

THE RIVER NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MANAGEMENT REPORT AND REVIEW 1st December 2014 - 30th November 2015



Sea trout captured during the Nith Sea Trout Experience

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AGENDA

for the

ANNUAL QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS MEETING

for year

01.12.14 - 30.11.15

1. Minutes of Annual General Proprietors Meeting 24.03.15
2. Annual Report
3. Annual Accounts
4. Management Plans for The Forthcoming Year and The Near Future
5. AOCB

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

on

24 March 2015 at 10.00 am

PRESENT

Percy Weatherall – Chairman
Nick Brown – Friars Carse
Wally Wright – Netting Representative
Robbie Cowan – Caerlaverock Estate
David Kempself – Dumfries & Galloway Angling Association
Peter Landale – Dalswinton Estate
Peter Hutchison – Netting Representative
Nick Wright – Closeburn Castle Fishing
Richard Gladwin – Blackwood Estate
Thomas Florey – Smiths Gore

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

Brian Fox – P.O.F.R.
Simon Kelly – P.O.F.R.
Jeff Walters – Closeburn Castle Fishing
Ed Baxter – Closeburn Castle Fishing
Roana Clark – Dumfries & Galloway Council

IN ATTENDANCE

Roderick Styles – Clerk
James Henderson – Fishery Director (FD)
Deborah Parke – Nith Catchment Fishery Trust (FB)
David McMichael – Senior Water Bailiff
Shona Kennedy – PA/Secretary

The Chairman welcomed those attending, introduced himself and opened the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL PROPRIETORS MEETING 25.3.14

The Chairman made reference to the last Annual Proprietors Meeting Minutes of 25th March 2014 and asked all present if the minutes were a fair and accurate record of that meeting. The Meeting Minutes were unanimously ratified.

2. ANNUAL REPORT - (reference the draft annual report)

The Chairman referred to the draft Annual Report and asked FD to address the meeting, summarising the last season. FD gave a brief summary of last season to all those present. Peter Landale referred to a meeting held at Gretna and outlined the essence of the meeting, expressing that all Solway rivers experienced the same problem of a poor season. FD agreed and he extolled the merit of such meetings as a shared voice is useful. Peter Hutchison stated that the Nith Catchment is in the best condition holistically it has ever been and acknowledged the achievements of the last year. Simon Kelly asked FD if the electrofishing surveys conducted mirror these achievements. FD responded by confirming that the river system is very healthy and juvenile fish numbers are good, the water quality is good and the species diversity is good. The Chairman agreed the water

quality is good as is apparent by the number of grayling in the river system as they are more sensitive to water quality.

3. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS – (reference the draft Annual Report)

The Clerk referred to the accounts and his notes thereon in the draft Annual Report, published on the website, requesting any questions. The Clerk stated that the draft Annual Report and accounts was not in its final form in order that any issues that might be raised during this meeting, could be taken account of. The Chairman confirmed the Board finances are healthy. The Clerk and FD have discussed changing the way the consultancy income is recorded in the accounts and will take guidance from the accountants.

The Clerk advised that in circulating notice of the Annual Proprietors Meeting he had also asked for advance written notice of any questions or issues that anyone might competently wish to raise in order for such questions and issues to be properly addressed and dealt with as fully as possible. The Clerk advised that no questions had been submitted and asked for any comments/questions/queries from those present regarding the draft Annual Report. None were raised.

The Clerk asked for approval of the draft Annual Report and the Accounts. The draft Annual Report and Accounts were unanimously agreed by all present and the draft Annual Report and Annual Accounts were accepted to be taken forward to the Annual Public Meeting.

The Annual Report is produced in electronic format in an attempt to save money, any hard copies can be provided if requested.

4. MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR AND THE NEAR FUTURE – (reference the draft Annual Report and Fishery Management Plan)

The Chairman asked FD to address the meeting in regards to the Management Plan and Prescriptions. FD referred to the quarterly management plan report and that it can be found on the website. The Chairman asked for any questions, in regards to River Management. No questions were received.

The Chairman referred to the possible proposed changes as outlined in the Wild Fisheries Review conducted by Andrew Thinn on behalf of the Scottish Government. A varied and useful discussion ensued to bring every one up to date on developments thus far. Following the discussion, the Chairman summarised that FD should continue represent the Nith at ASFB and that the Board would wait and see what decisions or actions the Scottish Government decide to take forward from the review before making our views known.

5. A.O.C.B.

FD requested a budget of £1000 for the Nith Sea Trout Event as it is planned to hold an opening event here at Friars Carse, this was unanimously agreed. FD asked if the Board would be employing a Seasonal Bailiff this year, FD recommended this as it is appropriate for protecting stocks. No objections were received this was unanimously agreed.

On the matter of the Scottish Government's consultations on licence to kill salmon and carcass tagging and other matters that would develop out of consultation on Wild Fisheries Review, with tight timeframes being imposed for responses to consultation, FD and the Clerk recommended that in order to meet deadlines set, they could between them formulate draft responses for circulation to and response from Board members and proprietors by specific dates, it being understood that if no responses were received this would be taken as acceptance and endorsement of the draft responses. This was unanimously agreed upon as the practice to adopt in respect of future consultations.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.39



Managing our rivers and the fish within them is currently challenging! Those challenges come in a number of guises from the ravages of winter floods to legislative changes, conservation policies, declining numbers of anglers and financial pressures. We, who are involved in fisheries management, are all working hard to manage our way through these challenges to ensure a sustainable future for the River Nith, its stocks of fish and its fishers.

At the time of writing this, I note the river is at its lowest for months. We seem to have endured more floods over this winter than ever before with the river breaching its course frequently. One would have to question what impacts this inflicts on the fish and their spawn in our rivers and the long term effects of high flows coupled with the movement of gravel etc.

Under the Scottish Government's recent conservation policies for salmon, the River Nith catchment has been classified as category 3. This reflects the numbers of salmon predicted to be present in the Nith based on mathematical calculations using catch data, potential spawning area, fish counter information from other rivers, then using that information to predict the likelihood of the river attaining its conservation limits for salmon. Our categorisation means that no salmon may be taken on the Nith during 2016, all salmon captured must be returned unharmed. We hope that this conservation policy assists the stocks of salmon and we are committed to working with the Government to gather all necessary data to improve our knowledge of fish stocks in our river. Thus raising our categorisation.

The Wild Fisheries Bill has been launched and we are considering its contents, prior to responding. We are being consulted in the Bill on a range of subjects that will potentially change the way we manage our river and the organisations involved. We will be responding on behalf of the Trust and Board and we urge all with an interest in the River Nith to also respond.

Many of the management issues associated with running the river are of little consequence to the fisher and we in management must never lose sight of the fact that most who go into the countryside to fish are there for a relaxing day in pleasant surroundings. A fish being a bonus and not essential. It is pleasing to note the interest from young people wanting to participate in angling via the initiatives managed by our Trust. We need these new recruits to the fishing community, they are the future of fishing as a sport.

Tight lines to all for 2016.

E.P.K. Weatherall
Chairman

Introduction

1. Constitution and Area

The Board for the year comprised: -

Chairman	Percy Weatherall	
Lower Proprietors	John Kingan Robbie Cowan	North Corbelly Caerlaverock Estate
Upper Proprietors	Peter Landale Nick Brown Nick Wright Mark Coombs David Kempsell	Dalswinton Estate Friars Carse Closeburn Castle Fishing Buccleuch Estates Limited D & G Angling Association
Lower Co-optees	Peter Hutchison Wally Wright	Netting Representative Netting Representative
Upper Co-optees	Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Thomas Florey Jim Gregory Roana Clark	Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative

- Rob Davidson retired and the Board accepted Tom McAuchtrie as a new Angling Representative and Roana Clark would stand in when Tom was unavailable
- Mark coombes retired and the Board accepted Derek Bathgate in his place as a new Upper Proprietor

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).

