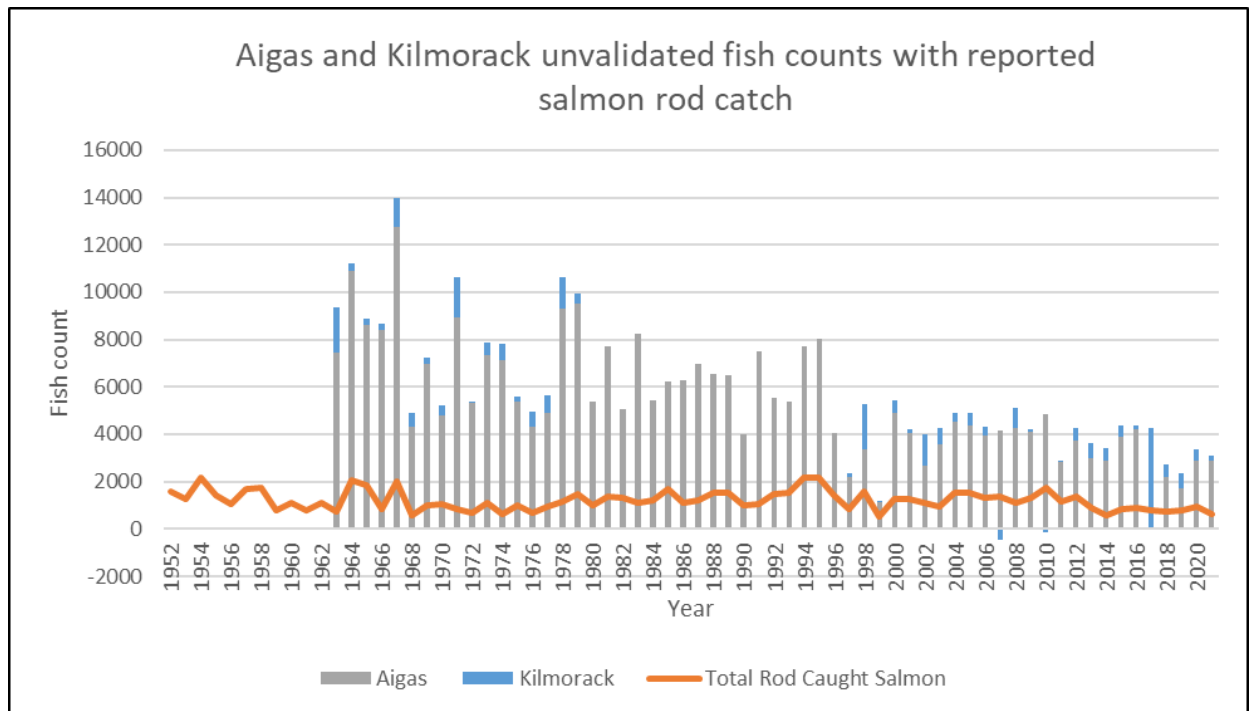


Figure 4 – Fish Pass Counter Figures, Aigas & Kilmorack Dams (source – SSE plc)

2021 saw especially high river temperatures between 23-26 July which may have affected run-timing, with fish seeking thermal refuges.

In 2021 fish lifts occurred three times a day compared to previous years' twice a day as standard mitigation for fish passage.

SSE are currently trialling a new fish counter across Scotland including at Kilmorack in 2022 so we hope that the fish counts become more reliable with time.

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 2021 is attached at Appendix 1. The Board has approved a policy for 2022, with one amendment concerning guidance on fishing and water temperature.

The recorded catch and release rate for salmon in 2021 was 97%.

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

7.0 Salmon Conservation Status

The Scottish Government introduced The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019, placing the River Beauly in Grade 1. This represented a significant change in policy from previous years and has been maintained for 2022.

8.0 Fishery Management Plan

(Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist)

The draft Fishery Management Plan was produced in March 2022. This has been seen by the board and distributed for proprietor consultation. Wider consultation will be conducted in due course.

The main pressures on salmon and sea trout identified in the catchment were broadly based on the Marine Scotland Pressures mapping work done in 2021 and easing these pressures guides the work we do. Our priority is to address each of these pressures where we can:

Main Pressures	Description	What we did May 2021-May 2022 to help ease the pressure
Climate Change	A pressure being detected at sea and emerging as a pressure in freshwater too. We can make our catchment more resilient to the changing climate.	Engaged with landowners to encourage riparian tree work. Temperature monitoring is in place. Updated the Conservation Policy to include temperature. See 'Habitat Improvement, Riparian Tree Work'.
Lack of Nutrients	Predominantly due to land-use and a lack of natural regeneration due to high deer numbers at the top of the catchment.	Riparian Tree work
Estuarine Netting	Netting stations in the inner Moray Firth have the potential to take Beauly fish although they are under the jurisdiction of the Ness board.	Worked with the Ness board to initiate discussions with FMS.
Illegal Exploitation	Poaching of Salmon and Sea trout occurs in the catchment both accidentally and deliberately.	Fisheries Officer and Seasonal bailiff employed during the season to bailiff. See 'Fisheries Protection'.

