

THE RIVER NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MANAGEMENT REPORT AND REVIEW

1st December 2017 - 30th November 2018



"2018 Opening Day at Dalswinton"

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AGENDA

for the

ANNUAL QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS MEETING

for year

01.12.17 - 30.11.18

1. Minutes of Annual General Proprietors Meeting 20.03.18
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 MEETING OF QUALIFIED PROPRIETORS
HELD AT FRIARS CARSE COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL
AULDGIRTH, DUMFRIES

on

20th March 2018 at 10.00 am

PRESENT

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

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

Brian Fox
Tom Brown
Karl Savege
Mike Machin
Geoff Walter
Jim Gregory
Dorothy Ashworth
Steven Ashworth

IN ATTENDANCE

Roderick Styles – Clerk
James Henderson – Fishery Director (FD)
Deborah Parke – Nith Catchment Fishery Trust (FB)
Davie McMichael – Senior Water Bailiff
Ruth Davies - Administrator

APOLOGIES

John Kingan
Derek Hextall

The Chairman convened the meeting and welcomed everybody in attendance.

The Chairman referred to the Agenda.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman asked for comments on these Minutes. There were none. The Chairman sought formal approval for the Minutes of AGMQP 23/3/17, which was unanimously given.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The Chairman referred to the Annual Report which had been circulated and was on the web and asked for comments thereon.

DK noted catch and release figures were generally good, however, 12% for the Nets was not so positive. PH stated he would like to see figures for the effort involved in fishing, for sea trout and salmon. FD highlighted that the return rate for the angler diaries issued was, very poor, at 50%. This issue had been discussed at the last Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) meeting and the Forth & the Tweed reported similar problems with their log book returns. RG suggested working with FishPal to progress a technology solution, however, FD advised that this would only cover 15% of ticket sales on the Nith. PL suggested he could attach a log book to post at both ends of Ellisland Pool. TB advised he had contacted Marine Scotland regarding logbooks, as the Environment Agency issue them in England, however no support was provided.

RG referred to the 'Average salmonid densities at annual Nith sites 2014/2017' graph asking if 2016/17 was really a standout year. JH confirmed yes it was, probably due to the mild conditions and there being no big flood events. The data relates to 10 annual monitoring sites. The question is whether these figures will convert to parr and eventually smolts who return to sea.

The Chairman sought formal approval for the Annual Report which was unanimously given.

3. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Chairman stated that the Accounts were broadly in good order. There were no questions or objections. The Accounts were unanimously approved by all concerned.

4. MANAGEMENT PLANS

FD confirmed that there were no radical plans to change the approach. New FMS management plan templates are awaited and we continue with our most recent plan until these are received.

The Chairman offered, that he was surprised by the re-categorisation of the Nith to a Cat-1 status, however, suggested on a positive note it made the river look more attractive to others. As David Kempzell had mentioned earlier, catch and release figures were good for the Cat-2 status last year. He stated he hoped this approach continues this year and hopes the Board supports this.

DK confirmed he thought anglers and netsmen would continue to support this approach.

5. A.O.C.B.

The Clerk advised that Triennial elections for NDSFB would be held in the lead up to July and invited current members of the board and the public to give this matter some consideration. Members should continue to represent angling proprietors, anglers, net proprietors and netsmen.

The Clerk confirmed John Kingan had tendered his resignation from the Board due to illness which resulted in his place being available for netsmen to consider.

TF asked what was happening in the Marine Environment. Is there anyone we should support? FD responded the Atlantic Salmon Trust were at the forefront of tagging projects. NDSFB attend their meetings and provide as much support as they can e.g. providing samples.

PL advised that a big project was about to start, the details of which would be covered at the Board meeting.

The chairman closed the meeting with thanks at 10.30am.

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

on

3 JULY 2018 AT 10AM

The order of business established for the Meeting was:-

1. Tri-annual Elections.
2. Annual Public Meeting.
3. Board Meeting.

PRESENT

Percy Weatherall (Chairman)
Robbie Cowan (Caerlaverock Estate)
Nick Wright (Closeburn Castle Fishings)
Wally Wright (Netting Representative)
Peter Hutchison (Haaf Netting Representative)
Thomas Florey (Angling Representative)
John Charteris (Dumfries & Galloway Council)
Raymond Mundle (Dumfries & Galloway Angling Association)

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

Geoff Walters

IN ATTENDANCE

Roderick Styles (Clerk)
James Henderson (FD)
Deborah Parke (FB) (Nith Catchment Fishery Trust)
David McMichael (Senior Water Bailiff)

APOLOGIES

Anna Fergusson (BEL)

1. TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS.

The Clerk explained to the meeting the statutory requirement for Triennial Elections, the process for electing and co-opting representatives and the sequence in which such election and co-opting should take place. The election procedures were undertaken. The elected Members of the Board are:-

Upper Proprietors

Nick Brown (Friars Carse)
Anna Fergusson (BEL)
Peter Landale (Dalswinton)
Percy Weatherall (Cowhill)
David Kempself (DGAA)
Nick Wright (Closeburn Castle Fishings)

Lower Proprietors

Robbie Cowan (Caerlaverock)

John Charteris (Dumfries & Galloway Council)

Peter Hutchison (Colvend Netting)

Tom Brown (to be confirmed pending production of Mandate from Drumburn Estate)

Upper Co-optees

Thomas Florey (Angling Representative)

Raymond Mundle (Angling Representative)

Lower Co-optees

Wally Wright

Mike Mackin

Thereafter, elected and co-opted Board Members confirmed that they wish to have Percy Weatherall serve as Convenor/Chairman and he agreed to accept the position.

Thereafter, the Triennial Elections concluded.

2. ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING**Annual Report and Accounts**

The Clerk referred to the Annual Report and Accounts that had been the subject of scrutiny and approval at the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors held on March 2018.

With Mr Geoff Walters being the only member of the public present, he asked for observations on both. There being none, he asked for final approval of both, which was unanimously given.

Fishery Management Plan

The Clerk referred to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). FD reminded those present that the Board had a plan that was due for revision and renewal during the course of 2018, but that the Board had been advised by Simon Dryden of Marine Scotland when he attended a previous Board meeting in 2017 that the Board should await finalisation of the Scottish Government's FMP template, then due for completion in the near future. FD had attended a meeting very recently with SG on the subject matter of the FMP template and that it was hoped that it would be settled in final form soon. It was agreed that the matter of the new FMP would be taken forward for full discussion at the Board meeting following the APM.

AOB

The Chairman asked if there was any other business to discuss or attend to. There being none, the Chairman closed the Annual Public Meeting.

Chairman's Foreword

The good news is that the main stem of our river, and its tributaries, are in good order. Salmon and Sea Trout are spawning in encouraging numbers and their progeny are thriving. Our electro-fishing programmes confirm healthy populations of young fish preparing for their journey to sea.

The bad news is that, in recent years, fewer and fewer of our fish have succeeded in returning, as adults, to the river of their birth. This pattern is mirrored throughout Scotland. The reasons for the decline are complex and, while research efforts are intensifying, not yet well understood.



Against this background your Board has, in recent years, made the conservation of the stock of fish that populate our river, a prime objective. In 2018 the Nith was 'promoted' to category 1 status. Your Board recommended a maximum of 2 salmon per angler be taken. I am pleased to be able to report that this 'catch and release' policy has been enthusiastically embraced by anglers throughout the Nith system and, during the year past, over 90% of rod-caught salmon were voluntarily released. Your Board thanks you for your restraint.

