

THE RIVER NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MANAGEMENT REPORT AND REVIEW
1st December 2010 – 30th November 2011



Sam Valentine's Malloch Challenge Trophy Salmon
Caught on Dalswinton

THE RIVER NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

REPORT

01.12.10 – 30.11.11

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AGENDA

for the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

for year

01.12.10 – 30.11.11

1. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 01.03.11
2. Annual Report
3. Annual Accounts
4. Angling Conservation Methods
5. AOCB

NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT FRIARS CARSE COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL,
AULDGIRTH, DUMFRIES

on

1 March 2011 at 10.15 am

1. PRESENT

Thomas Florey – Chairman
Alan Bryden -
Brian Lord – Mid Nithsdale Angling Association
Nick Brown – Friars Carse
Sir David Landale – Dalswinton Estate
John Kingan – North Corbelly
Robbie Cowan – High Mains
Roy Green – Buccleuch Sports
Geoff Walter –
Ronald Weir –
Ronald Clark –
Dougie Smith – Dalswinton Holdings
Wally Wright –
Tom Brown –
Sophy Weatherall – Cowhill Estate
David Matthews – Blackwood Estate
Simon Kelly – P.O.F.R Ltd
Nick Wright –
Brian Fox – P.O.F.R Ltd

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Roderick Styles – Clerk
James Henderson – Fishery Director (FD)
Deborah Parke – Nith Catchment Fishery Trust
Shona Kennedy - Admin
Gillian Reid – Carson & Trotter

3. APOLOGIES - None

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that as a consequence of speaking to others and in forming his own opinion it was his view that Fishery Boards have never been so important as they are today for three principal reasons, being:-

1. In the headlong rush by Government for the demand for renewables not enough account was being taken of the potential effect of renewable in relation to Salmon Fisheries.
2. In their wisdom Scottish Government wanted to provide for 17% more forestry in Scotland, which again would have an impact upon Fisheries which had been seen with previous forestry projects, and
3. Scottish Government has indicated that it is intending to make provision for doubling of the production of salmon aquaculture in Scotland.

The Chairman advised that in his opinion it was essential that Boards continued to flourish and to be seen to contribute to the protection of the Salmon Fisheries under their jurisdictions.

4. MINUTE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 17 FEBRUARY 2010, & MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

Brian Fox intimated a correction at the top of page 8 where “thirteen inches” was in error and the Report should state “thirty inches”. This correction was approved.

There were no other matters arising.

5. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman made reference to the Annual Report and for comments page by page.

The Chairman reported that with regard to page 11 there was now a settled staff. Funding was being contributed in respect of the involvement of Nith Catchment Fishery Trust.

The Chairman referred to Page 14 – Hatcheries – there had been great difficulty with regard to the frozen conditions prevailing at hatcheries this year with ice having to be broken from feeder streams and from tanks on a daily basis.

The Clerk drew the attention of those present to the Board’s views that the presence of the Hatcheries was essential evidence of which was particularly relevant during the previous winter. It had been noted in other Salmon Fisheries that had already opened during 2011 that there was a larger than usual presence of Baggots. The thinking developing in relation to this was that these unspawned fish had been unable to gain access to spawning tributaries because of the freezing conditions and as a consequence had been unable to spawn. The effect to this would be the loss of juvenile stock in the forthcoming year.

In addition, Fishery Board staff had noticed during the period of extreme cold that the river had fallen to very low levels and that redds of both salmon and sea trout had been seen lying out of water in dry parts of the river bed frozen completely solid which would inevitably lead to the killing of any eggs present in these gravels. Again, this would have a consequence upon the availability of juvenile stock in the forthcoming year.

The substantial pollution incident in the summer of 2010 had in all probability a detrimental effect on the presence of fish within the immediate area of pollution. The Clerk reminded those present that the initial reasons for setting up the Hatchery had been as a consequence of the damage caused in the first crossing of Rivers Nith and Cairn by the Irish Gas pipeline. The funds obtained as a consequence of that had been utilised towards the building of the Hatchery and the Hatchery was used for compensatory restocking as a consequence of damage caused by pollution incidents, OCCS Operations and natural disasters since then.

The Chairman referred to page 17 of the Report and the Celtic Sea Trout Project. FD reported that a meeting of the Project would take place locally on 30 March 2011 at the Cairndale Hotel in the form of a roadshow and a question and answer session to advise of the project. The event would take place during the day and in the evening. Invitations would be sent out.

The Chairman referred to page 18 of the Report and the ever advancing expansion of coal mining in the head waters. The Board continues to keep involved.

Brian Lord asked if there was any information on the effects of old mining shafts on the quality of water within the river system.

FD reported that with the new method of abstraction of coal by open cast methods old deep shafts were being removed as a consequence of the which the foul water that collected in them was also being removed therefore decreasing the bad effect of escape of foul water into the river system.

FD reported that Kirkconnell being an old mining area with numerous deep shafts was being looked at with technology now available which in combination with the value of coal made old reserves worth considering for the purposes of exploitation again. The Kirkconnell area in particular had been the subject of a lot of deep shaft activity and if open cast coal operations were to commence in these areas then yet more old shafts and foul water would be removed.

The Chairman made comment on Catch Statistic Returns. The Clerk advised that the method of computation of the Statistics available from Fresh Water Fisheries Lab had changed. FD reported that in addition and as a consequence of the 2003 Act it was now mandatory to provide Catch Statistic Returns

and that as a consequence he was ensuring that Returns were available from all Fisheries thus allowing him to produce quicker more accurate results that for the first time had allowed the previous year's figures for 2010 to be made available within the Report.

Brian Lord asked if it would be possible to correlate the Board's Statistics with those produced from Fresh Water Fisheries Lab to present a unified approach to the Statistics. FD responded that he would try to streamline the Montrose Statistics and make them correspond with those gathered by the Board but expressed concern that Statistics available from Montrose through FFL were to some extent inaccurate in any event. In two particular examples haaf netting fishings had been declared to exist in mid to upper reaches of mainstem River Nith.

David Matthews asked if it would be possible to show catch and release of fish as a percentage statistic of the whole numbers of fish declared in Returns for the year. FD agreed that this would be a good idea.

The Chairman reported that there were always going to be difficulties with Catch Statistic Returns. Different approaches to the collection of the Returns were taken by different Boards and ASFB were looking at matters with a view to standardisation of the information to be obtained from them.

In some cases some river systems do not even bother to provide Returns. Prosecution is now available to Fishery Boards for failure on the part of a Proprietor to provide Catch Statistic Returns.

Sophie Weatherall asked why mink numbers caught continued to increase. FD responded that Game Keepers and Board Staff were responsible for control of mink numbers. The Board has so far this year caught substantially increased numbers of mink. FD and Board Staff would continue to monitor the position and catch where appropriate.

The Chairman reported on page 21 of the Report and the Water Bailiff's Conference held in Dumfries for the first time which had been a great success.

With regard to farmed fish the Chairman asked why it would be that farmed fish returns continued to appear in Nith Catch Statistic Returns. FD responded that a recent report had shown that a number of tagged smolts from the River North Esk had turned up in the South of England, in the River Tweed, in the Nith and other river systems and that this was evidence of the fact that notwithstanding a general homing instinct to home rivers it was inevitably the case that some salmon would turn up in different river systems. Farmed salmon being of the same species would, if escaped, probably run with wild fish that they encountered no matter where the river system was. The consequence of this was that farmed fish would undermine the genetic integrity of a particular river should they spawn within it. FD stated that whilst wild fish could end up in different river systems it was clear that farmed fish could also do the same thing, although in the River Nith System wild fish would be more likely turn up at the bottom of this River System.

The Chairman made reference to the attendance record shown within the Annual Report as a new feature with better than average returns for attendance by Board Members compared with other river systems.

Alan Bryden asked about the average weight of fish returned given that numbers of small grilse appeared to turn up least year in greater amounts.

FD responded that approximately three years ago small grilse had started to appear around the 2lb weight. Last year a few fish of similar size category had turned up.

The Chairman reported that he and FD had been at a conference in Perth where they had seen time lapse video of sea temperatures over the previous fifty years. At the commencement of the fifty year period the sea temperatures had been relatively cold but over the last ten years the temperature at sea had risen. The thinking expressed at that meeting was that smolts were running from their birth river to where the feeding had previously been, but that with the rise in sea temperatures, temperature dependent feeding had moved north. It may be that this movement of feeding and rise of sea temperatures was of cyclical nature. Temperatures had started dropping again. The position may resolve itself.

Brian Fox raised the matter of the presence of invasive plant species and reported on the steps taken by Friars Carse Fishery to tackle presence of invasive species. He asked what progress the Board was making with dealing with invasive species.

FD reported that a full time Invasive Species Officer had been employed by the Board last year but had now left. The Board is continuing with the application for fresh funding by using seasonal staff at the point

of maximum control opportunity. He stated that by this he meant that control of invasive species needs to be tackled in the growing season in all parts of the Catchment.

FD reported that it was his intention to vary the basis of the Scheme this year by using Bailiff Staff to deal with invasive species at various parts of the Catchment prior to their commencement of patrol in these areas.

David Matthews raised the matter of seed spread of the like of Himalayan Balsam along roads and railways. He asked if the Council and Network Rail were doing anything to deal with the spread of seeds in these areas.

FD replied that the Board are meeting with the Council over the matter of the invasive species control. The Council use contractors to deal with verge cutting and these contractors need to be advised on the best methods of invasive species control. Board Staff have whenever possible and wherever seen been attempting to deal with roadside invasive species. Network Rail was difficult to deal with. FD reported by example on the presence of Japanese Knotweed at Dalswinton on the railway line. FB advised that a new Bill would be coming before Parliament which may deal with the position by giving more power to deal with the eradication of invasive species. She stated that thus far legislative powers had been insufficient to be able to force control of invasive species.

Tom Brown asked for the source of funding in respect of the Invasive Species Project. FB replied that the primary source of funding had been through the SEPA Restoration Fund.

Ronald Weir suggested that the Upper Catchment would be the place to start with invasive species eradication in order to prevent the flow of seeds down the river in high water. FD replied that he agreed and had been dealing with Giant Hogweed at the Afton Reservoir. A massive effort had been put in to deal with Hogweed. It had been dealt with on the gravel island at Dumfries Caul. FD reported that the vast majority of the work that had been carried out on invasives had been relation to Hogweed and to a lesser extent dealing with stem injection of Japanese Knotweed.

Sophie Weatherall asked about the treatment of Himalayan Balsam at Rosehill. FD drew attention to the explosion of its presence within fenced off Habitat work areas and where the gas pipeline had run through the River Nith. He had seen that sheep had eaten the Balsam in these areas and he suggested that there may be an advantage to allow limited grazing within Habitat Enhancement areas at the commencement of the growing season with provision of more tree protection as part of a limited grazing project.

FB stated that SNH had moved from a ban on the idea of grazing to the idea of limited grazing at certain times of the year. FB stated that it worth trying to encourage anglers to pull out Himalayan Balsam wherever seen.

6. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Clerk outlined his notes on the accounts and drew attention to a correction to be made under the heading "Turnover". It reads "*payment to NCFT*" when it should read "*invoiced to*" or "*payment from.*"

The Clerk drew attention to the new headings of income and expenditure relating to payments to and from NCFT, all of which had been provided to show as much transparency as possible relating to accounting matters between the Board and the Trust accounts.

Mr Green asked if the Board would have run at a loss without the pollution incident compensation payment. The Clerk replied that it would be arguable that this may have occurred, however due to nature, urgency and importance of the pollution incident, normal consultancy income yielding work that would otherwise have been undertaken was delayed or put off for 6 to 8 weeks.

FD stated that if the pollution incident had not occurred he would have been able to pursue other work giving rise to alternative means of revenue for the Board.

The Clerk also drew attention to the heading of expenditure relating to the Invasive Species Project funded by SEPA and the difficulties that the Board is having with the Invasive Species Project funding requirements and the subsequent expenses claims. The Clerk advised that it was his hope that the Board would be refunded by SEPA for the expenditure incurred by the Board very shortly.

Mr Wright asked about the enlargement of the mining operations and if future consultations with the Board will continue giving rise to more revenue for the Board. FD responded by stating that the Board cannot rely on such funding but he is confident that the consultations will continue as the mining operations are ongoing and expansions are being planned. FD also commented on the time and effort spent on assessing the work and the high standards adhered to by him and FB in respect of the Board's requirements for present and future mining operations in order to safeguard as far as possible the fishery.

The Clerk reiterated this and added that in the case of current mining projects the Board is contracted to receive income from its continued involvement in OCCS monitoring for up to the next 20 years as provided for by conditions in the grant of planning permission for the operation of the OCC sites. The revenue stream available to the Board from these operations is monitored by the Board every quarter.

Mr Green offered his congratulations on keeping the expenses under control.

7. Salmon and Sea Trout Angling Conservation Methods.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to address the subject of angling conservation methods. The Clerk reminded those present that Mr Brian Fox and others had raised and asked for a review of the angling code produced for the river system at the last AGM. The matter had been taken onto the immediately following Board meeting where it had been decided to form an Angling Methods Conservation subcommittee to consider matters and report to the Board.

The subcommittee had met during the course of the previous year and then produced a consultation paper for consideration by the full Board. The paper had been discussed at the Board meeting of 8th February 2011. It had not been possible for the matters raised to be fully discussed and consequently decisions on recommendations were not available for presentation to the AGM.

There had been considerable difference of opinion among Board members as to what was reasonable and fair to adopt by way of recommendations. The matter had been continued for further consideration to the next available Board meeting. In general however the Board had agreed that the fundamental matters to discuss and consider were the length of the season, species targeted, return of fish and recommendations on the equipment used regarding bait, barbless hooks etc.

The Clerk said that it is a controversial subject and the Board will distil recommendations down before taking them to the proprietors. The conservation measures will be voluntary and published in a revised code of good practice. As such it would require the goodwill of all fishermen and anglers for the implementation of the angling code to be successful.

The only alternative would be to petition Scottish Government to impose conservation methods by law, which would not be desirable and difficult to reverse.

The Chairman asked for views on this issue. He suggested that it was perhaps necessary to decide what was wanted by way of achievement and reverse engineer these hopes for achievements to what was necessary to recommend by way of restrictions on fishing methods for fish conservation.

The Clerk was asked for the best hoped for date for the publication of the new angling code. He replied that it would be ideal to try to have the new angling code decided upon well before the start of season 2012. Mr Green advised the chairman that most Buccleuch Estates Fishing permits for the following season were printed in the preceding year's month of August. It was agreed among all present that the Board would try to settle upon a revised angling code for August 2011.

FD reported on a very productive start to the fishing season so far. It has been reported to him that the Nith has made The Sunday News of the World because it has had such a good start to the season. Spring fish had been caught and with one notable exception had been returned wherever possible.

The Clerk advised that the catch statistics gathered by Board staff are only a guide; they are not an accurate management tool. It was discussed how to get the returns in on time and have them as accurate as possible.

