



RIVER DOON DISTRICT **SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

Clerk to the Board: Iain K Clark, LLB (Hons), Dip LP, NP
c/o Gilson Gray LLP, 160 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2HQ
Direct: +44 (0)141 530 2025 Mobile: +44 (0)7908 022 304
Email: RiverDoonDSFB@gilsongray.co.uk
Website: www.doonfishing.co.uk

DRAFT MINUTES

of

Meeting of River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board

Thursday 22 February 2024 at 4pm,

Western House Hotel, 66 Craigie Road, AYR KA8 0HA

1. **Persons Present**

<i>Alan Macdonald (“AM”)</i>	<i>Doonside Estate (Chair)</i>
<i>Iain K Clark (“IKC”)</i>	<i>Gilson Gray LLP (Clerk to the Board)</i>
<i>Stuart Brabbs (“SB”)</i>	<i>Ayrshire Rivers Trust</i>
<i>Struan Candlish (“SC”)</i>	<i>Ayrshire Rivers Trust</i>
<i>Mark Colman (“MC”)</i>	<i>Smithston Fishings Club, Board Member</i>
<i>David Cosh (“DC”)</i>	<i>Doonfoot Fishings, Board Member</i>
<i>Martin Donachy (“MD”)</i>	<i>Woodlands, Board Member</i>
<i>Stuart Dorward (“SD”)</i>	<i>Board Member (Salmon Fishers’ Representative)</i>
<i>Peter Kennerley (“PK”)</i>	<i>Auchendrane House, Board Member</i>

2. **Apologies**

<i>Lawrence Dalgleish (“LD”)</i>	<i>Blackhill, Rozelle, Board Member</i>
<i>Carlos Van Heddegem (“CVD”)</i>	<i>Holms Fishing, Board Member</i>

3. **Declaration of Members’ Interests**

In accordance with the Board’s good governance obligations, the Board has agreed a Meetings Protocol and Policy on Members Interests. All Board Members have signed a Declaration and the Board maintains a Register of Relevant Interests, pursuant to *Section 46E of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”)*. All Board Members present were invited to declare new/amend existing interests. No such interests were declared or amended.

In addition, the Clerk notified those present of the requirements of the Meetings Protocol. It was agreed that those present would each be noted as representing the interests of their Beat or organisation; and any other additional relevant financial interest should be declared under the *2003 Act*.

No additional interests were declared.

4. **Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting**

With one clarification from MC (clarifying that the Monkwood Beat had not yet been sold), the Minutes were unanimously approved.

5. **Matters Arising from Previous Meeting**

None

6. **Report from Ayrshire Rivers Trust (“ART”)**

SB presented a Report (attached)

Key highlights:

- Reported on the Loch Doon eDNA Surveys
- Drumgrange & Keirs have now adopted mandatory Catch & Release throughout the season, which the Board was very encouraged to hear. ART have been providing some assistance to stabilise the banks and are trying to get the Club Members to engage in Himalayan Balsam pulling
- Pollution Incident from North Kyle Wind Farm – was highlighted to SEPA by ART and took them a week to respond. Eventually the response came from Dumfries, as they are so under-resourced in Ayrshire. When SEPA did respond, they were brilliant and took a very strong tone with Jones Brothers. SEPA are to push for them to take on an environmental agreement. ART will continue to monitor and liaise with the Clerk as appropriate
- Fencing has been a bit slow with winter weather
- Smolt to adult supplementation - River Dee (Aberdeenshire) is working with Stirling University and Scottish Government to investigate. They won't license unless done the research already.
- INNS control – recommending some further Japanese Knotweed control to eradicate + Himalyan Balsam bashing
- Future Fencing and Tree Planting – got 4,000 trees – collecting and propogating – tree stakes and guards + a bit labour
- SB to provide a list of proposed priorities for Project Work for consideration at the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors

7. **Report from Clerk to the Board (“IKC”)**

The Chair noted that the Clerk had being doing a great job and he had the thanks of the Board.

There was a general discussion about the volume of work, but the Board acknowledged the quality of the work produced (and the requirements of the role), and the amount of work undertaken.

The Board unanimously agreed to an increase in the Fees for the Clerk of the Board to £1,250 + VAT per quarter i.e. a total of £5,000 + VAT per annum, which price would be held for 2 years.

