

Draft

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE FINDHORN
DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD held
at Logie House on Monday the 18th November
2013 at 10.30am

Present: Alasdair Laing – Chairman
Ewen Brodie
Anthony Laing
Diana Osborne
Rob Hoskin
David Sneddon
Lady Balgonie
Seymour Monro
Angus McNicol

In attendance: William Cowie – Clerk
Albert Duffus – Superintendent
Sean McLean, Bailiff
Robert Laughton – Director, Findhorn, Nairn & Lossie Fisheries Trust
Valerie Wardlaw – Administrator, FNLFT

Item	Action
1 Apologies had been received from Philip Mackenzie, Andrew Howard, Lord Cawdor, and Alastair Gordon-Cumming.	
2 Minute of Meeting held on 21st August 2013 at 2pm and post AGM meeting at 4pm Minutes were thereafter approved for signature.	
3 Matters Arising Not Covered Below Scale Reading Equipment: RL has identified equipment, total cost will be below £500, so intends to purchase as the Board agreed previously.	RL
Proprietor's Website- Alasdair Laing has discussed the inappropriate content with the proprietor, but the website has still not been updated. Will Cowie to write formally to the proprietor requesting he removes information which does not comply with the Findhorn Conservation code.	WC
Biosecurity- Robert and Ewen met and agreed a simplified Biosecurity form for next year- EB will circulate to all.	EB
4 Admin, Budget & Finance The Accounts have been discussed with Andrew Howard and Philip Mackenzie- they queried the Sundry expenses, ASFB subscription and Investment Portfolio items, but all these issues are now resolved. Previous year's debtors total is due to a delay in information reaching the District Assessor and thus the assessments being sent out. There are three beats which are proving difficult to raise the assessment from. Will Cowie requested a separate meeting with Alasdair to agree a way forward. The Board agreed that Philip and Andrew could sign off the accounts.	WC/AL PM/AH

Minutes, Administration & Clerk- R&R Urquhart have not been able to provide effective admin support for the Board recently and Alasdair will detail proposals at the end of the meeting to discuss ways forward. **AL**

Board Vehicle- Will Cowie to detail the repair costs on the current vehicle to inform a decision as to whether it is more economical to buy a new vehicle. **WC**

FNLFT: Seymour Monro outlined the FNLFT finances and indicated there would be a shortfall of £5000 for 2013-14. To meet this shortfall Seymour outlined a proposal to raise a contribution from Findhorn proprietors, which took into consideration contributions already made to the FNLFT by anglers and proprietors from estates such as Lethen, Glenferness, and Altyre. The Board agreed to raise this one-off contribution through an additional assessment, sent out with the annual Findhorn assessment letters. **VW**

5 Conservation Code 2014

Ewen Brodie circulated a paper prior to the meeting (see attached). The Spring run release rate was discussed in detail as the run is the most fragile population. The options were to retain the current code at 70% release rate or to introduce a 100% release rate until the 1st May. There was a slight majority in favour of keeping the current code. Alasdair Laing will email board members not present at the meeting to ascertain their feelings and then will confirm the majority decision. **AL**

Grilse code- the Board agreed to amend the code to reduce the keep rate for grilse from 4 to 2 as follows: Keep rate 1 salmon (under 9lbs) or 2 grilse (any fish under 4lbs) per rod per 6 days. Alasdair will confirm with other Board members that they agree to this change. **AL**

6 Hatchery

The Corrievorrie Hatchery is not available this year due to a change in proprietor. The Lethen hatchery has been mothballed this year.

Robert Laughton gave a summary of the current scientific research on the effectiveness of hatcheries. The scientific consensus is that hatcheries do not increase effectively the number of fish returning to rivers, although they can be beneficial for restocking damaged rivers. The Findhorn has a healthy fish population and so does not require a hatchery to restock. Habitat improvements and barrier removal are better methods for improving fish stocks. There is a RAFTS draft policy on hatcheries which agrees with Robert's opinion.

The Board agreed to retain equipment at the Lethen Hatchery in case of an incident affecting fish stocks in the future. Robert and Seymour will be attending the AST Stocking Conference next week and will report back. **RL/SM**

7 Rafting

Alasdair Laing met with Jim Davis from Ace Adventure (Other board members and activity providers were unable to attend). Alasdair showed Jim the video clip from Darnaway showing the disruption rafts can cause. Jim will use the video to train his staff as the rafts were overinflated and so stranded more often than necessary. Jim is looking into a Code of Conduct for rafters for the Findhorn- based on the Tay code. Robert Laughton has a Spey code he **RL**

will forward to AL.

8 Catchment Developments

Board Consultee Status- Alasdair has confirmed that the FDSFB is unlikely to be a statutory consultee. However Valerie Wardlaw will investigate if there is a way to be advised about new developments through Highland and Moray councils as applications are made.

VW

Glen Kyllachy - Alasdair and Robert are meeting with the developers on 19th November to discuss the EIA.

AL/RL

Tom nan Clach - planning consent given, works will commence in 2016. Angus McNicol to keep Valerie informed of any changes or developments.

AM/VW

Glaschyle - application goes to planning committee next month.

Cairn Dhuie - Scoping application submitted and under consideration

Moy Windfarm - received planning consent, Robert Laughton is contacting them to discuss a monitoring programme.

RL

Berryburn- will be starting generating soon; the monitoring contract will continue for two years.

9 River Reports

Albert Duffus circulated the season's catch returns (see attached). There are 5 returns outstanding which he is chasing up and he will circulate the complete returns once received. Catches are substantially reduced due to low water levels this year.

AD

Seymour Monro reported on the Moray Firth Predator Management Group which has been rejuvenated, chaired by Roger Knight. Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Boards have applied for a cull next year - for 6 + 2 for the Findhorn. The Predator Management Plan is being reviewed in the next six months.

The Joint Chairs of the three DSFBs are meeting with the FNLFT on the 4th of December to discuss future projects and finance.

**AL/SM/
WC/RL**

The FNLFT has launched a Friends scheme to support the Trust's activities with a new leaflet. If you would like copies of the leaflet please contact the Trust's office.

Atlantic Salmon Trust salmon and trout recognition and life cycle posters are available from the Trust for £15 (£3 goes to the FNLFT).

Robert Laughton will be contacting keepers etc to help with the next sawbill count- date t.b.c. but around the 12th of December

RL

10 AOCB

David Sneddon reported that the Forres Flood Alleviation scheme is ahead of schedule and hopes that there will be little disruption to the next season.

11 Date of next meeting: Friday the 23rd May 2014 at Logie- venue t.b.c. Dates of meetings and AGM for the remainder of the year will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