3. Research and Improvement

In 1991 the Board, together with Nith Fishings 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, Administrative Assistant Shona Kennedy, Senior Bailiff David McMichael and Seasonal Bailiff Ian Woods. During the summer the Board Bailiff team was supported by the addition of 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 and Management and holds an honours degree in Environmental studies. The Water Bailiff staff are 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 as amended. The Board is empowered under fisheries 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 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 Proprietors 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 the 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.

The Board adheres to the statement of Good Governance (Appendix 2).

7. Funding

The Board under its legislative powers derives its income each year from all proprietors of Salmon fishing's 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 representatives 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.

As a consequence of the new legislation, the public have access to Board meetings, the details of which are available on the Board's website.

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*), stone loach (*neopemacheilus 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 (*lampetra planeri*). In recent years a number of local lochs have been stocked with rainbow trout (*oncorhynchus mykiss*) that have subsequently found routes into the river system. However, there is no evidence that they have established a breeding population. The 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 a 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 system 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 four angling associations on the River Nith as follows: -

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

The public can also easily gain access to the other beats on the river. 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 difficult obstructions to try to improve smolt output. These stockings from Hatchery reared fry are monitored by means of electrofishing.

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.

Table 1 – List of Habitat schemes

River	Bank length (km)	Year/s work carried out
Dalwhat	1.5	1997
Spango	8	1997
Upper polneul	4	1998
Marr burn	1	1998
Kello water	6	1999
Kello water	4	1999
Nith	3	2000
Pennyland	3	2000
Clauchrie Burn	1	2001
Carron	8	2002
Cairn & tribs	1	2003
Cample	4	2004
Pennyland	0.5	2005
Wanloch	5	2006
Shinnel	2	2007
Lower Polneul	2	2008
Craigdarroch	5	2009
Mennock	3	2009
Nith	2.5	2011
Nith	5.5	2012
Crawick Water	7.5	2013,2010, 1999, 2005
Total	77.5km	

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. The District Salmon Fishery Board staff, supported by the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust Biologist, has conducted electrofishing surveys. Our Board and Trust staff are qualified, equipped and capable of conducting these research surveys.

Electrofishing is conducted within the Nith catchment every year to monitor the populations of salmon and trout juveniles present in different watercourses. In 2015, over 120 sites were surveyed by fully trained staff using single run, semi-quantitative survey protocols developed by the Scottish Fisheries Coordination Centre. The densities of fry and parr were then classified using the SFCC national classification scheme. This classification scheme categorises the data according to five categories derived using data from over 1600 Scottish sites.

In order that we can compare year to year performance we have selected 10 sites throughout the catchment. These sites are located on the main stream River Nith and its tributaries. The ten sites will be sampled every year and it is anticipated that over time, long term trends will be established. The intention here is to detect any issues specific to individual areas of our catchment and enable managers to address those issues timeously.

Table 1. Density of juvenile salmon per 100m²

Site	Watercourse - Location	Salmon fry		Salmon parr	
		2014	2015	2014	2015
1	Nith - Nith Lodge	9	65 (+622%)	16	8 (-50%)
2	Nith - Boig Road Bridge	6	17 (+183%)	21	7 (-67%)
3	Nith - Guildhall Bridge	30	45 (+50%)	12	4 (-67%)
4	Nith - Auldgirth New bridge	3	8 (+167%)	1	8 (+700%)
5	Nith - Martington Railway	12	9 (-25%)	0	0
6	Crawick - Spango bridge	17	38 (+124%)	5	2 (-60%)
7	Mennock - Glenim	5	69 (+1280%)	9	1 (-89%)
8	Scaur - Glenwhargen	44	9 (-80%)	24	7 (-71%)
9	Cample - Kirkbog Farm	64	25 (-61%)	5	0 (-100%)
10	Dalwhat Water - Bailwood	0	0	4	0 (-100%)
	Average	19.00	28.50 (+50%)	9.7	3.7 (-62%)

Table 2. Density of juvenile trout per 100m²

Site	Watercourse - Location	Trout fry		Trout parr	
		2014	2015	2014	2015
1	Nith - Nith Lodge	38	14 (-63%)	3	4 (+33%)
2	Nith - Boig Road Bridge	0	0	0	0
3	Nith - Guildhall Bridge	0	2	0	2
4	Nith - Auldgirth New bridge	0	0	3	0 (-100%)
5	Nith - Martington Railway	0	0	0	0
6	Crawick - Spango bridge	1	1	0	0
7	Mennock - Glenim	8	38 (+375%)	6	4
8	Scaur - Glenwhargen	32	2 (-94%)	8	0 (-100%)
9	Cample - Kirkbog Farm	4	6 (+50%)	0	0
10	Dalwhat Water - Bailwood	1	6 (+500%)	2	5 (+150%)
	Average	8.4	6.9 (-18%)	1.9	1.5 (-21%)

Excellent	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very Poor	Absent
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It is evident from the tables above, that there is a great deal of fluctuation between rivers, years and age classes of fish. Overall, there has been an increase in the density of salmon fry found during 2015's surveys compared to 2014. In fact, the only rivers that show a decrease in salmon fry densities are the Scaur and Cample Waters. This could be as a result of the high temperature and low water conditions that were experienced when the surveys were conducted in 2014, corralling the fish into a smaller area and making it look like there were higher densities than there actually were. This could also explain the decrease in parr as it is not unusual for parr to drop back out of small side burns and into larger bodies of water during periods of low water conditions. There certainly was far more water this year for them to spread out in. This decrease can also be seen in trout fry and parr, albeit to a lesser degree. Overall, the changes in juvenile densities are not overly concerning and are within natural fluctuations experienced throughout the catchment. It will only be once we have a number of years' data available that we will be able to see trends emerging.

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 of 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 mainstream 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.

Fry were planted out in the spring of 2015 at the following locations:

Species	Number	Location
Salmon	41809	Wanloch Water
Salmon	24933	Nith Greenburn
Salmon	14850	Crawick Water
Sea trout	10000	Nith Greenburn
Sea trout	9547	Mennoch
Brown trout	2833	Cairn Water

Total fry stocked out 103,972

The hatchery is a useful tool for allowing people to learn about the lifecycles of salmon and sea trout and their importance to the Nith System in a fun, interactive and hands-on manner. Hatchery visits prove to be very popular with those pupils from schools involved with the “Fishing for the Future” 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 visits sets the scene for them looking after their own salmon eggs in the classroom right through to stocking them into their local river. In 2015 the following schools visited the hatchery; Sanquhar Academy, Sanquhar Primary, Kelloholm Primary, Wallace Hall Academy, Holywood Primary, Heathhall Primary, Loreburn Primary, Brownhall Primary, Cargenbridge Primary, Langlands School, Lincluden Primary, Morton Scout Group, Dumfries High School, Young Persons Support Service, Maxwelltown High, Wallacehall activity group, and St Teresa’s Primary.

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.