FD voiced his support of tagging but advised that live fish tagging is extremely difficult. FD suggests having 5 tags a year for salmon kept by anglers to be issued with each permit, thereafter every additional tag may be purchased at an additional cost. This would have to be a nationwide effort not just on the Nith catchment. FD predicts that in the next 5 years tagging will come to Scotland as it is already successful in Ireland, and England has entered into discussions regarding this. Mr Green suggested issuing a certificate for catching a fish and returning it.

The Chairman concluded by stating that the conservation suggestions are ongoing and that the Board will discuss this in more detail at the next meeting.

8. A.O.C.B.

Brian Lord reported upon the moving of the Galloway Game Fair to Buccleuch Estate and asked whether it would be likely that the Board might have representation at the Game Fair. Discussion took place amongst all those present and it was agreed that it would be very good idea to have representation of the Board and Trust at the Game Fair. It was resolved to set up a sub-committee with a view to co-ordinating the organisation of a stand for Board and Trust.

Brian Lord asked if the Cample Burn might receive urgent attention from the Habitat Enhancement department of the Board given the considerable problems that had arisen. FD responded that he would try to do his best but there were severe constraints now imposed by SEPA in respect of the removal of gravel build up. FD stated that it used to be the case that gravel was removed by land owners on a regular basis without causing harm to the river system, but that this was now prohibited by SEPA under CAR regulations. FD stated that the last time that the Cample Water had been looked at SNH had stated that they did not want the burn to be interfered with and that it was to be left alone. FD stated that he would like to see something done about the Cample Water and the build-up of gravel. The question would be whether or not he and his staff would be allowed to do anything.

Geoff Walters reported that if it was gravel build up that was the problem then its removal would ultimately end up in the water course being refilled with the movement of gravel. He stated that Craigs Pool on Closeburn Castle had had gravel removed in the past but that it had arrived back again within the Pool within two years of its removal.

FD responded that in parts of the River farmers used to remove gravel annually but this was now not possible because of CAR regulations. SEPA are beginning to approve abstraction of gravel from rivers in limited circumstances, but subject to extremely rigorous control.

The chairman asked for any other questions and closed the AGM at 12.10pm.

MANAGEMENT REPORT 01.12.10-30.11.11

Chairman's Foreword

The arrival of 12th of March 2012 will see the end of six very informative years for me as Chairman of the Board. It has been a great privilege to work with you all and to see the management of our River and its catchment change so much over the six year period.

Having looked back to the minutes of the AGM and what was going on at the time when I took over the Chair from Sir David Landale, it occurred to me that you all need to be reminded of how much you have all achieved in those six years and a selection of these are set out below. I have then noted one or two regrets that might or might not be taken up by my replacement and the new Board in the next few years!

1. Following on from the good work done by the Galloway Fishery Trust in our catchment for many years, we have of course set up the Nith Catchment Fisheries Trust which hit the ground running and is now a well recognised force that covers a wider remit than the Board and is already earning great respect wherever people come across it.
2. Above all, we now have a Fishery Board which for certainly the last six years has all pulled in one direction! I understand from fellow Chairmen that this is not the case in all Fishery Boards and so much more can be achieved when there is a general consensus to do certain things. Healthy debate is one thing, but division of aims is another!
3. We have constructed a second hatchery primarily to give us better bio-security but also to particularly help with the restocking of sea trout/brown trout. The opportunity was taken to harness the enthusiasm and machinery being employed at the Dalswinton Wind farm when it was under construction and this building could in the future be used for a variety of purposes as well as its main use as a hatchery.
4. A lot of the items on Jim Henderson's wish list have been achieved! This includes getting involved initially at the ground level but now managing the main committee of the Celtic Sea Trout Project, of which much is hoped in identifying and trying to eliminate many of the problems that have beset sea trout populations in rivers draining into the Irish Sea. Jim's involvement has also raised the Board's public profile and particularly its connections with Scottish Government in that we have had two Minister's visits, (and commendations from them about the Board's management processes) and in addition we have purchased additional equipment in order to meet and deal with the modern requirements of the Board's work.
5. Whilst all the above has been achieved our balance sheet has not taken any big hits and is still in an extremely healthy state.
6. Staff numbers, on and off the riverbank have varied from year to year to suit changing circumstances and changing work and commitments made by the Board such as extra patrols at night, while still maintaining a presence on the riverbank meeting fishermen, checking permits etc. and this matter should always be kept under review and adjusted where necessary/possible.
7. The Board continues to receive considerable numbers of applications for development within the catchment from wind farms, open cast coal site extensions, hydro schemes and the like and these have all been dealt with, not by ignoring them but by giving proper responses and where appropriate asking for/insisting on baseline data being prepared before any work starts so that in the event of an accident or temporary removal of spawning watercourses (as in the case of opencast coal operations) losses can be readily be quantified and compensatory stocking provided for.
8. Adult fish numbers in the head waters have generally continued to be good each year and there are signs that Sea Trout numbers may be on the turn and will hopefully be coming back strongly. Fish numbers that are caught each year is not the only measure of success on a river as evidenced by last year when fishing conditions were not good and yet fish for our hatcheries were relatively easily obtained, albeit in high water conditions. 2008 has to stand out as a highlight year in terms of numbers of fish caught when something in the region of 4500 salmon were caught on the whole river system. Whilst catch statistics may be down for season 2011 some specimen fish have been caught and congratulations are extended to Mr Valentine for his fine salmon and for winning the Malloch Trophy.

9. The level of involvement and respect for the methods of management on the Nith at the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards and RAFTS is now at an all time high and we are therefore in a much better position to be involved at the highest level in providing for representations to Government on consultations for the future of fishery management and in respect of raising awareness of threats to what is important for the health and conduct of the fishery in our system. There has been a shift in management style and emphasis at ASFB away from technically unqualified fishery owners, with the involvement of suitably qualified Fishery Directors on the ASFB Executive Committee. Jim Henderson represents our interests on the Executive Committee. The use of qualified technically experienced representation by ASFB shows that ASFB is adapting to the modern requirements of national wild salmon and sea trout fishery management and gives more weight and credence to ASFB representations to Scottish Government.
10. The level of communication with the general public at large has never been so good with the new combined Board and Trust website and the regular publication of Nith News. However, more needs to be done to 'connect' with individual anglers.
11. Six years ago there was a very definite threat that the whole of Scotland would be covered by ten Fishery Boards with each Board being responsible for a particular region. That threat has been overturned completely but there is currently a review of Boards and their operation which means that we cannot be complacent. However I am convinced that this is more of a threat to the smaller Boards who simply are not carrying out their statutory obligations. I firmly believe that the management of our Fishery is best determined by local interests.
12. The centre of operations at Blackwood where we now have the hatchery, the main staff office, an education centre which is much more user friendly and plenty of car parking brings a focus to all our operations that must be better than having various operations at different points on the river system.
13. The Board's very active insistence upon consultation and involvement in all engineering and other operations that might adversely impact upon the Fishery ensures as much protection for the Fishery against such adverse impact as can be mustered. Developers pay for the involvement of the Board staff in these consultations and income is generated as a result. Rebates have been given on the Fishery Board levies in each and every of the six years that I have been Chairman! This has filtered its way down to the charges actually levied to fishermen on the riverbanks.
14. The River Nith's standing in Scotland is now much enhanced and by this I can give you three examples. The first is the increasing level of enquiries that I receive in my day job wanting fishing on the Nith rather than other more widely known rivers in Scotland. The second example is the fact that we have Jim on the Executive Board of ASFB, and the third is that in a public forum recently, how we deal with development in our catchment is held out by Scottish Government as a model for others to emulate in that we are prepared to see the bigger picture of having employment in our catchment rather than simply fighting open cast or wind farm proposals without any hope of success of stopping developments happening. I may have another "feather in our cap" to announce at the AGM!
15. The Nith Fishings Improvements Association, which for many years did amazing work in protecting our Fishery has been successfully amalgamated into the management of our river system and certain of the NFIA's objectives, such as encouraging youngsters to fish, has been adopted as our own.
16. Certain 'No Go' areas of the river where Fishery Board staff were unwelcome and where owners/tenants really did not seem to be operating in the same direction as the Board have now been brought into the fold and are now very much 'with' us in what we are trying to do.
17. Having never before been involved in Country Fairs before, our presence at the 2011 Galloway Country Fair was I feel a great success and gave us a shop window for the general public to learn more about what goes on and proved that the river system is being comprehensively and carefully managed. Our aim must be to get more people through the tent this coming year.
18. Various conservation measures have been amended to help the long term future of the river but much more can be achieved as evidenced in one of my regrets below.
19. I feel it is an achievement we have still not got Signal Crayfish, Gyrodactylis Salaris or Killer Shrimps in our system! Bio security is one of these words that you are not quite sure what it means, but we have to keep up the disinfecting of fishing equipment, the standard of how we manage canoeists and how we keep the public aware that slipping a few American Signal Crayfish into their garden pond really is not a good idea and is in fact illegal.

Turning to my regrets/areas where I feel further work could be directed, I am pleased to see that this list is somewhat shorter! Firstly the Nith is lagging way behind most is not all other rivers in Scotland in terms of the percentage of fish caught and released. Some rivers have realised quite how important this is and how you can in theory quickly improve the numbers of fish returning to the river to spawn, and are achieving over 80% release. Some rivers have done this by the Board insisting that all fish are released, which I am not in favour of recommending, but I feel that the excellent report prepared by Debbie Parke our Biologist sets out extremely clearly what needs to be done and what our target figure should be. **(see page 30 of this Report)**

Secondly, as mentioned above there is a lot more to be done with improving communications with the people on the riverbank and perhaps each Board member should be responsible for a sector of the river? Thirdly there is the perception that whilst the difficult problem of Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed is being addressed, nothing much is being done about the Himalayan Balsam. I trust that with research work currently being undertaken both in terms of spraying with a weak solution of Round-Up, and secondly by introducing insects that may target Himalayan Balsam only, this problem can be controlled.

Lastly there is still a huge problem which seems to be if anything, getting worse over the Controlled Activities Regulations and how SEPA deal with applications to remove gravel, heighten the levels of flood banks that keep failing, and how they deal with applications for riverbank protection works to keep the river where it should be and protect landowners property. Whilst this is not the Fishery Board's responsibility, the Fishery Boards up and down Scotland have a large amount of contact with SEPA and by working together a better system must be adopted to deal with the above problems on a sensible and balanced fashion rather than simply saying no to an application to carry out certain works.

In conclusion, I thank you for giving me the honour of allowing me to be your Chairman for a full six years and I wish the Board every success in the future.

T. Clancy

INTRODUCTION

1. Constitution and Area

The Board for the period 1st December 2010 - 30th November 2011 comprised:-

Chairman	Mr Thomas Florey	
Lower Proprietors	John Kingan Robbie Cowan Ronald Clark	North Corbely Caerlaverock Estate Drumburn
Upper Proprietors	Sir David Landale David Matthews Roy Green Alan Bryden	Dalswinton Estate Blackwood Estate Buccleuch Estates D&G Angling Association
Lower Co-optees	Wally Wright Tom Brown John Charteris	Netting Representative Netting Representative Angling Representative
Upper Co-optees	Mike Keggans Maxwell Keggans Ronald Weir Nick Brown	Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative
Additional Members without voting power		
Invitees		
Gordon McGregor		
Percy Weatherall		
Fiona Naysmith	SEPA	
Stuart Graham	SNH	
Officers		
Roderick Styles		Clerk
Gillian Reid,		Auditor
Messrs Carson & Trotter		
Chartered Accountants		
Staff		
James Henderson		Fishery Director
Barry Young		Senior Bailiff
Craig Henderson		Seasonal Bailiff
Shona Kennedy		Administrative Assistant
Robbie Cowan		Auxiliary Bailiff
David McMichael		Auxiliary Bailiff
Jim McKie		Auxiliary Bailiff

Its main areas of jurisdiction comprise the principal River System of the River Nith and all its tributaries including parts of the Solway Firth.

2. Invitees

In addition to the elected Chairman, lower proprietors and upper proprietors, the Board has invited representatives from the Scottish Environmental Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). The Board has also successfully made representations to Dumfries and Galloway Council and East Ayrshire Council to be considered as Consultees in respect of any works undertaken in the region that would or could have impact on watercourses within the catchment.

3. Research and Improvement

In 1991 the Board, together with Nith Fishing's Improvement Association (NFIA) instructed that a research report be prepared by West GFT (now GFT) in connection with the ecological and biological condition of the catchment and as a result of the preparation of that Report the Board together with NFIA formed the Nith Habitat Enhancement Committee (NHEC). NHEC has been subsumed into the Board as the environmental and habitat department and this important work is now conducted on behalf of the Board by the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust. In addition, the Board has built and operates its own hatcheries.

4. Staff

The Board staff during the period comprised Fishery Director Jim Henderson, Head Bailiff Barry Young and Seasonal Bailiff Craig Henderson. During the summer the Board bailiff team was supported by the addition of three Auxiliary Water Bailiffs who have worked enthusiastically during their time with permanent staff. The Board has committed to training these volunteers to the same standard as the permanent staff and equips them with all that is necessary for them to fulfil their tasks. Throughout the busy summer months the Water Bailiff team is also supported by the seasonal staff employed by the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust. A reciprocal arrangement exists so that the Trust gets assistance from Board staff in dealing with invasive species control.

The Fishery Director is qualified in the diploma of Institute of Fisheries Management, Basic I.T., and Management and holds an honours degree in Environmental studies. The Water Bailiff staff is suitably qualified in fisheries management. Individual members of staff are qualified in the use of Chainsaws, electrofishing equipment and other associated vocational qualifications. They undertake updated training courses as required on a regular basis.

5. Objectives

The Board is constituted under the Salmon Fisheries Legislation commencing in the 1860s as subsequently amended and presently stated in the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003. The Board is empowered under the 2003 Act and other legislation to do such Acts as is considers expedient for the protection, enhancement and conservation of stocks of salmon and sea trout and the general protection and enhancement of the fishery itself.

The Board's principal objectives are therefore to preserve, protect and enhance stocks of migratory salmonids in the Nith catchment and to preserve, protect and enhance the fishery.

The Board's principal objectives as set out above have been significantly widened as a result of the Water Framework Directive, also as a consequence of initiatives and consultations organised by the Scottish Government and in respect of initiatives relating to integrated Catchment management. The Fisheries Director attends regular meetings convened by SEPA concerning the development of the Nith Catchment Management Plan. It is important that the Board, in responding to this wider remit, should never lose sight of its basic principle objectives but on the other hand should seek to promote these through exercise of its anticipated rights and obligations as a "Competent Authority" under E.C. Directives.

6. How the Board Works

The Board is constituted by voluntary non-remunerated members and meets at least four times a year. It reports to proprietors at the Annual General Meeting once a year at which the proprietors meet for the purposes of considering the report and audited Accounts.

Day to day responsibility for administration of the Board rests with the Clerk who reports to the Chairman and liaises with the Fishery Director on a regular basis.

