



Kyle of Sutherland Fisheries Trust

Trustees Meeting at Kyle Fisheries Office Draft Minutes Thursday 5th April, 6.00 pm

Present

Richard Sankey, Chair -RS
John Green -JG
Steven McKenzie -SM
Michael Brown –MB
Gregor MacLeod - GM

Attending

Keith Williams - KW
Sean Robertson - SR
Michael Baird - MB

Apologies

Robbie Douglas Miller
Ashe Windham

Minutes

Jacqui Hamblin

1. Welcome

Richard Sankey welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.

2. Minutes of Meeting held 2nd October 2017 – Approval and Adoption

The minutes were accepted without amendment.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

ACTION POINTS				
Nº	Who	Action	Raised	Completed by:
1	JH	Review of office insurance October 2017	June 17	Completed
2	KW/RS	Produce paper on future of Trust (1)	June 17	On Agenda
3	KW	Scope project on peatland and sediment issues on Kyle rivers. <i>C/Fwd. new actions list (2)</i>	Oct 17	March 2018
4	JH	Trustees review and adopt new Governance documents. <i>C/Fwd. new actions list (3)</i>	Oct 17	May 2018
5	TI	Produce Special resolution and modify Articles of Association. (4)	June 17	C/Fwd. to Next AGM

4. Joint Management Group Trustee inclusion

Peter Routledge has been approached but no response as yet.

Ashe Windham has agreed to join as a Trustee and as a member of the JMG.

5. Governance

- i. Data Protection new laws from May 2018.
JH provided draft policy document, awaiting some further advice from FMS on legal aspects. Primary changes are the compulsory 'Opt In' and that a privacy notice/statement must be provided. **Action JH (5)**
- ii. Reserves Policy. KW it needs to be clear why we are holding reserves and their purpose. **Action KW to produce paper for June meeting. (6)**
- iii. Governance time period approval – covered in actions – adopted by 31st May if no objections received. **Action – All Trustees (3)**

6. Directors Report

A report had been submitted prior to the meeting. Comments were invited.

Director's Report to Kyle of Sutherland DSFB April 2018

Health & Safety

An incident occurred in early February when John Audsley twisted his foot on the office steps. His foot was examined by a doctor but he did not require hospital treatment. This has been entered in the Accident Book. We will paint the step with non-slip paint to reduce the risk of slipping in future. A near miss occurred when a winch cable snapped on a rotary screw trap during a period of high flows.

Staffing

The post of science & mitigation officer was advertised. Myself and Chris Conroy from the Ness interviewed one candidate, Sean Robertson. Sean has an MSc in fisheries science from Aberdeen University and worked for the Spey DSFB in the summer of 2017. He was offered the post until the end of the calendar year with a review taking place at that point. We have also approached Connor Gilmour who worked with us as a seasonal bailiff last year with a view to him helping out with the smolt work from May onwards and then continuing as a bailiff until September. John Audsley is currently undertaking his IFM Certificate course. Iain Gollan has undertaken a chainsaw course at Inverness College and Phil Blowers will undertake the same course in April.

Catches

A modest number of January/February fish were caught but generally catches have been low as indeed have catches throughout most of Scotland. Catches appear to be improving locally and nationally at the time of writing (week beginning 26th March).

Enforcement

The boat has been launched and tested and canoe patrols are now being increased as fish numbers improve. Liaison with bailiffs from neighbouring areas continues to improve.

- i. Catches – *Marine Scotland are looking at the establishment of a national electrofishing network sit alongside the rod catch tool for river classification purposes. Government money was likely to be channelled through FMS which in turn could be available to the Board/Trust. **Action SR (7) attending Marine Scotland meeting at which the proposed network would be discussed, to report back to trustees.***

Marine Scotland Acoustic Receivers

This project involved the deployment of receivers as part of a network in Scottish rivers. Adult salmon caught at Armadale netting station on the North Coast were tagged and subsequently released. The receivers have been retrieved, returned to Marine Scotland Science with an invoice submitted for the work we undertook. It is anticipated that a report will be received in due course.