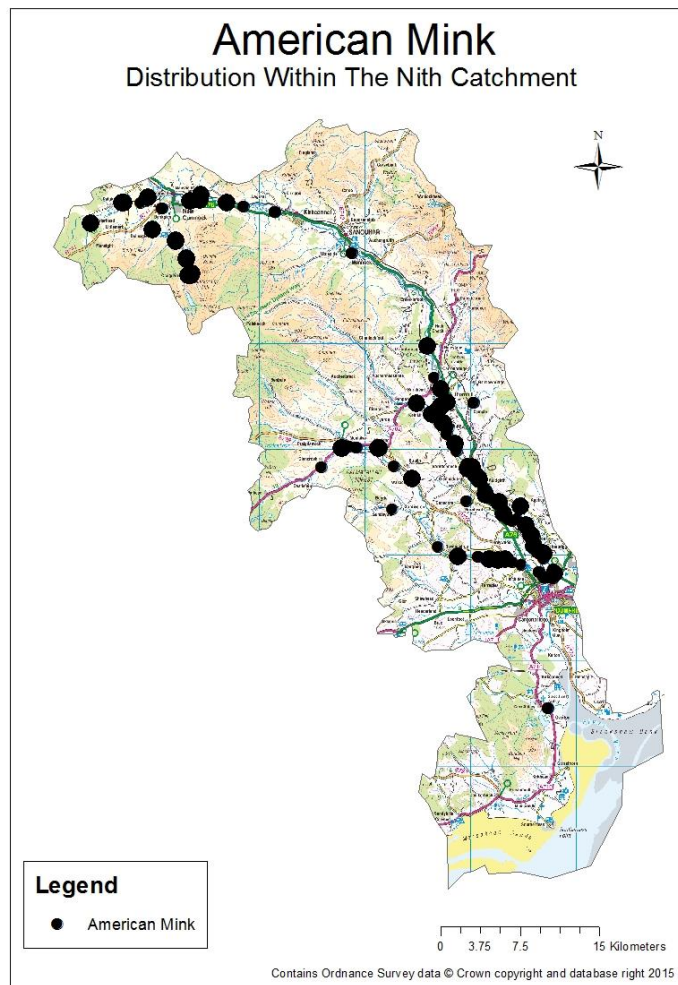
20. Predators - Statistics

Counts of goosander and cormorants were conducted on the mainstream 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 Scottish Natural Heritage to cull avian predators. This policy is carried out taking account of best practice and in consultation with SNH.

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.

The Bailiff Staff continues to follow Board approved policy on mink control. Nineteen mink were captured during the period December 2014 to November 2015 inclusive; this is conducted at suitable times when the river is not in spate.



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 number of studies have proved that if fish are handled carefully they have a high rate of survival.

The Board keeps under regular review and actively supports and encourages an evolving policy on catch and release.

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. Monitoring will help to determine which of these tributaries require Habitat Enhancement measures before their potential can be realised.

Spring Fish The Nith system 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. It is essential that this genetic core be safeguarded if there is to be any chance of an increase in its numbers. For the 2015 fishing season the Scottish Government introduced a ban on the killing of any salmon prior to April 1st.

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 slightly increased in the Nith system during 2015.
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. However, during the 2015 season a slight increase in catches of sea trout was experienced. The Board has sought to encourage a policy amongst proprietors, anglers and nets men of return of sea trout over 3lbs in weight with a limit of one sea trout taken per rod per day. 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. Engineering and Other Works

Open Cast Coal Mining

Open cast coal mining continues within the River Nith catchment. In addition to the annual monitoring that the Board conducts to measure impacts on the fish community the Board's staff have been involved in the restoration of the lower Green Burn on Kier's site at Greenburn. The work has involved eas9ng access for returning adults.

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.

High Voltage Electricity Infrastructure

The Board were consulted on plans to construct a major power line through the east of the River Nith catchment. The Board conducted electrofishing surveys and provide consultancy services to this project.

Gas Infrastructure

The Board has been consulted on the planned additional phase of the gas pipeline transferring gas from the mainland to Ireland. Electrofishing surveys have taken place and invertebrate samples have been taken to monitor the aquatic environment.

24. Illegal Fishing

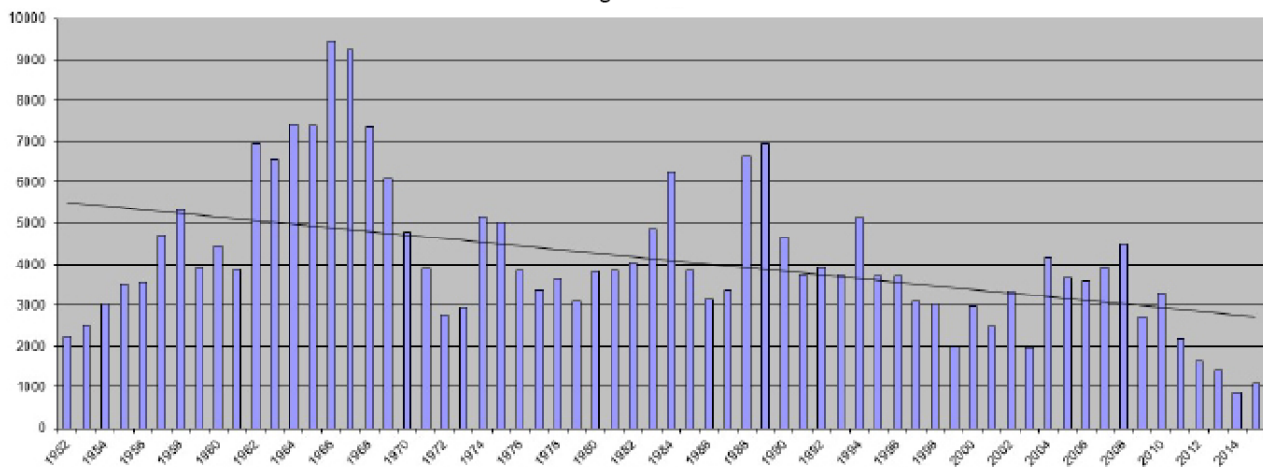
Statistics of incidents are provided further in this report.

25. Catch and Release Conservation Policy

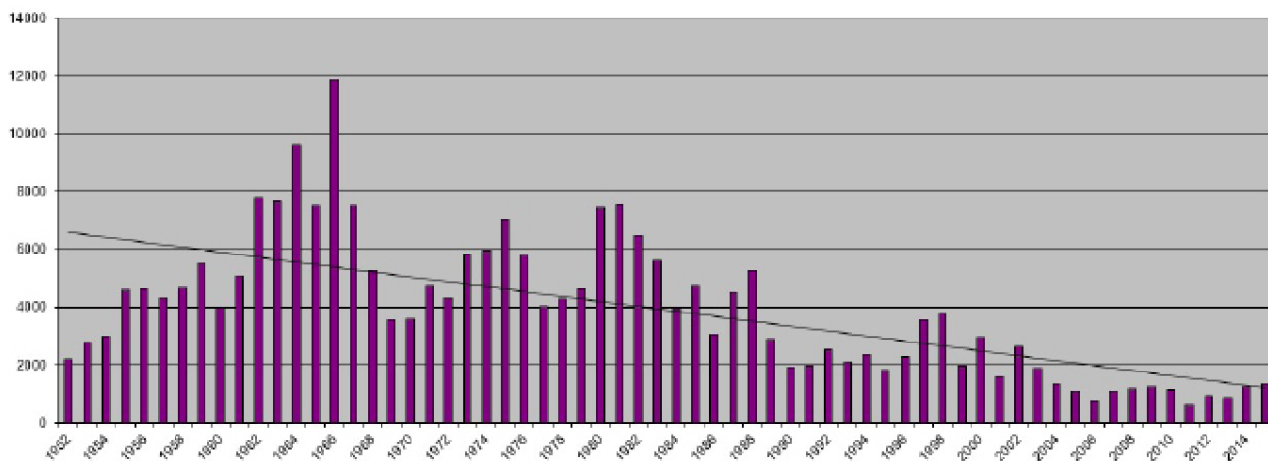
Catch and Release	Following on from the comments about the stock of spring fish the Board has recommended to all proprietors and anglers to adopt catch and release of spring fish up to the 1 st of June. NDSFB recognises the contribution which catch and release can make to conserving salmon stocks and encourages this practice. The Board also requested that all proprietors seek to impose a restriction upon the taking of, the numbers and size
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of sea trout caught and retained during any one day by anyone fishing for them suggesting that a maximum of one (1) 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.