The Fishery Director and Bailiffs are responsible for the protection and enhancement of the stocks of fish and these measures undertaken include anti-poaching enforcement measures, catchment patrol, sea patrol, pollution observation, conducting fishery research, providing advice on best practices in respect of civil engineering works that might impact upon the river systems and other general responsibilities. Work particularly during the summer months can involve long nocturnal hours. The liaison with proprietors, keepers and river watchers is a priority.

The Fishery Director and Bailiffs also run two hatcheries and principal duties include collection of brood stock, maintenance of salmon and sea trout ova, rearing fry and releasing fed fry into suitable stream areas.

7. Funding

The Board under its legislative powers derives its income each year from all proprietors of Salmon fishings in the district. All assessments are based on rateable value as calculated by the Local Authority Assessors for the respective beats and a sum determined by the Board is levied against all salmon fishing proprietors to meet the assessment needed to fund the Board. In addition the Board has received funding from Invicta Trout.

The Board also received donations for its hatchery operations from Nith Estuary Haaf Netting Association. The Board is enormously grateful for the support that it receives from the above and other sources.

The Board also receives consultancy income from various third parties (such as civil engineering contractors and others) who require information and guidance from the Board in connection with the likely environmental impact that any work to be carried out might have upon the river system and the steps that are necessary to mitigate against adverse environmental consequences for the river system under the Board's jurisdiction.

8. Constitutional Evolution

The Board has, for many years, comprised a chairman and representative of lower and upper proprietors. The upper members represent angling proprietors while lower members represent coastal and estuarine proprietors involved in net fishing.

Even prior to recommendations from the Nixon report (Scottish Salmon Strategy Task Force, 1997) the Board extended invitations to SNH and SEPA. Although these invitees do not have voting powers their attendance at meetings has been substantially beneficial since the inception of this arrangement in 1996.

9. Fish Species Present in the Nith

The Nith is similar to many Scottish rivers and supports only a limited number of fish species. These include Atlantic salmon (*salmo salar*), trout (*salmo trutta*) as migratory Sea trout and as resident Brown trout, European eel (*anguilla anguilla*), pike (*esox lucius*), minnow (*phoxinus phoxinus*), stoneloach (*neopmacheilus barbatulus*), three spined stickleback (*gasterosteus aculeatus*) and grayling (*thymallus thymallus*).

Three varieties of lamprey are also present, sea lamprey (*petromyzon marinus*), river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) and the fresh water resident brook lamprey (*lampreta planeri*). In recent years a number of local lochs have been stocked with rainbow trout (*oncorhynchus mykiss*) that have subsequently found routes into the Nith itself. However, there is no evidence that they have established a breeding population. This trend of stocking rainbow trout into ponds is of concern to NDSFB due to the predatory nature of this species of non indigenous fish.

10. Fishing methods

Four methods of salmon and sea trout fishing are operated in the Nith District, fixed engine on the coast, haaf netting on the tidal river estuary, net and cobble in the River Cairn and rod and line in the rivers. The current season for haaf netting extends from 25th February to 9th September in each year with a weekly "slap time" or period of no netting activity from Friday at 6pm to the following Monday at 6am.

Most of the angling on the Nith is concentrated from Sanquhar to the river mouth. However, salmon are taken further upstream and also from a number of tributaries most notably the Cairn. The current season extends from 25th February to 30th November and angling for salmon and sea trout is not permitted on Sundays in Scotland by law.

11. Salmon and Sea Trout Populations

Both salmon and sea trout are anadromous fishes – that is to say they spawn and undergo their early lives in freshwater but experience most of their growth at sea. In Scotland, a period of sea growth is prerequisite for the attainment of sexual maturity in hen salmon, but not for cocks, a proportion of which first contribute to the spawning act as mature parr. The dynamics of sea trout populations are more complex in that both sexes may attain sexual maturity while in fresh water. However, this tendency to early maturation is much more strongly developed in cock trout.

Rod and line fisheries for salmon are based upon the interception of sea run adults returning to spawn. The interception usually takes place in rivers of origin but a few fish, especially those entering fresh water many months before spawning, may be caught during the course of temporary excursions into non-native rivers. Exploratory behaviour of this sort is seen to a greater extent in sea trout that may also use non native fresh and estuarine waters for feeding and over wintering purposes. However, as with salmon, the abundance and timing of spawning migration are the primary factors that determine the availability of sea trout to the fisheries.

In relatively large rivers like the Nith, the seasonal characteristics of the fisheries vary and the extent of the variation is greater for salmon than for sea trout. Generally speaking, it is believed that the earliest running salmon are derived from and home to the upper part of the river and the later running fish to the lower. There is increasing genetic evidence that the homing behaviour leads to a degree of reproductive isolation among various main groups of fish that may therefore be regarded, for management purposes, as separate self-sustaining populations. Within each population, it is generally found that the higher the sea age the earlier the seasonal date of river entry by Salmon.

12. Marine pressures/International Impact

It has been known for many years that long-term changes take place in the numbers and seasonal availability of salmon. When such changes take place, their effects tend to be widely felt and there is increasing evidence that alterations in marine climate may lie behind them. The slower fish grow, the more vulnerable they remain. Similarly, the faster fish grow, especially in the spring, the earlier they are likely to mature and return. Because different populations of salmon appear to migrate to different parts of the North Atlantic, the effects of changes in marine climate may differ among the various groups of fish. The result for the fisherman may be a radical alteration, lasting for much of his fishing lifetime, in the numbers and seasonal distribution of the resource available to him. Growth and survival opportunities for salmon are currently poor for much of the North Atlantic. This conclusion is especially true in the North West Atlantic where many of the older sea springers complete their growth cycles.

Current insights into the likely causes of both short and long term changes in the abundance and structure of Atlantic salmon resources are largely based on the work of British, Norwegian and North American scientists as discussed at the regular meetings of the ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) Working Group on Atlantic Salmon.

In addition to changes in marine climate, the Working Group has recently drawn attention to other factors such as predation by seals and the side effects of marine fisheries for other species. So far as the Nith is concerned, the key requirements during the current lean period are to ensure that smolt production is not limited by lack of spawning adults. The risk of such limitation is greatest for the populations of early running salmon that currently spawn mainly in the upper catchment of the river.

13. Angling Availability

There are five angling associations on the River Nith as follows: -

Dumfries & Galloway Council (Burgh Anglers Association)
Dumfries & Galloway Angling Association
Mid Nithsdale Angling Association
Upper Nithsdale Angling Association
New Cumnock Angling Association

The public can also easily gain access to the other beats on the river. A trend, which has been developed by many owners over recent years, is to allow for evening sea trout fishing at a very reasonable cost to the public on various beats of the Nith. This has proved to be very successful financially for those beats letting the fishing. It has also been successful in dissuading poachers from settling in to a night of crime on an otherwise deserted beat. The Nith provides more public access to angling than many other major Scottish rivers.

14. Water Quality and Riparian Habitat

Clean and well-oxygenated water is obviously of paramount importance in safe guarding fish stocks of all kinds within the Nith. The quality and quantity of water in the Nith catchment is monitored by SEPA and apart from a few isolated pollution incidents the quality of the river is considered excellent.

15. Fish Access

Access to spawning areas is of paramount importance for salmon and sea trout to complete their life cycle successfully. There are few obstructions to fish passage on the Nith and those that exist are largely natural waterfalls. The Board has initiated several management options including stocking with juveniles above these impassable obstructions to try to improve smolt output. These stockings from Hatchery reared fry are easily monitored. The results obtained from electrofishing are not massaged in any way by natural stocks.

Other threats to adult access to spawning areas were recorded on a number of burns due to road bridge construction and natural blockages such as log jams over the course of the year. These have been dealt with and removed as appropriate. Discussions with road departments have resulted in securing bridge constructions that do not compromise adult access on a number of tributaries. Discussions now take place with Contractors prior to their moving onto site with full consultation with the Fishery Director. The District Salmon Fishery Board has good liaison with Dumfries & Galloway Council Roads and Bridges Department to ensure future consultation on any projects on or near to the watercourse.

16. Riparian Habitat Assessment and Management

Management of the riparian zone is an area of interest that has developed rapidly during the last decade. Pioneering work on the Tweed has illustrated the advantage of reinstating bankside vegetation and improving in-stream cover for fish. In addition there is clear evidence that a well vegetated and maintained riparian zone offers considerable advantages in terms of shading, a source of food production and habitat for salmonids. There are also additional benefits to the watercourse such as improved bank stability and more varied habitat for other wildlife. To this end the work previously carried out by the Nith Habitat Enhancement Committee, which was formed in July 1995, continues under the guidance and control of the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust.

Habitat enhancement work is conducted throughout the Catchment. The Habitat Enhancement work is of long term benefit and the river is unlikely to see the benefit of this initiative in the short term.

Reference is made to the report about Nith Habitat Enhancement work at page 36 of this report.

17. Juvenile Salmon and Trout Populations

The Nith Fishings Improvement Association commissioned a report, prepared by Dr. Alistair Steven, BSC PHD of Galloway Fisheries Trust and started a programme of juvenile surveys in 1991. The aims of this initiative were to determine the distribution and density of juvenile salmon and trout within the Nith, and use this data to estimate smolt output, monitor changes in fish populations and identify weak areas of the catchment in terms of low juvenile densities. The report showed that in general juvenile salmon and trout are well distributed throughout the catchment and often present in high densities. Poorly stocked areas are also evident particularly above physical obstructions such as Shinnel falls and Rouken Bridge on the old water of the Cairn. Ongoing survey work to assess juvenile population densities has continued on an annual basis. Galloway Fisheries Trust in the past carried out this work but in recent years the District Salmon Fishery Board bailiffs have also conducted their own electrofishing surveys. The Board's staff is qualified, equipped and capable of conducting these research surveys.

18. Hatchery and Stocking

Following Galloway Fisheries Trust juvenile salmon and trout survey in 1991 it was evident that there was a need to produce hatchery stock to restock areas that were devoid of salmonids by reason of poaching, pollution and degraded habitat. To meet that need the Board established a Hatchery at Blackwood Estate in 1994 and constructed a second hatchery at Dalswinton during 2008. These Hatcheries have the capacity to hold brood stock and produce ova and resultant fry for the catchment. Invicta Trout, Newtonairds Fish Farm, supplies all feed for fed fry.

Since the inception of the Hatchery program, the emphasis on the reasons for continuing with it have changed as a consequence of the commencement of substantial Open Cast Coal Operations at the top of the Catchment.

The use of hatcheries in modern fisheries management is a subject on which almost all involved in the fisheries world has an opinion. Historically, there have been hatcheries on lots rivers across Scotland but many of these are now gone and those that are still in existence are there to fulfil specific requirements. Hatcheries are no substitute for wild fish spawning naturally without the intervention of man.

So why does the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board operate a hatchery programme?

Because there is a requirement to produce hatchery reared fish to replace stocks lost as a result of mining activity in the upper catchment. Over the last decade there have been several major mainstem river diversions and loss of spawning watercourses due to the expansion of coal mining in the catchment. Part of the mitigation package negotiated by the Board with site operators to offset any adverse impacts on the numbers of juvenile salmonids as a consequence of these operations is to provide additional indigenous

salmonid stocks to restock coal abstraction areas once they have been reinstated. In addition, over the years, incidents have occurred involving mining operations which have resulted in the total loss of fry and parr from areas of the Nith catchment. The Board has countered the effects of these incidents by using hatchery stock to replace lost fish.

Anglers enquire about the hatchery and the Board's policy on stocking and the following list are some of the more frequently asked questions.

- ***How many eggs do you produce?***
Approximately 1 million eggs per year.
- ***Could the Board produce more eggs?***
Yes, but only if it was appropriate to do so.
- ***Why use only 1 million eggs?***
Because stocking only takes place in areas that have been accurately surveyed and have been assessed as suitable for stocking.
- ***Where do you get the brood stock from?***
The brood stock is captured from as near to the location where the stocking will eventually take place. This practice is in compliance with the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) code of practice for operating hatcheries.
- ***How many brood fish do you capture and strip to produce the eggs?***
Obviously, it depends on the size of the fish but the total number of broodstock fish required annually averages at approximately 140 hens.
- ***How many cock fish does the Board capture?***
The Board does capture cock fish and holds a few in stock in the hatchery but in recent years the practice has been adopted of stripping milt on site and returning the cocks immediately.
- ***How do you catch the brood stock?***
The most non-invasive fish friendly methods are used to capture brood stock. Board staff are well qualified in the use of electrofishing equipment and this method allows selection of individual fish for capture without affecting or touching others not required.
- ***Are fish from different parts of the catchment kept separate in the hatchery programme?***
Yes. Broodstock from a specific part of the catchment are assigned their own holding tanks and the resulting eggs and fry are also assigned their own trays and boxes to prevent mixing with stock from other parts of the catchment, again in compliance with ASFB best practice.
- ***Are you depleting stocks of fish in the areas where the Board collects brood stock?***
No. The Board collects brood stock from areas where it is established that there is "over redding" i.e. areas where fish spawn and subsequent fish also utilise many times over, digging up the spawn already in the gravel in the process.
- ***Do you have a licence to operate the hatchery?***
Yes. The Board has abstraction and discharge consent from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). In addition the hatcheries are registered with the Fish Health Inspectorate, Marine Scotland. All fish movements are also recorded and have written authorisation by the local District Salmon Fishery Board in compliance with Aquatic Animal Health (Scotland) Regulations 2009.
- ***Is the Board's staff qualified to operate hatcheries?***
Yes. All of the Board's permanent staff have obtained professional qualifications to operate a hatchery and in addition the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust Biologist who assists with the Board's hatchery has an honours degree in Aquaculture.

- ***How often do you attend the hatchery?***
At least once every day and more often depending on the time of year and the development stage the fish have reached.
- ***Why do you return the stock as fed fry?***
The fry are returned as fed fry in the spring. At this time of year the environment has warmed up, and more natural feeding is available for the fry, increasing their chances of survival. Follow up surveys have shown good survival rates of fry.
- ***Why not produce eyed ova and plant these in the gravel?***
Experience has shown us that during violent spates whole gravel beds can be washed out so the Board considers it safer to hold the stock until the spring.
- ***Why not stock smolts into the river?***
The facilities don't exist to produce smolts, nor is it desirable to stock fish at this stage. It is extremely expensive. The longer that stock is kept the more likely that the fish will imprint on their holding area. The Board follows best practice and stocks out fed fry at the optimum time for their survival, but prior to imprinting.
- ***Does the Board sell fish or eggs to other rivers or districts?***
No. The Board has received requests to sell eggs to other rivers and to the commercial aquaculture sector and has always refused to do so.
- ***Do the fry survive?***
All sites are surveyed after stocking has been conducted to ensure that the fry have survived. Subsequent surveys in future years also prove that the fry have over wintered and successfully survived to the parr stage.
- ***Do all the returned adults instinctively return to the hatchery outflow?***
No. The fry are planted out before they "imprint" on the hatchery water supply and in conformity with best practice, as confirmed by an independent fishery biologist (formerly with SEPA and now with RAFTS) who has visited the catchment.
- ***Is the Nith hatchery programme working?***
Yes. Areas of the catchment that have been stocked previously and now contain populations of fry and parr. There is no doubt that these areas are contributing to the river's smolt production.
- ***Will the Board continue the hatchery programme?***
Yes. For so long as OCC operations continue in the catchment, resulting in the complete removal of spawning water courses, then of necessity, compensatory stocking will take place.

