



River Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board

Clerk: Will Cowie

Administrator: Valerie Wardlaw

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Minute of Meeting of the Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board

Held on Monday 23rd May 2016 in the Long Room, Logie Steading, at 10.30am

Present: Alasdair Laing – Chairman
 Andrew Howard
 Philip Mackenzie
 Graham Bell

Robert Hoskin
 Billy Strathdee
 Julie Balgonie

In attendance:

Sean Mclean- Head Bailiff
 William Forrester- Bailiff

Robert Laughton – Director, FNLFT
 Valerie Wardlaw – Administrator, FDSFB

	Item	Action
1.	Apologies: Ewen Brodie, Mark Laing , Alastair Gordon Cumming, Anthony Laing, Colin Cawdor Billy Strathdee introduced Graham Bell from Findhorn Angling Association who will represent FAA on the board in future.	
2.	Minutes of Meeting held on 14th December 2015 Minutes were approved.	
3.	Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biosecurity- AlaL confirmed that Marine Scotland conducted a desk based biosecurity exercise to examine actions required in the event of an outbreak of GS. A report from the exercise will be circulated when it becomes available. • Potential Board members- the Board has a vacant seat and several board members are planning to stand down at the Triennial Elections in August. AlaL/PM/JB will sound out potential new board members. • Findhorn DSFB reserves- R&R Urquhart advise that it would cost approx. £2,000 to set up a Charitable Trust. The Board agreed to delay any action until further information is available about a possible central fund for boards to transfer their reserves into. VW to obtain the information required by OSCR for Charitable Trusts. The Board will decide on further actions before the WFR legislation is enacted. • Daltulich/Dounduff levy- VW to confirm if DSFBs can decide to write off the two years of levy owed. The Board agreed to write off the levy if legally able to do so. 	AlaL AlaL/PM JB VW VW
4.	Budgets and Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Accounts for 1st February 2015 to 31st January 2016 were presented and approved by the Board. AlaL will discuss the management charges for the Rathbones Investment Account (approx. 1% of the fund) with CC. • Smolt Trap- RL to cost a proposal for a smolt trap on the Findhorn in spring 2017 to obtain data to feed into the conservation limits model. RL to discuss potential sites with Moray Estates/Forres AA. The trap would need to be monitored on a daily basis. RL and the Findhorn bailiffs have been helping monitor the trap on the Nairn this year, so 	VW AlaL RL RL/AH/ GB/BS

	<p>two traps being used simultaneously in 2017 will stretch resources. Moray Estates offered staff to help, but anyone else who is interested contact RL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The detailed juvenile fish surveys for the Findhorn in 2014 and 2011 were badly affected by weather and so the data is fragmented. Electrofishing data could also enhance the conservation limits model. The Board asked RL to cost a proposal to run the electrofishing surveys on the Findhorn this year (it is the turn of the Lossie for the regular FNLFT surveys). • Budget for 1st Feb 2016 to 31st January 2017 – a draft budget with the levy set at 51p in the £ was circulated, which will result in a £600 deficit at the end of the year. <p>Two additional budgetary items were discussed. The contribution the Findhorn DSFB makes to projects conducted on its behalf by the FNLFT has remained static at £10,000 since 2012. The actual cost of the biologist's time to conduct this work averages at £23,000 per year for the last three years. The Board agreed to increase the contribution to the FNLFT to help cover project costs from £10k to £12k.</p> <p>The FNLFT has been successful in gaining £19k funding from the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund for the control of INNS along the Findhorn and Lossie in 2016. To access this funding £2191 as the Contributing Third Party Payment was required. The FNLFT was successful in gaining half of this CTP payment from the Berry Burn Community Fund. The Board agreed to contribute the other half- £1092- which enables £13,200 to be spent on contractors and herbicide to treat GH & JK along the Findhorn from Daltulich Bridge downstream to the A96. AlaL has received advice on the legal position re the responsibilities of landowners to control invasive plants and will circulate this.</p> <p>These two additional items would use £3k from the £5k contingency in the Budget. The Board agreed to set the 2016 assessment at 51p in the £</p>	<p>AH/ALL</p> <p>RL</p> <p>AlaL</p> <p>VW</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Triennial Elections</p> <p>VW has circulated an example of the paperwork required to be sent to all Findhorn Proprietors in preparation for the Triennial Elections in August. VW will circulate this paperwork with an additional explanation of Upper and Lower proprietors and where the dividing line between the two lies. The Board agreed to keep the total number of elected places as follows: 2x Lower Proprietors, 9x Upper Proprietors and 1x Co-opted member (FNLFT Chair). AH will confirm that Moray Estates can host the meeting on Sunday the 21st of August- Board meeting at 11am, followed by AGM & Triennial Elections, lunch. AH also offered to organise a short tour after lunch if required.</p>	<p>VW</p> <p>AH</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>WFR</p> <p>AlaL updated the meeting on progress to date- the Minister in charge of the process should be announced next week, and the legislative programme in the next 10 days. The new legislation is likely to be published in the spring 2017 at the earliest. When the legislation is enacted DSFBs will cease to exist. There are likely to be c. 16 FMOs which will be responsible for all forms of wild fishery- coarse as well as migratory.</p>	