Salmon and grilse catches 1952 - 2015



Sea trout catches 1952 - 2015



Netting	The Board is representative of all fishery proprietors in the Nith System and benefits from the long and wide experience of its netting members.
Hatcheries	The Board believes that the use of hatcheries has a specific role to play in the management of the fish stocks within the Nith System and therefore operates its hatchery programme 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 harder 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. The Board does have a licence and has the trained staff to be able to deal with any rogue seals that may cause issues. 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, the 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 mainstream 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 report from Stirling University opined that Salmon Angling at 1999 figures was worth in excess of £2.2 million to the local economy.

26. Legislation and Its Development

The Board responds to all consultations in relation to fisheries management including the Wild Fisheries Review which was conducted by Andrew Thin during 2014. The Nith Board will respond to this both directly and through the Fishery Director who sits on the Management Committee of the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards and has input to their responses.

27. Summary of Events from 01.12.14 - 30.11.15

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: -
12th December 2014,
24th March 2015 (Annual General Proprietors Meeting),
6th June 2015 (Annual Public Meeting and Board meeting),
15th September 2015.

The Board continues to be very busy attending to its statutory duties of managing the migratory stocks of salmonid species of fish throughout the 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.

The Board was represented at meetings and events throughout the catchment over the year. The Board recognises 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 Fishery Director represented the Board at various events throughout the year including: -

All coal mining Technical Working Groups, Bailiff Training meetings, Dumfries Burgh Fishing's Sub Committee, Nith Catchment Fishery Trust, Burgh Anglers AGM, Environment Days, Burgh Work party days, Annual Bailiffs conference, Association of Salmon Fishery Board's Management Committee meetings, the Joint Working Group meetings to consider the Wild Fisheries Reform for Scotland, the Rivers and Fishery Trusts of Scotland AGM, D&G Council Wildlife Open days, various meetings with the Scottish Fishery Directors, various site meetings to discuss renewable energy proposals and many other events to promote the work of the Board. The Fishery Director chairs the national Water Bailiff Development Group and has assisted the Scottish Government with its discussions with the Salmon Net Fishing Association.

The Board opted to participate in the Galloway Country Fair which was held in the grounds of Drumlanrig Castle. 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 on an annual basis.

28. Biologist's Report 2015

This last year has seen the successful completion of the two-year "Fishing for the Future" project, which has delivered many varied education sessions to over 950 young people throughout Nithsdale and the wider area. It

has been an enjoyable experience for all involved and the participants have been provided with an opportunity to experience the great outdoors in a fun, safe way, learning about the aquatic environment and gaining a sense of ownership of their local watercourses. We plan to continue with Fishing for the Future and will be expanding on it in 2016/17 to provide a pathway for enthusiastic young people into angling.

Times are unsure for fisheries management, fishing proprietors, clubs and anglers throughout Scotland currently with the Scottish Government changing the way that wild fisheries are managed. New legislation to categorise rivers and ban the killing of salmon on all Category 3 rivers has caused a great deal of mixed views throughout the angling community. Whilst some anglers have welcomed this change with open arms, some are more cautious or opposed to the legislation. There is concern amongst angling clubs and associations that this could make it even harder to keep membership numbers up and there is a very real fear that some associations may cease to exist in the next few years. This is why it is even more important that we continue to encourage new people into fishing and, in the process, teach them how to appreciate the species that they are fishing for and best angling practice.

It is likely that the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust, like all Scottish Fishery Trusts, will only have a couple of years left in which to operate before being incorporated into a larger Fishery Management Organisation (FMO) in accordance with proposals in draft legislation currently under consideration. What this management organisation will look like is as yet unclear. What is proposed by the government are fewer larger fishery management bodies as opposed to the current 41 Fishery Board structures and 26 Fishery Trusts. The geographic boundaries are still to be decided. We will have to wait and see. But what we do know, is that there will be change. In the meantime, it is important that we continue to achieve our aims and hope that whatever we do now will have a positive impact on the future of all species of fish and angling in the Nith catchment and surrounding area.

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. The Board also works to a five-year Fishery Management Plan which outlines the Board's intentions for the foreseeable future. The second five-year plan was written and approved in 2014. It represents the future aims and activities that the Board will embrace over the course of the next working year and beyond.

General Policy and Future Management

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 and operate in an open and transparent manner in accordance with the law.

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 hatchery programme,
- 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 fishers to return fish to the river where possible and appropriate.
- Encourage fishers 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 fishers 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.

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 Haaf Net Fishers Association Anglers and Angling Clubs Local Authorities and Councils Other Fishery Boards The Solway Firth Partnership Solway Heritage Police Scotland
National Organisations (Fisheries)	Scottish Government (Marine Scotland) Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) Scottish Net Fishing Association North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Institute of Fisheries Management Other Fishery Boards
National Organisations (Conservation/Protection)	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) Forestry Commission (FC) Environment Agency (EA)
Industrial Companies	Kier Mining Highways Agency Windfarm Operators Network Rail Hargreaves Surface Mining Gas Infrastructure

Nith Fishery Management Plan 2014-18 Prescriptions

The following prescriptions are to be found in the Fishery Management Plan, full details of which can be found on the Board's web site.

The prescriptions have been agreed by fishery proprietors and managers as necessary to promote the welfare of populations of fish within the River Nith catchment.

Poaching (High Priority)

- Maintain a team of Water Bailiffs commensurate with the threat of illegal fishing.

Exploitation (High Priority)

- Encourage the promotion of sustainable fishing throughout the catchment with all of its proprietors using the angling code and to develop an annual conservation code to be made available to all anglers.
- Promote accurate recording of all catches.
- Further endorse sustainable fishing via its education programme and by raising awareness of the benefits of catch and release.
- Adopt and promote carcass tagging which is anticipated will be initiated within the term of this fishery management plan for the purpose of assisting with the sustainable management of fish stocks.
- Discourage further exploitation of the resource.

Engineering procedures (High Priority)

- Respond to applications to conduct engineering and offer advice on mitigation and environmental protection in order to prevent degradation of habitat or fishing potential.
- Conduct monitoring in relation to engineering works.

Renewable energy (High Priority)

- Respond and comment on applications to construct renewable energy projects.
- Provide data and scientific input in relation to consideration of all renewable energy projects.
- Conduct monitoring to establish fishery data.
- Recommend mitigation to prevent damage to the resource.

Biosecurity (High/Medium Priority)

- Take full cognisance of the River Nith Biosecurity Plan when responding to consultations.
- Combat invasive non-native species throughout the catchment and continue to raise awareness about this issue.
- Participate in catchment, local, national and international initiatives to combat INNS.

Habitat degradation (High Priority)

- Carry out habitat surveys within catchment to identify potential habitat improvements.
- Carry out habitat works where identified and permitted.
- Maintain existing habitat schemes.