It is well documented that salmon return to the rivers and tributaries of their origin to spawn. Recent research by Verspoor (1995) looking into the genetic variation among salmon populations in the River Dee (Aberdeenshire) indicates that each tributary may contain a separate breeding population. It is likely that the Nith Salmon populations are similarly structured. This has implications for the management of the stocks. The collection of brood stock from certain tributaries and the planting out of fry in other parts of the river could be creating unnecessary havoc with the natural genetic mix. All stocking conducted by the Nith District Salmon Fishery Board is the subject of follow-up electrofishing survey work to ensure survival of the fry. In general, fed fry exhibit good survival rates even when introduced to more extreme areas of the catchment. Fry are stocked into suitable tributaries at a stocking rate of 3 to 5 fry per square metre. Although many anglers, gillies, proprietors and fishery biologists acknowledge that stocking can be used to supplement salmon stocks, difficulties arise in measuring the returning rates of the adult stock to the fishery. However, stocking within the Nith should not be implemented in isolation but in combination with other techniques reducing obstructions, habitat management predator control and so on.

Fry were planted out in the spring of 2011 at the following locations:

Species	Number	Location
Salmon	101,143	Euchan
Salmon	75,000	Nith (Thornhill)
Salmon	12,230	Crichope Linn (Cample)
Salmon	129,672	Crawick
Salmon	10,000	Glen Midge Burn
Salmon	100,155	Shinnel Water
Salmon	19210	Spango Water
Salmon	51,070	Mennock Water
Salmon	15,306	Cairn
Salmon	9,731	Polneul Burn
Salmon	60,939	Kello Water
Salmon	5,000	Nith (Carnsalloch)
Sea trout	33,449	Wanlock Water
Sea trout	63,886	Mennock
Sea trout	62,838	Nith (Rigg)
Sea trout	4,500	Connel Burn
Sea trout	4,510	Spango

Total fry stocked out **758,639**



The hatchery is a useful tool in allowing people to learn about the lifecycles of salmon and sea trout and their importance to the River Nith in a fun, interactive and hands-on manner. Hatchery visits prove to be very popular with those pupils from schools involved with the “Salmon in the Classroom” project and gives them a unique opportunity to see how salmon are stripped of their eggs and how those eggs are incubated within the hatchery. This initial hatchery visit sets the scene for them looking after their own salmon eggs in the classroom right through to stocking them into their local river. In 2011 the following schools visited the hatchery; Sanquhar Academy, Sanquhar Primary, Kelloholm Primary, and Wallace Hall Academy.

19. Sea Trout/Brown Trout

Salmon and trout do not exist in isolation and inevitably interact with other species. Salmon and trout at all life stages represent a food source for predators. The main predators in the Nith system include pike, otter, heron and mink within the river, seals which primarily forage around the river mouth and along the coast, and the goosander, and cormorants which migrate between the sea and river depending on the season. Ospreys also capture smaller salmonids.

20. Predators – Statistics

Counts of goosander and cormorants were conducted on the mainstem and a number of tributaries during the early 1990's and numbers varied considerably both seasonally and from year to year. These counts indicated that large numbers of goosanders and cormorants were often present in the lower Nith during the early months of the year. During the summer month's numbers dropped considerably and were predominantly female birds with young. While in autumn numbers began to increase again as male and immature birds returned to the river.

A licence is applied for annually from the Scottish Government to cull avian predators. This policy is carried out taking account of best practice and in consultation with SNH.

The Bailiff Staff continues to follow Board approved policy on mink control. Fifty four mink were captured during the period January to November inclusive; this is conducted at suitable times when the river is not in spate.

During 2011 the Board had a member of staff trained as an accredited marksman to enable the Board to shoot seals under licence from the Scottish Government.

21. Exploitation

Early work by Shearer (1988) suggested that in summer between 5% and 8% of the returning adult salmon are captured by anglers. However, because early running spring salmon remain in the river for longer they may be subjected to higher levels of exploitation. There is some limited evidence from radio tracking (Laughton, 1991b) and mark recapture studies (Davidson, Cove, Milner and Purvis, 1996) to support this suggestion.

There is increasing interest in Catch and Release as a conservation policy for salmon stocks. Although concerns have been raised that this is damaging to the fish and may compromise survival, a recent study by John Webb (Biologist with the Atlantic Salmon Trust) on the Aberdeenshire Dee refutes this. His work clearly indicates that spring and early summer salmon caught and returned by anglers, provided they are handled with care, can complete their spawning migrations successfully (Webb, 1998).

Reference is made to the Fishery Biologist's Report – Catch and Release (page 30)

22. Salmonid Stocks

Juvenile Stocks Our surveys show that in general stocks of juvenile salmonids are at a satisfactory level in a majority of the catchment. There are, however, some tributaries in which numbers are well below optimum levels. Closely monitored trial stockings will help to determine which of these tributaries require Habitat Enhancement measures before their potential can be realised.

Spring Fish The Nith does have a run of spring fish (those fish available to be caught, (from 25th February to 31st May) however numbers of these fish are very much reduced from what they were in the 1960s. 2011 saw an increase in the number of spring fish in the river and a number were captured by the few anglers who made the effort to fish on the river. It is essential this genetic core be safeguarded if there is to be any chance of an increase in its numbers.

The Board seeks to reduce the exploitation of stocks of spring salmon further by promoting their Return & Reward scheme. This scheme rewards fishermen by giving them a sweatshirt for returning a spring salmon.

Grilse and Autumn Fish

The availability of grilse and summer salmon plays an important part in providing fishing for local rods before many visitors come to the Nith for the autumn fishing. Grilse numbers were low in the Nith during 2011 and this was experienced all over Scotland. However the presence of large salmon in the river system was evident right throughout the year and the average size of salmon captured was approximately 1 Kg heavier.

Sea Trout The Nith has no fish farms close to its estuary or adjoining coastline and has not suffered the near extinction of its stocks experienced by many Scottish, especially West coast, rivers. A considerable decrease in the number of Sea trout caught has occurred within the Nith system. Decreasing numbers of Sea trout has been experienced throughout Britain and Southern Ireland. The Board has over recent years sought to lay down and bring on to release a greater proportion of sea trout in its hatchery operation. The Board has also sought to encourage a policy amongst proprietors, anglers and nets men of return of sea trout over 3lbs in weight with a limit of two sea trout taken per rod per day during the course of the season commencing in 2007. The Board will continue to monitor the position with a view to deciding upon what courses of action it might take to try to stem the apparent decline in the sea trout population within the Nith system.

The Return & Reward scheme rewards fishermen with a cap for returning any sea trout over the weight of 3lbs.

23. Celtic Sea Trout Project

Introduction

The Celtic Sea Trout Project (CSTP) is a European Union, Interreg IVA-funded, Ireland-Wales collaborative project on the status, distribution, genetics and ecology of sea trout around the Irish Sea. This note briefly outlines progress in 2011 for the many helpers and participants in angling clubs, river trusts and other organisations. More detailed technical accounts will be available in due course.

Sampling

The CSTP is reliant upon effective field sampling to collect data and material such as scales from fish for the scientific analysis. For example, the genetics and microchemistry analysis, that will tell us about the mixing and distribution of stocks, requires a baseline of measurements to be made in all the principal rivers around the Irish Sea which are likely to contribute to sea trout stocks. River sampling of juvenile trout for the genetics was the focus of the CSTP scientific team's work in 2010 and was completed in 2011, using a large scale electro-fishing programme, taking samples from around 80 rivers.

Sampling in the sea

Marine sampling of sea trout is a key part of the project because it has not been done before in British and Irish Waters. CSTP aims to discover where sea trout go, what they feed on and how fast they grow. This is a challenging task but the CSTP team has made good progress. New methods of trawl sampling have been developed and used successfully in surveys from Dublin to the Solway coast, via the Isle of Man. Shore sampling along the coasts of Wales, England and Scotland has proved more difficult. Collections are still sparse and the marine sampling, including trawl sampling off Cardigan Bay and South Wales, will be intensified in 2012. Shore sampling in Ireland has yielded good results and this programme will be expanded in 2012.

Sampling in rivers

A major part of the sampling programme is the collection of scales for analysis of life histories, and growth rates. CSTP needs to establish from which rivers samples came from and, apart from fish traps of which there are only three across the whole CSTP area (Tawe, Dee and Lune), the sampling of adults in rivers has to be done by angling. This part of the sampling programme has necessitated extensive communication with angler groups and distribution of thousands of sampling kits and scale envelopes. Several talks on the CSTP were given during the winters of 2008/9, 2009/10 and 2010/11 to clubs and associations across Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England. CSTP aims to collect scales from at least 300 adult sea trout from each of the selected rivers over the project.

The scale sampling to date has yielded mixed results, bearing in mind the target of 300 (Fig 1). The participation has been very good with over 1,600 anglers sending in 3974 sets, of which 2,322 came in 2011. Grateful thanks is extended for all of samples supplied. Some rivers have done particularly well, such as the Border Esk, the Irish Dee, Argideen, Castletown and Currane, and on others some of the shortfall has been made up with other forms of sampling. Sampling will continue in 2012.

Sample processing and data analysis

Genetic analysis at University College Cork and Bangor University has been completed to establish a baseline of genetic variation and has shown remarkably strong structuring, with patterns that appear to reflect the ancient glacial history of the Irish Sea. This information will be used to assign marine sea trout to their regions or rivers of origin, in order to learn how they distribute themselves at sea.

Scales from the past two years are currently being read and analysed and are being used to derive the ages, spawning history and growth rates of individual fish throughout their lives in rivers and sea. The bulk of this time-consuming work will be done by summer 2012. Other tasks on sea trout marine feeding, marine distribution modelling and fisheries analysis will be completed during 2012. The work includes dissecting organs and tissues from 2000+ adult fish, microchemical analysis of the inner ear bones, measuring and weighing 5,000+ fry, and scale reading and analysis of the large historical collection of scales that the CSTP has brought together. So, coupled with the year round sampling, the scientists are fully occupied.

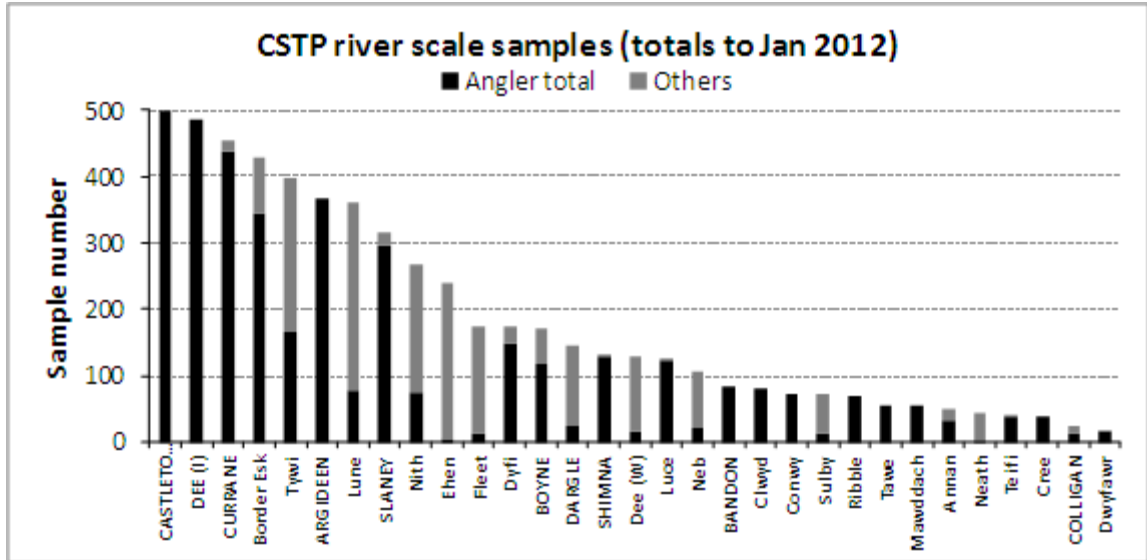


Figure 1 Rivers, with more than 10 samples at Jan 2012, ranked by scale sample size.

Sampling by anglers in 2012

The prize draw for the champion scale samplers will be held in Carmarthen 21st March 2013, but the CSTP needs the continued support of anglers in 2012. Scales can be taken easily once you have the basic kit which we provide. CSTP project team members are available to present talks to your club if required. Contact us through the CSTP website. Thanks is extended for the continuing support.

24. Engineering and other Works

Open Cast Coal Mining

Open cast coal mining continues with all three operators within the River Nith catchment namely ATH Resources, Scottish Coal and Keir Mining, all purposing extensions to their existing sites. The most significant project which the Board is involved with is Keir’s proposals to divert a section of the River Nith to facilitate the extraction of Coal under the original channel of the River Nith. The Board has been consulted about these proposals in great detail and has agreed measures to protect fish stocks and the River Nith catchment in general.



Nith diversion channel at House of Water OCCS.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy projects continue to be proposed throughout the Nith catchment. Many small watercourses are the subject of micro-hydro proposals and the Board maintains its policy of not supporting these proposals. That said, providing that the Board can establish accurate fishery data prior to these developments being constructed and contribute to the plans in order that they can be adapted to be fish friendly, then re assess, post commissioning to ensure that the fish community has not been adversely impacted, then the Board does not object to schemes.

In addition to hydro, wind energy proposals continue to be forwarded from the planning authority for comment from the Board. The Nith catchment seems to have more than its fair share of windfarms and this trend seems set to continue. Each windfarm proposal requires a complete set of electrofishing surveys of all watercourses in the vicinity of the construction site and along the route of the cabling to effect a grid connection. Whilst these renewable energy proposals are branded as “green” the Board is aware of the potential for such large scale construction works to create adverse impacts in the aquatic environment.

Forestry

The Board has been consulted by the Forestry Commission and private Forestry interests regarding many forest plans throughout the catchment. Forest design plans indicate the management actions such as harvesting, replanting and the time scales when these operations are likely to occur. The Board responds when appropriate on issues that could potentially influence fish or the habitat in which they reside.

