**DEE (KIRKCUDBRIGHT) DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

Chairman Treasurer Clerk Legal Adviser

J.P.H. Ingall Mrs. P. Campbell Mr.T.Ewing Gavin Scott,

Airds House, 12a The Crofts, Wayside, Townhead Messrs. Gillespie,Gifford

Parton, Kirkcudbright. of Greenlaw , & Brown, Kirkcudbright Castle Douglas Castle Douglas

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**Minutes of the DDSFB AGM held on 08.04.2017, 10am-1pm at the Parton Village Hall.**

In attendance - Mr J Ingall (JI), Mrs P Campbell (PC), Mr T Ewing(TE), Mr R Agnew (RA) , Mr W Forbes (WF),Mr S Ferns (SF) Scottish Power, Mr J Ribbens (JR) & Mrs R McCleary (R Mc) from the Galloway Fisheries Trust, Mr I Lindsay (IL)Bailiff
 Apologies- Sir Malcolm Ross , Mr. R Ade. Mr. K Munday (Threave Estates/NTS), Mr.J Curtis QC Lairdmannoch Est./Tarff

1. **Chairman’s welcome & annual report.** JI welcomed all attendees. Opened the meeting by paying respects to former Chair & Clerk of the Board Mrs A Ingall who sadly passed away in December and acknowledging the efforts made on behalf of the board by Annie over the years, hoping that both her working ethos and her hopes of re-instating the Dee Salmon Fishery to its former heights be continued.

JI reported that there had been no complaints against the board and the minutes were in order.

Salmon numbers counted at Tongland had seen an overall improvement with some good spring fish and a healthy summer run. The season end had reflected the current national trend of very few late running fish making the tail end poor for angling and a concern for broodstock capture.

The negative impacts of windfarm construction in the Glenkens and the Kendoon-Tongland power spur as well as the ongoing Gas pipeline construction would have to be monitored and assessed with input and advice from the Galloway Fisheries Trust (GFT).

The proposed legislative changes (FMO) by the Scottish Government had been abandoned and at present DSFBs would remain instead of the proposed FMOs. The Board would have to keep up its responsibilities and duties to ensure our long term survival. This change of direction allows the Board to re-engage fully with its most pressing issues – The impacts of being a Heavily Modified Water Body, Forestry Impacts and Agricultural pollution impacts. These issues now have a chance to be looked at in a new light and with the potential for a new approach.

RAFTS & the ASFB had now become a single body Fisheries Management Scotland.

The Board would now be required to make a Salmon Plan which needed to be signed off by the Scottish Government and could be used as a way of highlighting negative impacts and issues affecting the fishery.

There was a glimmer of hope with the potential for a ban on Coastal netting.

1. **Treasurers Report-** PC reported that the accounts were in order and that there were no ongoing issues other than that one old outstanding assessment payment for the Banks of Dee was being written off as bad debt. IL Asked if it was possible to sue for outstanding debt but it was deemed such a small amount as to cost more than it was worth to pursue.

The rateable value was to remain at 80%.

1. **Tongland Fish Counter/Pass (GFT)-** R.Mc Rowan presented this year’s fish counter results for Tongland which showed a positive increase from last year’s numbers with a strong summer run accounting for over 60% of the year’s total of +/-763 Salmon. The largest 2 Salmon recorded by the counter were 112cm (around 27lbs).

Scottish Power had kindly funded new software for analysing the Vaki data giving clear data on run structure and timings to help quantify the impacts (positive or negative) of the ongoing extra water freshets from the needle valve at Tongland. This will allow better management of the timings and quantities of water released to ensure maximum benefit to migratory fish. In 2016 the stretch between Tongland Dam and Tongland Power Station received an extra 547 MegaGallons of water from SP through the compensation valve mainly in July, August and October and from now on SP kindly by their own volition are licenced by SEPA to include these freshets in their controlled Activities Regulations (CAR) licence.

SF stated that since they were having problems measuring freshet flow at the compensation valve and that they were required to measure it as part of their CAR licence, it may be the case that the larger valve would have to be used to provide compensation flow. He hopes that they can further refine and target the flows to integrate with the main turbine output at Tongland as this will be when most fish are encouraged to enter the system.