The reduction in fish numbers in the river has led, not unnaturally, to a reduction in angling effort. This has, in turn, led to lower income for riparian owners of all sorts. While our finances remain in good order for the time being a prolonged dearth of fish will have troubling implications for your Board. On the bright side, your Fishery Director and his team do a good deal of remunerative environmental consultancy work which produces welcome income. Writing this foreword gives me the opportunity to thank them for their hard work during the year past.

Anyone doubting the health of the River Nith and its ecosystem should walk its banks. There you will be struck by the rising numbers of fish-eating birds in evidence. To investigate this phenomenon, and to quantify the impact these birds may be having on our fish stocks, your Board is participating in the Scottish Government's piscivorous bird stomach analysis project together with colleagues from the Dee, Spey and Tweed.

To finish on an optimistic note: I am told that our Grayling anglers have been catching (and releasing) Sea Trout. Hopefully this bodes better for the forthcoming season. Tight lines to all who fish our rivers!

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'E.P.K. Weatherall'.

E.P.K. Weatherall
Chairman

Introduction

1. Constitution and Area

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board is constituted under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003. Tri-annual elections were held on 3rd July 2018.

The Nith Board for the year comprised: -

Chairman	Percy Weatherall	
Lower Proprietors	Robbie Cowan John Charteris Peter Hutchinson Tom Brown	Caerlaverock Estate Dumfries and Galloway Council Douglas Hall Fishery Drumburn Estate
Upper Proprietors	Peter Landale Nick Wright Anna Fergusson David Kempzell Richard Gladwin Nick Brown	Dalswinton Estate Closeburn Castle Fishing Buccleuch Estates Limited D & G Angling Association Blackwood Estate Friars Carse Hotel (resigned)
Lower Co-optees	Mike Mackin Wally Wright	Netting Representative Netting Representative
Upper Co-optees	Thomas Florey Jim Gregory Raymond Mundle	Angling Representative Angling Representative Angling Representative

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 Nith Board has invited representatives from the Scottish Environmental Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), however in recent years SEPA and SNH no longer have officer time available to fulfil these invitations.

3. Research and Improvement

In 1991 the Nith 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 Nith Board together with NFIA formed the Nith Habitat Enhancement Committee (NHEC). NHEC has been subsumed into the Nith Board as the environmental and habitat department and this important work is now conducted on behalf of the Nith Board by the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust. In addition, the Nith Board has built and operates its own hatcheries.

4. Staff

The Nith Board staff during the period comprised Fishery Director Jim Henderson and Senior Bailiff David McMichael. During the summer the Nith Board Bailiff team was supported by the addition of Auxiliary Water Bailiffs who have worked enthusiastically during their time with permanent staff. The Nith 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 staff employed by the Nith Catchment Fishery Trust. A reciprocal arrangement exists so that the Trust gets assistance from Nith Board staff in dealing with Trust business.

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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith Board Works

The Nith 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 Nith Board rests with the Clerk who reports to the Chairman and liaises with the Fishery Director on a regular basis.

The Fishery Director and staff 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 staff also run the Board's hatchery operation 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 Nith Board adheres to the statement of Good Governance (Appendix 2).

7. Funding

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

The Nith Board also receives consultancy income from various third parties (such as civil engineering contractors and others) who require information and guidance from the Nith 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 Nith Board's jurisdiction.

8. Constitutional Evolution

The Nith 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 Nith Board extended invitations to SNH and SEPA.

As a consequence of the new legislation, the public have access to Nith Board meetings, the details of which are available on the Nith 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*), stoneloach (*neopmacheilus barbatulus*), three spined stickleback (*gasterosteus aculeatus*) and grayling (*thymallus thymallus*).

Three varieties of lamprey are also present sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), river lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*) and the fresh water resident brook lamprey (*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. Since the Scottish Government's inception of "The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Regulations 2016" fishing for salmon in the seaward part of the Nith Estuary has been banned. This has effectively stopped the stake net fishery and those haaf nets located in the seaward area from operating.

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.

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 years. 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 decades. 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. Annual maintenance of the Board's habitat schemes continues to be conducted with supplementary planting where required.

Table 1 – List of Habitat schemes

River	Bank length (km)	Instigation/improvement of scheme/s
Dalwhat	1.5	1997
Spango	8	1997
Upper Polneul	4	1998
Marr burn	1	1998
Kello water	6	1999
Kello water	4	1999, 2016
Nith - HOW	3	2000, 2016, 2017
Pennyland	3	2000, 2018
Clauchrie Burn	1	2001
Carron	8	2002
Cairn & tribs	1	2003, 2016
Cample	4	2004
Pennyland	0.5	2005, 2016, 2017
Wanloch	5	2006
Shinnel	2	2007, 2018
Lower Polneul	2	2008
Craigdarroch	5	2009
Mennock	3	2009
Nith - Kier	2.5	2011
Nith - Kier	5.5	2012
Crawick Water	7.5	1999, 2005, 2010, 2013, 2017, 2018
Dagig Burn	3	2018
Total	80.5km	

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 Nith 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 2018, over 150 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 addition, during 2018, 30 sites were surveyed as part of the Scottish Government's National Electrofishing Project which randomly selects sites in catchments throughout Scotland. This project is intended to provide data to assist the Scottish Government in determining the conservation status of all Scottish rivers.

Locally, 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.

Following electrofishing surveys conducted during 2018, there are now five years' worth of data from these ten sites and it is possible to start to see short-term trends. These results are displayed in the following table and graphs.

Overall, there was an increase in the average density of salmon fry found during the course of the annual surveys in 2018. This follows on from an increase in salmon fry densities in 2017 after poor numbers in 2014, 2015 and 2016. There was also an increase in salmon parr densities. Trout fry densities across the survey sites were found to be decreased slightly on previous years but trout parr have increased slightly. It should be noted that all of the sites surveyed are selected for their good fry habitat, specifically salmon fry, however, rivers such as the Mennock are well known sea trout rivers and will therefore more likely to contain juvenile trout.

ELECTROFISHING RESULTS – Annual Health check sites 2018

Juvenile salmonids – It should be noted that the sites selected are representative of salmon fry habitat and therefore densities of salmon parr, trout fry and trout parr are not comparable but there to show other species found.