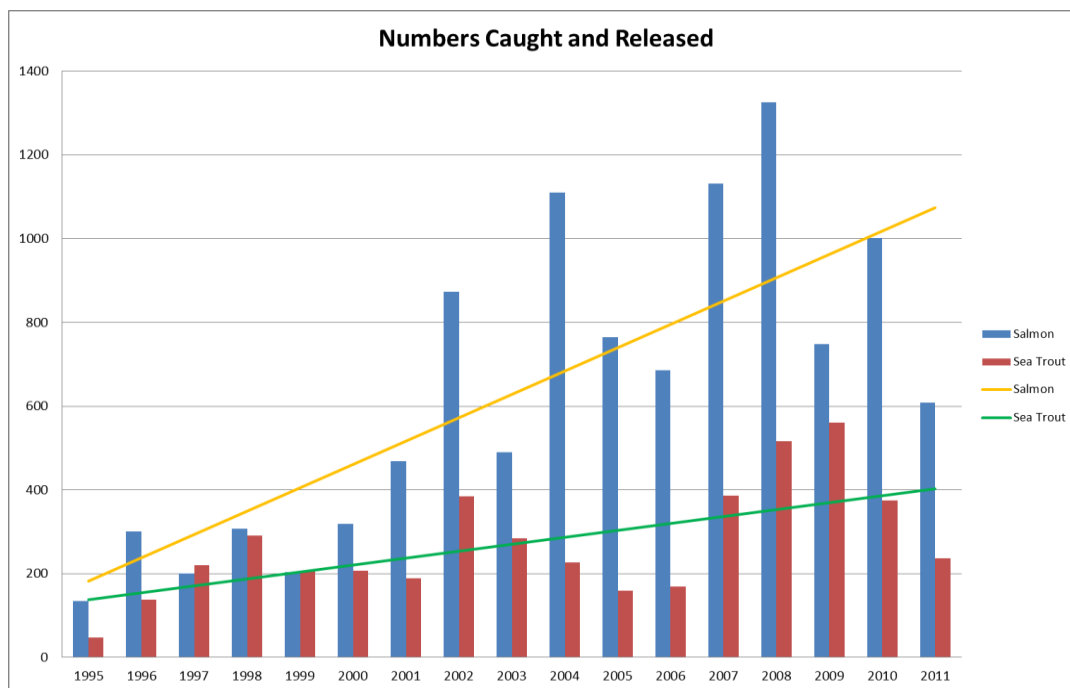
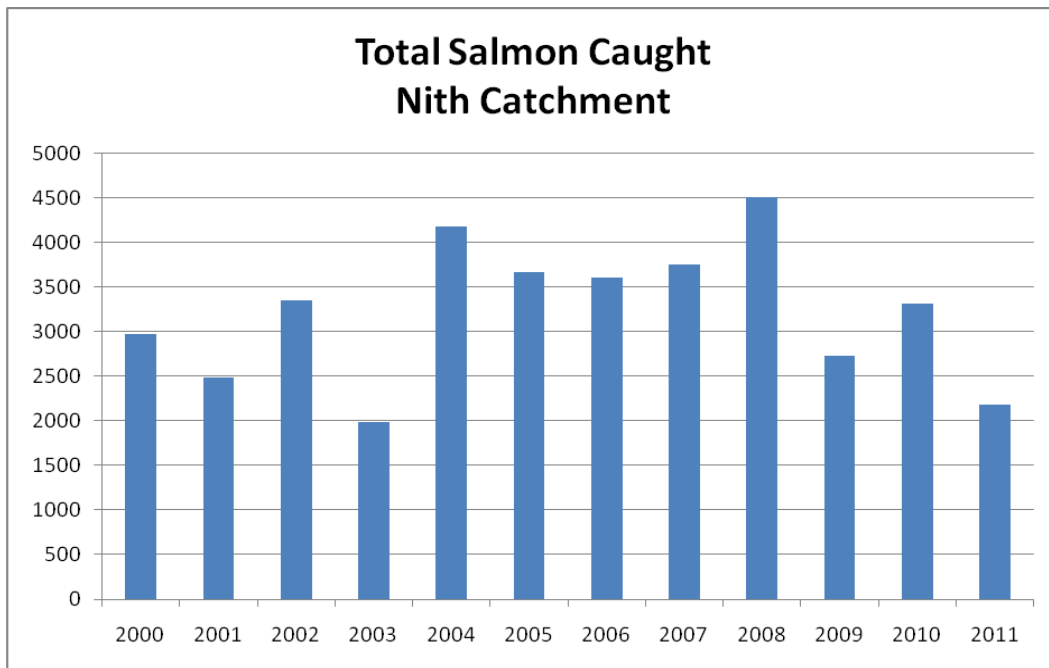
25. Illegal Fishing

Statistics of incidents are provided at page 36 of the report.

26. Exploitation

Catch and Release

Following on from the comments about the stock of spring fish the Board has recommended to all proprietors and anglers to adopt catch and release of spring fish. NDSFB recognises the contribution which catch and release can make to conserving salmon stocks and has encourages this practice. Proprietors and fishers have embraced this initiative enthusiastically. The Board also requested that all proprietors seek to impose a restriction upon the taking of the numbers and size of sea trout caught and retained during any one day by anyone fishing for them suggesting that a maximum of two (2) sea trout may be caught and retained per day and that all sea trout over the weight of 3 lbs should be returned to the river. NDSFB adopts a Return & Reward scheme (see page 22).



Netting

The Board is representative of all fishery proprietors on the Nith and benefits from the long and wide experience of its netting members.

Hatcheries

The Board believes that the use of hatcheries has a necessary role to play in the foreseeable future and therefore operates two hatcheries within the catchment for the propagation of salmon and sea trout,

Habitat

The Board attaches much emphasis to Habitat Enhancement. Naturally produced fish have been shown to be much hardier than those produced in a hatchery. The Board is mindful of maintaining a proper balance between resources used for hatcheries and those used for Habitat Enhancement.

Predators

Although present in the Solway Firth, seals do not appear to be the threat that they are in other Salmon Districts. Cormorants and goosanders are known predators of juvenile fish and the Board staff applies for and obtains an annual license to cull limited numbers of avian predators. Scottish Office research scientists have analysed the birds' diet and use the findings to

establish a case for the sensible and effective management and control of these species. Mink appear to be increasing especially within the catchment of the major tributary Cairn. The Board operates a mink control policy.

Water Quality

Close liaison with SEPA results in the Board having access to water quality monitoring data on the Nith.

River Engineering Works

The Board continues to provide guidance upon safe methods of work in relation to engineering works in or near the environs of watercourses to minimise risk of environmental damage to the river system.

Public Access

Approximately 62% of the mainstem of the Nith is directly available to public access for fishing via local associations. Of the remaining 38% the vast majority is available by daily or weekly rental. The Board considers this to be a very satisfactory situation; there is plenty of access for local anglers and good access for visiting anglers whose contribution to the Catchment's economy is considerable and vital. A recent report from Stirling University opined that Salmon Angling at 1999 figures was worth in excess of £2.2 million to the local economy.

27. Legislation and Its Development

The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 received royal assent in early 2003 and is now in force. The Board contributed to the consultation process on this legislation and is pleased to report that for once its views were taken account of in the final production of the legislation. This legislation now provides statutory recognition of haaf netting and retains the protection of the Solway Act 1804 in respect of all watercourses draining to the Solway Firth.

The Scottish Government has recently published its proposals for an Aquaculture and Freshwater Fisheries Bill. The Board will consider the proposals and liaise with ASFB through the Fishery Director to provide a response on the consultation process.

The Board continues to participate in and contribute to all relevant consultation documentation associated with Fisheries Management issues within their jurisdiction and on a National basis when appropriate.

28. Summary of Events from 01.12.10 – 30.11.11

The Board wherever possible tries to ensure that Board members are kept fully informed about the changing circumstances that affect the day to day management of the river system and meetings are often called at short notice.

The Board met on:-

2nd December 2010,
8th February 2011,
1st March 2011 (AGM), and Board meeting thereafter,
31st May 2011,
4th October 2011,
31st October 2011,
6th December 2011

The Board continues to be very busy attending to its statutory duties of managing the migratory stocks of salmonid species of fish throughout the River Nith catchment. As well as delivering management on the river this also involves the attendance of staff at various consultation meetings and national events to engage at the highest levels to ensure that the Board is able to contribute meaningfully to policies and future strategies. Board members are aware of the importance of informing political leaders regarding the work of the Board and the issues faced in managing salmon and sea trout. To that end the Board invited

the Minister for the Environment & Climate Change to attend a Board meeting in the autumn then to attend a field visit to see first-hand how the Board deals with major construction works within the catchment. The attendance of the Minister was greatly appreciated by the Board members and they considered his visit to be a great success.



Board members meet with Environment Minister Stuart Stevenson and Manson Wright from Scottish Government at the Cairndale...



and at House of Water OCCS.

The Board was represented at meetings and events throughout the catchment over the year. The Board recognise the importance of a presence at the various events in order that the anglers and netsmen are afforded the opportunity to question the Board's staff on any issues of concern. The Board requires the

support of the anglers and netmen for some of the initiatives that the Board is currently pursuing, such as the updated Angling Code “catch & release” policy. The Board strongly recommends that anglers adopt this policy as part of necessary salmon and sea trout conservation measures for the river. The alternative is to have compulsory catch and release measures being imposed on the system with Government involvement.

The Fishery Director represented the Board at various events throughout the year including:-

All coal mining Technical Working Groups, Celtic Sea Trout Project, Bailiff Training meetings, Dumfries Burgh Fishings Sub Committee, Nith Catchment Fishery Trust, Burgh Anglers AGM, Environment Days, Burgh Work party days, Annual Bailiffs conference, presentation to police probationers, Association of Salmon Fishery Boards Council meetings, the Rivers and Fishery Trusts of Scotland AGM, D&G Council Wildlife Open days, various meetings with the Procurator Fiscal, Scottish Fishery Directors meetings, Wallace Hall Academy Coal Mine trip, Dumfries Civic Pride litter picking on the River Nith, various site meetings to discuss renewable energy proposals and many other events to promote the work of the Board.

The Board opted to participate in the Galloway Country Fair which was held for the first time in the grounds of Drumlanrig Castle. This involved substantial organisation and the voluntary participation and cooperation of many members of staff. The event was considered a success for the Board and afforded the opportunity to interact with the public. The Board are planning to attend the Country Fair in 2012.



The Board's tent at Galloway Game Fare, Drumlanrig.

Fishery Biologist's Report - Catch and Release

The primary aim of any fishery manager is to ensure that stocks of fish are present in sufficient numbers, or if numbers are below the natural carrying capacity of the river, to try to increase stocks. There are a variety of different methods that can be used to improve the freshwater habitat that salmon and sea trout utilise. For instance, barriers to migration can be taken down, the amount of diffuse pollution entering watercourses can be reduced, access by farm stock can be restricted, trees can be planted and hatcheries can be used to stock juveniles. All of these methods work with varying levels of success but it is not just down to fishery managers to ensure the future conservation of salmon stocks. Fishermen and women can certainly do their bit by returning salmon and sea trout that they catch back to the river. This is a well-recognised conservation method and on some rivers a total catch and release policy has been adopted. However, the actual impact that this conservation measure can have on a river is often not fully appreciated. A document was recently produced by the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) that illustrates the benefits that can be derived from returning salmon back to the river. Using the ASFB model and applying it to the Nith using our own catch data, we have calculated the impact that increasing catch and release could have on the Nith's stocks of salmon. All of the assumptions used are those commonly used by fishery managers throughout Scotland and are based on research carried out on various rivers. Please note that all of the figures used are very conservative and should be seen as a minimum benefit.

On average, 3322 salmon and grilse were caught in the Nith over the last 10 years and it is generally assumed that this is approximately 10% of the total number of salmon entering the river. So, for ease, we can assume that 30,000 salmon and grilse enter the River Nith and its tributaries every year to spawn. If we assume that 50% of these are females that means that 15,000 hen salmon are depositing eggs in the Nith every year and that if each of these females laid an average of 4500 eggs each then 67.5 million eggs are being laid down naturally in the Nith catchment every year.

In 2010, 30% of the salmon and grilse that were caught in the Nith were returned. If we assume that 85% of these salmon survive to spawn and that 50% of them are hens (bearing in mind that most fish returned are females), then we can calculate that an additional 1.7 million eggs were laid down last year due to anglers returning their fish. If every fisherman or woman returned just one extra salmon per year it can easily be seen that this would have a significant impact on the number of salmon eggs being deposited in the Nith catchment. Table 1 below shows the number of additional eggs that could be laid down if catch and release figures were to increase.

Table 1. Number of additional salmon eggs laid down in relation to percentage of salmon released

Percentage of salmon released	Number of additional salmon eggs laid down
30%	1,723,500 (1.7 million eggs)
40%	2,700,000 (2.7 million eggs)
50%	3,375,000 (3.4 million eggs)
60%	4,050,000 (4 million eggs)
70%	4,725,000 (4.7 million eggs)
80%	5,400,000 (5.4 million eggs)
90%	6,075,000 (6 million eggs)
100%	6,750,000 (6.7 million eggs)

These numbers are not insignificant and can certainly make a difference to the number of returning salmon and grilse in future years. Unfortunately, the percentage of salmon that are caught and released within the Nith catchment is very low compared to other rivers around Scotland (Figure 2). An average river in Scotland is returning 70% of the total number of salmon and grilse caught each year. However Figure 3 shows that in the last 10 years the number of salmon returned has increased. In 2000, only 10% of salmon were returned. If every angler returned one more fish a year it would benefit salmon and grilse stocks in the long term. Rather than thinking about returning one salmon, why not think of it as returning 4500 eggs instead? As it is illegal to sell salmon and sea trout caught by rod and line in the UK, if we only took what we could eat this would assist in ensuring that our fishery was sustainable in the long term and that future generations will be able to enjoy the benefits of salmon and sea trout. Come on Nith, we can do better!