Downstream smolt passage	2018 saw an estimated 10% of the catchment's smolts trapped and rescued from Aigas and Kilmorack dam gate slots. Mitigation and improved flow protocol have reduced this pressure significantly.	We are working closely with SSE to monitor smolt run timing to improve flows for smolts (see 'Working with SSE, Smolt Monitoring: Assessing smolt run timing for improved flow management and smolt survival').
Hydro-morphology (Sediment and Flows)	Large hydro dams are known to have potential impacts on fish habitat in relation to 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.	Combined fish habitat and substrate walkovers of Cannich and Affric rivers were conducted spring 2022, gathering of pre-dam photos for comparison with present day. See 'Working with SSE, Flows and Sediment Management'.
Predation	Predation by various species has the potential to occur at all stages of a salmonid's life, and is often exacerbated by the presence of man-made alterations to the river.	Sawbill monitoring. Disseminated the FMS Seal monitoring app to proprietors and ghillies to improve our monitoring and knowledge of this pressure. Gathered observations of smolts in trout during the smolt run. See 'Bird Counts'.
Angling	Angling, whilst providing us with an important connection with the river, should be done according to best practise to maximise the survival of salmon and sea trout.	Updated the Conservation Policy.
Other Pressures:		
Pressure	Description	What we did May 2021-May 2022 to help ease the pressure
Diffuse Pollution	Water quality is generally good in the catchment however there are a few areas where cattle and sheep erode the banks of the river and small watercourses.	Endorsed the Beaully and Cromarty Firth collaborative AECs plan for better water quality.
Point Source Pollution	Pollution incidents do occasionally occur in the catchment.	Investigated a pollution incident involving foam.
Development	Development in the wrong place or constructed badly can affect salmon and sea trout.	Provided advice to help minimise the impact of four activities in the catchment. See 'Advice and Consultations'.
Trawling	Trawling occurs in the Moray Firth and can damage the seabed and nursery habitats of salmon and sea trout prey.	Continued to support the #OurSeas campaign.

Invasive non-native Species and Biosecurity	Although the presence of INNS plants does not appear to have resulted in silting up of spawning areas yet, INNS are an emerging pressure and action to eradicate them now will mean that we do not face an impossible task in the future.	Continued working as a Scottish Invasive Species Initiative partner under the 'Ness and Beaully Fisheries Trust'. Supported the Beaully Balsam Bashers (13 volunteer days), treated the priority Japanese Knotweed sites (4.5 volunteer days), treated the priority Skunk Cabbage sites in the catchment. See 'Habitat Improvement, Invasives'. Reported the first Pink Salmon in the Beaully to FMS. Supplied fishing huts with disinfection kit.
Barriers	Temporary debris blockages occur across the catchment that may block fish passage.	Assisted the LBFS ghillies in clearance of debris blockages in the Belladrum sub-catchment. Also see 'Working with SSE, Adult Fish Passage, Kelt Monitoring'.
Other priorities:		
	Description	What we did May 2021-May 2022
People: Community Engagement, Participation and Heritage	To deliver improvements to the river we need to work with people. Engagement is essential to making the right decisions regarding any changes.	The Oral History Project conducted in spring 2022 interviewed 10 folk in the catchment to get their views and to see how land-use had changed in their lifetimes. The board is extremely grateful to its volunteers who gave us 31 volunteer/ intern days to carry out electro-fishing and smolt trapping work. End of Season, Annual public meeting/ Xmas gathering- an opportunity to informally discuss the season (and other topics) with folk from across the catchment.

9.0 Fish Surveys

In 2021 the board carried out Electrofishing, Smolt trapping and participated in the Adult sampling project. Please see the 'Working with SSE section' for details of the smolt trapping.

