**CAITHNESS DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 6th of June 2025**

**Present**

Chairman: Lord Thurso (LT)

Members: J Mackay(JM), SWD Laird(SL), D Mackay(DM), M Newton(MN), R Dunbar(RD)

Officers: EC McCarthy(EM), A Youngson(AY), M Blackwood (MB)

Observer: RSPB representative

**1.Register of Interests**

None new to register.

**2.Apologies**

I Cormack(IC), A Macauslan (AM)

**3.Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th March were approved.

**4. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising not on the Agenda.

**5.Finance and Admin**

1. The Estimates for 2025 were approved and the rate for 2025 agreed at £0.16 in the £.
2. The 2024 annual report which had been agreed to at the proprietors meeting was noted.
3. Clerk’s report. The table of correspondence and other activity by the Clerk was duly noted.
4. The date for the Public AGM was agreed as being the 13th August at 2.00 pm at The Ulbster Arms and the Clerk was asked to undertake the necessary arrangements.

**6.Consultant’s Report**

The board received the consultants report and noted the following:

1. **2024 EF Report –** AY gave a brief explanation on the report. The finalized report was made public on the CDSFB website.
2. **Havbredey OWF –** AY replied to the Scoping Report for the proposed Havbredey windfarm 17km northwest of Cape Wrath on behalf of the Board. All the responses should be posted on the MD-LOT webpage at <https://marine.gov.scot/>. Go to “Search” and enter “Havbredey” to view all the scoping responses once they are posted. **Action: JT Circulated MD-LOT response to board members.**
3. **Coordination of Board responses to windfarm applications –** AY attended an FMS Teams meeting of board/ trust biologists to discuss greater coordination of the unmanageable burden being placed on Boards by having to respond to the increasing number of renewables projects - offshore and onshore - at all their various stages.
4. ***Saprolegnia -*** Aberdeen University will provide an update on progress via Teams that AY will not be able to attend but has asked a colleague, Simon Harrison, to cover. **Action: AY to update on the outcome, with supplementary report ahead of next meeting if need be.**
5. **Peatland Restoration –** AY have raised a query on behalf of CDSFB with NatureScot regarding the lack of guidance for contractors on the protection of salmon during peatland restoration. Risk assessment is required for several specified species – bats, otters etc - but there appears to be no recommendation that salmon in non-SAC rivers should be accorded similar consideration. **Action: AY sent letter to Nature Scot advising salmon should be considered.**
6. **Forss Recovery Group -** AY attended a meeting with Scottish Water re Shurrery dam in support of Chris Kenny of the Group. EM and MRN provided an update to go along with emails circulated ahead of meeting.
7. **Smolt tracking in North -** An irrefutable case can be made for obtaining data on smolt behaviour near the northern rivers, especially in the contexts of West of Orkney and the Havbredey windfarms. However, no arrangements have been made for 2026 despite various efforts to press the case.

**7.Flow Country Rivers Trust**

Nothing to note.

**8.Bailiff’s Report**

Bailiff reported things had been very quiet.

**9.Any other business**

Nothing to note.

**10.Meeting dates**

The next meetings of the board will take place as stated below;

Wednesday 13th August 2025 2pm AGM followed by board in the Ulbster

Friday 21st November 2025 via zoom – time to be confirmed