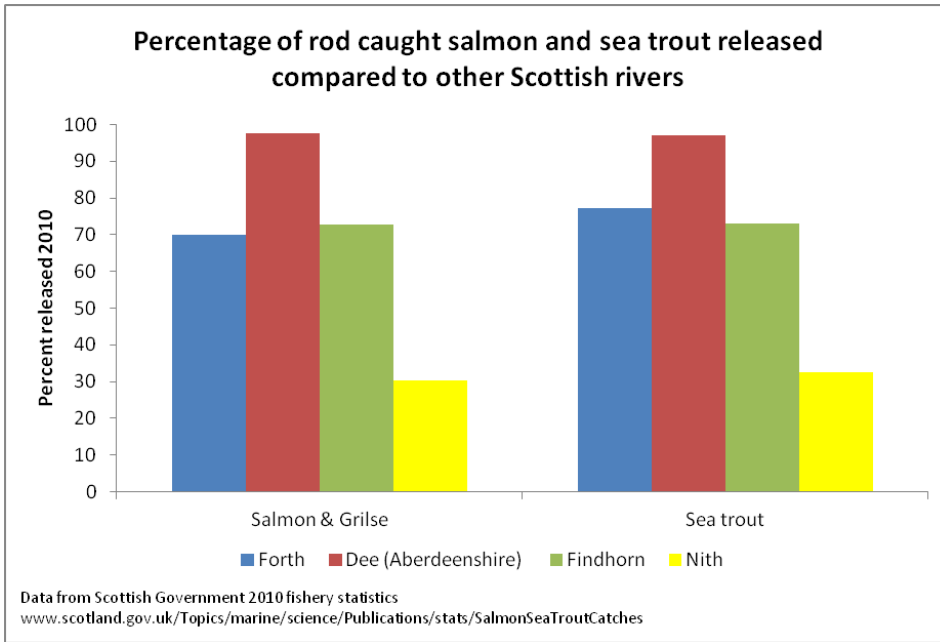


Figure 2 – Comparison of catch and release rates between four rivers in Scotland, shown as percentage of total catch

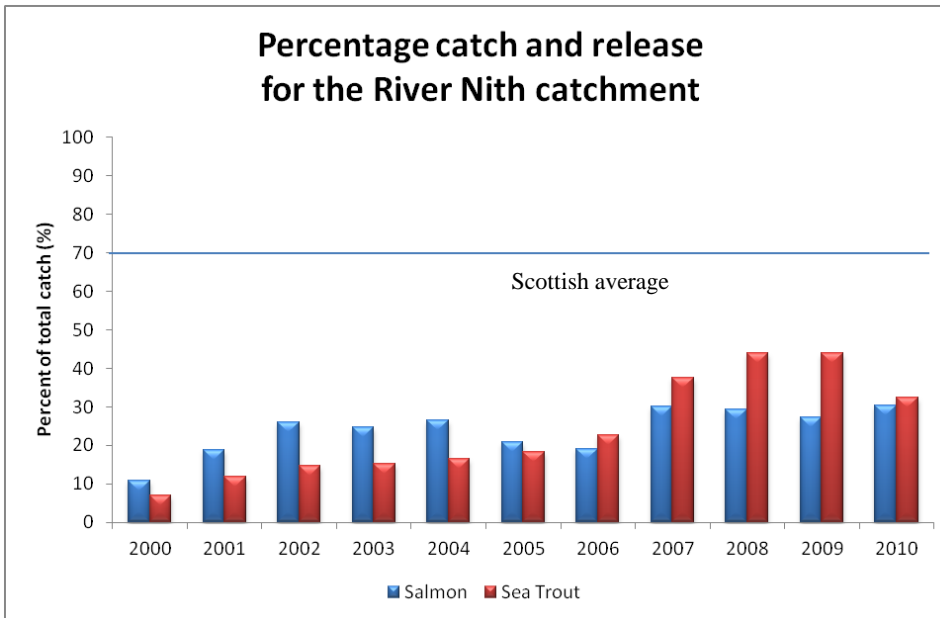


Figure 3 – Catch and release in the River Nith and its tributaries since 2000, shown as a percentage of total catch

NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

The numbers of salmon available for exploitation in the Nith is, broadly speaking, a product of the numbers of smolts produced by the river and the number of adult salmon that return to it. An upper limit on smolt production is set by the availability of spawning and nursery habitat. Whether or not that limit is attained depends upon the adequacy of egg deposition for each of the main populations of salmon that use the Nith.

The broad objectives are to ensure that smolt production is maximised by focusing exploitation on the most robust populations, currently summer and autumn running salmon and grilse, and by taking all practicable steps to improve adult access and the quality of juvenile habitats.

In this section the Board outline their current policy on a number of key areas and issues as described in Section 5.

General Policy

The Board will: -

- Continue to protect, conserve and enhance all stocks of salmon and sea trout in the River Nith,
- Continue to monitor and encourage stock components in particular the spring salmon,
- Remain accountable to Proprietors and ensure that resources are properly applied such that the most efficient and economically beneficial application of the funds, raised by Proprietors through assessments, is achieved, and
- Continue to liaise with and inform Proprietors, their agents and anglers on the work of the Board.

Enforcement

The Board will: -

- Continue the employment of a qualified Bailiff force of suitable size to curtail unlawful fishing methods and activities,
- Maintain both river and sea patrol systems,
- Continue with the development of sophisticated intelligence systems, and
- Promote the prosecution of those breaching salmon fisheries legislation.

Monitoring

The Board will, in liaison with other relevant bodies, continue to monitor and influence:-

- The riverine and related environment,
- Water volume and quality,
- Juvenile stocks,
- Smolt production, and
- Numbers of returning adult fish

and to utilise information arising from all of the above towards the better management of the Nith salmon and sea trout stocks.

Research

The Board will continue and increase where possible its commitment to producing high quality research data to improve the management of the river and its salmon and sea trout stocks. Key areas include:-

- Improving data on spawning escapement through catch data,
- Maintaining and improving data on juvenile salmonid distribution and density,
- Further developing instream and bankside habitat surveys and establishing where improvements, if any, can be made,
- Monitoring the benefits, or otherwise, of stocking and/or habitat enhancement for salmonid stocks,
- Examining current data with respect to any available historical information and catchment land use data using latest available techniques.
- Continuing to promote the work of the Board through presentations and publications at local and national level,
- Providing assistance and encouragement, where possible, to neighbouring Boards with their research and management plans, with a view to establishing as comprehensive a network of information as possible for the Nith and neighbouring Districts, and
- Continuing contributions to and liaison with other fisheries research bodies including, but not limited to, Scottish Fisheries Co-ordination Centre, the Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory and the Marine Laboratory Aberdeen, Environment Agency, SEPA and SNH.

Stock Enhancement

The Board will: -

- Continue to operate the Board's hatcheries,
- Take all reasonable steps to avoid genetic mixing of ova, and
- Encourage natural spawning where possible but undertake stock enhancement in areas where stocks of fish are seriously depleted.

Sea trout and Spring Salmon

The Board will: -

- Encourage proprietors to act responsibly over fishing methods and effort, and
- Encourage anglers to return fish to the river where possible and appropriate.
- Encourage anglers to return sea trout of appropriate classification

Predators

The Board will: -

- Continue to encourage control of salmonid predators such as, but not limited to, sawbills by continued application to SEERAD for annual licences when deemed necessary,
- Encourage the trapping of mink and other riverside predators where lawfully possible and demonstrated to be damaging salmonid stocks, and
- Resist the re-introduction of the beaver (although it is not a direct predator on salmon) due to its potential harmful effects on riparian habitat.

Transfers of fish and fish disease

The Board will: -

- Maintain vigilance in the unlawful transfer of fish and/or fish diseases both to salmon, sea and brown trout, rainbow trout and other species to continue to monitor and operate surveillance in this regard paying particular attention to keeping Proprietors advised of the information passed to it on best practice for the prevention of outbreak of Gyrodactylus Salaris.

Habitat Management

The Board will: -

- Encourage appropriate instream and bankside management,
- Encourage the adoption of beneficial land management practices, and
- Encourage liaison with and among relevant proprietors and other bodies such as, but not limited to, SNH, FWAG, SEPA, Forestry Commission and Planning Authorities.

River Engineering Works

The Board will: -

- Continue to provide guidance and assistance through its Fishery Director to those wishing to undertake such works enabling repairs to take place, and seek to restrict improvement works without prior consultation and assessment, and
- Provide an Advisory Service to Proprietors.

Abstraction

The Board will: -

- Continue to monitor the amount of abstraction from the river, and
- Monitor the use of water for agricultural irrigation purposes.

Catchment Land Use

The Board will: -

- Liaise with the all relevant bodies over land within the catchment and encourage moves towards integrated catchment management,
- Provide an advisory service preventing irresponsible land use developments which may adversely affect salmonid populations, and/or their habitats, and
- Seek to inform proprietors, where salmon or sea trout angling may not be a priority, of the importance of maintaining upper tributaries and spawning areas in good condition.

Level of Angling Exploitation

The Board will: -

- Monitor levels of fish returning to the river system and encourage proprietors to utilise common sense and sensitivity in the levels of exploitation exercised by anglers at any time and from time to time,
- Restrict, where appropriate, spring fishing to protect the vulnerable early running populations of salmon,
- Encourage proprietors to ensure that the level of fishing effort is reasonable, and take other appropriate steps to protect, conserve and enhance the stocks of fish and to give publicity thereto.

Catch and Release

The Board will: -

- In addition to the general policy of restraint and already advocated encourage, where fish are cleanly caught, the return of spring salmon and hen fish in the autumn and sea trout over 3lbs in weight.

Netting

The Board will: -

- Continue to take an interest in the level of high seas exploitation to support bodies such as, but not limited to:-
 - Association of Salmon Fishery Boards
 - North Atlantic Salmon Fund (UK)
 - Atlantic Salmon Trust
 - North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO)

in their endeavours to restrict and where possible remove interceptor high seas fishing.

Nature Conservation

The Board will: -

- Liaise with proprietors and bodies such as, but not limited to, SNH, Solway Firth Partnership and SEPA in maintaining the high quality of the natural environment and safeguard the outstanding natural heritage features within the Nith system.

Liaison with neighbouring Boards

The Board will: -

- Continue to liaise and encourage the promotion of good relations with other neighbouring Boards.
- Continue surveillance and enforcement activities in liaison with neighbouring Board Bailiffs and to provide and receive assistance under existing complementary jurisdiction arrangements.

European Directives

The Board will: -

- Continue to consult with SNH and other bodies and will liaise closely with proprietors in promotion of the salmon and sea trout interests covered by the Habitat and Species Directive, and
- Review its potential responsibilities and the advantages to be gained from the Water Framework Directive.

U.K. and Scottish Legislation

The Board Will: -

- Continue to monitor the promotion and development of draft legislation which is likely to have an effect, whether direct or indirect, upon the promotion of the interests of salmon and sea trout, the fisheries related thereto and the sustainable exploitation of the fishing resource within the Catchment.
- Continue to consult with the proprietors in connection with the drafting of responses germane to the interests of proprietors in relation to the promotion of relevant draft legislation by the Scottish, U.K. and European Parliaments.

NITH SYSTEM CATCH DATA

The data is shown in the attached appendices and shows all categories of catch returns including returns of farmed salmon and returns of salmon and sea trout caught and released.

Liaison Organisations

Organisations and groups with which Nith District Fishery Board liaise closely and regularly regarding local, national and international management of salmon and sea trout stocks.

Local Organisations and Groups	Proprietors and Agents Nith Catchment Fishery Trust Nith Haaf Net Fishers Association Anglers and Angling Clubs Local Authorities and Councils Other Fishery Boards The Solway Firth Partnership Solway Heritage Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary
National Organisations (Fisheries)	Scottish Office (Marine Scotland) Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) Atlantic Salmon Conservation Trust (Scotland) (ASCT(S)) Scottish Net Fishing Association North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Institute of Fisheries Management Other Fishery Boards Celtic Sea Trout Project
National Organisations (Conservation/Protection)	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Scottish National Heritage (SNH) Forestry Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Forestry Commission (FC) Environment Agency (EA)
Industrial Companies	Scottish Coal & Associated Sub-Contractors Kier Mining ATH Resources Amey Highways Windfarm Operators

Incidents of illegal Fishing/Poaching Activities 1/12/09 – 30/11/10

One person was reported to the authorities for a case involving illegal fishing.

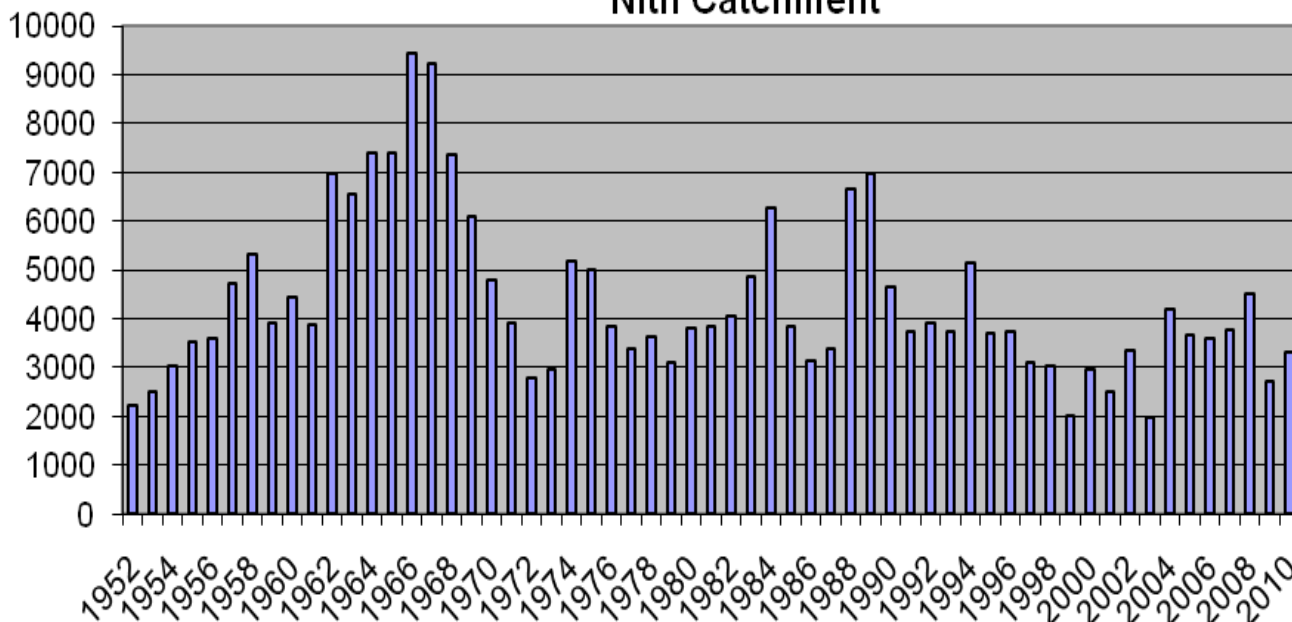
Nith Habitat Enhancement Projects – 1st December 2010 to 30th November 2011

During 2011 all habitat schemes throughout the Nith catchment were maintained and those were planting of trees has been conducted have been checked and re-planting conducted where necessary. 2011 saw the completion of the mid - section of the Crawick habitat scheme. This tributary has been the subject of substantial investment over the years and is considered to be one of the most important sea trout spawning areas in the River Nith catchment.

