

Nith Catchment Fishery Trust

Meeting No. 31

Following AGM, 22nd March 2017

Fishery Office, Blackwood Estate

Present

Percy Weatherall – NCFT Chairman
Thomas Florey – Director
Jim Henderson – Director
Peter Hutchison – Director
David Kempself - Director
Brian Lord – Director
Raymond Mundle - Director
Christine Carson - Director
Stewart Cameron - Director

In Attendance

Debbie Parke – Operations Manager/Biologist

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The previous meeting on the 20th December 2016 was jointly held with the River Nith District Salmon Fisheries Board and therefore the minutes are a hybrid of each organisation and were taken as true and accurate for Trust business.

2. Matters Arising

All matters arising would be covered during the course of the meeting.

3. Wild Fisheries Reform

Jim Henderson provided an update on WFR to date. In early 2017 it was announced by Scottish Government that the amalgamation of Boards would now not go ahead with other areas of activity continuing these being: a new fisheries bill; implementation of a maximum landing size for pike; development of a statutory requirement for all fisheries management organisations to have a fisheries management plan; and although there will not be a forced merger of boards voluntary mergers are acceptable and to facilitate this merged boards now do not need the same rate. In addition the River And Fisheries Trust Scotland (RAFTS) will cease to exist as from March due to the lack of EU funding following Brexit. Instead a new umbrella organisation for all fisheries boards and trusts in Scotland has been formed Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) which will levy an income from these organisations. The requirement for both the Board and the Trust to be members with the work of the two organisations being closely linked will be discussed with FMS.

4. Quarterly Report and project updates

Debbie Parke referred to the Quarterly Report which had been circulated and spoke about some of the activities for the last quarter.

Gas Pipe – JH updated the Directors on the progress of the new gas pipe project with river crossing methods having been established with additional measures being taken by contractors to prevent the spread of cray fish such as power washing of equipment.

Scale Reading – DP updated the Directors on the scale readings being taken for Scottish Government that was generating useful data however, it required a lot of resources.

Electrofishing – DP updated the Directors that method of electrofishing may need to be changed in the future. Current methods provide quantitative measurements however, Marine Scotland (MS) may need a fully quantitative measurement using random sites throughout the catchment. Until a clearer steer is given by MS electrofishing will be conducted as before.

Invasive Non-Native Species – DP provided an update on the status of progress of the INNS project as funding has now finished areas that had been cleared will be kept clear and other sites identified will need payment from the land owner due to lack of funding.

Fishing for the Future project and Youth Club – DP updated the Directors on the funding progress to date. Funding has been extremely difficult to get this year but we have 2 years of funding from Holywood Trust on provision that we get in kind funding. The Youth Club has been a great success with a lot of interest again however, this had also required the use of a lot of resource to deliver.

Nith Fish Counter project – JH updated the Directors on the progress of Fish Counter Project. Land had been identified and provided by the Buccleuch Estate on Crawick Water. This is a major tributary of the Nith with the costs of building a counter at this location being manageable. The counter would provide accurate fish numbers both going into and out of the river and so also providing a conversion rate. The Board will be asked if the project can progress to planning stage at their next meeting.

5. A.O.B

SC asked for clarification on if the Fishing Methods Review had been dropped also by WFR. JH responded in saying that this was still in place as Scottish Government will remain in control of fishing on salmon rivers however, it was the Boards responsibility to deliver a conservation management plan to manage fish stocks.

Actions resulting from Trust Meeting No. 31

Action points	Action by	Action completed
None		

Signed.....
EPK Weatherall, Chair

Date.....