Access for fish (High Priority)

- Prioritise barriers within the Nith catchment using recognised barrier assessment tools.
- Remove temporary impediments to migration.
- Seek removal of any man-made obstruction to fish.

Water Quality (Medium Priority)

- Liaise with SEPA and other agencies regarding potential or existing water quality issues.
- Respond to any reported incident with the potential to impact on fish stocks and pursue through appropriate channels.
- Expand the Riverfly Partnership Anglers Monitoring Initiative.

Marine survival (High Priority)

- Participate in appropriate local, national and international research projects.
- Work with other agencies to gain knowledge.
- Use latest science to advise and make informed management decisions on local and national levels.

Predation (Medium Priority)

- Conduct predator counts to provide accurate data for license applications.
- Apply for annual licences to predators.
- Conduct annual licenced predator culls.
- Conduct mink trapping within the Nith catchment.

- Improve counting techniques and keep abreast of alternative means of control.

Fish stock data (High Priority)

- Conducting electrofishing surveys throughout the catchment.
- Conduct repeat annual electrofishing surveys at core sites throughout the catchment to assess annual fluctuations.
- Carry out scale reading of adult and juvenile salmonids to gain data on the structure of fish populations.
- Continue to participate in national research programmes to determine stock dynamics and populations trends within the Nith catchment.

Artificial enhancement programmes (High Priority)

- Continue to operate a hatchery at levels agreed by the NDSFB Stocking Committee.
- Endeavour to maximise natural stock production by improving habitat, access and conserving stocks of returning adults rather than stocking artificially.
- Authorise and stock fry into areas identified.
- Monitor any salmon and sea trout stocking.
- Comment on applications made to Marine Scotland to stock brown trout.

Prescription	Actions
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bailiff team comprised 1 full time, 2 part-time, 1 seasonal and 2 volunteer warranted water bailiffs • 8 incidents dealt with by enforcement staff – 1 abandoned by PF, 2 active and 5 cautioned • National Bailiff Development Group meetings attended • Attended National Bailiffs conference • Ran 3 Solway Bailiff training courses
Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch and release 63% for salmon and grilse and 80% for sea trout during 2015 • Consulted on Scottish Government ban on killing of salmon and attended associated national meetings • Conservation promoted through education projects, outreach programmes and distribution of conservation codes
Engineering and forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish rescues conducted • Supervised channel repair on Nith at House of Water • Consulted on 3 bank repairs • Five juvenile fish surveys carried out in connection with engineering works taking place throughout the catchment • Four responses made with regard to forestry plans • Advised on DGAA river engineering works
Renewables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirteen surveys carried out in connection with renewables taking place throughout the catchment • Thirteen scoping responses made regarding renewables projects • Nine reports submitted
Planning and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulted on new hospital site • 21 planning responses submitted • Responded to public consultations on Ban to kill salmon
Biosecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crayfish refuge traps monitored and Lochfoot Burn monitored for crayfish spread • 15741m² of Japanese knotweed treated • 5524m² of Giant hogweed treated • 13400m² of Himalayan balsam treated • 739m² of Skunk cabbage treated • Article on Giant hogweed with Border news • Rainbow trout survey on Cairn Water

Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat schemes checked and water gates repaired • Willow whipping and habitat restoration day on Nith • River bank planted with over 2000 native trees • Pond weed survey • Cample Water habitat scheme coppiced • Removal of fencing at Upper Crawick habitat scheme
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 barrier temporarily eased on Pennyland Burn • Greenburn Burn barrier modified and resurveyed for passability • Log jam removed on Enterkin Burn
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five pollution incidents attended and reported to SEPA • Six invertebrate surveys carried out
Marine survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended 2nd International Sea Trout Symposium • Application to Horizon 2020 for additional research on marine survival rejected
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended meetings/consultations regarding Wild Fisheries Reform • Scottish Government meetings • Various meetings attended - see page 18 for full list of meetings/events attended • Staff training and appraisals carried out
Predation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licenses applied for and gained and used to prevent serious damage to wild stocks of salmon/sea trout by cormorants and goosanders • 19 mink trapped
Fish stocks and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 catch data collected and reported on website • 244 historic electrofishing sites entered into SFCC database • NFCT/NDSFB conducted electrofishing at 120 sites throughout the catchment • 10 annual electrofishing sites surveyed • Provided electrofishing data to MS Science
Hatchery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82,000 salmon fry, 10,000 sea trout and 3000 brown trout fry stocked • Post stocking electrofishing surveys carried out • Brood stock captured for fry production for 2016 • 18 school visits to hatchery • Many general visits
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing for the Future Project completed – over 900 participants took part • Nith Sea trout experience – eight weeks of free fishing to promote the Sea trout fishery on the River Nith • Nith Grayling day – 18 participants and 56 fish captured • Various shows and fairs attended - See page 18 for full list of meetings/events attended • Presentations given to other organisations • PR via website, social media, TV and newspapers including Autumn Watch

Incidents of illegal Fishing/Poaching Activities 1/12/14 - 30/11/15

- 8 incidents dealt with throughout the catchment

Nith Habitat Enhancement Projects - 1st December 2014 to 30th November 2015

During 2015 all habitat schemes throughout the Nith catchment were maintained and those where planting of trees has been conducted have been checked and re-planting conducted where necessary. Various tributaries have been cleared of woody debris where this was causing an impasse to migrating salmonids.

Appendices:

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Appendix 1: Attendances at Board Meetings

Board Meeting Dates	No. Board Members Attended	Attendance Rate (%)
12 th December 2014	10 (max 15)	67
24 th March 2015 (AQPM)	10 (max 15)	67
6 th July 2015 (APM + Board meeting)	6 (max 15)	40
15 th September 2015	9 (max 15)	60

Board Meeting Dates	Attendees (apologies/absent)
12th December 2014 Board meeting	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Mark Coombs Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempself Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey Tom McAuchtrie
24th March 2015 Annual Qualified Proprietor Meeting Members of public Brian Fox Simon Kelly Jeff Walters Ed Baxter	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Buccleuch Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempself Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey Tom McAuchtrie

Board Meeting Dates	Attendees (apologies/absent)
6th July 2015 Annual Public Meeting and Board Meeting	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Buccleuch Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempself Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey Tom McAuchtrie
15th September 2015	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Derek Bathgate Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempself Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey Tom McAuchtrie

Appendix 2: Statement of Good Governance Compliance

Meetings

The annual meeting of qualified proprietors was held on 24th March 2015 at Friars Carse Country House Hotel, Auldgirth, Dumfries. The meeting was publicised by means of notice on the Board website and a copy of the notice was sent to the Scottish Government on 23rd April 2015. Four members of the public chose to attend. The minutes from this meeting can be viewed at www.river-nith.com

The annual public meeting was held on 6th July 2015 at Friars Carse Country House Hotel, Auldgirth, Dumfries. This meeting was publicised by means of notice on the Board website and a copy of the notice was sent to the Scottish Government on 2nd July 2015. No members of the public chose to attend. The minutes from this meeting can be viewed at www.river-nith.com

In addition, further meetings of the Board were held on 12th December 2014 and 10th September 2015. These meetings were publicised by means of notice on the Board website. The minutes from these meetings can be viewed on the Board website.

Annual Report and Accounts

This annual report will be published on the Board website.

The accounts will be published on the Board website.

Complaints

The Board has set up and maintains a complaints procedure which can be viewed on the Board website.

