

Argyll District Salmon Fishery Board

Minutes of the Board Meeting held at the Argyll Hotel, Inveraray on 24th October 2012

Present - Board

Roger Brook (Chair) (Awe) **RB**
Stephen Gibbs (Arran) **SG**
Caroline Fleming (Arran) **CF**
David Stewart (Creran) **DS**
Tuggy Delap (Fyne) **TD**
Andrew Montgomery (Fyne) **AM**
Andrew Barker (Ruel) **AB**
Jimmy Middleton (Tenant nets men's rep)

Apologies

Michael Handley (Nell)
Willie Shaw (Salmon angling rep)

Present - Others

Richard McKenzie **RMcK** (LAIA)
Tom Turnbull
Jane Wright **JW**
Donna-Claire Hunter (RAFTS)
Penny Hawdon (Scottish Salmon Company)
Marina Curran-Coltart (A&B Council)
Richard Hammond
Keith Miller (AFT)
Craig MacIntyre (Clerk/AFT) **CM**
Daniel Brazier (AFT)
Alan Kettle-White (AFT)
Helen MacIntyre (Administrator)

1. **Apologies** were offered.

2. **Minutes of the AGM of 20th April 2012** were accepted.

3. Matters arising

Seal marksman course - RB said that if you have the deer shooting qualification DSC1 then you don't need to do the full seal marksman qualification, you can just do the theory test on the internet for £280 plus £25 to 'validate' your DSC1 certificate. CF asked if ADSFB would make representations objecting to the cost of the seal marksman course, and RB said that we have already.

Levies – SG said that Arran proprietors were not happy with the change in levy calculations as they are now paying more, and that they want to investigate delisting rivers that have few/no fish in them. RB explained that the Board has done as much as we can within the law, including recalculating Arran levies using Argyll & Bute rules rather than Ayrshire. He is aware that Kintyre rivers are not benefitting much from the Board. The District Assessors will not reduce the minimum value. He pointed out that delisting some rivers will mean the levy will have to go up for others. CF said they don't get much back for their levies, it's more like a tax. RB pointed out that it did used to be a sporting tax, and that AFT has surveyed Arran's rivers but understands that that is the cheapest part of making improvements. The Board was created to bring all proprietors together for everyone's benefit. Argyll's voice is heard in Holyrood and at other fishery boards and trusts. It wouldn't be cheap to disband the Board. DS agreed that the Board gives a bigger voice to lots of tiny rivers. RB suggested that a sub-committee could be formed for the small rivers. SG agreed they could try it. RMcK suggested that small rivers promote increasing income, but CF pointed out they can only get income if there are fish to be caught. TD said one small river can't improve itself alone, so we must club together. RB said we have introduced Fishpal to help increase income for some rivers. JW said Fishpal needs to be reinvigorated next year, and RB agreed.

4. ADSFB Executive Committee

RB – Tuggy Delap has joined the joint AFT/ADSFB Executive Committee. No contact has been received from Ross Appleyard.

5. Finance

a) Levy recovery

We have a lawyer ready to collect unpaid levies from Kintyre.

b) 2013 Budget

There is a small surplus of approx £5000. We will use it for habitat restoration, and the executive committee will decide on this.

6. Clerk's Progress Report

CM gave the progress report. Points of interest include:

- There have been lots of hydro scheme applications this year because the tariffs for joining the national grid go up at the end of next year.
- New fish farm site in Loch Striven is not being objected to. Skipness and Cock of Arran sites are no longer being pursued by the salmon companies.
- We have an agreement with Scottish Salmon Company regarding seal shooting licenses where they will take some of our quota of seals and in return they will arrange to shoot any problem seals for the Board.
- The Board now sits on Water Framework Directive advisory groups, and SEPA diffuse pollution group.

7. ADSFB Website

Please let us know ideas for what you want on the Board's new website.

8. Date of next meeting

To be arranged.

9. Aquaculture Mitigation Presentation – Donna-Claire Hunter (RAFTS)

Donna-Claire gave a presentation on a new tool to map and rate Scottish waters on their sensitivity to potential impacts from fish farms. RB explained that the Scottish Government is committed to the expansion of fish farming. We cannot object to all new farms, so we need an evidence-based tool like this to use for objecting to the most harmful sites. AM said that aquaculture will just come back with their own reports to suit what they want. RB said the government have been supportive of this, and aquaculture want as little opposition to farms as possible because it is expensive. PH pointed out that this tool would allow planners to be much more informed to make good decisions. JW used the example of the relocation of a Loch Ridden farm to Ardmaddy which the Board supported but has since been criticised for, because we didn't have enough information about the suitability of sites, but this new tool would reduce mistakes in the future. AKW asked if there has been any consultation with Boards/Trusts. RB said yes the consultation starts now with meetings like this. KM asked if the model will be able to be tweaked by the public, and D-C H confirmed it won't be able to be manipulated externally. Funding for this project is only guaranteed until end of March 2013, but it needs funding for longer.

Ulcerative dermal necrosis – Association of Salmon Fishery Boards have asked University of Stirling to research this. RB asked if the Board should donate £500 towards this research. TD said that if the Board has £500 to spare they should give it to AFT! RB said no-one seems in favour of donating to the research so we won't.

Fisheries Bill

RB described the changes that have been made to the Fisheries Bill. It has been watered down on the demands on aquaculture and toughened up on demands on Boards, with more administrative burden. Aquaculture can decide its own farm management areas. Boards have to publish annual reports and accounts, summary of activities and future actions, complaints to Boards and actions taken; hold one public meeting per year, so may need to advertise it publicly which will be costly. The Government can dissolve a Board committee if the Board is not well run. Other issues include: carcass tagging (will affect netting industry); developing a national policy on stocking – may be a concern; powers to revoke consents to farm if not farm have been removed; sea lice data no longer needs to be published; SEPA will no longer get powers to reduce biomass on farms. In conclusion, the Bill has not been improved. This Bill may leave us with not much more than we had before.

10. Argyll Fisheries Trust Biologist's Report

Alan Kettle-White gave the Biologist's report. The AFT website has all the information about what they have been doing. He showed a great video showing that fish are coming back into the River Fyne in good numbers.