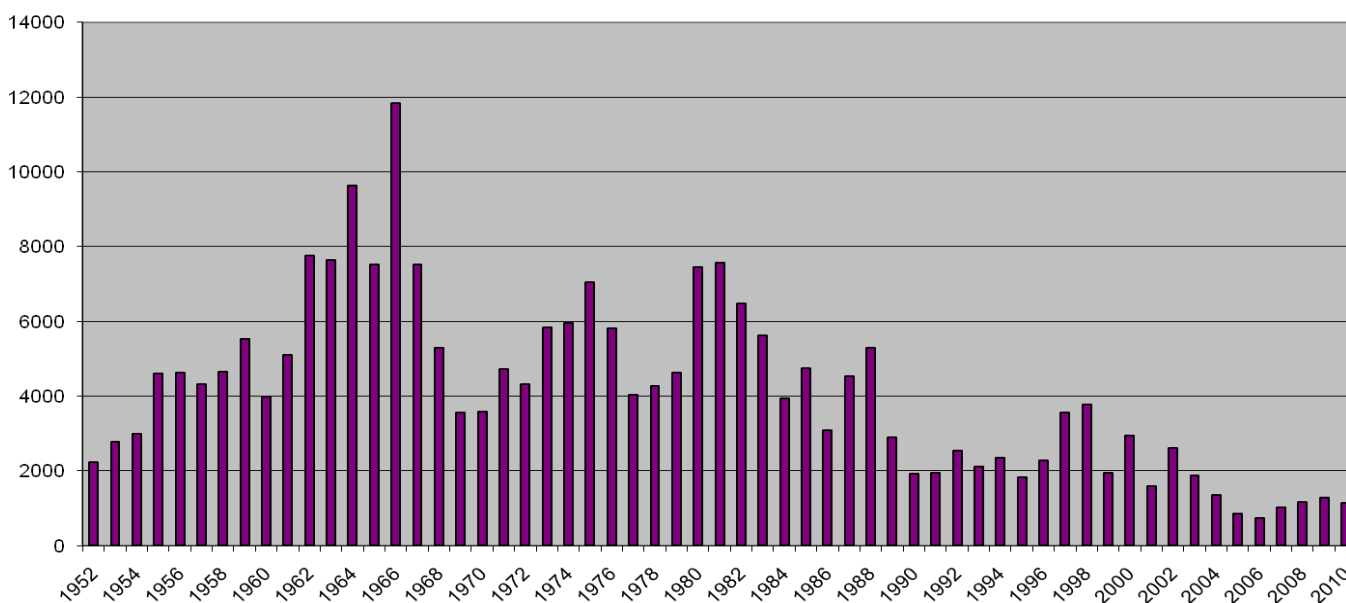
NITH SYSTEM CATCH DATA

The Board now collects its own data from all proprietors. The charts show the returns to season end 2011

**Total Salmon Caught
Nith Catchment**



**Total Sea Trout caught
Nith Catchment**



Catch Statistics Returns 1952-2008

The data below provided by Fisheries Research Services, an agency of the Scottish Government and shows all categories of catch returns currently available from them including returns of farmed salmon and returns of salmon and sea trout caught and released.

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1952-2008

Wild Rod & Line Retained

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
1952	66	272	338	69	407	1262	0	288	1328	1616	136.98	1753	1128.54	0.00
1953	67	452	519	114	633	1792	0	318	2235	2553	242.22	2795	1372.12	0.00
1954	123	671	794	97	891	1965	0	596	3192	3788	215.00	4003	1908.26	0.00
1955	98	685	783	158	941	2924	0	565	3135	3700	322.05	4022	2904.81	0.00
1956	120	734	854	373	1227	3287	0	454	3254	3708	830.98	4539	2934.29	0.00
1957	298	1217	1515	347	1862	2792	0	1226	5339	6565	777.00	7342	2676.65	0.00
1958	192	1041	1233	325	1558	3480	0	930	4736	5666	724.84	6391	3312.13	0.00
1959	235	953	1188	186	1374	4085	0	1157	4462	5620	364.69	5984	3731.25	0.00
1960	235	1035	1270	172	1442	2995	0	1219	4642	5861	371.49	6232	2915.69	0.00
1961	239	1188	1427	213	1640	4056	0	1171	5932	7103	452.69	7555	3793.39	0.00
1962	227	1859	2086	491	2577	6570	0	1118	8376	9494	1104.04	10598	6208.32	0.00
1963	240	2122	2362	381	2743	6450	0	1041	10190	11230	845.50	12076	6798.44	0.00
1964	154	2233	2387	496	2883	8111	0	736	9922	10658	1123.55	11782	7492.44	0.00
1965	246	1851	2097	436	2533	6417	0	1242	8395	9637	1023.76	10661	6520.84	0.00
1966	338	1874	2212	437	2649	9391	0	1546	8117	9664	928.05	10592	10030.74	0.00
1967	170	921	1091	205	1296	5599	0	824	4174	4998	458.58	5457	5895.34	0.00
1968	75	706	781	261	1042	3377	0	352	2896	3248	547.03	3795	3508.54	0.00
1969	53	911	964	449	1413	2531	0	255	3816	4071	1028.75	5099	2540.57	0.00
1970	59	1272	1331	501	1832	2733	0	279	5346	5626	1050.07	6676	2576.86	0.00
1971	66	857	923	345	1268	3667	0	298	3428	3726	703.52	4429	3334.81	0.00
1972	43	542	585	192	777	3486	0	213	2468	2680	402.79	3083	3328.46	0.00
1973	46	1101	1147	404	1551	5486	0	209	4690	4899	754.78	5654	5234.91	0.00
1974	41	1293	1334	521	1855	4403	0	180	4931	5110	1149.40	6260	3970.29	0.00
1975	62	1025	1087	386	1473	5476	0	274	4537	4811	866.36	5678	5198.62	0.00
1976	31	780	811	303	1114	4898	0	126	3180	3305	626.86	3932	4943.70	0.00
1977	85	869	954	256	1210	3363	0	361	3847	4208	587.86	4796	3441.86	0.00
1978	72	863	935	300	1235	3310	0	309	3673	3982	682.20	4664	3464.08	0.00

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1952-2008

Wild Rod & Line Retained

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr Number	Salmon May-Dec Number	Salmon Annual Number	Grilse Number	Salmon & Grilse Number	Sea Trout Number	Finnock Number	Salmon Jan-Apr Weight(kg)	Salmon May-Dec Weight(kg)	Salmon Annual Weight(kg)	Grilse Weight(kg)	Salmon & Grilse Weight(kg)	Sea Trout Weight(kg)	Finnock Weight(kg)
1979	37	1016	1053	527	1580	3480	0	154	4536	4690	1239.67	5930	3587.92	0.00
1980	50	1313	1363	977	2340	5800	0	222	5416	5638	2096.05	7734	5419.07	0.00
1981	31	1345	1376	365	1741	6375	0	134	6397	6531	815.11	7346	6260.94	0.00
1982	40	1142	1182	640	1822	5004	0	186	4986	5172	1449.68	6622	4742.31	0.00
1983	24	1298	1322	471	1793	4670	0	90	5625	5715	1087.71	6803	4146.29	0.00
1984	21	1628	1649	687	2336	2429	0	86	7247	7334	1524.07	8858	2238.93	0.00
1985	41	2060	2101	761	2862	3798	0	178	9615	9794	1765.84	11559	4247.44	0.00
1986	59	1893	1952	612	2564	2913	0	265	9764	10029	1450.59	11480	2733.35	0.00
1987	28	1969	1997	686	2683	3933	0	124	9226	9350	1617.51	10968	3678.63	0.00
1988	23	3939	3962	1600	5562	4529	0	94	16120	16214	3818.34	20032	4315.48	0.00
1989	30	2420	2450	1022	3472	1974	0	121	10722	10844	2467.09	13311	1861.09	0.00
1990	43	2287	2330	572	2902	1408	0	193	10368	10561	1400.69	11961	1379.83	0.00
1991	26	1955	1981	491	2472	1431	0	100	8411	8512	1136.70	9648	1333.11	0.00
1992	21	1983	2004	672	2676	2194	0	81	8441	8523	1550.83	10073	2325.11	0.00
1993	18	1654	1672	652	2324	1863	0	74	6884	6959	1553.10	8512	1814.82	0.00
1994	45	2096	2141	524	2665	1730	0	207	9046	9253	1312.70	10566	1559.45	0.00
1995	10	826	836	233	1069	1378	0	39	3306	3345	513.47	3859	1065.49	0.00
1996	19	1129	1148	383	1531	1776	0	76	4630	4706	857.40	5563	1700.54	0.00
1997	12	892	904	396	1300	2995	0	51	3532	3583	937.10	4520	3058.50	0.00
1998	9	1217	1226	560	1786	3093	0	35	5159	5194	1314.76	6509	2897.69	0.00
1999	22	566	588	192	780	1348	0	62	2513	2575	423.68	2999	1414.30	0.00
2000	5	1216	1221	590	1811	2488	0	21	4917	4937	1259.33	6196	3225.24	0.00
2001	8	874	882	414	1296	1196	0	43	3759	3802	987.02	4789	1317.24	0.00
2002	14	1158	1172	529	1701	1733	0	45	4891	4936	1309.97	6246	1988.38	0.00
2003	21	704	725	223	948	1455	0	62	3196	3259	561.65	3820	1698.37	0.00
2004	15	1702	1717	597	2314	991	58	40	6789	6829	1493.41	8323	1163.14	34.19
2005	12	1085	1097	420	1517	596	119	47	4442	4489	1036.45	5525	620.03	45.20

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1952-2008

Wild Rod & Line Retained

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
2006	14	1224	1238	758	1996	483	25	61	5019	5080	1746.60	6827	499.13	10.20
2007	7	1105	1112	510	1622	552	8	23	4398	4422	1295.20	5717	518.71	3.40
2008	9	1550	1559	1335	2894	605	26	36	6563	6599	3079	9678	579	11.90

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1952-2008

Wild Catch & Release

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
1994	0	106	106	27	133	65	0	0	435	435	62.60	498	59.87	0.00
1995	8	101	109	26	135	47	0	14	377	391	52.16	443	31.75	0.00
1996	3	228	231	69	300	138	0	8	951	960	157.85	1117	114.42	0.00
1997	1	159	160	41	201	220	0	3	621	624	101.20	725	180.30	0.00
1998	7	236	243	64	307	291	0	22	961	983	169.23	1152	260.69	0.00
1999	7	170	177	26	203	207	0	25	784	809	54.45	863	148.77	0.00
2000	7	237	244	75	319	207	0	33	938	971	168.37	1139	205.34	0.00
2001	1	326	327	141	468	189	0	6	1405	1411	346.11	1757	213.68	0.00
2002	5	591	596	277	873	384	0	14	2629	2643	728.23	3371	448.43	0.00
2003	11	389	400	90	490	284	0	27	1607	1635	239.52	1874	267.01	0.00
2004	5	836	841	269	1110	226	61	20	3565	3585	687.89	4273	216.45	29.18
2005	20	574	594	170	764	159	133	122	2447	2569	424.84	2994	205.40	51.50
2006	3	480	483	203	686	170	30	12	1843	1855	489.48	2344	165.16	11.40
2007	3	901	904	227	1131	386	89	8	3262	3269	533.49	3803	410.18	38.75
2008	17	819	836	351	1187	406	121	71	3366	3438	810	4248	467	45.60

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1952-2008
Net & Coble
Wild & Fixed Engine

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Sea Trout	Finnock
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
2008	4	209	213	523	726	200	0	18.7	989.1	1008	1203.1	2211	202.7	0

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1994-2008
Farmed Rod & Line Retained

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
1994	0	12	12	2	14	0	58	58	2	60
1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1996	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	8	8
1998	0	2	2	0	2	0	7	7	0	7
1999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	0	1	1	3	4	0	4	4	5	9
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	4	0	4
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2

Nith District Salmon & Sea Trout Catches 1994-2008

Farmed Rod & Line Released

Year	Salmon Jan-Apr	Salmon May-Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse	Salmon Jan- Apr	Salmon May- Dec	Salmon Annual	Grilse	Salmon & Grilse
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)	Weight(kg)
1994	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	3
1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1996	0	1	1	0	1	0	5	5	0	5
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	0	2	2	1	3	0	5	5	3	8
1999	0	2	2	0	2	0	8	8	0	8
2000	1	0	1	0	1	3	0	3	0	3
2001	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	5	5
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	0	2	2	0	2	0	9	9	0	9
2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	5	5

N.B. From and inclusive of 2009 onwards FRS has changed the bases of providing the Catch Statistics Returns. Below is what can be presented in the new format.

Attendances at Board meetings

Board Meeting Dates	No. Board Members attended (max 15)	% Attendance Rate
2 nd December 2010	9	60%
8 th February 2011	14	93%
1 st March 2011 (AGM)	14	93%
31 st May 2011	13	87%
4 th October 2011	10	67%
31 st October 2011	11	73%
6 th December 2011	9	60%

Board Meeting Dates	Attendees (apologies)
2 nd December 2010	Thomas Florey - Chairman Alan Bryden Gordon McGregor Maxwell Keggans Nick Brown Ronald Clark Ronald Weir Tom Brown Wally Wright Mike Keggans Percy Weatherall Robbie Cowan
8 th February 2011	Thomas Florey – Chairman Alan Bryden Sir David Landale David Mathews Gordon McGregor John Kingan Maxwell Keggans Mike Keggans Nick Brown Robbie Cowan Ronald Clark Ronald Weir Tom Brown Wally Wright Roy Green Sophy Weatherall
1 st March 2011 (AGM)	Thomas Florey – Chairman Alan Bryden Brian Lord Sir David Landale David Mathews John Kingan Nick Brown Robbie Cowan Ronald Clark Ronald Weir Roy Green Sophy Weatherall Tom Brown Wally Wright

<p>31st May 2011</p>	<p>Thomas Florey – Chairman Alan Bryden Gordon McGregor John Charteris John Kingan Maxwell Keggans Nick Brown Robbie Cowan Ronald Weir Roy Green Tom Brown Wally Wright Sir David Landale Percy Weatherall</p>
<p>4th October 2011</p>	<p>Thomas Florey – Chairman Alan Bryden Gordon McGregor John Kingan Maxwell Keggans Robbie Cowan Ronald Clark Roy Green Tom Brown Wally Wright Sir David Landale Percy Weatherall Michael Keggans Ronald Weir</p>
<p>31st October 2011</p>	<p>Tom Florey (Chairman) John Charteris Sir David Landale Robbie Cowan Ronald Clark Wally Wright Ronald Weir Gordon McGregor Tom Brown Alan Bryden Sophie Weatherall John Kingan Nick Brown Roy Green Brian Lord</p>
<p>6th December 2011</p>	<p>Tom Florey (Chairman) Sir David Landale Ronald Clark Maxwell Keggans Michael Keggans Wally Wright David Matthews Nick Brown Gordon McGregor Tom Brown John Charteris Ronald Weir Alan Bryden Robbie Cowan</p>

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

01.12.10 – 30.11.11

Clerk's Notes on the Accounts
01.12.10– 30.11.11

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Turnover

Assessments Receivable

The Sums raised by assessment issued to the Proprietors of Salmon Fishings within the District.

Payments from NCFT

Charges raised by the Board to the Trust for the provision of services, manpower and equipment by the Board to the Trust.

Consultancy Income

Arises from the Boards activities in connection with supplying environmental audit reports derived from electro fishing and other monitoring data collected by the Board.

INNS Project

Sums recovered from SEPA/Leader Fund for the Invasive Species Project for the year 2010

Other Direct Income

Salaries Contributions

Dumfries & Galloway Council paid for a Temporary Bailiffs salary for 6 months. **N.B. This payment will not be available to the Board in the financial year 2012.**

Refund of dues

The proportion of refund arising during this accounting year agreed to be paid by the Board to the Proprietors in the last fiscal year (round figures - £35,000).

Other operating income

Sundry Income

Arises from donations and the like.

Bank Interest

This is derived from Board investments. Interest rates have remained low and static during the last financial year.

Overheads

Wages & Salaries

The Board at the close of the financial year employed a Fisheries Manager, a Senior Bailiff and a Clerical Assistant. Seasonal members of staff were employed during the summer and Autumn. Salaries increased as a combination of applying the annual increase to existing salaries combined with the decision to employ additional temporary seasonal staff.

