



**RIVER LOSSIE DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD**  
**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors**

Held at Pitgaveny.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 3pm.

**Present**

Crinan Dunbar (Chair) (CD), Bill Fraser (BF), Poppy Houldsworth (PH), Gordon Robertson (GR), Fred Rhind (FR).

**In attendance** Clare Walker,(Minutes) (CW), Robert Laughton (RL)

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies:</b> CD opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Apologies received from Mark Laing.	
2.	<b>Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022</b> A couple of minor corrections to the attendees were noted. The minute was approved subject to the corrections being made. CD will forward the original Word document to CW to make the required corrections	CD/CW
3.	<b>Matters arising not on the agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CD noted his thanks on behalf of the LDSFB for the work provided by Valerie Wardlaw during her many years as Administrator for the Board. RL passed on thanks to the LDSFB from Valerie for their kind farewell.</li> <li>- FR asked whether any progress had been made towards the installation of a fish counter along the river Lossie. RL informed those present that Scottish Government are testing an acoustic counter on the river Deveron. Counters are costly in terms of outlay and staff time but if the data received is good Scot Gov may expand the project but not at the present time. There are other possible funding avenues that might be suitable, and RL will maintain a watch on these for opportunities.</li> <li>- FR highlighted a publication by Moray Council where they stated that the Cloddach bridge and road will remain closed with the bridge eventually being removed. It would be important, in that event, that the bridge foundations were also fully removed to secure fish passage. RL confirmed that an email had been sent to this effect to Moray Council but, as yet no reply had been received. He had applied for a license to allow anglers to move fish upstream from the bridge. Redds upstream of the bridge have been observed so some fish are getting through, but he acknowledged that the issue needs to be resolved and agreed to push Moray Council.</li> </ul>	RL
4	<b>Financial</b> BF highlighted the problems that the Elgin Angling Association continue to have with recruiting and retaining members which has a considerable effect on the club's revenue and ability to afford the assessment levy. Different factors were thought to be contributing to the decline in membership including the 100% catch and release policy on the Lossie (grade 3), poor fishing and socioeconomic factors. A number of avenues the Elgin AA might be able to explore were discussed including taking part in educational days; fishing competitions for young anglers; instructional sessions in schools; using fishpal and approaching Elgin Community Council and other schemes about potential funding such as Money for Moray. BF confirmed catch data from the AA as 29 Sea Trout, 3 Salmon and 12 Grilse.	Elgin AA/ALL

	<p><b>Approval of Draft Accounts to August 2022-</b> these were approved. CD will sign the accounts and take them to the accountants for countersigning then send to CW. The signed accounts will be posted to the website and sent to Scot Gov.</p> <p>Post meeting note: The Board approved the addition of CW and CD to the banking mandate for the LDSFB RBS account.</p> <p><b>Assessment for 2022-23-</b> CW presented a draft budget for Sept 2022 to August 2023. A levy set at £1.15 in the £ will result in a small deficit. The board approved the levy set at £1.15 in the £. CW will send out notices in the new year.</p>	<p>CD/CW</p> <p>CW</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>2022 Season Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bailiffing</b> – The bailiffs have done regular patrols along the river Lossie. There were few people out fishing and only a few minor incidents. Sean McLean and Alister Taylor will produce an end of season report and circulate this to the Board. A Riverwatch meeting was held in November. RL reiterated the importance of reporting incidents to bailiffs and 101. The police attending the Riverwatch meeting stressed how even minor intelligence feeds into the bigger picture of crime in the area and can be very valuable. At a recent meeting of the FDSFB the Board approved bailiff support into 2022-23.</li> <li>• <b>INNS</b> – GH is reaching a management level along the upper parts of the river Lossie. BF and the Elgin AA have cleared areas around Elgin town this year. RL will be providing training for INNS control next year and encouraged proprietors to submit any names to him of people who may want to do this training. Significant progress into JK control has been made at Kellas and RL is currently working on an alternative control proposal involving the use of pigs to put forward for funding from the Landfall Tax fund. Brokentore is now mostly clear of JK. A lot of contractor time was spent at Bogside this year and the results of this should be seen directly next year. There is still some liaison work to be done with some of the farms along the river to expand the control measures into these areas. Skunk Cabbage on Dallas Pond has been treated with very good results, but the lower half of the burn still need tackling. It is hoped that funding will be granted to continue the SISI project for a further 3 years, a decision is expected soon.</li> <li>• <b>Developments</b> – RL has a visit to Dallas substation this week, where SSE are proposing to re-channel the burn to reduce erosion to the land supporting the sub-station. A previous survey of the burn didn't find many fish. RL will keep PH up to date on the outcomes of this meeting. Clashgour and Rothes III windfarms have been granted planning permission. A habitat survey for Milton Duff was completed and submitted to the distillers but plans for this development have not gone further as yet.</li> <li>• <b>Funding</b> – RL has been meeting with distillery companies about the possibility of receiving funding for conservation projects across the three rivers. A number of projects have been tabled and discussions are ongoing. FMS/Scot Gov have made funding available for the development of interactive web-based fishery management plans. Further development of this approach will take place over the winter.</li> </ul>	<p>SM/AT</p> <p>RL</p> <p>RL</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GR wanted to make the Board aware that there is now a defibrillator at Kellas and in all the estate vehicles - If this information can be passed on.</li> <li>GR informed the meeting that Kellas has submitted a planning application for a windfarm on the estate. He also expressed concerns over the proposed routing of the installation of SSE pylons in the vicinity of the estate. PH also expressed concerns over the routing of the pylons and confirmed that Mark Houldsworth has been pushing for the routing to be diverted to the south of Dallas. The plans are still in the scoping stage so the final proposal for the route of the pylons isn't confirmed yet. RL will be keeping an eye on the development and will keep interested parties updated if he receives any information.</li> </ul>	ALL  GR/PH/ RL
6	<p><b>Conservation Code for 2023</b></p> <p>The Lossie is still a Grade 3 river so all salmon and grilse must be released. The Conservation Code for Sea Trout was approved unchanged from 2022. CW will update the conservation code on the website.</p>	CW
7	<p><b>Catchment Developments</b></p> <p>No further progress has been made on the A96 dualling project.</p>	
8	<p><b>SLA &amp; River Management Plan</b></p> <p>The Service Level Agreement between the Lossie DSFB and the FNLRT is valid for 5 years. FNLRT's fee to the LDSFB will be reviewed at the next FNLRT meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</p>	
9	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>RL updated the meeting on the FNLRT's recent successful funding bid to the Scottish Government's Just Transition fund. The award amounts to over £900k over two years. The Trust is working closely with Elle Adams of Living Alive to develop a project to reconnect and rejuvenate woodland along the upper Findhorn river. The project reflects the Trust's focus on conservation of the river catchment and the aim is to mitigate increasing water temperatures which are reaching critical levels for salmon.</p> <p>GR asked whether measures to restore peatland by blocking drains will have an effect on the volume of water able to reach the river. RL confirmed that there is not a lot of data available but early indicators are that the restored peat acts as a good filter for the water but data on any changes in flow rates was still lacking. However, as more projects develop this should improve.</p>	
10	<p><b>Dates of 2023 Meetings</b></p> <p>March 28<sup>th</sup> at 3pm AGM  June 27<sup>th</sup> at 3pm, Board meeting  November 21<sup>st</sup> 3pm, Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors</p>	

With no further business CD closed the meeting at 17:15.