

Nith Catchment Fishery Trust Annual General Meeting 2013

7.00pm Monday 11th March 2013

Friars Carse, Auldgirth

Present

Percy Weatherall – NCFT Chairman
Jim Henderson – Director
Brian Lord – Director
Robert Schiller - Director
Gordon McGregor
David McMichael
Matt Walker
Shona Mitchell
David Kempself – Dumfries & Galloway Anglers Association
Maggie Gordon
Brian Fox
Andrew Wood

In attendance

Debbie Parke (DP) – Biologist
Andrew Wallace – RAFTS
Callum Sinclair – RAFTS
Stuart Graham – SNH (Advisory capacity)
Tony Lightley – Forestry Commission (Advisory)

Apologies

Captin Beauchamp Blackett
Andrew Hunter-Arundell
Ben Weatherall
John Kingan
Simon Duffin
Tommy Littlejohn
Trevor Muir
Alex Saville
Simon Kelly
Robbie Cowan
Thomas Florey
Robert Perrett

1. Minutes of previous AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 12th March 2012 were approved as a true and accurate account.

2. Trust Update

The Trust Biologist, Debbie Parke, gave a presentation outlining the following main topics:

- The Role of the Trust
- Monitoring
- Catch & Release
- Education & Out-reach
- Invasive Non-Native Species Project
- Biosecurity Plan
- North American Signal Crayfish,
- Check, Clean, Dry

3. Speakers

Andrew Wallace from RAFTS gave a brief introduction on RAFTS and its aims towards the 25 Scottish Trusts. Callum Sinclair from RAFTS then gave a presentation on the following topics:

- Membership
- Staff
- Income/Funding Structure
- Representing Fisheries in Scotland
- Fundraising
- Project Development
- Education
- Training Opportunities
- Biosecurity Planning
- Invasive Species Control and Management

Questions were invited from the floor and a number were received including merit of having a representative on the Scottish Anglers National Association (SANA) and the future structure / and survival of Trusts in Scotland due to the financial climate.

4. Accounts

The Chairman presented the summary accounts on page 19 of the Annual Report for the period January 2011 to December 2012 to the members present and offered to provide the full accounts if needed. The Chairman requested that the accounts were adopted and this was unanimously agreed.

5. Trust Management Structure and Voting Procedure

The Chairman informed the meeting that prior to the AGM, members had been asked to put their name forward if they wished to be considered as a director. Information packs were distributed to all members eligible to vote along with the Trust management structure, voting procedures and a

brief resume from each member wishing to be considered for a directorship. The following members wished to be considered:

- Captain Beauchamp Blackett
- Thomas Florey
- David Kempself
- Brain Lord
- Alex Saville
- Andrew Wood

The Chairman explained the voting procedure and asked that all members present who were entitled to vote complete the form. The voting forms were collected by Shona Mitchell and votes counted by the Chairman, Jim Henderson and Shona Mitchell.

The new directors as are follows: Thomas Florey, David Kempself, Brain Lord and Andrew Wood.

6. Written Questions

Prior to the AGM questions were submitted for consideration and discussion. The questions were as follows:

- From Alex Saville – “Crayfish are going to be a problem so how do we address the problem” DP answered and spoke about the Nith Catchment Biosecurity Plan and how further in depth surveys are going to be carried out to establish the exact downstream extent of the crayfish. Once this is known then containment options can be explored. She urged that unfortunately once crayfish enter a water body it is virtually impossible to eradicate them and the only way is to prevent them entering the water body in the first place through all water users following biosecurity measures recommended by the NCFT and NDSFB.
- From Alex Saville – “ We require a fish counter on the river”. DP spoke about the advantages and disadvantages of having a fish counter on the River Nith and that this had been discussed at some length previously but that overall it was felt that the potential to hinder the passage of fish and the variance in data obtained did not warrant the expense of installing a counter.
- From Gordon McGregor – “What is the main reason for the poor fishing on the middle beats?” DP agreed that the middle section of the river was a very good section and should be producing more fish than it does but that the average catch returns for the middle section of the river were not very different in comparison to the other sections. There appears to be an overall lack of fishing effort for that stretch, particularly the Mid-Nithsdale waters, Drumlanrig and Closeburn beats. The changing morphology of the river was also discussed.

7. Any Other Competent Business

A proposal was made to organise a Grayling open day, Matt Walker volunteered to assist with this project. DP requested photographs of Salmon, Sea Trout and Grayling for the River-Nith website. The merit of The River Nith Catchment Angling Code was discussed at

length. DP congratulated the beats that obtained 70%+ catch and release targets and urged other beats to follow suit.

8. Closing Remarks

The Chairman offered thanks to the retired Trust Directors for their dedication and input and to DP for her continued commitment and hard work. The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.