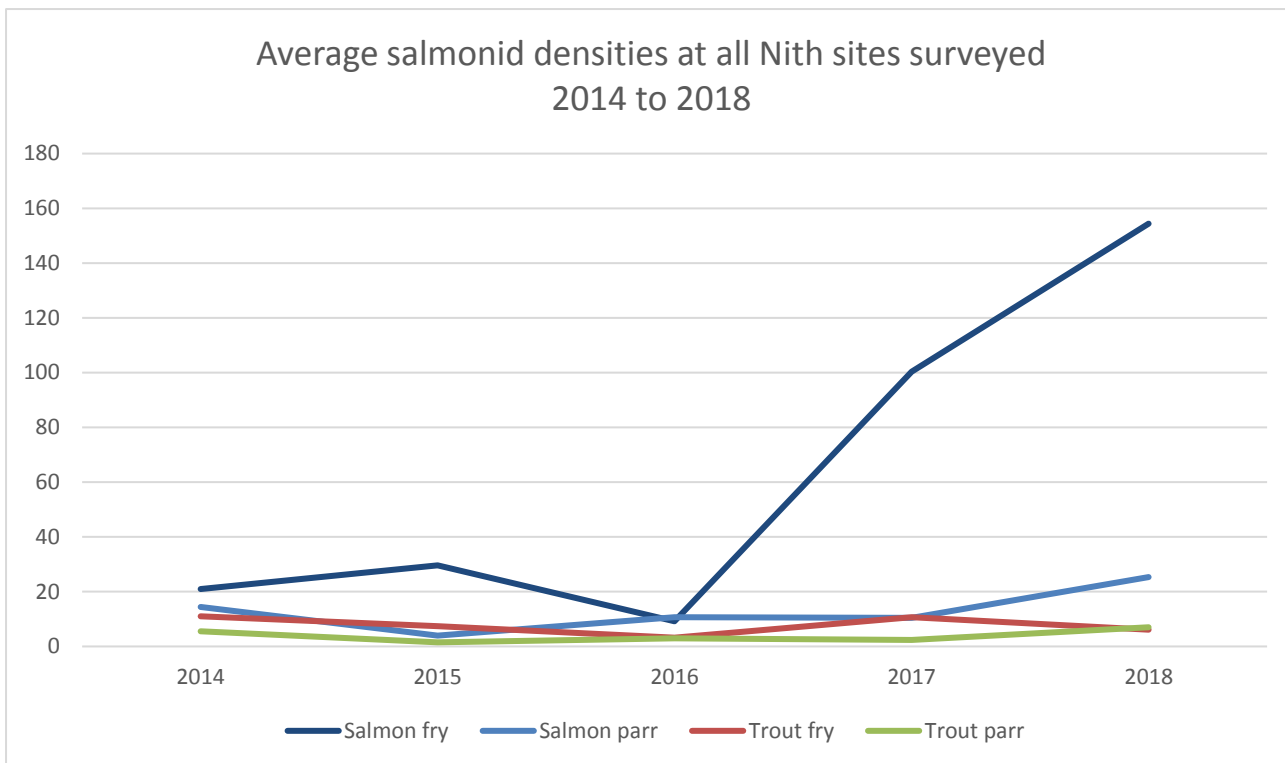
Watercourse	Site code	Location	Salmon fry (/100m ²)	Salmon parr (/100m ²)	Trout fry (/100m ²)	Trout parr (/100m ²)	Other species
Nith	1	Downstream of Nith Lodge, New Cumnock	192.00	13.44	24.96	5.76	-
Nith	2	Downstream of Boig Road Bridge, New Cumnock	79.25	25.36	3.17	3.17	SL, Eel
Nith	3	Upstream of Guildhall Bridge, Kirkconnel	223.85	36.63	0	0	M, SL
Nith	4	At Auldgirth New Bridge	55.10	5.70	0	0	SL, M G
Afton	5	Upstream of Blackcraig Bridge	195.00	45.20	7.50	17.50	-
Crawick Water	6	Downstream of Spango Bridge	283.56	37.53	0	4.17	Eel
Mennock Water	7	Upstream of confluence with Glenim Burn	88.00	12.00	18.00	12	-
Scaur Water	8	Downstream or Bridge at Glenwhargen	97.28	19.76	4.56	0	-
Cample Water	9	Downstream of bridge at Kirkbog Farm	327.24	3.03	3.03	0	SL
Dalwhat Water	10	Upstream of Bailwood Plantation	2.74	54.66	0	27.4	-
Average of all sites:			154.40	25.33	6.12	7.00	

Key to classification of salmonids per 100m²

absent
Very poor
Poor
Moderate
Good
Excellent

Key to other species:

E	-	Eel
M	-	Minnow
SL	-	Stone Loach
L	-	Lamprey
SB	-	Stickleback
G	-	Grayling
F	-	Flounder
P	-	Pike



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 Nith 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.

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 Nith 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 Nith Board has countered the effects of these incidents by using hatchery stock to replace lost fish.

Fry were planted out in the spring of 2018 at the following locations:

Species	Number	Location
Salmon	30,000	Nith Greenburn
Sea trout	10,000	Nith Greenburn
Salmon	2,000	Connel Burn
Salmon	35,440	Wanlock
Sea trout	5,740	Wanlock

Total fry stocked out
83,140

The capture of adult broodstock for the hatchery is conducted during October/November of any year. 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.

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

Although present in the Solway Firth, seals do not appear to be the threat that they are in other Salmon Districts. The Nith Board does have a licence and has the trained staff to be able to deal with any rogue seals that may cause issues. During 2011 the Nith Board had a member of staff trained as an accredited marksman to enable the Nith Board to shoot seals under licence from the Scottish Government. The Nith Board continues to apply for a licence to shoot seals on an annual basis and makes the appropriate quarterly returns.

Cormorants and goosanders are known predators of juvenile fish and the Nith Board staff applies for and obtains an annual license to cull/scare limited numbers of avian predators the Nith Boards licence was extended during 2018 to cover the period of late November and December. 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.

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.

Mink continue to be seen throughout the catchment of the River Nith and the Nith Boards policy of controlling mink continues. The Bailiff Staff continues to follow Nith Board approved policy on mink control. Fifteen mink were captured during the period December 2017 to November 2018 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. Catch and release rates for rod caught salmon within the River Nith catchment for the 2018 salmon fishing season was 91%. The catch and release rate for sea trout over the same period was 78%.

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

22. Government Conservation

The Conservation of Salmon (Scotland) Regulations 2016 outlined a system whereby the Scottish Government categorised the conservation status of individual rivers to manage the killing of Atlantic salmon in inland waters on an annual basis. In 2018, the River Nith was categorised as a Category 1 river, which means Exploitation was sustainable therefore no additional management action was required. This recognises the effectiveness of existing non-statutory local management interventions.

The Board notes the mandatory total catch and release requirement for salmon on all River Systems throughout Scotland to 1st April in any given year.

The Board notes the voluntary total catch and release policy for salmon from 1st April to 31st May on the River Nith system in any given year.

The Board recommends for conservation purposes that wherever possible total catch and release policy be adopted for the whole river system, but taking into account its conservation category status, if salmon are to be taken then no more than two salmon per person per season be taken with a view to achieving in excess of 80% catch and release of salmon for the 2018 season.