Electro-fishing

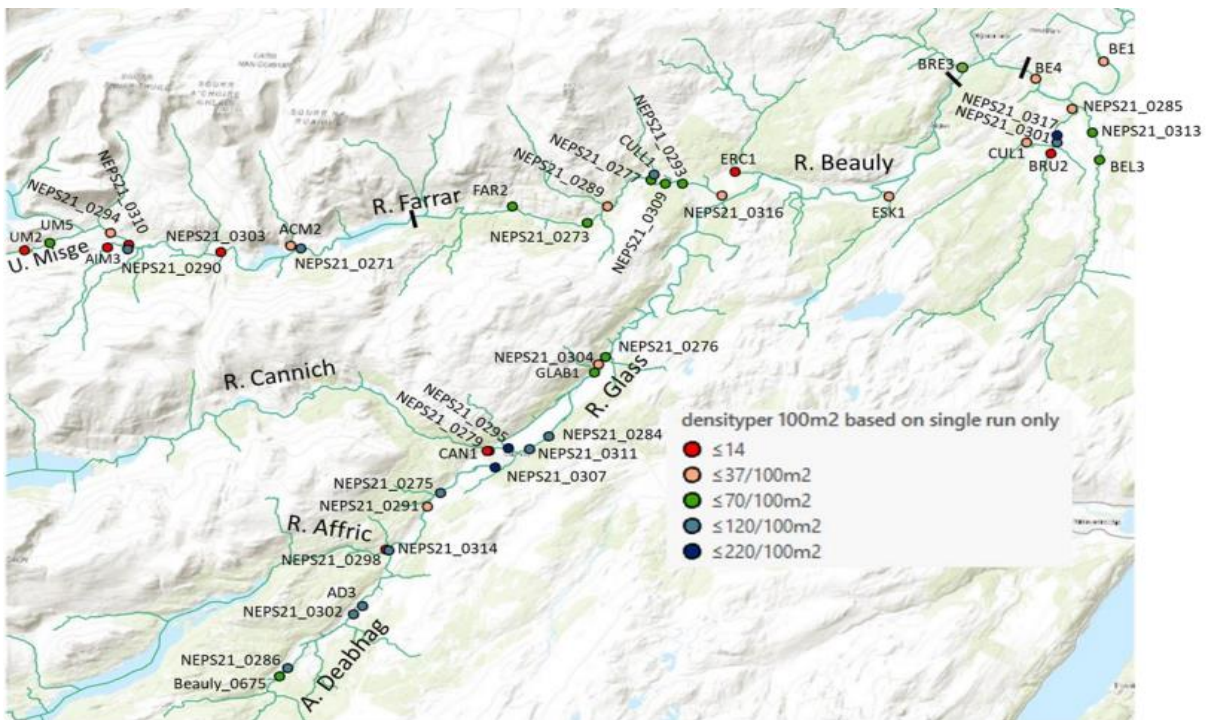
30 National Electrofishing (NEPs) sites and 18 historic sites were completed in summer 2021 with the help of contractor Lynn. Our intern UHI student Karla and volunteers gave us **22 days** of their time and we are very grateful to them. The 48 sites gave a good coverage of the accessible reach, including the mainstem Glass for the first time. Of these, 17 were fully quantitative (3-run) sites (16

NEPS, 1 historic) enabling the potential for capture efficiencies to be calculated. The remainder were single run (semi-quantitative).

Not only were fish densities ascertained, but water sampling and genetic sampling of parr was also completed (National Introgression Programme). The surveys highlighted:

- potential hydro-morphological problems on the Rivers Cannich and Affric
- The Glass mainstem having higher average fry densities in comparison with the Farrar mainstem. Incorporating higher numbers of sites in future analysis should make comparison statistically possible
- Fry and parr densities were found to be slightly higher on average compared to 2020, although a vast number of sites would need to be surveyed each year to make between-year comparisons statistically possible.
- The highest parr densities were found in the Belladrum sub-catchment

Overview of minimum salmon fry densities per 100m² found in 2021



For further information please see the [2021 Electro-fishing report](#).

The report made several recommendations including continued sediment management on the Farrar, investigating potential hydro-morphological pressure on rivers Cannich and Affric, ensuring burns are clear debris barriers ahead of spawning time, and encouraging landowners to carry out riparian tree planting in the upper catchment.

Electro-fishing was also done on the Farrar to collect genetics samples from fry, to help ascertain adult numbers. Analysis of these is being done by the River and Lochs Institute.



Lynn assessing fish habitat after electro-fishing on the U. Misge

Adult Sampling Project

2021 saw the board with the Lower Beaully Syndicate ghillies participate in the National Adult Sampling project. This involved the collection of scales, and accurate length and weight data from 16 fish caught on the Lower Beaully. Scale reading was done by Marine Scotland, the report is available [here](#) on the website.

10.0 Update on Conservation Work

(Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist)

Habitat Improvement

Invasives

Invasives work in the catchment is funded by the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) and we are guided by our [Biosecurity Plan](#). 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. The extent of invasive plants (especially in and around Beaully) is more than the Board alone can deal with so we work with our much valued volunteers.

Key achievements:

- We continue to work with the **Beaully Balsam Bashers** with Lovat estate. In 2021 they gave us **>13 volunteer days** of Himalayan Balsam picking time. Most known sites were picked thoroughly, all of the priority upstream sites were picked, and a kayak survey was conducted to map the Invasives on the Lower Beaully. Please see the [case study](#) on the SISI website for more information.