7.	<p>Season to Date SM circulated catch data to date- see attached. 214 fish have been caught and returned- 93 up on the same time last year. SM is still waiting on returns from 3 beats. The Board briefly discussed the Conservation Code and agreed to discuss it further at the August board meeting- in particular requesting 100% catch and release for all beats in September. The Board considered that in light of the Findhorn only just being assigned Grade 1 status, it would be unwise to request to extend the season into October.</p>	<p>SM ALL/RL</p>
8.	<p>Head Bailiff Report SM has been circulating monthly reports with detail of their activities. In addition there has been a recent incident where the bailiff vehicle tires were slashed. This has been reported to the police, and in addition, information on anglers who were reported worming at Tomatin. SM & WF has been helping manage the Nairn smolt trap- where upwards of 10,000 salmon smolts have been recorded. The bailiffs participated in a netting exercise in Findhorn Bay, and they continue to monitor mink sightings and help with INNS control. The sawbill quota is nearly complete and will be managed differently next year- starting earlier in the year, with SM taking the majority of the quota. SM will ensure that all landowners have given their permission for any quota that is taken on their land.</p>	<p>RH/SM</p>
9.	<p>FNLFT Director Report RL reported that the Berry Burn WF monitoring is now finished and Marine Scotland are analysing all the data with the intention of publishing a paper. No gross changes in the tributary burns during construction of the WF were detected. Monitoring of the construction of Moy WF will continue for another year, and contracts to monitor Tom Nan Clach and other prospective WFs are in discussion. Conservation Limits model- RL considers more angling effort data is required as the current model is based on very poor data. Further electrofishing and smolt data (discussed earlier in the meeting) will create a more accurate model. Fish counters would give the most accurate data on fish populations, but are very expensive and RL knows of only one site in the Findhorn catchment- on the Muckle Burn - which would be suitable. Coignafearn- RL will be meeting Roy Dennis and Estate staff to discuss a long term monitoring programme of their improvements to upland habitats through drain blocking etc. Lochindorb- new signs have been created to protect Black Throated Divers by informing anglers of the potential damage caused by discarded fishing tackle. The Findhorn Bailiffs plan to patrol at Lochindorb to reinforce this message.</p>	<p>RL SM/WF</p>
10	<p>Catchment Developments A9- RL has provided data and continues to be consulted as the final line of the road is developed. A96- RL is being consulted on the Nairn by-pass and will monitor the development of the river crossings of the Findhorn and Muckle Burn when the next stage of the A96 is developed.</p>	<p>RL RL</p>
11	<p>AOCB Biosecurity- Ewen Brodie's email comments were discussed- RL to draft information on decontaminating kit for the next board meeting and then for circulation to all proprietors. The Findhorn Bailiffs could also make</p>	<p>RL</p>

	<p>occasional spot checks. Catch maximisation for maintaining Conservation status. The Board agreed to continue angling as usual, rather than advocating any change in angling behaviour. Tom nan Clach WF- site meeting tomorrow at 10am as part of the appeal process.</p>	
12	<p>Dates of future meetings:</p> <p>Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors (AGM plus Triennial Elections) Sunday August 21st (venue Moray Estates with lunch t.b.c.)</p> <p>Board & Annual Public Meeting Monday 21st November, 10.30am venue t/b/c/</p>	