Members' interests

The register of members' interests can be viewed on the Board website. We have included a standing item at each Board meeting inviting Board members to declare new/amend existing interests and all such instances are recorded in the minutes of these meetings.

Appendix 3: Register of Complaints

1. Complaints received:

During the last 12 months Nith District Salmon Fishery Board received no complaints.

Appendix 4: Nith System Catch Data

The Board now collects its own data from all proprietors. The charts show the returns to season end 2015.

Salmon and grilse caught over the last 10 years

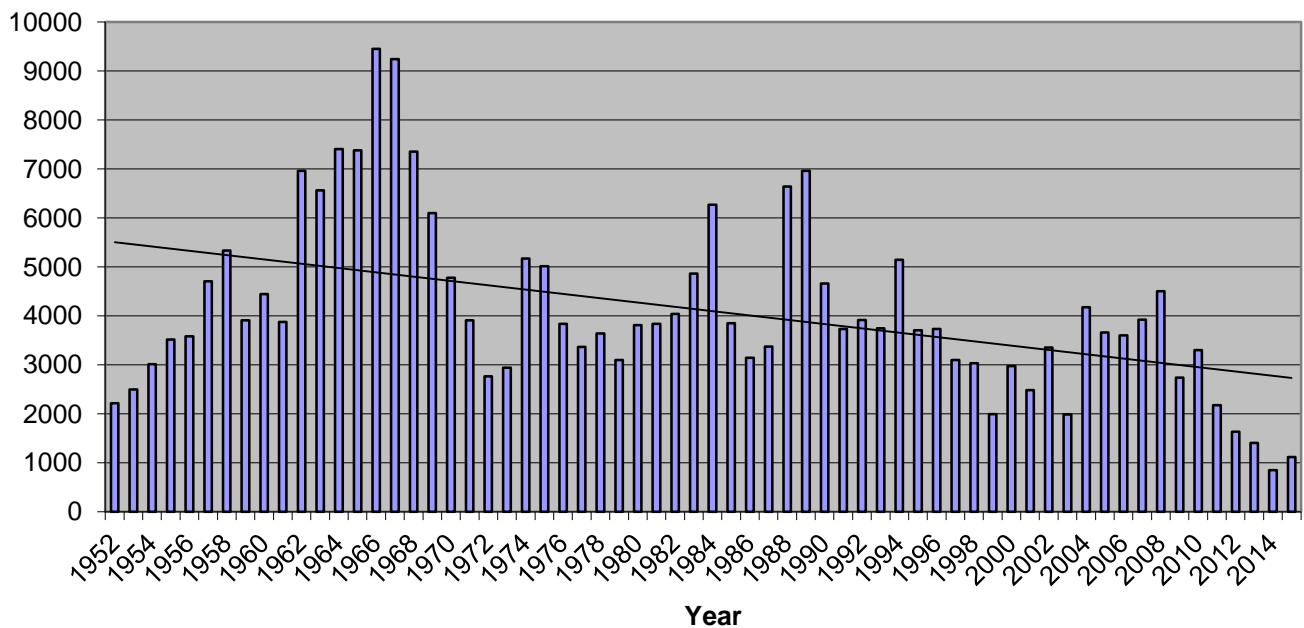
Year	Rods	Nets	Total	% C&R	10 year average
2006	2682	921	3603	26%	3038
2007	2993	932	3925	41%	3121
2008	3764	740	4504	35%	3268
2009	2095	644	2739	36%	3342
2010	2336	970	3306	43%	3375
2011	1637	545	2182	40%	3344
2012	1283	352	1635	40%	3173
2013	940	465	1405	59%	3114
2014	520	331	851	64%	2781
2015	702	417	1119	63%	2527

Sea trout caught over the last 10 years

Year	Rods	Nets	Total	% C&R	10 year average
2006	708	96	804	28%	2163
2007	1022	100	1122	43%	1919
2008	961	217	1178	52%	1658
2009	1104	136	1240	49%	1588
2010	850	303	1153	44%	1408
2011	515	94	609	46%	1310
2012	782	163	945	55%	1142
2013	671	170	841	62%	1038
2014	1119	132	1251	87%	1026
2015	1063	283	1346	80%	1044

Total Salmon and grilse caught 1952 - 2015

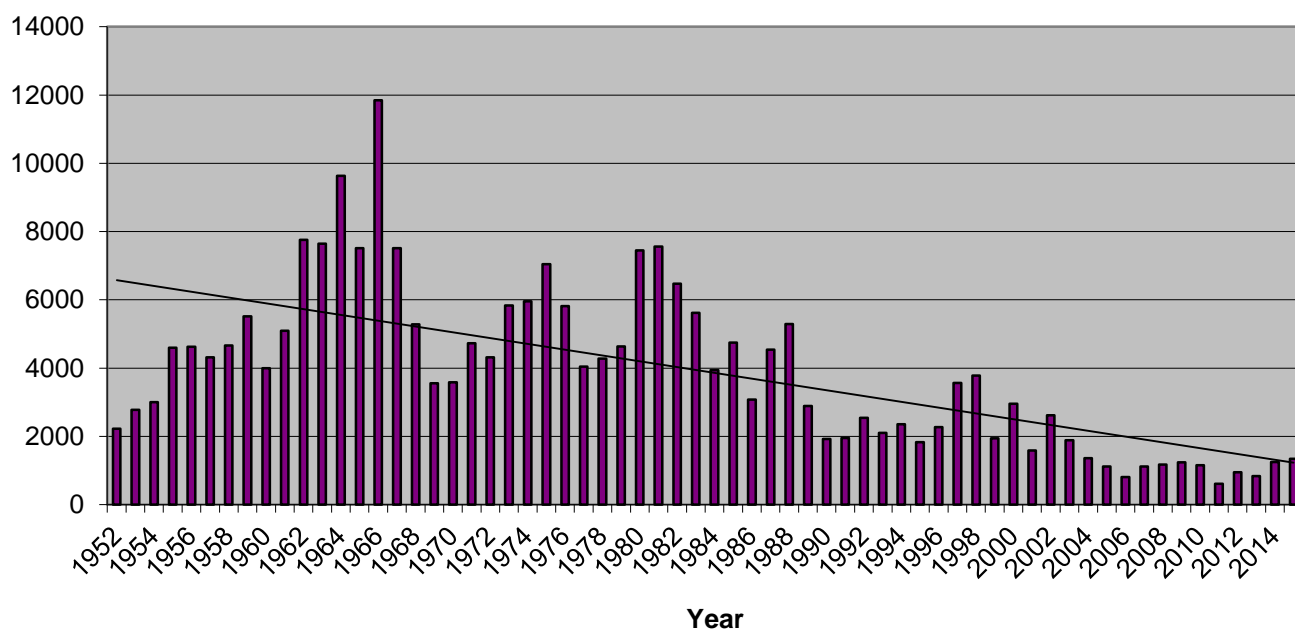
Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 year average
1952	2220	-	2220	
1953	2497	-	2497	
1954	3018	-	3018	
1955	3518	-	3518	
1956	3585	-	3585	
1957	4711	-	4711	
1958	5336	-	5336	
1959	3912	-	3912	
1960	4447	-	4447	
1961	3877	-	3877	
1962	6960	-	6960	4186
1963	6562	-	6562	4593
1964	7407	-	7407	5032
1965	7379	-	7379	5418
1966	9452	-	9452	6004
1967	9243	-	9243	6458
1968	7353	-	7353	6659
1969	6100	-	6100	6878
1970	4781	-	4781	6911
1971	3909	-	3909	6915
1972	2768	-	2768	6495
1973	2946	-	2946	6134
1974	5174	-	5174	5911
1975	5013	-	5013	5674
1976	3839	-	3839	5113
1977	3370	-	3370	4525
1978	3640	-	3640	4154
1979	3100	-	3100	3854
1980	3811	-	3811	3757
1981	3837	-	3837	3750
1982	4040	-	4040	3877
1983	4863	-	4863	4069
1984	6270	-	6270	4178
1985	3851	-	3851	4062
1986	3147	-	3147	3993
1987	3377	-	3377	3994
1988	6643	-	6643	4294
1989	6962	-	6962	4680
1990	4663	-	4663	4765
1991	3737	-	3737	4755
1992	3917	-	3917	4743
1993	3748	-	3748	4632
1994	5012	133	5145	4519
1995	3576	135	3711	4505
1996	3435	300	3735	4564
1997	2899	201	3100	4536
1998	2727	307	3034	4175
1999	1792	203	1995	3679
2000	2658	319	2977	3510
2001	2021	468	2489	3385
2002	2480	873	3353	3329
2003	1501	490	1991	3153
2004	3067	1110	4177	3056
2005	2896	764	3663	3051
2006	2917	686	3603	3038
2007	2623	1131	3925	3121
2008	3178	1326	4504	3268
2009	1988	751	2739	3342
2010	2307	999	3306	3375
2011	1543	648	2182	3344
2012	1120	515	1635	3173
2013	853	552	1405	3114
2014	517	334	851	2781
2015	672	447	1119	2527