23. Salmonid Stocks

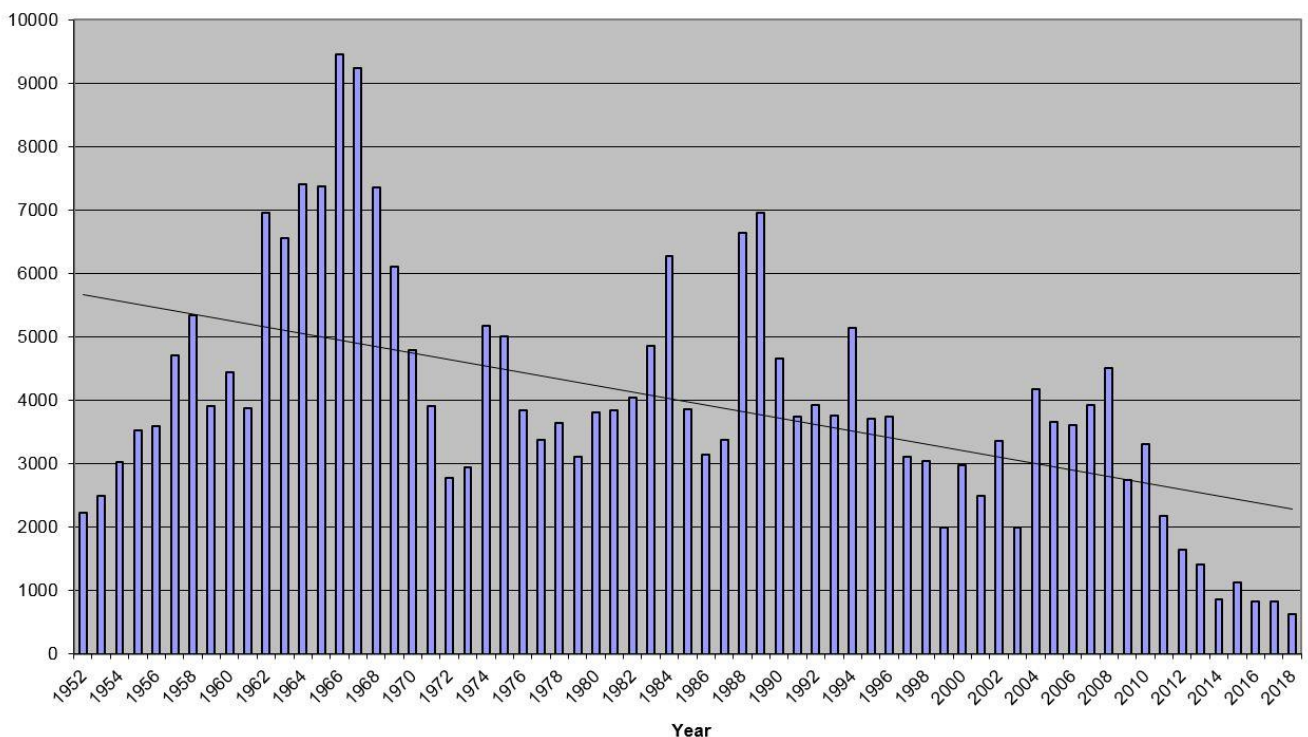
Juvenile Stocks Our surveys show that in general stocks of juvenile salmonids are at a satisfactory level in the majority of the catchment. There are, however, some tributaries in which numbers are well below optimum levels. Monitoring will help to determine which of these tributaries require Habitat 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. From 2015, the Scottish Government introduced a ban on the killing of any salmon prior to April 1st each year. In addition, the Nith Board recommends that no salmon should be killed prior to the 1st of June in any year.

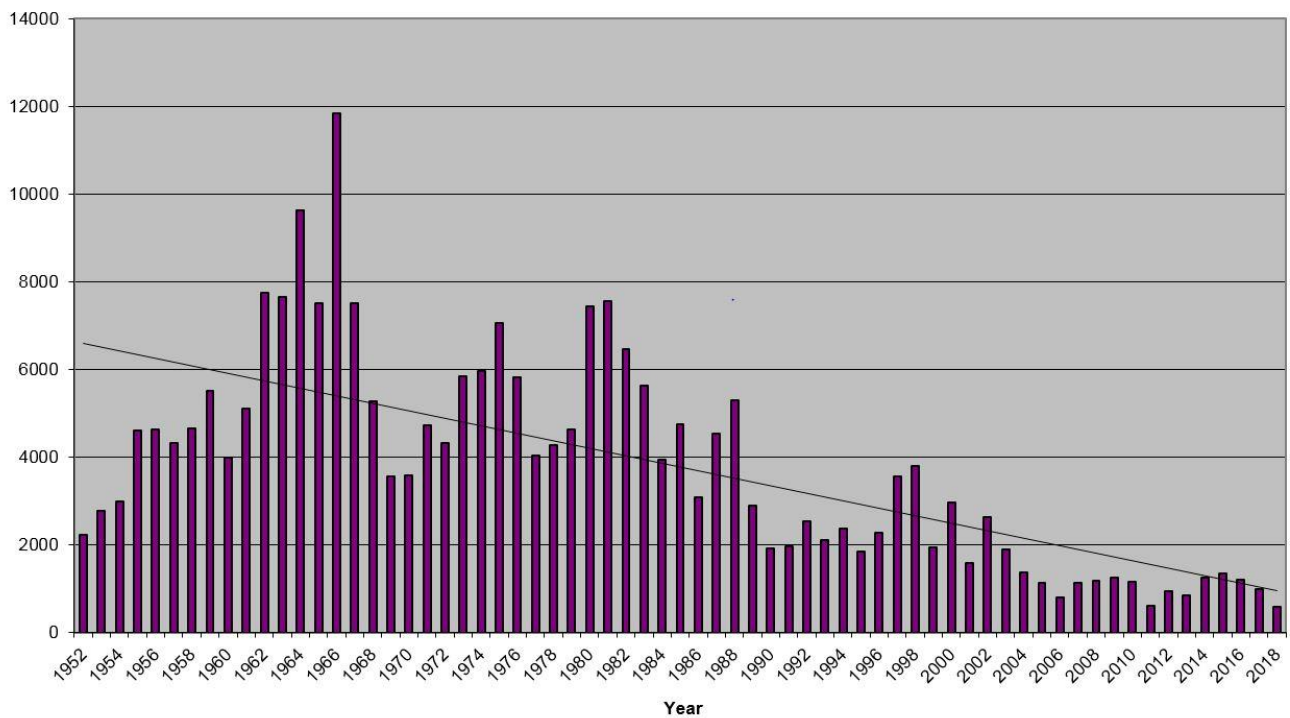
Grilse and Autumn Fish The availability of grilse and summer salmon plays an important part in providing fishing for local rods before many visitors come to the Nith for the autumn fishing. The grilse run on the River Nith system is not as consistent now as it once was.

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. The Nith 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 Nith 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 populations within the Nith system.

Total Salmon and Grilse Caught by all Methods 1952 - 2018



Total Sea Trout Caught by all Methods 1952 - 2018



24. Engineering and Other Works

Open Cast Coal Mining

Open cast coal mining is reducing within the River Nith catchment. In addition to the annual monitoring that the Nith Board conducts to measure impacts on the fish community the Nith Board's staff have been involved in the restoration of the Dalgig Burn on Kier's site at Greenburn. The work has involved the construction of a completely new channel having removed the redundant hydroelectric dam which had previously been a barrier for migrating salmonid species of fish. The habitat in the riparian zones of the Dalgig Burn has undergone grass seeding and tree planting during 2018.

House of Water

House of Water continues to produce coal albeit at a reduced quantity than previously. Restoration work is in an advanced state and the Nith Board continues to monitor and manage the major river diversions that took place on this site.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy projects involving hydro would have appeared to have peaked during 2016 as a result of reduced feed-in tariffs for this method of energy production. The Nith Board maintains its policy of not supporting these proposals. That said, providing that the Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith Board. The Nith catchment seems to have more than its fair share of windfarms. 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 Nith Board is aware of the potential for such large scale construction works to create adverse impacts in the aquatic environment.

Forestry

The Nith 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 Nith Board responds when appropriate on issues that could potentially influence fish or the habitat in which they reside.

High Voltage Electricity Infrastructure

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

The Nith Board have conducted further follow up surveys to validate the environmental protection measures adopted to protect the aquatic environment.

Gas Infrastructure

The Nith Board has been consulted on 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. These surveys were repeated during 2017 and again in 2018. This construction project was due to complete during 2017 but has extended.

25. Illegal Fishing

Statistics of incidents are provided further in this report. Following a request by Dee District Salmon Fishery Board, our westerly neighbours, NDSFB agreed to provide a limited enforcement presence in the Carsphairn area of their catchment.