Dornoch Netting Lease

I attended a Dornoch Community Council meeting in order to try and enlist their support for the renewal of the five year netting lease between Highland Council and the Board. The Community Council were sympathetic but the Highland Councillor present, who had input into the renewal process, felt that the asset was worth considerably more than the current rental. He was aware that at present the station cannot be legally operated. I have subsequently been asked to attend a meeting with Highland Councillors in Lairg on 9th April to discuss the situation.

- i. *Dornoch netting lease- JG requested update on Highland Council netting lease. KW advised that 5 year lease lapsed November 2017 and we have been in discussions prior to this date with a view to renewal. KW attended a Community Council meeting in Dornoch. Currently the annual rent is £250 per annum but Highland Council are seeking more. KW is attending Council ward meeting tomorrow to further discuss. MB is happy to speak to Jim McGilvary to expand on our position. **Action MB (8).** SM suggested negotiating extending lease to 10 years.*

Gleann Beag

A site meeting was held on 29th March at which SSE, SEPA and the Kyle Board staff were present. The head pond was dewatered in order to facilitate the changing of the compensation flow from winter to summer levels. In 2017 electro-fishing showed the presence of putative trout/salmon hybrids upstream of the

structure. This evidence supported the reports from Alladale of seeing salmon upstream of the structure during the spawning period in 2016. The likely route of ingress through the structure was identified during the site visit and potential remedial action is now being considered.

Smolt Trapping

Traps at Fiag and Tirry were deployed by SSE and traps at Merkland and Corriekinloch were deployed by Kyle Fisheries. All traps are now in operation and are being manned by SSE and Kyle Board staff. A full update will be given at the Board meeting under the agenda item. If water levels allow we intend to deploy a small smolt trap on the upper Cassley for a limited period. The aim of this is to ascertain the size of the smolts for potential future tagging studies. The trap can be checked as part of routine bailiffing operations.

Migdale Smolts –Planning Application

An application has been submitted by the operator to Highland Council to remove the ten year limitation to planning permission. I am currently considering our response.

Fish Health Inspectorate Report

We have successfully passed our routine inspection of the hatchery facilities.

Proposed Moray Firth Smolt Tracking Project

I recently attended the first meeting of the steering group for the proposed AST Moray Firth tracking meeting in Inverness. More details of the proposed project are likely to be forthcoming in the near future.

Consultations and Other Activities

- I attended the two day SFCC annual meeting at Pitlochry.
- I attended an SSE health and safety workshop.
- A response was submitted to the Scottish Parliament committee considering the SAMS aquaculture report. The report correctly identified the major issues, however it did appear to place more emphasis on marine rather than freshwater concerns.
- I responded to a further scoping request for the proposed Lairg – Loch Buidhe transmission line upgrade.
- I completed the FMS online survey on behalf of the Board and the Trust.
- I met with Neil McInnes to discuss water quality issues on the Oykel. Potential options to determine the sources of silt are being considered which may also be applicable to the Shin and other rivers.
- I have met with Iain McMyn and had numerous telephone conversations with him regarding the 2018 smolt trapping operation.
- I have completed river reports for the FMS annual report.
- The office hosted an SFCC GIS workshop.
- Jacqui and I met with the website company we have used for many years with a view to redeveloping the site. This will be considered as an agenda item.
- We participated in the trial use of radios on the River Shin.
- Staff appraisals were undertaken trialling a slightly different system.
- I attended a SEPA meeting in Fort William to discuss waterbody classifications.
- I responded to the consultation for a scoping request for the proposed Garvary wind farm.