8. **Proposed Fishery Assessment Rates for 2024/2025**

The Board considered the Report presented by the Clerk and unanimously agreed that the Annual Fishery Assessment Rate for 2024/2025 would be fixed at 40p in the £. Fishery Assessment Notices would be issued in due course in April/May 2024.

9. **Annual Catch Returns**

The Clerk presented a Report. This would be discussed more fully at the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors and the Annual Public Meeting.

10. **River Doon River Watch Scheme**

(a) Report

The Clerk presented a Report from himself, the River Watch Coordinator and the River Watch Patrol Coordinator. There were 4 reported incidents in 2023 and the summary reports would be incorporated into the Annual Report. The Board noted it was very appreciative of the efforts of all concerned.

(b) Renewal of Contracts for River Patrol Coordinator and River Watch Coordinator

Subject to the agreement of the individuals concerned, the Board was delighted to agree the renewal of the Contracts on the same terms as previously. The Clerk to communicate accordingly.

11. **Correspondence/Actions since Previous Meeting**

(a) Drumgrange & Keirs Angling Club - The Clerk reported on the discussions and correspondence with the Treasurer, who had confirmed acceptance of the offer to sponsor the Salmon Trophy Day and the generous donation from Alan Macdonald of 4 tickets for Ayr Racecourse.

(b) Pollution: the Jones Brothers site (North Kyle Wind Farm) at Dalmellington – the Clerk presented the correspondence, as noted above

(c) Transfers/Ownership of Beats - There are some ongoing issues regarding transfers of fishing rights/ disputed ownership for beats. There are similar issues being debated in some of the other DSFBs of which the Clerk is also Clerk. The Board agreed to fund additional research and advise to a cost of £200 + VAT if the River Stinchar DSFB will do likewise.

(d) Loch Doon Dam – There has been some correspondence over the last few months re freshets, additional water releases, screen cleaning etc. There is a new manager at DRAX. There are ongoing discussions with ART about better water level management – opening gates at right times and places etc.

(e) Website Hosting - CE Project Management have indicated they would like to divest themselves of this role. ART are willing to take this on, on the basis they will charge a nominal fee of £150 per annum PLUS whatever admin fee the Web Hosts themselves charge, coordinating with the Clerk. The Board agreed to that proposal.

12. **Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors + Annual Public Meeting**

- (a) Dates:
Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors: Thursday 14 March 2024, 7:30pm
Annual Public Meeting: Thursday 25 April 2024, 7:30pm
- (b) Various logistics were discussed.

13. **Draft Annual Report**

Deadline for submissions: Monday 4 March 2023

- (1) Chairman's Report – Alan Macdonald (“AM”)
- (2) Summary of Work Done
 - a. Report from Clerk to the Board - **IKC**
 - b. Report on Fishery Assessments - **IKC**
 - c. Consultation Responses - **IKC**
 - d. Governance - **IKC**
 - e. Annual Catch Returns – **IKC**
 - f. Draft Annual Accounts and Corporation Tax Return - **IKC**
 - g. Code of Practice - **IKC**
 - h. River Watch Scheme – **Alan McDowall/Alan Shannon**
 - i. Scientific Report - **ART**
- (3) Future Work of the Board
 - a. Report on Expected Budget - **IKC**
 - b. Proposed Works for Discussion/Agreement - **ART**

14. **Any Other Business**

DC had been coordinating the Bird Licence for a number of years, but would like to retire from this role. SD agreed to take this on and DC to coordinate a handover.

River Categories – SB again stated ART would like the River Doon to be Category 3, requiring mandatory catch and release. The Clerk had likewise made representations. The consensus of the Board was that they would encourage SG to categorise the river as Category 3. However, SB explained it is a complex process and criteria based on analysis of catch returns, water levels, egg deposition etc etc + SG periodically ask for electrofishing surveys designated by SG at their sites. Until the River Doon met that criteria, it would remain Category 2, but this should not stop the Board from maintaining its position that Category 3 would allow the Board to enforce mandatory Catch & Release.

It was suggested that Ayr Angling Club may not have had its lease renewed this year, due to some internal issues with CISWO. No doubt the Clerk would be informed in due course.

15. **Dates of Next Meetings**

- (a) Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors: Thursday 14 March 2024, 7:30pm
- (b) Annual Public Meeting: Thursday 25 April 2024, 7:30pm
- (c) Board Meeting: mid-June 2024 – still to be considered further

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting concluded at 17:42