

MINUTES of THE MEETING of THE RIVER DEVERON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
being a Meeting open to the public in terms of the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013
held at THE CASTLE HOTEL, HUNTLY on Thursday 5th July 2018 at 12 noon.
This meeting was held in conjunction with that of the TRUSTEES of THE DEVERON, BOGIE & ISLA RIVERS
CHARITABLE TRUST. The minutes cover both organisations.

At the outset the Chairman explained that in terms of the 2013 Act, all Meetings require to be open to the public. An invitation to the public was published on the Board's website along with a copy of the proposed Agenda. Any member of the public who wished to attend was required to inform the Clerk.

Andrew Allwood and **Calvert McKibbin** attended as members of the public.

Present: **Malcolm Hay** (B & T), **A Gordon Morison** (B), **Matthew Marsden** (B), **Mrs J Player** (B), **Gordon Christie** (proxy for David Borthwick, Huntly Angling Association), **Rory Cooper** (B & T) (All Upper Proprietors), **Frank Henderson** (B & T) (Turriff Angling Association & Turriff Community), **Richard Breakell** (B) (Salmon Anglers), **Jim Cruickshank** (T) **Richie Miller** (B and representative of DBI Trust)
In attendance- **Mrs S Roebuck** (Clerk to Board and Administrator of DBI Trust);
Marcus Walters (DBI Trust)
{ B = Board member; T = Trustee or representative }

Chairman: Malcolm Hay

Prior to the commencement of the formal meeting, Dr Al Reeve and Karen Muller introduced themselves to Board and Trust members and described in brief their successes to date in dealing with invasive non-native species (primarily American mink and giant hogweed) throughout the catchment.

Apologies for Absence: Neil Stephen (Ghillies' Rep – DBI Trust), Robert Shields (B&T)

Minutes of Meetings on 5th April 2018 A draft of the Minutes of the Meeting had been sent to all Members of the Board and Trust and unanimously approved by those who had attended. The minutes have been published on the Board/Trust's website (www.deveron.org) and signed by the Chairman of the Meeting.

Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 Mr Hay reported that there were no changes noted to Board Members Financial Interests since 5th April 2018 as applicable to the Board. No complaints against the Board had been received by the Clerk since the last meeting.

Report by Mr Miller and Mr Walters on DBI Trust work Mr Miller and Mr Walters had prepared a written report on the work of the Trust since the last Board Meeting and this was handed out (available on request). Both members went over the salient points:

- Water Quality - Mr Walters has been trying to get a sampling strategy on an annual basis to which James Hutton Institute (JHI) has agreed to do at a reduced fee. Mr Walters reported that JHI proposed they would have 3 sites and would sample them 3 times a year.
- Stirling Student Project – a project will be starting in the Autumn involving invertebrate sampling and sediment deposition throughout the catchment.
- Piscivorous Bird Licence – as part of the smolt tracking project, a section between the Bridge of Marnoch and Muiresk was intensively scared at least twice a day during April & May. Mr Walters explained that the licence to shoot 20 Goosanders next year is based on 15% of the previous year's count

(17 Goosanders were removed in 2017-18). A graph was produced to show how many birds were seen in total per day between the beginning of April to the end of May for the section between Bridge of Marnoch and Muiresk as result of the scaring effort.

- Smolt Monitoring – this year has seen the most smolts caught since 2014 and a table was produced showing the number of smolts handled each year from 2014 – 2018. 100 smolts were tagged this year and the Trust will repeat the work done over the last 2 years as well as examine survival rates in the bird scaring section. However, results are likely to be affected by the lack of movement of smolts in unusually low water levels. A graph was produced to show the survival percentage of smolts passing various points in the river over the last 3 years.
- Missing Salmon Project - Mr Hay suggested the Board/Trust should give full support to this important project and handed out booklets outlining the ambitious scope of the proposals. The project is being backed by the Government and most organisations with an interest in migratory fish stocks. The Project will deliver 50 smolt tags to the Deveron and it was unanimously agreed that the Board/Trust would underwrite a further 50 and seek to raise external funding for these from supporters.
- Trout Weekend– Mr Miller thanked Frank Henderson for organising the event and also thanked Al Reeve and Karen Muller for helping out.
- Fishery Protection – a report of illegal fishing on The Castle water had been received but no-one was seen when the bailiff patrolled the area. The Spey boat had visited the coastline at the mouth of the river but found no evidence of any illegal netting.
- River Champion Award - Mr Miller congratulated Mr Robert McConnell (Honorary Membership Secretary of the Trust) on the award given to him by the River Restoration Centre for all his efforts and contributions.

Update on Financial Matters

Mrs Roebuck circulated draft statutory accounts for both The Board and the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2018. A couple of text changes were requested, and subject to those, both sets of accounts were unanimously approved. Mrs Roebuck was asked to arrange for the accounts to be signed.

The valuation of the Improvement Fund stood at £124,392.12.

Quarterly accounts to 30 June for both Board and Trust will be issued to all Members shortly.

Budget & Fix Assessment

A draft budget was circulated for the Board. There was a general discussion on the levy rate in view of the budget figures. The Board unanimously approved a rate of 42p in the £, matching the previous year's rate which had taken into account the recent Revaluation. Mrs Roebuck was asked to issue the notices to Proprietors.

The budget for the Trust was also circulated. Mrs Roebuck reported that the Trust will likely need to register for VAT this year, as the VAT taxable turnover is very nearly at the threshold.

Health & Safety	Mr Miller reported that Alan Reeve and Karen Muller have completed first aid training and are looking into the possibility of getting canoe training to remove hogweed plants in areas difficult to access from the bank.
AOCB – Fishing programme	Mr Hay expressed concern at the lack of young people taking an interest in the river and suggested instigating a fishing programme for youngsters as part of a wider plan to promote interest in the river and the often ground breaking and innovative work undertaken by the Trust. Mr Miller undertook to assess what additional part time staffing might be required to achieve this.
AOCB – Statement on Temperature	Due to the recent high temperatures and the likelihood of a prolonged period without rain, the Board felt that guidance and advice should be given to anglers on best practice for fishing in such abnormal conditions. It was agreed that anglers be encouraged to avoid fishing during the hottest part of the day and that the most suitable times would be from late evening to early morning. If extreme conditions were to persist, the Board may have to consider closing the river. Mr Hay and Mr Miller undertook to research what, if any, government backing would be required for this. However, it was agreed that issuing guidance would be all that is necessary for the time being.
AOCB – Next meeting:	The next Board/Trust meeting will be held on Thursday 13 th September 2018, at The Castle Hotel at 3.30pm, followed by the Annual Proprietors Meeting and joint Board and Trust AGM at 5pm.
Meeting closed at 2.30pm	Mr Hay thanked everyone for attending.