Map of Himalayan Balsam Picking activity around Beauly, 2021



Red= high effort, Orange= some effort. Map does not include the wider catchment where picking was also carried out.

Skunk cabbage control continues through a mixture of manual removal and spraying at Mauld and at the odd site on the Glass and Beauly. It is due to take place on Kirkton burn shortly.

-Japanese knotweed was treated at various sites in the catchment, including a key site at Struy, with help from trained volunteer Steve who gave us **4.5 days** of his time.

- Mink volunteers monitor rafts and are co-ordinated by Ali. Mink are non-native voracious predators and can impact on the wider biodiversity of the river. 3 mink were dispatched in the catchment between April 2021-May 2022.

Riparian tree work

Planting riparian trees (or encouraging natural regeneration along river banks) is the easiest way of making the catchment resilient to climate change and have multiple other benefits. We have been encouraging landowners to take up riparian tree planting in the following ways:

-The board hosted a 'Trees, Fish, and Carbon Credits' talk at the Lovat Arms on 10 February 2022. This talk was delivered by Ruth, Francis Williams (SEEN) and Russ Jobson (Riverwoods) and was aimed at explaining to landowners how carbon credits and working together could make planting trees close to rivers a viable option, the talk was recorded and is available [here](#).

-A walkover with Russ Jobson (Riverwoods) was conducted on Braulen estate (a priority area) to discuss potential riparian planting options.

-Ruth attended the 'Riverwoods' (Scotland Big Picture) film shown on 21 May, Drumnadrochit and answered questions on a panel along with Brian Shaw (Ness Fishery Board) and Alan McDonnell (Trees for Life).



Trees, Fish, and Carbon Credits

Thursday 10 February, 7pm
Lovat Arms hotel, Beaully

Welcome



RIVERWOODS

Beaully
Fishery Board



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks
TRANSMISSION

Opening slide at Landowner talk

11.0 Fisheries Protection

(Ali Skinner, Fisheries Officer / Bailiff)

I have a varied role, and this includes working with the Senior Biologist, Seasonal Bailiff, Ghillies and volunteers. I am also in regular contact with the Bailiffs from the Ness and Cromarty Boards to share any fisheries intelligence.

I continue to keep a very high profile to deter poaching activity on the rivers and along the coastline. Whilst poaching activity may be declining, there is no doubt that without the dedicated professional work of the BSFB Bailiffs, the rivers Beauly, Glass and Farrar would be far more of a target for such illegal activity.

I have fostered excellent working relationships with the bailiffs, ghillies, river watchers, volunteers and staff from SSE. I arrange for the catchment to be patrolled 14 hours a day (where possible), through a combination of early/day/late/night patrols during the season to try and deter potential poaching activities within the catchment.

Members of the BAC and river watchers have been very helpful passing on information on suspicious behavior and of strange cars parked at the river. I have found the local Police Wildlife Officers to be a great source of information and they have also been extremely helpful when I have had to contact them.

I would like to say a special thank you to the Seasonal Bailiff, Bob Smart, for all his hard work and for the support he gave me in 2021, my first season with the BDSFB.

This season is getting busy. We have received more calls out in May 2022, than during the whole of last season already.

Fisheries Protection is reviewed annually and recommendations are worked on ahead of the following season.



River Patrols

The total numbers of patrols (carried out by both the Fishery Officer and Seasonal bailiff) are shown below.

River	Patrols (25 May 2021-24 May 2022)	Warning Letters Issued
BAC water	432	3
Beaully -Syndicate and Middle	521	3
Glass	173	3
Farrar	177	0
Beaully Firth	228	2

Lower- Middle Beaully

953 patrols were conducted on the Beaully Angling Club (BAC) waters and Lower and Middle beats of the Syndicate during the season May 2021- May 2022. I have spoken to several youths regarding fishing the BAC waters without a permit.

Six anglers were removed from the BAC and Syndicate waters for fishing without a permit and fishing with the wrong tackle. They were all issued with a warning letter and all fishing equipment was seized. They had no Salmon.

I gained permission from the landowner to access Beaufort Castle grounds to carry out patrols in the area. I received permission to set the wildlife cameras in the area and have permission to carry out ongoing patrols on the Castle bank.

1 Monofilament net was found on a Saturday night patrol. No fish were in the net and on inspection no scales were found.

Glass

173 patrols were conducted on the river Glass during the season. Three warning letters were issued, and fishing equipment was seized for small scale fishery offences.

Very few anglers fished the river until August, but we kept a good presence in the area.

I met with the Bailiff and Ghillie from the Glass and agreed our joint working operational plan for the season.

The hut at Balmore beat 6 was broken into and I reported this to the proprietor who said they would investigate.