Total Sea Trout caught 1952 - 2015

Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 year average
1952	2228	-	2228	
1953	2778	-	2778	
1954	2999	-	2999	
1955	4599	-	4599	
1956	4626	-	4626	
1957	4317	-	4317	
1958	4659	-	4659	
1959	5521	-	5521	
1960	3999	-	3999	
1961	5095	-	5095	4082
1962	7760	-	7760	4635
1963	7642	-	7642	5122
1964	9633	-	9633	5785
1965	7517	-	7517	6077
1966	11846	-	11846	6799
1967	7511	-	7511	7118
1968	5284	-	5284	7181
1969	3559	-	3559	6985
1970	3587	-	3587	6943
1971	4724	-	4724	6906
1972	4314	-	4314	6562
1973	5837	-	5837	6381
1974	5961	-	5961	6014
1975	7048	-	7048	5967
1976	5815	-	5815	5364
1977	4043	-	4043	5017
1978	4275	-	4275	4916
1979	4637	-	4637	5024
1980	7448	-	7448	5410
1981	7563	-	7563	5694
1982	6470	-	6470	5910
1983	5618	-	5618	5888

Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 year average
1984	3945	-	3945	5686
1985	4749	-	4749	5456
1986	3081	-	3081	5183
1987	4537	-	4537	5232
1988	5290	-	5290	5334
1989	2887	-	2887	5159
1990	1922	-	1922	4606
1991	1953	-	1953	4045
1992	2541	-	2541	3652
1993	2105	-	2105	3301
1994	2295	65	2360	3143
1995	1787	47	1834	2851
1996	2135	138	2273	2770
1997	3344	220	3564	2673
1998	3494	291	3785	2522
1999	1738	207	1945	2428
2000	2748	207	2955	2532
2001	1400	189	1589	2495
2002	2239	384	2623	2503
2003	1600	284	1884	2481
2004	1138	226	1364	2382
2005	708	159	1119	2310
2006	579	170	804	2163
2007	644	386	1122	1919
2008	661	517	1178	1658
2009	717	560	1240	1588
2010	779	374	1153	1408
2011	373	236	609	1310
2012	511	434	945	1142
2013	409	432	841	1038
2014	273	978	1251	1026
2015	489	857	1346	1049



Clerks Notes on the Accounts
01.12.14 – 30.11.15

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

This arises from the Board's activities in connection with supplying environmental audit reports derived from electro fishing and other monitoring data collected by the Board. The consultancy income generated has increased substantially over the last year. as a consequence of involvement with substantial numbers of micro hydro and wind farm schemes and also South of Scotland Grid Improvements.

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. There were none during the year.

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 Fishery Director, Head Bailiff and an Admin. Assistant. Seasonal staff employed during the summer months reduced to one seasonal bailiff. The Board agreed to pay the staff overtime in connection with the various projects giving rise to consultancy income during the financial year 2015. Seasonal members of staff were employed during the summer and autumn free of salary on a work experience basis.

Grant to NCFT

The Board agreed some time ago to support the formation and initial running costs of NCFT. This period shows the year's level of support.

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. The fees paid to the Trust Biologist are also reflected in the Consultancy Income (above) enjoyed by the Board because of the Biologist's input to the research done for the reports produced for consultancy on third party development projects. There was an exceptional amount of work arising for both Board and Trust during the financial year 2015 resulting in the substantially increased Trust fees of £19,500. It is unlikely that this amount of work will arise during financial year 2016.

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 contributes pension contribution of 7.5% of salary paid to employees who have pension plans. The Board needs to be alert about the changing legislation that will require employers to contribute to pension schemes for employees.

Insurance

Premia increased in line with industry increases. In addition, there was taken increased indemnity insurance cover to satisfy the cover levels required by some of the companies with whom the Board carried out consultancy work.

Repairs & Maintenance

During the course of the year there were payments for office, hatcheries, boat repairs and maintenance, chainsaw and electrofishing equipment servicing, repairs and maintenance, shotgun safety inspection and maintenance etc. There was a requirement to replace and service equipment to a higher degree this year, including the service of electrofishing equipment on two occasions during the year at a combined total cost of £2,000 and the purchase of satmap gps mapping equipment at £430 in order to carry out the increased volume of consultancy income.

Habitat & Hatchery Expenses

The Board is responsible for two hatchery buildings and re stocking work. Habitat Enhancement was carried out during the course of the year as detailed within the Annual Report. The Board agreed to pay for the fitting of a central heating system in the hatchery office to the extent of £3,386.

Clothing Allowance

Payments for staff clothing.

Printing, Postage & Stationary

Costs have increased as a consequence of rising postage charges linked to keeping Board members and proprietors advised on the changing circumstances of Wild Fisheries Reform.

Computer Costs

maintenance being carried out as required by donation of service by Robin Armstrong, Dumfries.

Hire of Equipment

Hire of quad bike required for various projects in respect of which Consultancy Income is engathered. This has increased as a consequence of increased consultancy work carried out during the year, giving rise to increased use of the Fishery Director's quad bike.

Accommodation & Subsistence

Attendance of staff at Bailiffs and other Fishery related Conferences and meetings. This has increased as a consequence of the Board's involvement in the Sea Trout Symposium. The Nith trust has reimbursed the Board for a share of the costs for the Trust Biologist's attendance...

Legal and Professional

No independent specialist legal advice required during the course of the year.

Clerk's Fees

Increased as a consequence of added workload on consultancy on Wild Fisheries Review and compliance with the 2012 legislation.

General Expenses

Subscriptions, Shotgun Licence renewal, hire of rooms etc. for meetings, advertising for posts of water bailiff and administrative assistant (£560), Attendance and arrangements for the Sea Trout Symposium (£365), Hog roast for the Sea Trout Festival (£250), Forth Fisheries Trust donation in exchange for use of their extended electro fishing equipment (£250)

Subscriptions

ASFB Subscription, Membership of Fish Legal and Institute of Fisheries Management.

Balance Sheet

Fixed Assets

Plant & Machinery

As detailed in the Fixed Assets Schedule.