1. **Galloway Fisheries Trust** JROngoing refinements of the methodology for setting the Conservation Limits (CL) after their implementation in 2015 have been encouraged by the GFT. The GFT sit on a number of the Scottish Governments Technical Working Groups and have provided various data to improve the accuracy of these calculations including the Dee fish counter figures and scale data provided by anglers. Across the region this has resulted in several catchments improving from a grade 3 to a grade 2. Sadly the Dee will not in the short term be likely to move above a Grade 3. It is vital that all catch returns are made and that the Tarff fisheries make full reports of their catches of Salmon & Sea Trout to Marine Scotland.

The GFT will be focusing on assessing and monitoring the impacts of the ongoing South West Scotland Renewables Connection Project on our water bodies as they fit overhead transmission lines and underground cables throughout the upper catchment. There have been some concerns regarding silt entering the upper Deugh.

They are also in similar discussions over the safe installation of the Kendoon to Tongland overhead line with baseline data being collected this summer.

The Cluden to Brighouse Bay Gas Pipeline will also be monitored and assessed as it progresses with 9 fish rescues already agreed on water courses which the pipe will be laid through.

The Carsfad Fish ladder is presently not in operation due to engineering works being undertaken by SP. All fish were removed from the ladder before drainage.

Invasive Non Native Species control was continued last season by the GFT staff and TE, sadly SEPA funding for this work has stopped but efforts would be made by the GFT and TE to ensure it continues to some degree.

A Fisheries Survey of The Black Water of Dee was undertaken and the report given to the DDSFB concluded that fish recovery on the lower Black Water was being hindered by poor forestry practice, lack of spawning substrates, fish access issues and poor water quality. Agreements to alleviate these issues are being sought with the hope of addressing them in the very near future.

The GFT are closely involved with the Galloway Glens Partnership Project delivering fishery related benefits through the Loch Ken Fisheries Survey, The Loch Grannoch Project, The Black water of Dee Restoration Project and the Tongland Smolt Project.

The board should put in a request to the Scottish Government to receive the rod catch data/fishing returns to ensure proprietor compliance.

GFT encourage all to use and follow their works through the facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Galloway-Fisheries-Trust>,

or Twitter <https://twitter.com/Galloway_FT>

and their web-site <http://www.gallowayfisheriestrust.org>

1. **Hatchery & Bailiffs Report-** TE Reported that the hatchery had focused its efforts on rescuing fish at the tail end of the season from Tongland Fish Pass to use as broodstock and had taken 11 fish (5 Hens/6 Cocks) from there as well as 2 Hens from rod and line at the Bridge of Dee. Ova survival was exceptionally high resulting in around 30,000 eyed ova being produced. These were primarily stocked in the lower Black Water of Dee between 3 sites in 12 man-made redds. Kells Primary were given 100 eyed ova to hatch as part of the Salmon in the Classroom project, they visited the hatchery in March to release their Alevins in the Dullarg Burn and will revisit in the summer to see how they have fared.

No reports of poaching on the Dee were made to the bailiff but in June TE had to assist the Fleet Board in tackling netting activities in the estuary, attendance by the local police saw an end to said activity.

24 bankside and instream patrols were made through the season. Angling effort was low, perhaps in response to the no kill legislation although several nice fish did fall to rods on the Bridge of Dee beats.

No further reports were made of boats or nets in the estuary so hopefully the message that they will not be tolerated has got about.

TE requests that any suspicious activity be reported immediately to the Bailiffs.

It was again noted that good numbers of fish are spawning at the loop pool Bridge of Dee and that monitoring of this site should continue.

1. **A.O.B.-**  .

TE will monitor record, report and respond where necessary to any INNS.

South West District Salmon Fishery Boards will continue to meet to ensure broad agreement on issues relating to local rivers.

IL requested a continued subscription to the IFM

TE will continue to carry out Riverfly Surveys and submit data to the GFT.

TE Suggested that there was an ongoing organic pollution issue in many of the feeder streams and that he would survey and report to SEPA where necessary.

TE put forward the notion of a Facebook page to try and increase interest and involvement particularly with the younger generation of anglers.

A new E-mail address would be created for the board.

SP agreed that siltation and debris build up in the ladders would be addressed.

Thanks were given to the GFT for all their hard work.

The date of the next meeting is still to be agreed.

TE asked that the Memory of Mrs. Annie Ingall and Mrs Beryl Moultrie who both sadly passed in 2016 be minuted. The board would like to thank the Ingalls for their dedication to the care of the fishery, that hopefully in time Annie and Beryl’s dreams of returning fish to the numerous headwaters will be realised and that we as a board will carry on with that ethos of hope and determination to save the Dee Salmon.