26. Conservation Policy and Angling Code

Catch and Release Further to the statutory conservation measures implemented by the Scottish Government for salmon (see section 22. Government Conservation) the Nith Board also requested that all proprietors seek to impose a restriction upon the taking of, the numbers and size of sea trout caught and retained during any one day by anyone fishing for them suggesting that a maximum of 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.

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

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

River Engineering Works The Nith 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.

27. Public Access

Approximately 62% of the mainstem of the Nith is directly available to public access for fishing via local associations. Of the remaining 38% the vast majority is available by daily or weekly rental. Further public access was afforded during the River Nith sea trout event which ran over four Friday evenings in the summer of 2018. Anglers given free access to private beats to fish for sea trout. The Nith 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.

28. Legislation and Its Development

The Nith Board responds to all consultations in relation to fisheries management.

29. Summary of Events from 01.12.17 - 30.11.18

The Nith Board wherever possible tries to ensure that Nith 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 Nith Board met on: -
11th December 2017,
20th March 2018 (Annual General Meeting of Qualified Proprietors followed by Board members meeting),
3rd July 2018 (Annual Public Meeting followed by Board members meeting),
21st September 2018.

The Nith 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 Nith Board is able to contribute meaningfully to policies and future strategies. Nith Board members are aware of the importance of informing political leaders regarding the work of the Nith Board and the issues faced in managing salmon and sea trout.

The Nith Board was represented at meetings and events throughout the catchment over the year. The Nith 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 Nith Board's staff on any issues of concern.

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

All coal mining Technical Working Groups, Bailiff Training meetings, Nith Catchment Fishery Trust, Environment Days, the Fisheries Management Scotland AGM, 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 Nith Board.

The Nith Board opted to participate in the Galloway Country Fair which was held in the grounds of Drumlanrig Castle. The Board also attended Lowther Country Fair along with members of the committee from Dumfries and Galloway Angling Association. These events were considered a success for the Nith Board and afforded the opportunity to interact with the public. The Nith Board plan to continue to attend these Country Fairs.

30. Biologist's Report 2018

Having recently received all of the catch returns for the River Nith and collated the catch data, it is a depressing situation with continued decreased catch returns for both salmon and sea trout. Numbers of both species have been dropping for many years now but 2018 produced the lowest return figures on record since 1952. Whilst 2018 was not conducive to producing good fishing conditions with a long-term drought covering prime fishing months, this in no way masks that fact that fish simply did not return to our river in their former numbers. I have been looking at long-term trends in catch statistics and whilst the data shows peaks and troughs in recorded catches, we are now observing a long-term trend for both salmon and sea trout that is very worrying.

The catch return statistics do show that fishers are, in the main, taking responsibility for their actions and are returning most of their catches to the river. I do consider that sea trout are not given the conservation emphasis that salmon are.

Encouragingly, the juvenile surveys conducted during the summer of 2018 indicated good densities of salmon fry throughout the catchment. Our survey season was especially busy during 2018 due to the additional work from the Scottish Government's National Electrofishing project. This project is intended to provide data to the Government to be included in considering individual rivers conservation status. Within the Nith catchment, we conducted an additional 28 sites.

The Trust's Fishing for the Future project had a very successful year with more and more young people wishing to participate in the many varied outdoor education activities. The Nith Young Anglers has a full programme of events and our facilities at Blackwood have proven to be very successful. The pond is now fully operational and is mellowing after the major construction works. The facilities have proven their worth and are enjoyed by all who attend, including the three new taster sessions, which are made possible by the construction of the new pond. The proximity to our hatchery facilities expands the capabilities and deliverables of any activities that we run. Accordingly, the project has evolved into demonstrating to participants how they can turn a fish which they have captured into a tasty meal.

At the time of writing, we are enjoying the warmest February on record in Scotland and it serves to prove the point that we are vulnerable to whatever the weather forecast decides to throw at us with the resultant impact on species and habitats.

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 Nith Board outline their current policy on a number of key areas and issues as described in Section 5. The Nith Board also works to a five-year Fishery Management Plan which outlines the Boards 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 Nith Board will embrace over the course of the next working year and beyond. During 2017, Scottish Government attended Nith Fishery Board meeting where it was decided that the creation of a new Fishery Management Plan would be suspended whilst we await the imminent production of the new Fishery Management Plan template from Scottish Government.

General Policy and Future Management

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

Enforcement

The Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith Board will: -

- Continue to operate the Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith Board will: -

- Continue to encourage control of salmonid predators such as, but not limited to, sawbills by continued application to Scottish Government/SNH/SASA 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith Board will: -

- Adhere and promote the Scottish Governments conservation policy with regard to conservation of salmon regulations which has categorised the River Nith as a 2 for the 2019 season. In addition, the Nith Board will seek to conserve stocks of sea trout as discussed in Section 26. Conservation Policy and Angling Code. See Appendix 6 for the 2019 Angling Code.

Netting

The Nith Board will: -

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

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

Nature Conservation

The Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Nith 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 Police Scotland
National Organisations (Fisheries)	Scottish Government (Marine Scotland) Fisheries Management Scotland Scottish Net Fishing Association North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) 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 TranServe Scotland Windfarm Operators Network Rail Hargreaves Surface Mining Gas Infrastructure Iberdrola, AMEC and Scottish Woodlands Scottish Power Renewables

Nith Fishery Management Plan 2014-18 Prescriptions

As agreed at previous Board meetings, this plan and its prescriptions have been extended to take account of the interim period whilst we await the Scottish Government's Fishery Management Plan template.

The following prescriptions are to be found in the Fishery Management Plan, full details of which can be found on the Nith 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 3 employed warranted bailiffs and 2 volunteer warranted water bailiffs • 7 incidents dealt with by enforcement staff – 5 illegal fishing methods, 1 incident of spawning bed disturbance and 1 incident of breach of construction method statement. • Continued Professional Development undertaken • Supplied poaching exhibits to Police Scotland • Obtained Dee (Kirkcudbrightshire) warrant cards • Advised Police Scotland on Enforcement issues • Advised the Dee Kirkcudbright and Urr Fishery Boards • Policed commercial carcass tagging legislation • Attended meeting with Environment Agency senior enforcement staff
Exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch and release 91% for salmon and grilse and 78% for sea trout by rod and line and 54% for salmon and 26% for sea trout by nets during 2018. • Assisted Scottish Government with categorization • Assisted D&G Common Good with fisheries management advice • Altered Nith Angling code to reflect Scottish Government policies • Conservation promoted through education projects, outreach programmes and distribution of conservation codes • Issued carcass tags to Haaf Netters • Ran Nith Sea Trout Experience
Engineering and forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulted on multiple engineering projects • Inspected flood damage on Nith prior to repairs • 8 electrofishing surveys carried out in connection with engineering works taking place throughout the catchment • 9 fish rescues throughout the catchment. • Consulted on Lochfoot to Brighthouse gas pipeline, SWS Overhead Powerline, Bridge repairs for Buccleuch Estate, SEPA Laggan Burn and Upper Nith Flood projects, East Ayrshire Flood Project, log jam at Buccleuch Estate, A76 Guildhall Bridge works, A76 Enterkin Roadworks, PA Forestry for culvert. • Attended all Open Cast Coal Mine TWG's
Renewables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 surveys carried out in connection with renewables taking place throughout the catchment.

