

MINUTES of 2021 AGM
THE DEVERON, BOGIE and ISLA RIVERS CHARITABLE TRUST
OPEN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
at the BANFF SPRINGS HOTEL, BANFF on Thursday, 9th SEPTEMBER 2021, 5pm
Following the RDDSBF Annual Meeting

- Present:** **Trust Officers:** J Cruickshank, A Allwood, R Cooper, F Henderson.
In attendance: R Miller (River Director); M Walters (River Operations Manager), Mrs S Roebuck (administrator); Board Members of The River Deveron District Salmon Fishery Board; proprietors and members of the public
- Apologies for Absence:** R Shields, D Borthwick
- Chairman:** Mr Cruickshank welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Minutes of last Annual Meeting:** Having circulated the minutes in advance for the last meeting held on 10th September 2020, Mr Cruickshank proposed that they be taken as read and this was unanimously approved.
- Financial Report & Presentation of Accounts:** Mr Cruickshank presented the accounts to the meeting and pointed out that an extract of the figures had been included in the Annual Report which had been circulated in advance to all Proprietors and other interested parties. The Accounts had been approved by all Trustees.
- Mr Cruickshank expressed that to emerge without a loss is a remarkable achievement and it is a remarkable tribute to the staff and the team on the trust. Mr Cruickshank wanted to record the efforts that the team have put in over the past 12 months. He also added that the Trust recorded a profit on paper but operated a trading loss. Mr Cruickshank felt this is within the margins of expectations due to the impacts of COVID-19.
- Mr Cruickshank welcomed any questions. None were forthcoming.
- Re-election of Officers/Chairman:** R Shields, F Henderson, J Cruickshank, D Borthwick and R Cooper, being eligible put themselves forward for re-election. Mr Cruickshank proposed that they be re-elected en bloc. This was approved and carried.
- J Cruickshank and R Cooper put themselves forward for re-election of Chairman and vice Chairman. The was unanimously approved.
- Re-election of Accountant:** Mr Cruickshank proposed that Cathedral Accountancy be re-elected as Accountant for the ensuing year. This was approved.
- Meeting closed** At 5.30pm to be followed by a presentation from Mr Marcus Walters, River Operations Manager of the Deveron, Bogie, and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust.

**Presentation by Mr
Marcus Walters**

Mr Walters gave a presentation on the activities completed over the past year and discussed plans for future of the Trust.

Mr Walters announced that the Scottish Government has funded the capital costs for a combined fish counter and Pit Tag Array to go into the river. This is a sonar counter that would identify fish as they migrate into the Deveron. This is a significant investment by the Scottish Government and is to be welcomed. The Deveron could potentially become an indicator river which will be used by Scottish Government or NASCO when they are assessing the status of salmon. The Atlantic Salmon Trust will also hopefully fund some of the running costs. There is going to be a significant amount of work in running this equipment and the interpretation of data.

Mr Walters welcomed any questions:

Mr Breakell asked about the distance of detecting fish when using Pit tags. Mr Walters explained that the distance is from $\frac{3}{4}$ metre to a metre. There are adaptations that could be made to the pit tag arrays to make it work in hard flows which will form part of the trials. This however is one of the limitations and that in big flood flows some fish might be missed. Therefore, for the time being the two arrays are being planned to be put in the top and middle of the river

Mr Cheyne asked about possible solutions to encourage members of the public to stop littering the river.

Mr Walters explained that the Trust would normally do presentations in school to inform and educate kids. This year due to covid limitations this has not been possible. The Trust also uses their social media accounts to promote the river and to educate members of the public.

Mr Hay enquired about the time and cost of the interpretation of the counter data and whether this cost is also being covered by the Scottish Government. Mr Miller explained that the government investment through Marine Scotland is £230,000. This fund is for the counter equipment and the pit tagging array. The Atlantic Salmon Trust have expressed that they would fund 50% the running costs for the first three years, but this is yet to be confirmed.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Marnoch expressed that after studying the data of the state of salmon fishing in Scotland, it shows 20 years of steady decline and questioned if there is time remaining solely for salmon science and salmon research before it is too late and that other direct forms of intervention should be considered. Lord Marnoch suggested that the scientific principle of biodiversity had been taken too far and that the time had come to follow the Ranga model and import parr or smolts from fish farms and put them in our rivers. There was a general discussion on the above with members expressing different opinions. Mr Cruickshank expressed that by doing the research and collaborating with the AST the Trust can come up with better evidence and understand why there is a poorer rate of returning fish.

End of talk and meeting Meeting closed at 6:30pm.