



River Findhorn District Salmon Fishery Board

Clerk: Anthony Laing Administrator: pending

Fisheries Office, Logie Steading, Dunphail, Forres, IV36 2QN

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Minute of the Board Annual General Meeting

Held on Monday 8th August 2022 at 11.00am
at Coignascalan Farm, Coignafearn Estate

Present:

Anthony Laing -AnL (Chairman)

David Paton – DP

Alisdair Laing (AL)

Murray Wilson – MW

Graham Bell- GB

In attendance:

Sean McLean (SM) (Head Bailiff),

Alister Taylor (AT) (Bailiff)

Duncan Kerr (Kyllachy Estate)

Robert Laughton (RL) – Director, FNLRT

Philip Mackenzie (Glen Kyllachy)

Robin Glynn-Piercy (Tomatin)

Kenny Graham (Coignafearn Estate)

Elle Adams (LivingAlive)

Russ Jobson (Tweed Forum)

A	Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies: Tony Watts, Mark Laing, Andrew Howard, Campbell Ross, Christopher Longstaff, Richard Benyon, Jamie Whittle, Andrew Fleming, Edward Usbourne.</p> <p>AnL welcomed all to the AGM.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of Meeting 9th August 2021 Minutes were approved. RL to post on web site.</p>	RL
3.	<p>Matters arising None</p>	
4.	<p>2021 Summary and Annual Report</p> <p>Chairman AnL provide a summary of activities throughout the last year. The Annual Report was published in January 2022 and can be accessed on the web site here.</p> <p>The 2021 season was affected by the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions early in the year. The catch was higher than 2020 but overall, the trend is still one of declining catches and salmon stocks.</p> <p>A full electrofishing survey of the river was carried out along with additional survey sites as part of the National Electrofishing Programme for Scotland (NEPS). Data is still being analysed but initial impressions are that the juvenile salmon are well distributed and numbers within the river are encouraging.</p> <p>Anthony also thanked Valerie Wardlaw who had been administrator for the Board and Trust for her hard work over the last nine years. Valerie had decided to step down from the role to pursue personal interests and Clare Walker would shortly take up the role in mid-August.</p>	

	Anthony thanked the bailiffs Sean McLean and Alister Taylor, and the FNLRT Director Bob Laughton for all the hard work over the year.	
5.	Accounts for 2021-22 Accounts had been approved and are available on the website here	
6.	Proposals for 2022/23 An electrofishing survey of the mainstem will be carried out this summer and combined with analysis of historical data from the previous surveys. Adult salmon scale sample programme is underway on the lower Findhorn as part of a Scotland wide Government programme. Work continues on poaching and predator control and a wide range of river works issues and developments. The Board and Trust are promoting riparian woodland restoration to ameliorate the effects of climate change and a presentation will follow the AGM.	
7.	AOCB Revaluation of Findhorn Rateable Value The Board have agreed to a revaluation of the Findhorn by Moray and Highland Councils. AnL to contact Councils. Christopher Longstaff raise two concerns by letter regarding the fish disease outbreak earlier this season and whether there was a case for re-opening a hatchery on the Findhorn. RL indicated that he had recently received a report on the diseased salmon sampled by the Fish Health Inspectors and had distributed the results to the Board. In summary Saprolignia, a fungal infection, was the most likely cause of the loss of salmon however, a range of other pathogens had also been noted. RL was seeking some further clarification of the results with the Inspectors. RL indicated that the hatchery operation had been closed down for around six years. Although some limited data from the programme showed a small improvement in juveniles after stocking, information from studies elsewhere increasingly indicated that hatcheries provided little benefit to rivers with a good run of wild fish, it was generally considered a better option to allow the fish to spawn naturally. In a situation where a man-made problem had affected salmon access and stocks such as a hydro dam then there was a clear case for establishing a hatchery programme for mitigation. Fisheries Management Scotland has recently commissioned a range of online films on hatchery operations and RL would circulate the links after the meeting and place them on the web site. GB asked if anyone had information on a hatchery operated by the salmon netmen on the Findhorn, no information was forthcoming, but it was agreed to seek further information.	AnL RL RL
B	Election of Upper and Lower Proprietors The current Board stood down.	

	<p>Nominations for Lower Proprietors: Graham Bell (Forres AA), Alasdair Laing (Findhorn Salmon Fishings Ltd) Proposed by Anthony Laing, and elected.</p> <p>Nominations for Upper Proprietors Andrew Howard (Moray Estates), Colin Cawdor (Cawdor Estate), Alex Leven (Glenferness Estate), Anthony Laing (Coulmony Estate), Murray Wilson (Glem Mazeran Estate), David Paton (Dalmigavie Estate)</p> <p>Proposed by Graham Bell and elected.</p>	
C.	<p>Election of Co-optees</p> <p>Nominations for Co-option on to the Board Mark Laing (FNLRT), Campbell Ross (Findhorn Angling Club) Proposed by Alasdair Laing and elected.</p>	
D.	<p>Election of Chair</p> <p>Nominations for Chair : Anthony Laing. Proposed by Alasdair Laing and seconded by Graham Bell. All agreed and Anthony accepted the Chair.</p>	
E.	<p>Meeting of New Board and Minute</p> <p>AnL welcomed the new Board and set the next meeting date for November 14th 2022 with venue to be announced.</p> <p>He extended thanks to Kenny Graham and Coignafearn Estate for hosting the meeting and following field visit.</p> <p>He then introduced Robert Laughton (FNLRT), Elle Adams (Living Alive) and Russ Jobson (Tweed Forum) who provided presentations on restoring riparian woodlands. The presentations were followed by a site visit to Coignaferan to view forest and peatland restoration areas led by Kenny Graham.</p>	
	<p>Dates of 2022 Meetings November 14th 10.30am Board Meeting. Venue tba.</p>	