Planning and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning lists checked on a weekly basis and responses made where appropriate.
Biosecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crayfish refuge traps and Lochfoot Burn monitored for crayfish spread • Japanese knotweed treated • All Nith Giant hogweed treated
Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All habitat schemes checked and water gates repaired • Replanting trees on Crawick and Pennyland habitat schemes • Replaced fence on Pennyland habitat scheme • Repaired fence on Wanlock habitat scheme • Planted trees on Dalgig habitat scheme • Problem trees removed throughout catchment
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstruction tree cut on DGAA water • Details of impassable road culvert near Kier reported to SEPA • Observed sea trout ascending the falls on Pennyland Burn
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 pollution incidents attended and reported to SEPA • 36 aquatic invertebrate surveys completed
Marine survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed all necessary documentation for seal licensing • Discussions with AST regarding salmon tracking project • Discussions with Inland Fisheries Ireland regarding sea trout tracking project
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Health and Safety at work Policies updated • Reviews and updated website • All appropriate licensing requirements in place • Various meetings attended - see Section 29 for full list of meetings/events • Staff training carried out • Fishery Catch Returns compiled
Predation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licenses applied for and gained to prevent serious damage to wild stocks of salmon/sea trout by cormorants, goosanders and seals. • License returns completed • 15 mink trapped
Fish stocks and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 catch data collected and reported on website • NCFT/NDSFB conducted electrofishing at over 150 sites throughout the catchment • 10 annual electrofishing sites surveyed • Provided electrofishing data to SFCC • Participated in Scottish Government national electrofishing project
Hatchery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83,140 fry stocked • Post stocking electrofishing surveys carried out • Brood stock captured for fry production for 2018/19
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nith Sea Trout Experience – four weeks of free fishing to promote sea trout fishing on the River Nith. BBQ event for participants held at Dalswinton Fishing Hut. • Various shows and fairs attended - See Section 29 for full list of meetings/events attended • Ran Fishing for the Future programme in schools and groups • Presentations given to other organisations. • PR via website, social media, TV and newspapers.

Incidents of illegal Fishing/Poaching Activities 1/12/17 - 30/11/18

- 7 incidents dealt with throughout the catchment.

Nith Habitat Enhancement Projects - 1st December 2017 to 30th November 2018

During 2018 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. In discussions with landowners regarding extending the existing habitat scheme on Crawick Water.

Appendices:

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Appendix 1: Attendances at Nith Board Meetings

Nith Board Meeting Dates	No. Board Members Attended	Attendance Rate (%)
11 th December 2017	11 (max 15)	73%
20 th March 2018 (AQPM & Board meeting)	12 (max 15)	80%
3 rd July 2018 (APM & Board meeting)	8 (max 16)	50%
21 st September 2018	9 (max 16)	56%

Board Meeting Dates	Attendees (apologies/absent)	
11 th December 2017 Board meeting	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Anna Fergusson Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempzell Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey John Charteris	Members of the Public Carl Savage Tom Brown Mike Machin Raymond Mundle Scott Kerr Mike Keggans Christine Carson
20 th March 2018 Annual General Meeting of Qualified Proprietors and Board Meeting	Board members Percy Weatherall John Kingan Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Anna Fergusson Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempzell Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Danny Marshall Jim Gregory Thomas Florey John Charteris Derek Hextall	Members of the Public Brian Fox Tom Brown Karl Savege Mike Machin Geoff Walter Dorothy Ashworth Steven Ashworth
3 rd July 2018 Triannual Elections, Annual Public Meeting and Board Meeting	Board members Percy Weatherall Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Anna Fergusson Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempzell Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Jim Gregory Thomas Florey John Charteris Raymond Mundle Mike Machin Tom Brown	Members of the Public Geoff Walter

Board Meeting Dates	Attendees (apologies/absent)	
<p>21st September 2018 Board meeting</p>	<p>Board members Percy Weatherall Robbie Cowan Peter Landale Anna Fergusson Nick Wright Nick Brown David Kempzell Wally Wright Peter Hutchison Richard Gladwin Jim Gregory Thomas Florey John Charteris Raymond Mundle Mike Machin Tom Brown</p>	<p>Members of the Public None</p>

Appendix 2: Statement of Good Governance Compliance

Meetings

The annual meeting of qualified proprietors was held on 20th March 2018 at Friars Carse Country House Hotel, Auldgirth, Dumfries. The meeting was publicised by means of notice on the Nith Board website and a copy of the notice was sent to the Scottish Government. Seven 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 3rd July 2018 at Friars Carse Country House Hotel, Auldgirth, Dumfries. This meeting was publicised by means of notice on the Nith Board website and a copy of the notice was sent to the Scottish Government. One member 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 Nith Board were held on 11th December 2017 and 21st September 2018. These meetings were publicised by means of notice on the Nith Board website. The minutes from these meetings can be viewed on the Nith Board website.

Annual Report and Accounts

This annual report will be published on the Nith Board website.

The accounts will be published on the Nith Board website.

Complaints

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

Members' interests

The register of members' interests can be viewed on the Nith Board website. We have included a standing item at each Nith Board meeting inviting Nith 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 Nith Board now collects its own data from all proprietors. The charts show the returns to season end 2018.

Salmon and grilse caught over the last 10 years

Year	Rods (%C&R)	Nets (%C&R)	Total	10 year average
2009	2095 (36%)	644 (0%)	2739	3342
2010	2336 (43%)	970 (0%)	3306	3375
2011	1637 (40%)	545 (0%)	2182	3344
2012	1283 (40%)	352 (0%)	1635	3173
2013	940 (59%)	465 (0%)	1405	3114
2014	520 (64%)	331 (1%)	851	2781
2015	702 (63%)	417 (0.5%)	1119	2527
2016	655 (100%)	163 (100%)	818	2248
2017	695 (89%)	133 (70%)	828	1939
2018	520 (91%)	110 (54%)	630	1551

Sea trout caught over the last 10 years

Year	Rods (%C&R)	Nets (%C&R)	Total	10 year average
2009	1104 (49%)	136 (10%)	1240	1588
2010	850 (44%)	303 (0%)	1153	1408
2011	515 (46%)	94 (0%)	609	1310
2012	782 (55%)	163 (1%)	945	1142
2013	671 (62%)	170 (8%)	841	1038
2014	1119 (87%)	132 (8%)	1251	1026
2015	1063 (80%)	283 (4%)	1346	1044
2016	866 (78%)	348 (40%)	1214	1089
2017	768 (83%)	214 (12%)	982	1076
2018	479 (78%)	111 (26%)	590	1017