There has been a massive increase on anglers fishing the river Glass for Brown Trout this year 2022.

Farrar

177 patrols were conducted on the river Farrar and a number of small-scale fisheries issues have been addressed so far (no permits).

I have met with several SSE employees in the Farrar catchment and shared with them both mine and the seasonal Bailiff's contact details.

I have an excellent working relationship with the Ghillies on the Farrar.

Firth

228 patrols were conducted within the Beaully Firth. One angler was observed fishing from a rib. When challenged on his arrival into Kessock pier he could not produce a permit to fish the Firth

and was issued with a warning letter. No fish were onboard his rib. One person was observed fishing below the Kessock bridge and when challenged, had no permit, and was also issued with a warning letter.

One Multi mono net was found on the shoreline while carrying out a night patrol and information passed onto Police Scotland.

I have received numerous phone calls reporting possible poaching in the Beaully Firth by small scale vessels and have been carrying out as many patrols as possible. Several vessels have been inspected on arrival into Kessock pier and only Pollack and Mackerel have been found.

I have contacted Marine Scotland Compliance and this coming year 2022, they will deploy one of their inshore vessels to carry out rib patrols within the Inner Beaully Firth with help from the Beaully bailiffs.

Offences Reported

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

Police Scotland

Beaully Fishery Board participated in Operation Wingspan. This was a joint venture between local Wildlife Crime Officers and Salmon Fishery Board Bailiffs to deter wildlife crime.

I organised several joint patrols throughout the season with the local Wildlife Crime Officer from Police Scotland. This collaborative approach will be ongoing to deter any illegal fishing.

All poaching incidents are passed onto the Wildlife Crime Officer to record on Police Scotland's database.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any issues on the river by email at ali@beaullyfisheryboard.org or by phone on 07786 741482.



12.0 Working with SSE

The Beaully system is heavily affected by hydro-electric schemes operated by SSE. 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. 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.



Catchment visit May 2022

Adult fish passage

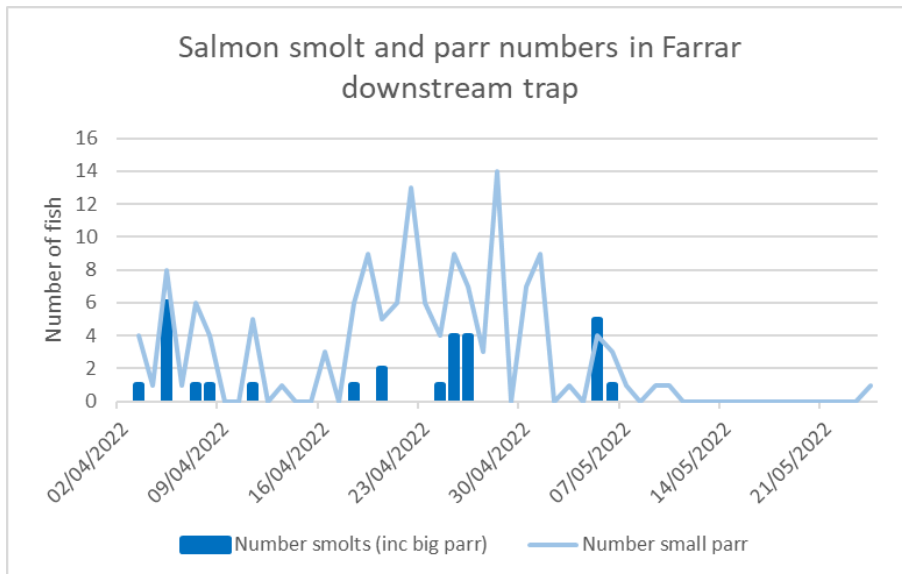
Three daytime lifts occurred throughout the 2021 season and it was agreed by the board and SSE that this improvement in adult fish passage will continue as it is standard mitigation elsewhere in Scotland.

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

In 2021 BFB carried out smolt monitoring to pin down the timing of the smolt run in the catchment to enable better flow management by SSE for improved smolt survival. A 4ft rotary screw trap placed at Fasnakyle (the top of the Glass) was monitored and showed the smolt run to have occurred between 15 April-12 May. As a result enhanced flows for smolts were in place between 22 April-1 June, with a peak total of 152 smolts being reported to be seen by SSE at Aigas and Kilmorack on 27 May. This was a 50% improvement compared to the previous year. For more information see [2021 Smolt report](#).

In spring 2022 the 4ft rst was again in place at Fasnakyle with a view to assessing smolt run timing plus capture efficiency of the trap and smolt output for the Abhainn Deabhag. Unfortunately disaster struck when high flows caused the trap to be damaged after just one night of operation. 130 smolts were recorded in the trap on 5 April.