On the face of it, it appears that salaries have risen by approximately 8.5%. In fact the following information is relevant:-

1. In the financial year to 30.11.10 the gross salaries payable were -	£110,976.00
Grant of salary from Future Jobs Fund and INNS Project Fund received -	<u>21,271.00</u>
Net salaries paid per Accounts for year 30.11.10 -	<u>£ 89,705.00</u>

2. An Invasive Species Officer was employed for part of year to 30.11.10.
3. No INNS Officer or Future Job start up staff were employed in year 2011, so no Future Jobs Fund or INNS funding was received during 30.11.11.
4. Salary increases applied in the year were 2.5%.

Grant to NCFT

The Board agreed some time ago to support the formation and initial running costs of NCFT. This period shows the second year of that support. The level of support sought by the Trust has dropped as it "finds its feet" and gains more earning power.

Trust Biologist's Fees

The Board contracts with the Trust for provision by the Trust Biologist of her services for electrofishing and biological work. These costs arise primarily from the involvement of the Biologist in consultancy work carried out by the Board at the request of project applicants relating to civil engineering projects, e.g. micro hydro schemes, wind farm schemes etc. for which the Board charges the project applicants consultancy fees.

Staff Pensions Costs

These are linked to salaries paid by the Board paying a percentage of salary paid to the employees. This needs to be monitored carefully in respect of the new pensions arrangements forecast for 2012. The Board agreed to increase its pensions contribution from 4% to 7.5% during the financial year.

Staff Training

Comprised IFM Bailiff training course chainsaw training courses and update training for all relevant staff, electrofishing safety protocols and use and fish awareness seminars.

Inns (Invasive Species) Project

The Board agreed to become involved with SEPA and Annan DSFB in a five year project (Guaranteed two year funding) to attempt to control invasive plant species such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed. The management of the project has transferred to the Trust.

Celtic Sea Trout Project

This represents the first of two annual payments agreed a number of years ago but only falling due for payment in this year.

Insurance

Increased premia for additional employees combined with an overall rise in premia generally. The Board instructs Insurance Brokers to review its insurance requirements annually.

Repairs & Maintenance

For office, hatcheries, boat repairs and maintenance, chainsaw and electrofishing equipment servicing, repairs and maintenance, shotgun safety inspection and maintenance etc.

Habitat & Hatchery Expenses

The Board has constructed and outfitted a new Hatchery and therefore now runs two hatcheries. Habitat Enhancement was carried out during the course of the year as detailed within the Annual Report.

Clothing Allowance

Additional employees, to include clothing for four additional voluntary Bailiffs.

Printing, Postage & Stationary

Publication of annual report, production of brochure, school competition for Loreburn and Kelloholm Primary Schools and sundry expenditure on stamps, stationary etc. In this year there were additional copies of the Annual Report ordered.

Computer Costs

Monthly maintenance charges for computer equipment – decision made to pay annually. Board website subscription.

Motor Expenses

Substantially increased fuel costs, together with more fuel purchased. The Board buys and stores its fuel in a large tank at the Hatchery. The cost of filling the tank has increased on average by £500 per tank fill to around £3,000 per fill during this financial year. In addition, the tank was refilled (a) in first few days after the commencement of the new financial year and (b) in the last few days prior to the close of the financial year end.

Additional repairs to Land Rover Discovery, which was out of warranty.

Additional travelling costs arise out of (a) Celtic Sea Trout Project and (b) assistance given to the Trust with the INNS Project, which are recoverable and dealt with as part of expenses refunds from each of these organisations, credited to the Consultancy Income account.

Accommodation & Subsistence

Bailiffs Conference held in Stornoway. Attendance at Atlantic Salmon Trust Conference, London. Attendance at Seal Culling Course in Oban.

Promotional & Public Relations Expenses

A new heading of expense identified to deal with substantial involvement of the Board in Country Fayre at Drumlanrig, together with arrangements for the attendance of the Environment Minister.

General Expenses

Subscriptions, Shotgun Licence renewal, hire of rooms etc for meetings.

Subscriptions

ASFB Subscription again increased. Membership of Fish Legal and Institute of Fisheries Management are both new.

Balance Sheet

Fixed Assets

Plant & Machinery

As detailed in the Fixed Assets Schedule. New printer, digital camera and laptop computer acquired during this financial year.

Motor Vehicles

As detailed in the Motor Vehicles Schedule.

Current Assets

Debtors is outstanding unpaid proprietors assessments. Three of these assessments are rebated by the Board by agreement because they are fisheries not exercised for conservation purposes. One substantial outstanding assessment has been repaid since the close of the financial year. One remains outstanding.

Current Liabilities

Relates to sums outstanding at close of books for the year.

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board
Board members report and financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2011

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Contents

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Income and expenditure account	3
Balance sheet	4
Notes to the financial statements	5 - 7

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Board members report **for the year ended 30th November 2011**

The board members present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30th November 2011.

Principal activity

The Board is constituted under the Salmon Fisheries Legislation commencing in the 1860s as subsequently amended and presently stated in the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 2003. The Board is empowered under the 2003 Act and other legislation to do such Acts as it considers expedient for the protection, enhancement and conservation of stocks of salmon and sea trout and the general protection and enhancement of the fishery itself.

The Board's principle objectives are therefore to preserve, protect and enhance stocks of migratory salmonids in the Nith catchment and to preserve, protect and enhance the fishery.

Board of Members

The members who served during the period are shown at Section C of the Report and Review.

Responsibilities of the board

We, as board members are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The Board members are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year. We have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the organisation and of the surplus or deficit of the organisation for that period. In preparing these financial statements, we are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue in business.

We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 2003. We are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditors

The auditors, Messrs Carson & Trotter, C.A., have indicated their willingness to accept re-appointment.

This report was approved by the Board on and signed on its behalf by

T Florey
Chairman

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Independent auditors' report to the members of The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

We have audited the financial statements of The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board for the year ended 30th November 2011 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008) (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

This report is made solely to the members, as a body, in accordance with the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 2003. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the organisations members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the organisation and the organisation's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of board members and auditors

As set out in the statement of board members responsibilities, the members of the board are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 2003. We also report to you whether in our opinion the information given in the Board Members Report is consistent with the financial statements.

In addition we report to you if, in our opinion, the organisation has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding members' remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

We read the Board's report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

Scope of the audit

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the organisation's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of the significant accounting estimates made by the board members ; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 30th November 2011, and of its surplus for the period then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation)(Scotland) Act 2003 ; and
- the information given in the Board Members' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Carson & Trotter Chartered Accountants, Statutory Auditor
123 Irish Street
Dumfries
DG1 2PE

Date:

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Income and expenditure account
for the year ended 30th November 2011

		2011	2010
	Notes	£	£
Turnover	2	262,424	206,718
Cost of sales		(34,989)	(30,125)
Gross surplus		<u>227,435</u>	<u>176,593</u>
Administrative expenses		(214,671)	(207,952)
Other operating income		550	74,605
Operating surplus	3	<u>13,314</u>	<u>43,246</u>
Other interest receivable and similar income		997	712
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation		14,311	43,958
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	5	(203)	(150)
Surplus for the financial year		<u><u>14,108</u></u>	<u><u>43,808</u></u>

The notes on pages 5 to 7 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Balance sheet
as at 30th November 2011

	Notes	2011		2010	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	6		31,649		38,994
Current assets					
Debtors	7	17,664		96,791	
Cash at bank and in hand		158,088		57,194	
		<u>175,752</u>		<u>153,985</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	<u>(1,895)</u>		<u>(1,582)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>173,857</u>		<u>152,403</u>
Net assets			<u>205,506</u>		<u>191,397</u>
Capital and reserves					
Income and expenditure account	9		<u>205,506</u>		<u>191,397</u>
Members' funds			<u>205,506</u>		<u>191,397</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on and signed on its behalf by

T Florey

The notes on pages 5 to 7 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2011

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below and have remained unchanged from the previous year, and also have been consistently applied within the same accounts.

1.1. Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

1.2. Revenue Recognition

In accordance with the principles of revenue recognition, income is recognised as the right to consideration obtained through performance of contractual obligations, and is included in the financial statements when the organisation is legally entitled to the income.

1.3. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Tenant's improvements	-	10% reducing balance
Plant and machinery	-	25% reducing balance
Nightsights	-	20% reducing balance
Motor vehicles	-	25% reducing balance

1.4. Pensions

The board operates a defined contribution scheme. The costs of contributions are written off against profits in the year they are payable.

2. Turnover

The total turnover of the board for the year has been derived from its principal activity wholly undertaken in the UK. The board's turnover represents the value of goods and services supplied to customers during the year.

3. Operating surplus

	2011	2010
	£	£
Operating surplus is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of owned assets	9,661	11,982
Auditors' remuneration	1,745	1,622
	<u>11,406</u>	<u>13,604</u>

4. Pension costs

The organisation operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the organisation in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the organisation to the fund and amounted to £3,579 (2010 - £2,362).

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2011

..... continued

5. Tax on surplus on ordinary activities

Analysis of charge in period	2011	2010
	£	£
Current tax		
UK corporation tax	203	150
	<u>203</u>	<u>150</u>

The organisation is exempt from the charge to Corporation Tax on its trading activities as agreed with HM Revenue & Customs. Corporation Tax is only chargeable on investment income arising in the period.

6. Tangible fixed assets

	Nightsights	Tenant's	Plant and	Motor	Total
	£	Improvements	machinery	vehicles	£
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1st December 2010	7,257	5,326	34,891	47,132	94,606
Additions	-	-	2,316	-	2,316
At 30th November 2011	<u>7,257</u>	<u>5,326</u>	<u>37,207</u>	<u>47,132</u>	<u>96,922</u>
Depreciation					
At 1st December 2010	4,100	1,940	25,272	24,300	55,612
Charge for the year	631	339	2,984	5,707	9,661
At 30th November 2011	<u>4,731</u>	<u>2,279</u>	<u>28,256</u>	<u>30,007</u>	<u>65,273</u>
Net book values					
At 30th November 2011	<u>2,526</u>	<u>3,047</u>	<u>8,951</u>	<u>17,125</u>	<u>31,649</u>
At 30th November 2010	<u>3,157</u>	<u>3,386</u>	<u>9,619</u>	<u>22,832</u>	<u>38,994</u>

7. Debtors: all receivable within one year

	2011	2010
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,555	84,198
Prepayments and accrued income	13,109	12,593
	<u>17,664</u>	<u>96,791</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2011

..... continued

8. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2011	2010
	£	£
Trade creditors	231	-
Corporation tax	4	7
Accruals and deferred income	1,660	1,575
	<u>1,895</u>	<u>1,582</u>
	<u><u>1,895</u></u>	<u><u>1,582</u></u>
9. Reserves	Income and expenditure account	Total
	£	£
At 1st December 2010	191,398	191,398
Surplus for the financial year	14,108	14,108
At 30th November 2011	<u>205,506</u>	<u>205,506</u>
	<u><u>205,506</u></u>	<u><u>205,506</u></u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Balance Sheet
as at 30th November 2011

	£	£	2010 £
Fixed Assets			
Tenant's Improvements		3,047	3,386
Nightsights		2,526	3,157
Plant & Machinery		8,951	9,619
Motor Vehicles		17,125	22,832
		<u>31,649</u>	<u>38,994</u>
Current Assets			
Debtors	4,555		84,198
Prepayments	13,109		12,593
Clydesdale Cashflow Account	4,928		8,560
Clydesdale Cash Management Account	5		4
Scottish Building Society Scotplus Account	132,418		33,920
Scottish Building Society Vehicle Account	20,737		14,710
Clydesdale-NHEC Account	-		-
Scottish Building Society - NHEC	-		-
	<u>175,752</u>		<u>153,985</u>
Current Liabilities			
Trade creditors	231		-
Corporation Tax	4		7
PAYE outstanding	-		-
Accruals	1,660		1,575
	<u>1,895</u>		<u>1,582</u>
Net Current assets		173,857	152,403
Net assets		<u>205,506</u>	<u>191,397</u>
Income and expenditure account		<u>205,506</u>	<u>191,397</u>
Members' funds		<u>205,506</u>	<u>191,397</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2011

	£	2010 £
Turnover		
Assessments receivable	167,685	164,004
Payments from NCF Trust	3,735	3,578
Consultancy income	49,147	29,219
INNS Project	31,418	-
	<u>251,985</u>	<u>196,801</u>
Other Direct Income		
Salaries contributions	10,440	9,917
	<u>262,425</u>	<u>206,718</u>
Less: Refund of dues	(34,989)	(30,125)
	<u>227,436</u>	<u>176,593</u>
Other operating income		
Sundry Income	550	1,530
Pollution Incident	-	73,075
Bank interest	997	712
	<u>228,983</u>	<u>251,910</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2011

	£	£	2010 £
brought forward		228,983	251,910
Overheads			
Wages and salaries	97,506		89,705
Grant to NCF Trust	25,715		28,931
Trust Biologists Fees	600		7,200
Staff pension costs	3,579		2,362
Staff training	2,438		2,460
Inns Project	-		18,771
Celtic Seatrout Project	17,181		-
Insurance	3,438		3,295
Repairs and maintenance	4,536		2,280
Hatchery and habitat enhancement expenses	1,109		3,344
Clothing allowance	1,658		806
Printing, postage and stationery	2,204		1,476
Advertising & sponsorship	-		1,461
Telephone and internet	3,480		3,558
Computer costs	899		4,437
Motor expenses	20,328		10,842
Accommodation and subsistence	1,073		492
Promotional & public relations expenses	2,815		-
Clerk's fee to Walker & Sharpe	8,020		7,673
Audit fees	1,745		1,622
Bank charges	676		566
General expenses	1,110		739
Subscriptions	4,900		3,950
Depreciation	9,661		11,982
		<u>(214,671)</u>	<u>(207,952)</u>
Surplus before tax		14,312	43,958
Taxation		(203)	(150)
Surplus for the year		14,109	43,808
Retained surplus brought forward		191,397	147,589
Retained surplus carried forward		205,506	191,397
Nith Habitat Enhancement Committee			
Hatchery expenses	-		(906)
		-	(906)
(Deficit) on activities		-	(906)

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2011

£ £

Tenant's Improvements

Opening Balance		3,386
Less: Depreciation for year @ 10%		339
Closing Balance		<u>3,047</u>

Nightsights

Opening Balance		3,157
Less: Depreciation for year @ 20%		631
Closing Balance		<u>2,526</u>

Plant & Machinery

Opening Balance		9,619
Additions		
Printer	1,239	
Digital Camera	480	
Laptop	597	
		<u>2,316</u>
		11,935
Less: Depreciation for year @ 25%		2,984
Closing Balance		<u>8,951</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2011

	£	£
<u>Motor Vehicles</u>		
Landrover Defender SA09 SKN - balance b/f	11,790	
Depreciation for year @ 25%	2,947	
	<hr/>	8,843
Landrover Discovery SC57 AEU - balance b/f	11,042	
Depreciation for year @ 25%	2,760	
	<hr/>	8,282
Closing book value		<hr/> <hr/> 17,125