

MINUTES OF MEETING  
of the  
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board  
Held at Bruce Hotel, Newton Stewart  
On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 5:30pm

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**Present**

Terence Flanagan – Chairman  
Steve Smith – Mandatory (Lord Crampton)  
Dougal Evans – Mandatory (Lord Granchester and Andrew Stewart)  
Jim Davidson  
John Galloway - NSAA  
Tom Kenyon  
Jonathan Haley  
Johnnie Johnstone - NSAA  
Duncan Bailey – Angler Representative

Also in attendance:-

Matthew Pumphrey – Clerk  
Jamie Ribbens – GFT

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were intimated from:-

Christine Welsh – SNH  
George McShane – Angler Representative  
Murdo Crosbie - RCHHT  
John Gorman - SEPA

**2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

These were approved without demur.

**3. Matters Arising**

Steve Smith asked whether the River Management Plan should be on the website and if so where. It was agreed that it should be placed under the link “Conservation”.

Jamie Ribbens raised some points regarding the River Management Plan. The Chairman indicated that the Plan had been agreed at the last meeting, but pointed out in relation to the timing of provision of the Stocking Plan, that this was to be no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> August “if possible”.

**4. GFT Report**

Jamie Ribbens provided a handout with 8 numbered points and briefly spoke to these points. On point 4 the Chairman asked about the results of the sampling programme. Jamie Ribbens indicated that he would bring the results to the attention of the Board once they were available.

Jamie Ribbens also provided a handout entitled "Celtic Sea Trout Project (Information sourced from CSTP Talks)". The handout included some information about sea lice. Jamie Ribbens said that the figures should be regarded with care because quite a lot of information was still not available and it might be that the mean figure for presence of sea lice in salmon was misleading. He did feel that a common approach should be adopted by other fisheries on the Irish Sea because the same trend in the decline of fish affected all rivers flowing into the Irish Sea although in different degrees.

## **5. RCHHT Report**

The Chairman circulated a handout provided by Murdo Crosbie who unfortunately had already intimated that he could not attend the meeting. There was some discussion on the merits of controlling numbers of pike and perch in the river the theory being sometimes that perch were more dangerous to salmon than pike and that as pike ate the perch there might be some merit in ensuring that the bigger pike should be put back to control their lesser brethren.

The Chairman indicated that the Kirkland Burn may be good enough to support spawning fish.

It was mentioned that the control of Japanese Knotweed was slightly more complicated than had often been thought and it was important to poison it in the first year but then not to do so again until it was properly again in flower.

## **6. Register of Interests**

Some of these forms had already been returned viz from Terence Flanagan, Dougal Evans on behalf of three clients, John Galloway, Tom Kenyon, James Davidson and Steve Smith. Could the others please be returned on 4<sup>th</sup> June?

## **7. Complaints Procedure**

This was approved. The Chairman reminded the Clerk that it must now be sent to the Scottish Government.

## **8. Proposed Letter to Alex Salmond (Steve Smith)**

Steve Smith had circulated the proposed letter. There was some concern expressed about ensuring that the facts stated in the letter were correct and could be justified. Steve Smith agreed with this. It was agreed that there should be a sub-committee to discuss the exact wording of the letter. That sub-committee would consist of Terence Flanagan, Steve Smith and Jim Davidson.

## **9. Wild Fisheries Review**

Most members appeared to have the ASFB paper on this. The Chairman said that he was most unhappy with some of the proposals and in particular the proposal to centralise or regionalise fishery management and to diminish the powers of smaller boards such as the Cree to run their own rivers. The Board, generally, agreed with the Chairman's stance.

The Chairman then went through the questionnaire part of the ASFB handout. The numbered paragraphs related to structure, critical mass, funding mechanisms, proprietorial representation, likely impact on current networks and conclusions. Five of the boxes were agreed and 18

disagreed. Some were regarded as not applicable as they assumed a regional structure which the Board were opposed to.

Jonathan Haley made the point with which everybody agreed that he would not wish to attend a meeting in Dumfries where the problems of coalmining in the River Nith at New Cumnock would be on the agenda any more than anybody from Dumfries would be interested in coming to Newton Stewart to discuss afforestation on the River Cree. Even Rivers in Dumfries & Galloway have different issues let alone other Rivers in other parts of Scotland.

#### **10. Any other Business**

The Chairman raised the question of fish eating birds. There was some discussion about cormorants and goosanders. Tom Kenyon raised the point about chemicals being used by the Forestry Commission for their trees and Jamie Ribbens mentioned in answer to that that there had been a lesson to be learnt from the activities of the Scottish Woodlands organisation on the River Annan. It was agreed however that the bird count should be supported but it would mean close liaison between all relevant proprietors to ensure that the bird count was done properly and effectively. The Chairman would look to proprietors to assist, with a view to arranging a bird count in the autumn.

#### **11. Date of Next Meeting**

Because John Gorman had agreed to give a presentation and 4<sup>th</sup> June was his preferred date it was agreed that the date of the next meeting should be 4<sup>th</sup> June at 5.30pm at the Bruce Hotel.