Trial box trap monitoring (sub-sampling) on the Farrar (on Culligran and Braulen estates) became the main monitoring and smolts were recorded between 5 April-6 May (peak of 5 smolts on 5 May) in the trap downstream of Beannacharan dam. Due to warm preceding temperatures it is likely smolts were running earlier than this.



SSE’s smolt protection protocol was similar to that in place in 2021. SSE implemented Phase 1 flows for smolts between 1 April-31 May with Phase 2 flows being in place between 25 April-28 May. The 2022 smolt report will be available on the website in due course. Thanks to our volunteers who gave us **9 days** of their time to help us with this monitoring.

Flows and sediment management

Observations continue to be made on potential hydro-morphological issues in the catchment.

2021 electro-fishing highlighted a lack of spawning substrate and very low salmon fry densities at the bottom of Cannich and Affric rivers. With the help of trainee Louise we are currently conducting walkover surveys of the Cannich and Affric rivers to understand better what is going on and whether improved sediment management (or equivalent mitigation) at Mullardoch and Beinn a’Mheadhoin dams could help or not. A report will be produced in due course.

The 2021 electro-fishing also showed a lower average fry density on the Farrar when compared to the Glass and further sites are required before proper analysis can take place. Old photos (pre-dam) do suggest that there was a greater prevalence of pebble-gravel (spawning) substrate than is currently there, however a walkover and further investigation is required.

We are part of the FMS hydro-group and continue engaging to help improve the systems in place in regard to SEPA’s regulation and higher level SSE- fishery board engagement.

Kelt monitoring

It has been shown that a significant proportion of kelts may come back as repeat spawners so it is vital that they are allowed unimpeded passage out of the catchment. Kelts are able to travel down the fish passes at all three dams in the accessible reach but sometimes numbers above the dams do build up. SSE and Board staff regularly check for this and at least two kelt releases occurred in March- April this year.

13.0 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 2021. 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 10th June 2021. 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 2021 can be viewed at <http://beaully.dsfb.org.uk/>.

An annual public meeting was held on 8th December 2020. Five members of the public attended.

In addition, meetings of the Board were held on 10th June; 23rd September; 8th December 2021 and 1st February; 30th March 2022. These meetings were publicised by means of the Board's website. The approved 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 2020-21, including approved accounts for the year to 31 December 2020, was published on the same website and a copy sent to Scottish Government. Draft Annual Accounts to 31 December 2021 are attached to this report at Appendix 2.

The annual report 2021-22 and accounts for 2021 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.

14.0 Other work

Bird Counts

Ali Skinner co-ordinated the 2022 spring sawbill count to aid our 2022 licence application. This was carried out 22 April with Bob smart, our seasonal bailiff. Bird count results, observations recorded by ghillies and scaring and shooting activities will be submitted to NatureScot as part of a control licence renewal application.

Advice and consultations

Advice was provided for a broadleaf planting scheme at Struy, improvements to the bridge at Foxhole, bank works at Kilmorack, and Affric gravel clearing.

Endorsement for a joint Agri-Environment Scheme to reduce diffuse pollution going into the Beaully Firth was given (April 2022).

Pollution Incidents

Unusually, three dead adult fish were found on the Lower Beaully between 1-5 July 2021. Two of the fish had net marks on them and water temperatures at time of collection were warm (recorded up to 17.2°C). It was concluded that two of these fish had died due to a combination of netting stress and temperature. Improvements to fish passage at the dams and bailiffing should help this stop occurring again.

Foam was reported to SEPA on the Allt na Glaic tributary of Belladrum burn by a member of the public on 22 January 2022. The burn was walked and no dead fish were seen.

Pink salmon

A Pink salmon was found dead on the Lower Beaully on 2 Sep. This is the first known record of Pink salmon on the Beaully. All details were recorded and entered onto the FMS app.



15.0 Priorities for the Forthcoming Year

Our priorities for the coming year are in line with our statutory function and draft Fishery Management Plan and will include the following: -

Fisheries Protection

We will ensure bailiffing is carried out during the fishing season in co-ordination with Marine Scotland compliance, Police Scotland, and neighbouring catchments. We will continue to encourage proprietors to improve their permitting systems for more effective bailiffing.

Fish Surveys

As the National Electro-fishing Programme for Scotland (NEPs) will not be happening in 2022, electro-fishing surveys will focus on assessing the potential hydro-morphology (substrate and flows) pressure in relation to the dams, and also coastal burns as these are not included in NEPs. Invertebrate sampling at historic sites may occur if time/ staffing allows. The board aims to host 2x UHI interns (if available) over the summer to get the electro-fishing work done. Going forward, the board aims to participate in the NEPs work as this allows a contractor to be employed as a second team member and a large number of sites to be surveyed.

