

CAITHNESS DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 14 MARCH 2014

Present:	Viscount Thurso (Chair) Anson MacAuslan Simon Laird Earl of Caithness Tom Stitt	John Mackay (Vice Chair) Sir Richard Dunbar Roddy Willis Ian Cormack
In attendance:	Eddie McCarthy	Eleanor Constable
Apologies:	Tertius Threipland, Alan Youngson	

Register of Interests

No changes to the register were recorded

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Matters arising from previous meetings

Further consideration was given to the expression of interest from the Halladale River in joining the Caithness DSFB.

Admin and Finance

- Draft Accounts

The draft Income and Expenditure account and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31 December 2013 were approved.

- Draft Estimates

The draft Estimates for 2014 were approved. An assessment rate of 35p in the £ was agreed for the year, subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

- Triennial Elections

The date set for the Elections was 23 May and the Clerk was duly instructed to give notice to Proprietors.

- Consultation Activity

The record of requests received during the previous quarter and action taken in response was noted.

Consultant's Report

In the absence of Mr Youngson the Chairman updated the Board on the status of the 2013 Electrofishing Report and plans for publicising it. It had been approved by the Crown Estate and reviewed favourably by Marine Scotland and was ready for release. The prospects for conducting a second year of electrofishing to consolidate the baseline were discussed.

Action: Chairman

River Improvements Committee

The primary focus of the Committee over the past quarter had been supporting the review of the Electrofishing Report. Four areas had been identified for the Board's attention arising from the results of the survey:

1. Concerns about the state of the River Wester and the desirability of carrying out further survey work to investigate the disproportionately low numbers of fish, (noting that SEPA has listed the Wester in the top 10 "worst polluted" rivers in the north).
2. A probable need to examine in more detail the anomalous sites identified
3. The surprisingly low numbers of trout found and what this might signify
4. The scales were available for a possible genetic project, which would cost in the region of £10-20k.

The consensus of the Committee was that a survey should be repeated this year, subject to available funding.

Inspector's Report

No activity to report.

Any other business

The Chairman had received a letter from Highland Council proposing flood mitigation measures for a property on the River Thurso. The Chairman was to refer the proposals to the Consultant to respond on behalf of the Board.

Action: Chairman

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for Friday 23 May at 2.30 pm, following the Elections.