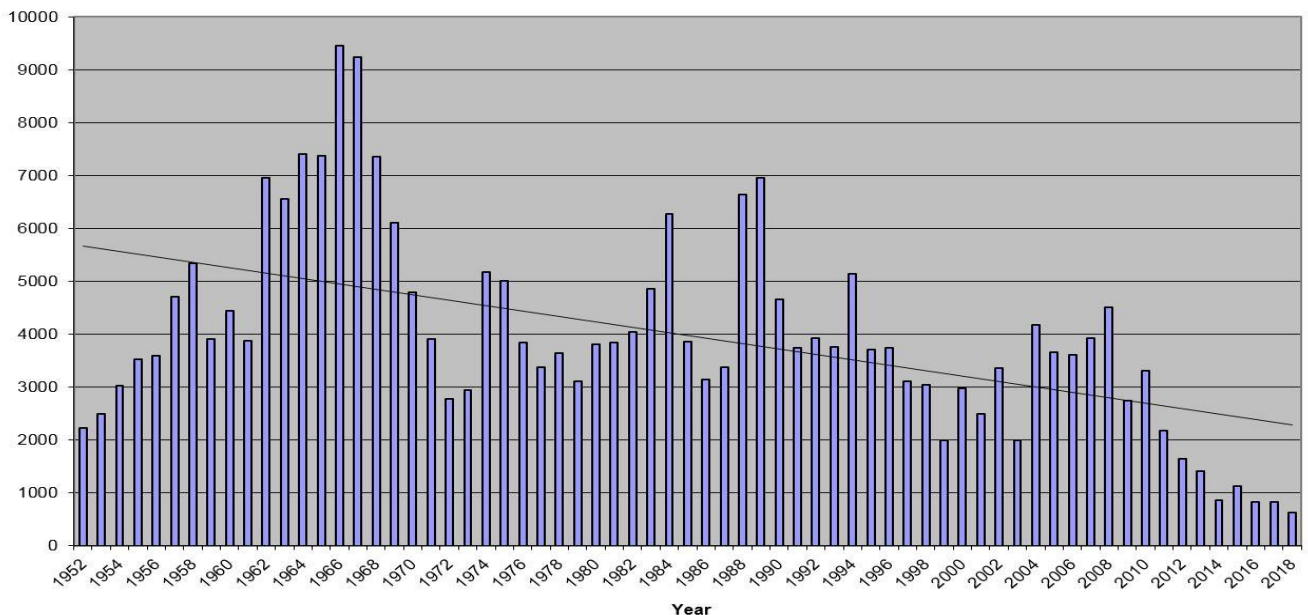
Appendix 5: Nith Salmon and Sea Trout Catches - Catch Statistics Returns 1952-2018

Total Salmon and grilse caught all Methods 1952 - 2018

Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 ye av.
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

Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 ye av.
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
2016	0	818	818	2248
2017	116	712	828	1939
2018	97	533	630	1551

Total Salmon and Grilse Caught by all Methods 1952 - 2018

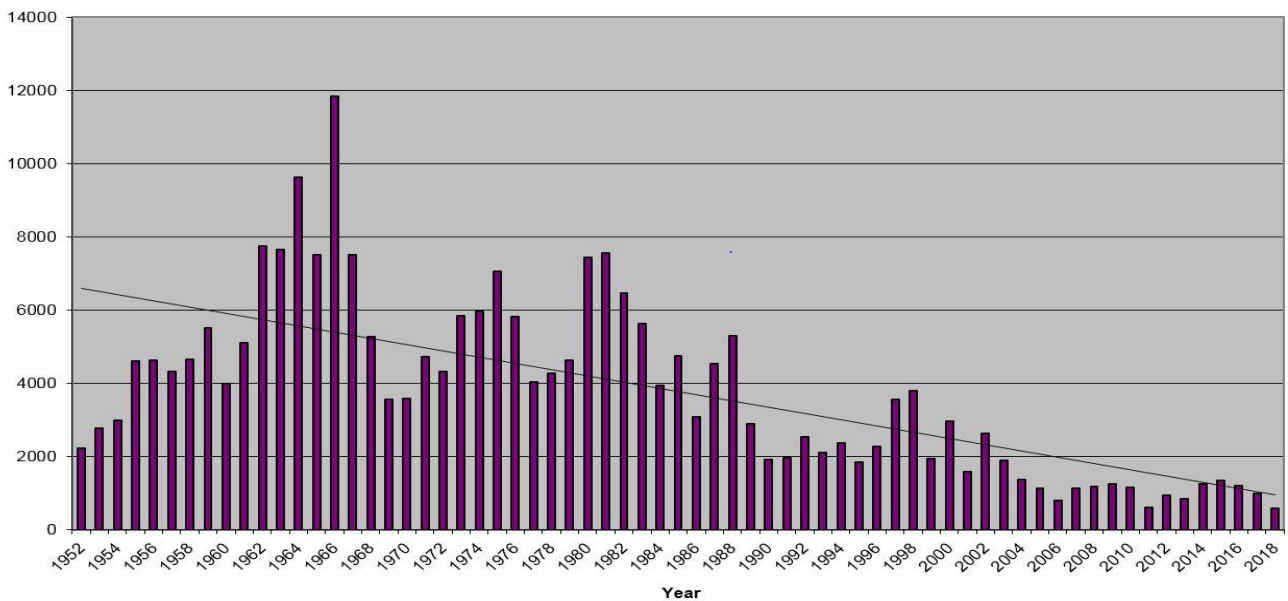


Total Sea Trout caught 1952 - 2018

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
1984	3945	-	3945	5686

Year	Retained	Returned	Total	10 year average
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
2016	402	812	1214	1090
2017	318	664	982	1076
2018	185	405	590	1017

Total Sea Trout Caught by all Methods 1952 - 2018



NITH DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD CONSERVATION POLICY 2018

<p>Statutory Regulations</p> <p>Fishing seasons Rod and Line 25th February - 30th November Net 25th February – 9th September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No fishing for salmon or sea trout on Sundays by rod and line No fishing for salmon or sea trout from 6pm Friday to 6am Monday by net No salmon to be taken till 1st April <p>It is illegal to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberately attempt to foul hook fish or to take fish which have been foul hooked i.e. those not hooked in the mouth. Kill kelts, smolts or parr. Take unclean or unseasonable fish being baggots, highly coloured, black or red fish and fish about to or in the process of spawning. Sell salmon or sea trout which have been caught with rod & line. Use natural shrimps or prawns on any part of the river upstream of the Kingholm Gates at the bottom end (tidal area) of the Dumfries Town Fishings. Fish for any fish without written permission (or permit) from the beat’s owner or his representative. Fish with any form of salmon roe. Fish with a “fixed line.” Use gaffs, tailers or knotted mesh nets. <p>All fish caught must be recorded with the beat proprietor with the exception of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kelts, i.e. fish that have spawned. During spring only, sexually mature fish that have not yet spawned. <p>Breach of any of the above could lead to criminal prosecution, seizure of fishing equipment and vehicles.</p>	<p>Nith Voluntary Regulations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Board notes the existing voluntary catch and release policy for salmon from 1st April to 31st May. The Board recommends total catch and release of salmon for the whole river system. However, if salmon are to be taken, a maximum of 2 salmon per person per season be taken with a view to achieving in excess of 80% catch and release for the river system. All sea trout under 10” and over 3 lb must be returned. Sea trout retained should be limited to no more than 1 Sea Trout in any day. Barbless hooks be used when the intention is to Catch & Release. Foul hooked fish i.e. those not hooked in the mouth, must be returned to water. Ripe or darkly coloured fish should be returned to the water. If in doubt, RETURN it! Fish being returned to the water should not be handled by the tail or gills and should be released as quickly as possible. Remove the hook with forceps and return the fish facing upstream and gently support it until it swims away. Fish being retained should be killed as quickly as possible using a priest or appropriate instrument. <p>General Rules</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Respect boundaries between adjoining beats. Anglers must show permits, tackle and catch to Bailiffs, Police Officers or other anglers if requested. Anglers under 12 years of age should be accompanied by an adult when fishing. <p>Methods & Equipment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use sweep nets, ground bait or rod rests. Do not fish from trees, bridges, etc. or use assistance from anyone in such a position. The maximum permitted line breaking strain for all types of fishing should be 15lbs. 	<p>Spinning and Bait fishing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Bait/spinner must be kept moving through the water at all times. The maximum permitted hook size for bait fishing will be No 4. <p>Fly Fishing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fly hooks or tubes should be properly dressed with a coloured body and a reasonable quantity of hair/fur/feather in proportion to the hook size. Anglers should not use weights or lead-core lines of any kind when fishing with the fly. No retrieve, other than slow hand-lining should be made until the cast has been fished out. <p>General Conduct</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Always fish in a sporting manner. Give consideration to anglers on the opposite bank. Fish down through pools in rotation, taking at least one full step between casts. Avoid unnecessary wading or any avoidable disturbance to the water. Always respect the environment, wildlife, other anglers and members of the public. Do not park vehicles so that they obstruct gateways or cause a hazard on the roadway. Remove waste nylon and personal litter from the river banks and parking places. Follow the Country Code. Always respect farm animals and crops. Do not light fires or allow dogs to roam free. Always be conscious of and alert to hazards and look after your own safety and the safety of other anglers. <p>Report strange goings-on immediately to: River Enforcement Staff - 07785 743663 Police – 101</p>
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Catch and Release Guidelines can be found on the River Nith website www.river-nith.com/conservation-policy