The board intends to participate in the **National Adult Sampling Project** in partnership with the Lower Beaully Fishing Syndicate ghillies.

Habitat Improvement

The board will continue to eradicate invasives in the catchment in an upstream to downstream direction with a focus in 2022 on the large patch of Japanese Knotweed at Beaully as this will have multiple biodiversity and community benefits. We have two willing (and trained) volunteers able to give a significant amount of their time to this specific project.

We aim to continue encouraging more riparian trees to grow in the catchment. Specifically we aim to work with Braulen estate and start working with Trees for Life's riparian project officer to get more riparian trees in the upper catchment to help buffer the future impacts of climate change and improve nutrient availability to fish.

Working with SSE

We hope to complete **fish count validation** work at the three dams in the catchment to assess how accurate the Mark12 fish counters are. This year SSE will commence trialling AI technology/ a new generation of fish counters so this may fit well with their work.

We are working with SSE on future **smolt monitoring** plans for improved smolt survival. This may involve installing a 6ft rotary screw trap a few km above Aigas dam to capture smolts from across the catchment to improve our estimate of when smolts are running. This may also start to allow us to estimate smolt output for (most of) the catchment.

An initial report summarising the results of the fish habitat/ substrate walkovers on the Cannich and Affric rivers will be ready in due course and will form the basis for discussions with SSE about the

potential for **improved sediment management** in the catchment for improved spawning and fry habitat. We hope to conduct a walkover of the Farrar and Lower Beaulieu in due course.

We will continue monitoring **kelt** build ups at the dams.

Other work

The Board will continue to gather evidence to inform applications for lethal control of sawbill birds and make improvements to the monitoring of specialist seal ingress into the river.

Continued co-ordination of blockage clearing on tributaries will continue to ensure good fish passage.



Debris blockages on the Belladrum sub-catchment

We will also continue providing advice to developers and supporting landowners to participate in Agri-environment schemes.

Report prepared by: -

Alastair Campbell, Clerk to the Board

Ruth Watts, Senior Biologist

Ali Skinner, Fisheries Officer, Bailiff

APPENDIX 1
BEAULY DSFB CONSERVATION POLICY
2021

BEAULY DISTRICT FISHERY BOARD

SALMON & SEA TROUT CONSERVATION POLICY

2022

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

Given current concerns regarding salmon stocks, the Board supports and encourages responsible catch and release practice throughout the season, with the aim of achieving 100%. Specific policy guidance is given below.

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.
- Be mindful of water temperature. During a warm summer the best time to fish will be in the morning before river temperatures have warmed up. When water temperature is above 18°C consider stopping fishing until temperature is lower. Warm water holds less oxygen, and a fish played in warm water will be more stressed, and this can decrease survival rates for released fish.

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 2021

Beauly District Fishery Board

Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

A9 Accountancy Limited
Elm House
Cradlehall Business Park
Inverness
IV2 5GH

Beaulieu District Fishery Board

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**Independent Examiner's Report to the Board Board of Directors on the Preparation of
the Accounts of
Beaully District Fishery Board
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021**

I report to the board on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 which are set out on pages 2 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of river proprietors and examiner

The river proprietors are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013. The river proprietors consider that an audit of the financial statements is not required. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

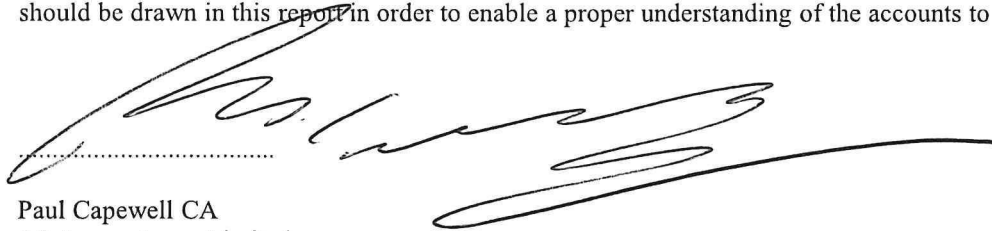
My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the board and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the board members concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter had come to my attention:

- which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep accounting records and prepare accounts in accordance with the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 or the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 have not been met; or
- to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Paul Capewell CA
A9 Accountancy Limited
Elm House
Cradlehall Business Park
Inverness
IV2 5GH

Date: 23/12/21

Beauly District Fishery Board

Profit and Loss Account for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover		<u>138,192</u>	<u>100,571</u>
Gross profit		138,192	100,571
Administrative expenses		<u>(128,592)</u>	<u>(52,093)</u>
Operating profit		9,600	48,478
Other interest receivable and similar income		<u>6</u>	<u>36</u>
Profit before tax		<u>9,606</u>	<u>48,514</u>
Profit for the financial year		<u><u>9,606</u></u>	<u><u>48,514</u></u>

The above results were derived from continuing operations.