Motor Vehicles

As detailed in the Motor Vehicles Schedule. A new vehicle was purchased in November 2014.

Current Assets

Debtors this year relates to outstanding consultancy income invoices at close of books. All assessments were engathered during the course of the year.

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 2015

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

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Income and expenditure account	3
Balance sheet	4
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The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Board members report **for the year ended 30th November 2015**

The board members present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30th November 2015.

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 Board members must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they 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 that are sufficient to show and explain the organisation's transactions and 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

P Weatherall
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 2015 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 and express an opinion on 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.

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. In addition, we read all the financial and non financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements and to identify any information that is apparently materially incorrect based on, or materially inconsistent with, the knowledge acquired by us in the course of performing the audit. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

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 2015, and of its surplus/(deficit) 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.

Messrs. 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 2015

		2015	2014
	Notes	£	£
Turnover	2	313,562	262,438
Cost of sales		(35,043)	(35,043)
Gross surplus		278,519	227,395
Administrative expenses		(241,540)	(216,245)
Other operating income		1,981	3,925
Operating surplus	3	38,960	15,075
Other interest receivable and similar income		972	1,177
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation		39,932	16,252
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	5	(194)	(235)
Surplus for the financial year		39,738	16,017

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 2015

	Notes	2015		2014	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	6		47,583		42,070
Current assets					
Debtors	7	56,811		11,634	
Cash at bank and in hand		106,704		117,756	
		<u>163,515</u>		<u>129,390</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	<u>(2,050)</u>		<u>(2,150)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>161,465</u>		<u>127,240</u>
Net assets			<u>209,048</u>		<u>169,310</u>
Capital and reserves					
Income and expenditure account	9		<u>209,048</u>		<u>169,310</u>
Members' funds			<u>209,048</u>		<u>169,310</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

P Weatherall

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 2015**

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

	2015	2014
	£	£
Operating surplus is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of owned assets	15,337	13,421
Auditors' remuneration	2,050	1,975
	<hr/>	<hr/>
and after crediting:		
Profit on disposal of tangible fixed assets	1,881	3,525
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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 £4,109 (2014 - £4,006).

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2015

..... continued

5. Tax on surplus on ordinary activities

Analysis of charge in period	2015	2014
	£	£
Current tax		
UK corporation tax	194	235
	<u> </u>	<u> </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 2014	7,257	5,326	41,463	58,930	112,976
Additions	-	-	5,390	30,279	35,669
Disposals	-	-	(654)	(34,889)	(35,543)
At 30th November 2015	<u>7,257</u>	<u>5,326</u>	<u>46,199</u>	<u>54,320</u>	<u>113,102</u>
Depreciation					
At 1st December 2014	5,963	3,105	35,658	26,180	70,906
On disposals	-	-	(554)	(20,170)	(20,724)
Charge for the year	258	223	2,778	12,078	15,337
At 30th November 2015	<u>6,221</u>	<u>3,328</u>	<u>37,882</u>	<u>18,088</u>	<u>65,519</u>
Net book values					
At 30th November 2015	<u>1,036</u>	<u>1,998</u>	<u>8,317</u>	<u>36,232</u>	<u>47,583</u>
At 30th November 2014	<u>1,294</u>	<u>2,221</u>	<u>5,805</u>	<u>32,750</u>	<u>42,070</u>

7. Debtors: all receivable within one year

	2015	2014
	£	£
Trade debtors	52,686	10,213
Prepayments and accrued income	4,125	1,421
	<u>56,811</u>	<u>11,634</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the financial statements
for the year ended 30th November 2015

..... continued

8. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2015	2014
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	2,050	2,150
9. Reserves	Income and expenditure account	Total
	£	£
At 1st December 2014	169,310	169,310
Surplus for the financial year	39,738	39,738
At 30th November 2015	209,048	209,048
10. Controlling interest		

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board is under the control of the Board Members.

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Balance Sheet
as at 30th November 2015

	2014	2014
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Tenant's Improvements	1,998	2,221
Nightsights	1,036	1,294
Plant & Machinery	8,317	5,805
Motor Vehicles	36,232	32,750
	<u>47,583</u>	<u>42,070</u>
Current Assets		
Debtors	52,686	10,213
Prepayments	4,125	1,421
Clydesdale Cashflow Account	23,332	26,528
Clydesdale Cash Management Account	25	25
Scottish Building Society Scotplus Account	81,339	88,700
Scottish Building Society Vehicle Account	2,008	2,503
	<u>163,515</u>	<u>129,390</u>
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	<u>2,050</u>	<u>2,150</u>
Net Current assets	161,465	127,240
Net assets	<u>209,048</u>	<u>169,310</u>
 Income and expenditure account	 <u>209,048</u>	 <u>169,310</u>
Members' funds	<u>209,048</u>	<u>169,310</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2015

	2015	2014
	£	£
Turnover		
Assessments receivable	182,860	182,860
Payments from NCF Trust	14,423	9,297
Consultancy income	116,279	70,280
	313,562	262,437
Less: Refund of dues	(35,043)	(35,043)
	278,519	227,394
 Other operating income		
Sundry Income	-	400
Bank interest	972	1,177
Total income	279,491	228,971

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2015

	2015	2014
	£	£
brought forward	279,491	228,971
Overheads		
Wages and salaries	109,253	100,159
Grant to NCF Trust	35,000	32,541
Trust Biologists Fees	19,500	8,400
Staff pension costs	4,109	4,006
Staff training	65	150
Insurance	4,513	3,789
Repairs and maintenance	3,922	2,901
Hatchery and habitat enhancement expenses	3,426	1,088
Clothing allowance	1,384	1,240
Printing, postage and stationery	1,700	1,567
Telephone and internet	2,679	3,094
Computer costs	-	515
Hire of equipment	4,069	2,382
Motor expenses	14,366	18,467
Accommodation and subsistence	3,701	3,189
Promotional & public relations expenses	820	1,356
Clerk's fee to Walker & Sharpe	8,940	8,820
Audit fees	2,050	1,975
Bank charges	583	553
General expenses	2,264	831
Subscriptions	3,759	5,801
Depreciation	15,337	13,421
Losses on disposal of tangible assets	100	-
Gain on sale of fixed assets	(1,981)	(3,525)
	(239,559)	(212,720)
Surplus before tax	39,932	16,251
Taxation	(194)	(235)
Surplus for the year	39,738	16,016
Retained surplus brought forward	169,310	153,294
Retained surplus carried forward	209,048	169,310

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2015

£ £

Tenant's Improvements

Opening Balance	2,221
Less: Depreciation for year @ 10%	223
Closing Balance	<u>1,998</u>

Nightsights

Opening Balance	1,294
Less: Depreciation for year @ 20%	258
Closing Balance	<u>1,036</u>

Plant & Machinery

Opening Balance	5,805
Additions	
IG600 electro fishing system	4,680
Laptop	710
	<u>5,390</u>
	11,195
Disposals	
Fridge	299
Camera	355
	<u>654</u>
	10,541
Less: Depreciation for year @ 25%	2,778
Closing Balance	<u>7,763</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2015

	£	£
<u>Motor Vehicles</u>		
Landrover SD61 ECF - balance b/f	14,719	
Sold during year	14,719	
		-
Landrover ST64 CVH - balance b/f	18,031	
Depreciation for year @ 25%	4,508	
		13,523
Isuzi SG15 EBC - Purchased during year	30,278	
Depreciation for year @ 25%	7,570	
		22,708
Closing book value		36,231