**River Luce District Salmon Fishery Board**

**Chairman’s Report**

Firstly, I must apologise that this report and the AGM are both considerably later than intended. There are a variety of reasons for this mostly unconnected with the river, and not least of which is that we are currently without a Clerk to the Board. This will be resolved as soon as possible.

It has been a very interesting river year, and at the last meeting, I fully expected not to have to write a Chairman’s report, because the Scottish Government were showing every intention of destroying the River Board system, and centralising or grouping rivers together. I would maintain that would not have been in the interest of either the River Luce, or of the other rivers in the grouping.

Last year, the river was caught up in the computerised grading system for the conservation of salmon Stocks. Like many theoretical calculations the government computer assessed the Luce on a national average for catch statistics, and as a result did not take account of the relatively light angling effort, and therefore returns from the Luce catchment. As a result, one of the more healthy rivers was indicated as having a severe threat to migratory fish stocks, and duly marked as a grade three river with compulsory catch and release. This error in calculations impacted further on the fishing on the river. I am pleased to say that the grading has been reassessed, and the Luce is now a grade 2 river. This encourages catch and release, and the hope is that anglers will respect this and ultimately we will achieve a grade 1 status.

I would like to finish my report with a note of thanks to our recently departed Clerk, David Greer, and to Martin Loch for the Bailiff help, and organisation. I would also like to record my thanks to the Galloway Fisheries Trust who provide so much valuable assistance in the conservation management of the river.