

Nith Catchment Fishery Trust

Meeting No. 22

6pm Thursday 11th September 2014

NCFT office, Auldgirth

Present

Percy Weatherall - Chairman
Jim Henderson
Thomas Florey (left early)
Peter Hutchison
Jim McKie
David Kempself
Brian Lord

In Attendance

Debbie Parke – Operations Manager

1. Apologies

Robert Schiller
Andrew Wood

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of both the AGM and the previous Directors meeting were taken as true and accurate.

3. Matters Arising

The actions from the last meeting were reviewed.

Action points	Action by	Action completed
WFM Information pack to be compiled – 2 sides of A4	TCF, PH, AW, JH, EPK	
Pay Easterbrook deposit	DP	
Provide DP with names and address to send information out to.	All directors	
Send out letters regarding event	DP	
Put together flyer for event	DP	

4. Finance

The finances were discussed and it was agreed that the finances were in a better state than had been anticipated at the start of the year.

PH would like a monthly cash flow for 2015 to be presented at the next meeting.

5. Progress updates

Fishery Management Plan

It was agreed that the plan was very useful and gave a very good insight into the work of the Board and the Trust. Some of the items were discussed and it was noted how many wind farm and hydro applications had been dealt with. The increase in hydro schemes was discussed. The Board and Trust are against hydro in principle but recognise that hydro schemes are a form of green energy and likely to form part of the energy generation mix for Scotland for the foreseeable future.

Approximately 80% hydro proposals are approved but all of them are assessed individually and mitigation such as fish passage, etc. is put in place to ensure that any impacts on fish are reduced. Post monitoring took place this year on 6 schemes and there has not been any impact on the fish in the depleted reaches of these schemes. There is concern regarding the potential for operators blocking the inlet of the schemes – spot checks will be carried out by Board and Trust staff.

DK raised the issue of the non-native plant Himalayan Balsam and the current strategies for control given the prevalence of this plant during 2014. DP discussed the use of “Rust” the biocide that has been licenced for use in England as a method for control. Hopes are that this method of control will be a success and that this will also be licenced for use in Scotland. Whilst small areas can be controlled by means of hand pulling, in practical terms this is not feasible on a catchment wide scale.

Generally it was agreed that the Trust was making good progress against those areas of the Fishery Management Plan over which they had responsibility.

Wild Fisheries Review

The current Wild Fisheries Review (WFR) was discussed. JH updated the Directors on the latest discussions with Andrew Thin, leading the review. The review will be presented to the Scottish Government and they will decide on the items within the review that they wish to pursue. It is unlikely that anything would happen for 3 years as they have missed their legislative slot. It is being suggested that there will be a central body and local management organisation. It is likely that the Board and the Trust will be amalgamated but the resulting body will not have statutory powers. Water bailiffs would still be employed. The fishery management plan would be written by the Local Fishery Management Organisation (LFMO) and be reviewed by the central body for and approval. Funding will be collected centrally, a proportion of which will be kept by the Scottish Government and only paid back once objectives have been achieved by the LFMO. LFMO core functions would include control of exploitation of all fish, manage species and habitats, research and monitoring, consultations and planning applications, fishery development and education. LFMO will be assessed on capacity to fulfil objectives. Small rivers may have to join to be able to get the critical mass required.

Other options – fishing on a Sunday by nets or rod, there will be a presumption to ban the killing of salmon throughout Scotland. Quotas will be set for each river then individual proprietors seeking to

kill salmon will have to apply for a licence to do so. Tags would be supplied and all captured and killed salmon would have to be tagged. The proposal to implement a rod licencing scheme was discussed.

Project updates

DP appraised the Directors regarding the INNS project, the Fishing for the Future project and the potential of future projects.

Galloway Country Fair

It was generally felt that the fair was a success. It afforded the Trust a very useful opportunity to get their message across to the public.

PW agreed to write to His Grace, The Duke of Buccleuch and thank him for his generosity of providing a tent for the Trust and Board.

6. River Nith Dinner Dance

The event was discussed and concerns were raised regard the number of tables sold to date and the likelihood of selling the remainder of the tables. The options were talked about and it was decided that the lack of enthusiasm for the event was exposing the Trust to unacceptable reputational and financial risks. DP advised the Directors that the deadline for commitment to the event was nearing. A vote was taken and the majority (5 votes) decided that the risk to the Trust was unacceptable and therefore instructed DP to cancel the event.

7. A.O.B

Meeting closed 19:30

Actions resulting from Trust Meeting No. 21

Action points	Action by	Action completed
PW to write to the Duke thanking him for support re Galloway Country Fair	PW	
Monthly cash flow for 2015 to be produced for next meeting	DP	

Signed.....

Date.....

EPK Weatherall, Chair