

RIVER LOSSIE DISTRICT SALMON FISHERIES BOARD Minutes of the Annual Public Meeting (AGM)

Held at Pitgaveny. Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 3pm.

Present

Crinan Dunbar (Chair) (CD), Poppy Houldsworth (PH), Mark Laing (ML), Bill Fraser (BF), Roy Russel (RR).

In attendance Clare Walker, (Minutes) (CW), Elle Adams (EA), Ollie Smaje (OS).

	Item	Action
1	Welcome and Apologies : CD opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Apologies were received from John Fielding, Tomas Christie, Tim Atkinson. CD introduced EA and OS to the Board, EA will be taking over from Bob Laughton (RL) as FNLRT Director in April 2025, with OS taking on the Ecology/Biology role previously, also undertaken by Bob Laughton.	
2.	Minutes of the Meeting of Qualified Proprietors held on 26 th November 2024 Minutes were approved. CW to publish on the FNLRT website.	
	Minutes of LDSFB Meeting held on 28 th January 2025	
	Minutes were approved. CW to publish on the FNLRT website.	CW
3.	Matters arising not on the agenda CW was unsure whether feedback on the FMS catch and release proposal had been passed on. She will check the status of this before RL finishes in post.	CW
4.	Financial Budget Update The budget and levy were approved at the previous meeting and CW has sent out first half assessment letters for 2025. The outstanding assessments from previous years remain outstanding and CD will visit those proprietors to discuss settlement.	CD
	Fundraising Update Several actions were identified in the Board meeting in January which are still to be carried out and CW hopes to be able to update further at the next Board meeting in June.	CW
	RR confirmed that the Elgin AA membership have approved joining a scheme for creating a 'roving' ticket for fishing the length of the Lossie. PH asked about mitigations for increased traffic to some estates if a river wide ticket were used. CW agreed that this would need to be carefully considered and once it is known whether proprietors agree in principle to take part, further thought will go into the administration and management of such a ticket.	
	CD has been in touch with the Lossie Community Development Trust (LCDT) who have indicated they would be happy to sell beach tickets on behalf of the Elgin AA. They will shortly have an office open 7 days a week for the tourist season. CD will pass on contact details to the Elgin AA.	CD

CD and WF are still to arrange a meeting with Alasdair Kennedy.	CD/WF
Year 2024 Report and Update	
OS and RL are currently working on the final report of the results of the Lossie mainstem juvenile electrofishing survey carried out in 2024. OS provided a summary of preliminary findings which show that, since the last full survey in 2016, there has been a large decline in salmon density. There is some other survey data from the National Electrofishing Program (NEPS) which isn't yet incorporated and that may give a clearer picture of what was happening during the period since 2016.	
Adult catches remained low, although 2024 did see a slight increase on the previous year. The low numbers from 2022-2023 will be affecting the decline in juvenile salmon in the 2024 survey.	
Sea Trout have done slightly better, although densities in some tributaries show a decline. There was an uptick in adults caught in 2024.	
There are some restoration opportunities for the Lossie which could increase productivity, and it is hoped that FNLRT will be able to develop these in the coming years.	
RR observed that some of the historic data shown by OS from the mid- 1980s to early 1990s shows an increase in juvenile populations and pointed out that this coincides with a period of hatchery stocking on the Lossie. The membership of the Elgin AA would like to explore the possibility of opening a hatchery and feel that this is something that Scottish Government/Fisheries Management Scotland/FNLRT should be funding. CW and ML confirmed that there is not funding available for such a project, and it would not be within the remit of FNLRTs charitable activity to fund a	
CW offered to put together an organisational diagram to illustrate the relationships between the LDSFB and other organisations, such as FNLRT/FMS, including where responsibilities lie. This could be circulated to the Elgin AA's members to make these relationships a bit clearer.	CW
CW will also put together a brief document summarising the issues around opening a hatchery which could also be fed back to members so they get a clearer idea of why this wouldn't be possible at this time.	CW
Proposals for 2025 New FNLRT Director Introduction EA gave a short introduction on her work with FNLRT as Project Development Lead for the Findhorn Watershed Initiative (FWI) project. She	
	Year 2024 Report and Update OS and RL are currently working on the final report of the results of the Lossie mainstem juvenile electrofishing survey carried out in 2024. OS provided a summary of preliminary findings which show that, since the last full survey in 2016, there has been a large decline in salmon density. There is some other survey data from the National Electrofishing Program (NEPS) which isn't yet incorporated and that may give a clearer picture of what was happening during the period since 2016. Adult catches remained low, although 2024 did see a slight increase on the previous year. The low numbers from 2022-2023 will be affecting the decline in juvenile salmon in the 2024 survey. Sea Trout have done slightly better, although densities in some tributaries show a decline. There was an uptick in adults caught in 2024. There are some restoration opportunities for the Lossie which could increase productivity, and it is hoped that FNLRT will be able to develop these in the coming years. RR observed that some of the historic data shown by OS from the mid-1980s to early 1990s shows an increase in juvenile populations and pointed out that this coincides with a period of hatchery stocking on the Lossie. The membership of the Elgin AA would like to explore the possibility of opening a hatchery and feel that this is something that Scottish Government/Fisheries Management Scottand/FNLRT should be funding. CW and ML confirmed that there is not funding available for such a project, and it would not be within the remit of FNLRTs charitable activity to fund a hatchery. CW offered to put together an organisational diagram to illustrate the relationships between the LDSFB and other organisations, such as FNLRT/FMS, including where responsibilities lie. This could be circulated to the Elgin AA's members to make these relationships a bit clearer. CW will also put together a brief document summarising the issues around opening a hatchery which could also be fed back to members so they get a clearer idea of wh

	will now be moving into the Director's role with OS taking on the Biologist/Ecologist part previously covered by RL. The focus of the FWI has been on the Findhorn to date, but the intention is that it is rolled out to the Lossie in future.	
	 CW confirmed the following activity for 2025: INNS – the SISI project will continue through next year and tenders have been issued to contractors. Contracts renewed for 2025 with Crown Estate and Moray Estates. Paul's Hill Windfarm – Small monitoring contract at the very top of the Lossie catchment WF raised that Elgin AA that RL had previously supplied roundup to their certified sprayers. CW will confirm these arrangements with RL. 	CW
7	Complaints Procedure – There were no changes suggested to the procedure. The procedure was approved, CW will publish on the website.	CW
8	Dates of 2025 Meetings - 24th June 5:30pm - 25th November 3pm, Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors	

With no further business CD closed the meeting at 16:10