The company has no recognised gains or losses for the year other than the results above.

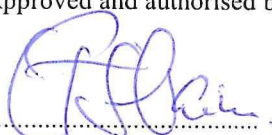
Beauly District Fishery Board

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	3	3,344	3,672
Current assets			
Debtors	4	15,533	4,546
Cash at bank and in hand		81,878	96,088
		<u>97,411</u>	<u>100,634</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	5	<u>(6,117)</u>	<u>(19,274)</u>
Net current assets		<u>91,294</u>	<u>81,360</u>
Net assets		<u>94,638</u>	<u>85,032</u>
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		94,638	85,032
Shareholders' funds		<u>94,638</u>	<u>85,032</u>

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 3 May 2022, we approve the financial statements set out on pages 2 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 A9 Accountancy Limited with all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

Approved and authorised by the Board on 9/1/22..... and signed on its behalf by:


.....
Frank Spencer Nairm
Chairman

Beauly District Fishery Board

Statement of Changes in Equity for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Profit and loss account £	Total £
At 1 January 2021	85,032	85,032
Profit for the year	9,606	9,606
Total comprehensive income	<u>9,606</u>	<u>9,606</u>
At 31 December 2021	<u>94,638</u>	<u>94,638</u>
	Profit and loss account £	Total £
At 1 January 2020	36,518	36,518
Profit for the year	48,514	48,514
Total comprehensive income	<u>48,514</u>	<u>48,514</u>
At 31 December 2020	<u>85,032</u>	<u>85,032</u>

The notes on pages 5 to 7 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Beaully District Fishery Board

Notes to the Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting policies

Statement of compliance

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).

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.

Income

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

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are stated in the balance sheet at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

The cost of tangible assets includes directly attributable incremental costs incurred in their acquisition and installation.

Depreciation

Depreciation is charged so as to write off the cost of assets, other than land and properties under construction over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Plant and machinery	25% straight line basis

2 Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year, was 3 (2020 - 1).

Beaully District Fishery Board

Notes to the Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

3 Tangible assets

	Plant and machinery	Total
	£	£
Cost or valuation		
At 1 January 2021	4,896	4,896
Additions	1,195	1,195
At 31 December 2021	6,091	6,091
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2021	1,224	1,224
Charge for the year	1,523	1,523
At 31 December 2021	2,747	2,747
Carrying amount		
At 31 December 2021	3,344	3,344
At 31 December 2020	3,672	3,672

4 Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	10,825	2,007
Prepayments	4,708	2,539
	15,533	4,546

5 Creditors

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Due within one year		
Trade creditors	3,081	13,673
Taxation and social security	1,992	1,011
Accruals and deferred income	1,044	4,590
	6,117	19,274

Beaulieu District Fishery Board

Notes to the Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

6 Control

The board is controlled by the elected proprietors.

7 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.

8 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingencies

Amounts not provided for in the balance sheet

The total amount of financial commitments not included in the balance sheet is £12,562 (2020 - £9,275).

Beauly District Fishery Board

Detailed Profit and Loss Account for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Turnover		
Levies receivable	75,445	60,011
Income from SSE Renewables	41,819	40,560
Contracting income	20,928	-
	<u>138,192</u>	<u>100,571</u>
Employment costs		
Wages and salaries (excluding directors)	(70,645)	(15,114)
Staff NIC (Employers)	(2,474)	-
Staff pensions (Defined contribution)	(2,678)	-
Health & safety costs and training courses	(1,457)	-
Staff clothing	(755)	(457)
	<u>(78,009)</u>	<u>(15,571)</u>
Establishment costs		
Insurance	(3,849)	(1,723)
Upkeep of property	(83)	-
Small tools and equipment	(1,803)	(1,576)
Fisheries Management Scotland	(331)	(1,775)
	<u>(6,066)</u>	<u>(5,074)</u>
General administrative expenses		
Telephone and fax	(945)	(363)
Irrecoverable VAT	(6,732)	(2,866)
Computer costs	(12)	(473)
Administration costs	(8,017)	(10,829)
Anti-poaching costs	-	(2,668)
Trade subscriptions	(823)	(678)
Sundry expenses	(1,011)	(201)
Project expenses	(4,793)	-
Motor expenses	(13,684)	(3,394)
Advertising	-	(509)
Accountancy fees	(3,625)	(2,790)
Legal and professional fees	(3,196)	(5,264)
	<u>(42,838)</u>	<u>(30,035)</u>
Finance charges		
Bank charges	(155)	(189)
Depreciation costs		
Depreciation of plant and machinery	(1,524)	(1,224)
Other interest receivable and similar income		
Bank interest receivable	6	36

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements.

