

NESS DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MINUTE OF MEETING

Held at the SNH Great Glen House, Inverness on 1 November 2010

Present:

Hughie Campbell Adamson, Chairman (HCA) (in the Chair)
Rod Andean, Clerk (RA)
Graham MacKenzie, Co-option(GM)
Willie Armstrong, Oich, Mandate (WA)
Donnie MacKay, Angling Association , Mandate (DMK)
Sandy Patience, Netters, Co-option (SP)
Keith Williams, Ness and Beaully Fisheries Trust, Observer (KW)
Neil Cameron, Ness and Beaully Fisheries Trust, Co-option (NC)
Michael Martin, BPT, Mandate (MM)
Annie Girvan, Invermoriston, Mandate (AG)
Paul Williamson, Garry, Mandate (PW)
John MacColl, Ness Board Bailiff, Observer (JM)
Ryan Rutherford, Ness-side, Mandate (RR)

Confirmation of Co-options

It is confirmed that Neil Cameron, Graham MacKenzie and Sandy Patience would become co-options and are welcomed to the Board.

Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

HCA proposes the Chairman to be Andrew Duncan representing Ness Castle and the Vice-Chairman Michael Martin representing Burton Property Trust. PW seconds.

Observers

The Board identifies SNH, SEPA, Keith Williams, John MacColl and Alastair Stephens from Scottish & Southern Energy should all be Observers of the Board. The Clerk is to invite all five to meetings.

Minutes from Meeting on 10th August 2010

GM notes that he believes that the idea of two people (co-options) representing Loch Ness was discussed and didn't appear to be in these Minutes. GM is informed by RA that this was in fact discussed at the Triennials and not the last Board Meeting.

Page 2 of the Minutes under Bailiff Warrant Cards, first sentence, says KW and his assessment from the Ness and Beaully Trust, it should be KW and his assistant.

Matters arising

HCA explains most issues from the previous meeting will be addressed in Keith's and John's updates.

AGM

HCA informs the Board that an AGM should take place before Christmas and should coincide with the next Board Meeting. The Board should maybe look at holding the event in the evening. At the AGM the Board should try to present some sort of information to people and provide the public with copies of the Accounts. The AGM was proposed to take place on Tuesday, 14th December at 7.30pm with the Board Meeting to be held at 5pm.

Update from the Trust (see Keith Williams' Report – Appendix A)

The Garry

The second genetic test has come back which was focusing on the Kingie region. The basic consensus is that there's no fish of native origin up in those regions. KW proposes a sub-group is put together combining the Board, the Trust and possibly the likes of Alastair Stephens to look into dealing with this situation. It is decided that the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are to decide how to set up such a sub-group. MM identifies it is very important for KW to provide the scientific information and guidance in any decisions that the Board requires. KW identified that the Trust's mission statements/plan runs out next year so in theory a new one could coincide with the Board's plans going forward.

Moriston/Loyne Flow Proposal

SEPA seem to have given themselves another six months to look into this further.

Balmacaan Pump Storage – See Appendix A

Season Extension – See Appendix A

Holm Burn

KW was called to a meeting with the Highland Council. It transpired that the Highland Council forgot about works required to the Dores Bridge. For these works, they really need to go into the Burn in early 2011. The Council has intimated to KW that they could do other work to help the Ness system for allowing them to go into the Burn and carry out these works. KW identified that there was possibly work required to the bridge apron on the Farigaig. MM asks to ensure that the Council will produce a method statement and identify mitigation plus identify where and what works could be carried out elsewhere on the Ness system which could help with the conservation of salmon. HCA suggests that KW and MM liaise over this matter and report back to the Board. The Board agrees.

Conservation Measures

HCA thinks the Board has up until round about 16th November to re-apply and advertise. It is noted that KW and RA are still trying to get in contact with Manson Wright.

Update from John MacColl (Superintendent) – See Appendix B

Five out of the six charges for poaching were wrong as the wrong charge was put to the Procurator Fiscal by the Police. John has emailed the IFM to ask for advice. MM thinks that this situation does need to be addressed but the Board must tread lightly. MM asks HCA if he knows if this is widespread across Scotland and, if so, can the ASFB look into tackling the situation? HCA will make note and look into it. RA explains that he had a conversation with the Wildlife Liaison Officer for this area. The officer noted that the Police have no real time to deal with poaching issues and will have even less time going forward due to cut-backs.

JM believes that there are a number of gaps on the Assessor's Roll of people paying assessment on the Enrick. JM is to compose a list of names he knows of.

JM states that the end of season raffle draw/prize draw will be drawn at the AGM.

Current Topics – as seen by the outgoing Chairman

- Catch and Release policy needs addressed
- Arguments over netting need to be dealt with swiftly
- Great potential due to the tremendous water source to create a thriving system going forward
- Board need to review the Board/Trust relationship
- Board needs to review the role and commercial terms of the Clerk as Strutt & Parker have been effectively funding this role given the volume of work that has been involved of late

Way forward – Michael Martin

- Board needs to establish trust and openness within the new Board
- It is effectively a business which needs to be managed
- Essentially the Board needs to protect and enhance the River (i.e. the salmon's environment).

There are two different scenarios which the Board will need to deal with going forward

- Reactive issues – those that come to the Board out of the blue. While some of these may be difficult to deal with, they are likely to identify themselves and will most probably relate to the "protection" role of the Board.
- Active Management – the Board being proactive in identifying what needs to be done to deliver its "enhancement" role. This is where Board members must be prepared to make a real commitment to fulfil their obligations in participating as Board members. For the Board to be fully effective this needs to be done with a view to enhancing the whole river system without bias to Board members' individual interests.

MM believes there needs to be clear intent throughout the tenure of this Board and the Board must articulate the goals it has to the wider community who share an interest in the river environment and its salmon population. The Board should aim to put itself on a business footing, with its business being the protection and enhancement of the fishery. As with any good business, it must have a clear strategy and a set of business goals. The Board must articulate how it intends to achieve its vision and goals and be able to communicate those intentions clearly to the community it serves and to those whom it needs

to influence. MM then asks the Board to identify realistic goals which they believe the Board could meet and pass these back to AD in the next three weeks. AD and MM will then take these suggestions and draw them together into an overall strategy for discussion and agreement at the next board meeting.

A.O.C.B.

PW very kindly offers one of his company's services to create a website for the Ness Board. He will register the name and will produce a very basic draft of the website for the AGM which could be presented. The Board gives approval for PW to proceed with this.

Graham MacKenzie is asked to look into re-establishing the Loch Ness Proprietors Fishing Association.

The Clerk is to email the new Board identifying MM and AD's contact details.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 14th December, 5pm. Venue to be confirmed