Clerks Notes on the Accounts
01.12.17 – 30.11.18

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Turnover

Assessments Receivable

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

Consultancy Income

This arises from the Board's activities in connection with supplying environmental audit reports to contractors involved in wind farm, micro hydro and civil engineering projects that might have an impact on the Fishery, derived from electro fishing and other monitoring data collected by the Board. Consultancy Income rose substantially during the course of the year.

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 - £65,000).

Other operating income

Bank Interest

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

Overheads

Wages & Salaries

The Board at the close of the financial year employed a Fishery Director and a Head Bailiff. The Board had employed for part of the financial year a part time administrative assistant.

Grant to NCFT

The Board at the inception of the formation of the Trust agreed to support the formation and running costs of NCFT.

Staff Pensions Costs

These are linked to salaries paid by the Board paying a percentage of salary paid to the employees The Board contributes pension contribution of 7.5% of salary paid to employees who have pension plans. The Board complies with Government requirements to put in place a retirement pension scheme for its employees. Both employees have declined to take up the statutory pension scheme, but the Board will continue to provide access to the scheme for existing employees and new future employees .

Insurance

Premia increased in line with industry increases.

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.

Clothing Allowance

Payments for staff work and health and safety clothing.

Hire of Equipment

Hire of quad bike required for various projects in respect of which Consultancy Income is engathered.

Accommodation & Subsistence

Attendance of staff at Bailiffs and other Fishery related Conferences and meetings.

Promotional and Public Relations Expenses

For website design update and hosting

General Expenses

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

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.

Current Assets

Debtors this year relates to outstanding consultancy income invoices at close of books and some assessments remaining outstanding, one of which relates to withdrawal of the right to continue with netting and killing of salmon as a consequence of the Scottish Government's decision to ban the netting of salmon during the course of the year.

Accrued Income from the previous year 2017 related to the Nith Pilot Project - Restoration of the Upper Nith System overseen by the Fishery Director on behalf of SEPA, and contractor Ove Arup's invoice and SEPA invoice 246 of £52,944.49 which were issued prior to the year end, being essentially put through as opposing entries through both Accrued Income and Trade Creditors to account for them. This was reversed this year when the amounts were transferred to settle the invoice. This explains why Trade Creditors and Accrued Income were high last year. There were no such transactions in the current year.

Last The substantial difference from last year related to

Current Liabilities

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

Trade Creditors – See explanation given for Accrued Income above

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Balance Sheet
as at 30th November 2018

	2018		2017	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Tenant's Improvements		1,456		1,618
Nightsights		3,093		3,865
Plant & Machinery		6,326		5,353
Motor Vehicles		28,032		29,934
		<u>38,907</u>		<u>40,770</u>
Current Assets				
Stocks and work-in-progress		-	34,747	
Debtors	82,812		38,363	
Accrued income		-	52,944	
Prepayments	3,458		3,404	
Clydesdale Cashflow Account	5,677		2,591	
Clydesdale Cash Management Account	25		25	
Scottish Building Society Scotplus Account	188,371		141,890	
Scottish Building Society - SEPA funds	11,505		51,169	
Scottish Building Society Vehicle Account	12,249		6,226	
		<u>304,097</u>	<u>331,359</u>	
Current Liabilities				
Trade creditors	12,051		104,277	
Corporation Tax	222		258	
Accruals	2,200		2,130	
		<u>14,473</u>	<u>106,665</u>	
Net Current assets		289,624		224,694
Net assets		<u>328,531</u>		<u>265,464</u>
Income and expenditure account		<u>328,531</u>		<u>265,464</u>
Members' funds		<u>328,531</u>		<u>265,464</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
Turnover		
Assessments receivable	183,653	183,653
Payments from NCF Trust	-	955
Consultancy income	143,127	96,762
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	326,780	281,370
Less: Refund of dues	(64,995)	(64,995)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	261,785	216,375
Other operating income		
Bank interest	1,168	1,336
Gain on sale of fixed assets	-	5,669
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income	262,953	223,380

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 30th November 2018

	2018	2017
£	£	£
brought forward	262,953	223,380
Overheads		
Wages and salaries	105,521	97,576
Grant to NCF Trust	37,139	35,000
Staff pension costs	5,130	4,565
Staff training	125	1,289
Insurance	5,381	5,246
Repairs and maintenance	2,683	2,744
Clothing allowance	1,528	2,011
Printing, postage and stationery	499	1,449
Telephone and internet	2,475	2,293
Hire of equipment	2,800	3,600
Motor expenses	10,151	10,369
Accommodation and subsistence	993	1,316
Promotional & public relations expenses	384	504
Legal and professional	-	5,578
Clerk's fee to Walker & Sharpe	9,900	9,660
Audit fees	2,266	2,160
Bank charges	291	279
Bad debts	3,218	-
General expenses	2,152	2,905
Subscriptions	2,075	2,144
Depreciation	4,953	12,907
	<u>(199,664)</u>	<u>(203,595)</u>
Surplus before tax	63,289	19,785
Taxation	(222)	(258)
Surplus for the year	63,067	19,527
Retained profit brought forward	265,464	245,937
Retained profit carried forward	328,531	265,464

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2018

£ £

Tenant's Improvements

Opening Balance		1,618
Less: Depreciation for year @ 10%		162
Closing Balance		<u>1,456</u>

Nightsights

Opening Balance		3,865
Less: Depreciation for year @ 20%		772
Closing Balance		<u>3,093</u>

Plant & Machinery

Opening Balance		5,353
Additions		
Aquantic Logie Fish Counters	3,090	
		<u>3,090</u>
		8,443
Less: Depreciation for year @ 25%		2,117
Closing Balance		<u>6,326</u>

The Nith District Salmon Fishery Board

Fixed Asset Schedule
for the year ended 30th November 2018

	£	£
<u>Motor Vehicles</u>		
Landrover ST64 CVH - balance b/f	7,606	
Depreciation for year @ 25%	1,901	
	<hr/>	5,705
Toyota Hilux SJ66 AOF - balance b/f	22,327	
Written off during year	22,327	
	<hr/>	-
Toyota Hilux BT67 XXU - purchased during year	29,770	
Depreciation for year @25%	7,443	
	<hr/>	22,327
Closing book value		<hr/> <hr/> 28,032