

## **RIVER BLADNOCH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

### **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of The Proprietors and Members Of The Public**

#### **Annual General Meeting**

**held at The Bruce Hotel, Newton Stewart on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at  
6:00pm**

#### **Board Members Present:-**

Sir Michael Wigan, Chairman  
Andrew Gladstone  
Malcolm Adkin  
Colin Richardson  
John Haley and  
Jonathon Haley

#### **Also in Attendance:-**

Peter Murray – Clerk  
Jamie Ribbens from Galloway Fisheries Trust  
together with three proprietors and one member of the public.

#### **1. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman read his report to the meeting in accordance with the typed report attached to these minutes following which the Clerk read out the Bailiff's Report also attached hereto.

#### **2. Matters Arising from Both Reports**

It was confirmed that the taking off of nets was definite for a period of three years in all salt water. It was decided it was questionable whether this would make any difference and that the Board should rather concentrate on improving production of smolts and improving the smolt runs.

It was noted however that the smolts run at sea was really a general problem which should be dealt with by many boards banding together whereas the Bladnoch should concentrate on its own problem in the head waters.

It was noted that the Nith Returns had this year collapsed.

It was also noted that the catch and return policy would deter a lot of local anglers which would therefore further decrease the number of anglers fishing the river and thereby decrease the catches.

### **3. Fishery Management Organisation**

Concern was expressed that a future Fisheries Management Organisation for the area may not incorporate local anglers/proprietors and if that was the case then it was felt that a separate body should be established consisting of such people to keep pressure on the FMO.

### **4. Galloway Fisheries Trust Report**

Jamie Ribbens then spoke to the report which he tabled and which is adopted as part of these minutes.

#### **Matters arising therefrom**

1. Jamie confirmed that GFT have been regularly on the Kilgallioch Wind Farm construction site.
2. The temperature monitoring – it was felt that this may be of great interest due to climate change but how useful or not it is will become apparent in the future. Time will tell.
3. Water quality monitoring - the question was raised as to why the probe had been put in the Black Burn and it was stated this was really for ease of testing and for security and as peat land restoration is planned nearby but that it could be moved after a couple of months and indeed one of the benefits of this probe was that it could be moved about to different locations easily.

The question was raised as to why the Trust was having to do this and why SEPA didn't do it as it should be part of their remit.

**EU water quality** – the question was raised as to why nothing was being done about the fact that the water quality consistently failed the EU parameters. Jamie advised that new standards were being introduced in regard to peaty water which meant that acidified waters may be upgraded even though they have not improved. This is likely to mean that waters which would fail to sustain a salmon population may in the future not always be considered acidified by the agencies.

**Conservation Limits** – The question was raised over the area of the Cree and the area of the Bladnoch which appeared to be similar. This is because all of the Bladnoch was included but not the High Cree. It was noted that it was essential that all catches were reported to Marine Scotland as it was catch numbers which determine the Conservation Policy. It was noted that the Board would take this on for their next meeting.

**Grilse/Salmon** – The question came from the floor as to what was the differentiation point between the two. It was explained that the only true differential was on examining the scales however it was thought that on a weight basis probably anything under 6lb would be grilse and over that, salmon. Members were encouraged to submit scales to the Galloway Fisheries Trust for fish caught throughout the season.

## **5. Accounts**

The Accounts had been prepared by Messrs Montpelier and were tabled and approved.

## **6. Any Other Competent Business**

Electrofishing Data – The trust was asked if they could carry out electrofishing on the area where the gravel had been raked this summer and it was confirmed that the Trust would do this the following summer.

Dirnow Forest – The meeting was advised that the application for replanting Dirnow Forest had been submitted. McNeill Estates had lodged an objection and had got rather a snotty letter back saying that SEPA had no problems with the application, SNH did not respond and the GFT wrote saying it is not a source of acidification. Michael McNeill from McNeil Estates advised that he had found it to be an acidified area and Jamie Ribbens confirmed that he would look into this and get back to Michael and the BDSFB.

It was noted with some concern that SNH had not responded when it is part of the SAC for which they are responsible.

It was noted that the Board would discuss the question of limestone gravel at their next meeting and start putting in place a conservation plan with a view to having this completed before the end of the summer which is a requirement for all Category 3 Rivers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.30pm, with a thanks to the chair.