7. Budgets and Finance

- i. 2017-2018
2017-2018 Deficit less than forecast.
- ii. MFST project wound down and now closed. Excess funds (£1300). incorporated into reserves. Contacted MFST steering committee in regards to how to use remaining funds. MB final report on MFST and publish/promote on website. SM – use funds to pay for final report. **Action KW (9)** to follow through with this idea
- iii. 2018-2019
No comments

8. Projects

- i. Diebidale – Have been unable to complete meeting with SEPA & Mr FH. It is understood there is a new factor in position therefore this may be avenue to go down. **Action KW (10)** to try different contacts.
- ii. Henry Morrice – KW met with Matt Curran from UHI last week and discussed a few strands of the index extracts such as egg yields, smolt numbers etc., this should provide very interesting data. More fundraising is required. **Action KW/SR (11)** to consider crowdfunding option.
- iii. Shin Smolts – Traps are in, not much running yet. Approximately 35 fish from Merkland which are considered unlikely to be wild. Migdale Smolts planning permission limitation of ten years is currently up for review. **Action KW (12)** to respond to planning consultation.

9. Future direction of the Trust

We require the science to back up our strategy. The funding by SSE was not fit for purpose and they terminated the funding agreement. Funding has been re-negotiated and secured for 5 years on specific projects– Carron, Shin and Kyle - against schedules of work. Sean Robertson has been employed as a science & mitigation officer and a seasonal bailiff/habitat worker is also expected to be employed by the Kyle DSFB. By having resources in house we should be able to bid for more of this type of work, delivering knowledge and evidence to inform policy. .

GM – Trust stagnant at the moment.

JG – Agreed, lacked income stream.

MB – Beatrice Wind farm has opened up their fund to wider projects. Worth exploring. **Action KW (13)** to look into funding streams.

MB – We should be getting information out there.

10. Website and Social Media

JH gave brief view of new website visual with plans to make more user friendly, have a donate option and to promote the work we do. Facebook will be trialled with a closed group. SM expressed concerns using Facebook to a wider audience. **Action SR (14)** to invite wider board & trustee group to Kyle Facebook page.

MB – Use What's App as a communications forum for the trust. **Action JH (15)** explore this option.

AOB

MB suggested that formal representation should be made to Highland Council regarding putting monitoring conditions in place as part of planning consent. KW added that ideally Aquaculture Stewardship Council criteria should be adopted. **Action KW (12)** to make appropriate representations.

Meeting Closed 8.00pm

Next Meeting: Thursday 28th June 2018

ACTION POINTS				
Nº	Who	Action	Raised	Completed by:
1	KW/RS	Produce paper on future of Trust	June 17	May 18
2	KW	Scope project on peatland and sediment issues on Kyle rivers. <i>SM had continuing concerns on silt, advised to take a look at mulching at Strathaesgaich Burn Action KW follow up report from Neil McInnes and consider silt fingerprinting.</i>	Oct 17	March 18
3	JH	Trustees review and adopt new Governance documents. <i>Trustees to review in dropbox if no comments by 31st May will be automatically adopted</i>	Oct 17	31 st May 2018
4	TI	Produce Special resolution and modify Articles of Association.	June 17	C/Fwd. to Next AGM
5	JH	Data Protection new policy	April 2018	25 th May 2018
6	KW	Produce Trust reserves policy	April 2018	June 2018
7	SR	Report back on Marine Scotland Electrofishing meeting	April 2018	June 2018
8	MB	Speak to Jim McGilvary regarding Dornoch netting lease	April 2018	As soon as possible
9	KW	MFST – final report, use funds to complete. KW to explore this with steering committee	April 2018	As soon as possible
10	KW	Diebidale – contact new factor as avenue for SEPA discussions on removal	April 2018	As soon as possible
11	KW/SR	Henry Morrice – increase fund raising. SR crowdfunding option	April 2018	As soon as possible
12	KW	Migdale Smolts planning application – Make appropriate representation to planning consultation.	April 2018	Immediate
13	KW	Explore funding from Beatrice Wind Farm fund	April 2018	June 2018
14	SR	Facebook, invite board & trust members to closed group for feedback	April 2018	As soon as possible
15	JH	Explore the use of What's App as a communication tool for trustees etc.	April 2018	June 2018