

Minutes of Directors Meeting, Torlundy 11th March 2011

Present

Viv de Fresnes (VdF) Chairman

Grace Henderson (GH) Vice-chairman

Sandy Grierson (SG) Treasurer

Simon Boulton (SB)

Donnie MacBeth (DM)

Diane Baum (DB)

Lucy Smith (LS)

Apologies

Minutes from Previous meeting

GH asked if we had had any response from our letters to RAFTS and RLA. VdF confirmed we hadn't had any response from either.

The issue of finding a new director was brought up, one final suggestion was made.
VdF to talk to BC about approaching possible candidates about becoming a director.

Minutes accepted by SG, seconded by GH.

Biologists Report.

See attached

FMP

SG asked if the Crown Estate funding which we received in previous years was likely to be renewed. DB replied she wasn't sure so would contact Callum Sinclair from RAFTS to find out.

DB to contact CS from RAFTS about the future of Crown Estate funding

RAFTS-TWG replacement

VdF asked if plankton sampling would continue as part of the new RAFTS aquaculture bid. DB replied that no lice had been found in samples collected by LFT so far (although not all samples had been analysed) and results from Shieldaig suggested lice are only detectable in the plankton when they are at high densities. Plankton trawls will be carried out to validate the lice dispersion model, but

west coast biologists have decided to concentrate on seine netting within the Rafts project as we want to know where lice are settling on fish, not just where high densities of lice are.

Shiel project

VdF asked if issues with the exact timing of the April gill netting had been resolved to minimise the impact on reconditioned kelts or smolts. DB said we had spoken to Gordon Shankland and agreed that very early April would be the best time.

Biosecurity

VdF asked if the Trusts biosecurity work was likely to extend into tackling Rhododendron. DB said that due to the difficulty of getting rid of rhodies, and the fact they were so widespread throughout Lochaber that we didn't feel we could make an impression on it. She continued that Forestry Commission were tackling rhodies as part of their works. VdF asked if the Trust would be running a training course, similar to the one last year, on how best to tackle knotweed. GH stated there was a day of "how to deal with rhodies" talk at Onich Hotel the following Tuesday, and that she would pass on the details. DB stated it was the sort of event that the Trust could run if there was enough interest.

DmB raised the issue of rainbow trout in a burn near Loch Laggan, DB said we would look into it. DmB suggested some contacts for info on fish in Laggan.

Treasurers Report

SG stated the budget was ok, and there was still quite a lot of money still to come in for 2010-11. He predicted we should be £5-6k in profit by the end of the financial year. SG stated that with the inevitable government cuts coming the Trust should be looking to companies such as Marine Harvest for funding. DB replied that specific companies were good funders for specific projects related to the systems that that company affected.

AOB

No other business

Date of next meeting

The next AGM & directors meeting will be on June 24th 2011, AGM at 10am, directors meeting at 11am, at Torlundy Training Office.

LFT Directors meeting
Torlundy, 11th March 2011
Biologist's report

Salmon in the Classroom

Currently in the middle of this year's project with ten schools participating. Since eggs were not available from the River Lochy Association, we have had to use trout eggs for seven of the schools this year. These will be stocked into the trout ponds at Torlundy. Ardtornish and Lochshiel Estate have kindly provided salmon eggs for three schools. This is the second year of a three year grant from SNH.

RAFTS Aquaculture project

RAFTS have secured one year's funding from Scottish Government for aquaculture projects on the west coast. Half of the £200 000 will be spent employing two staff. Their job descriptions are yet to be agreed on, but producing locational guidance for planners should make up most of their work plan. There will also be money for continuing post-smolt lice sampling. This is likely to amount to approximately £9 000 for the LFT. Genetic sampling will also be carried out, but the details are still to be determined.

Smolt tracking

We will be continuing with the smolt tagging work in Loch Linnhe and Loch Eil begun last year. In collaboration with MSS, we will be tagging and tracking 50 salmon and 50 sea trout smolts during their first few months at sea. This year's tracking will be guided by the preliminary results of the MSS lice dispersion model currently in development.

Shiel Project

We have completed the electrofishing and snorkel survey part of the study and completed the October gill net sampling. This year we will repeat the gill netting in April and June and attempt to radiotrack trout caught at the Glenfinnan cages. An interim report has been sent to TWG and the Shiel Sub-board.

Hurich Habitat Survey

Forestry Commission have asked us to carry out a river habitat study in Glen Hurich to allow the 2006 LFT report to be updated. The fieldwork is underway and a report will be prepared in collaboration with FC this summer.

Lochy PIT tagging

The River Lochy Association have pulled out of the PIT tagging study. No tagging will occur this year, but we will continue to download the Mucomir decoder to record returning adults from previous tagging work.

Future Work

Biosecurity

RAFTS have approached SEPA to fund future non-native plant control. This will allow us to provide volunteers last year with chemicals and carry out some spraying ourselves.

Fishery Management Plan Projects

RAFTS are negotiating with Scottish Government for continuation of the FMP project grants that we have received in the past three years. Nothing has been confirmed yet, but if successful only a single year's funding is likely at present.

Freshwater pearl mussels

SNH are considering an EU Life bid to restore pearl mussel populations. There are three Special Areas of Conservation for mussels in Lochaber and we have been invited to an initial meeting to discuss the bid at the end of the month.

Grigadale electrofishing

To monitor the impact of the fish pass installed on the Allt Grigadale, SNH are paying for electrofishing on the upper Grigadale this August.

Kingairloch Hydro monitoring

SSE are committed to post-construction monitoring of the Kingairloch Hydro scheme. It is hoped SSE will contract us to carry out this electrofishing, gill netting and invertebrate sampling this summer.

Pattach electrofishing

Salmon have been found in the River Pattach above the Laggan Dam. It is thought that they are Spey fish that have come through the Alcan tunnel that links the catchments. It has been recommended that Alcan carry out electrofishing to look at the distribution and density of salmon in tributaries of Loch Laggan.

High School Project

We are preparing a proposal for a project looking at river ecosystems and the impact of hydro schemes aimed at secondary school pupils.

River Leven interpretation signs

There have been ongoing problems on the Leven with disturbance to spawning areas particularly by canoeists. We cannot easily restrict access to the area, but are working with the Leven Angling Club to install signs near the area to alert people to its importance and fragility.

