

MINUTES OF THE BRORA DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD
Proprietors meeting

Held at Sunrise House, Brora
On Thursday 28th March 2019 at 11am

Present		In Attendance	
The Earl Cadogan, (Lower Brora North Bank)	LC	Neil Wright (Clerk to the Board)	NW
Mrs Angela Tyser, (Upper Brora & Loch Brora)	AT	Martin Livings (Head Bailiff)	ML
	MJ	Mungo Ingleby (Sporting Agent for Lord Cadogan)	RR
		Christian Wroe (Agent)	CW

1	APOLOGIES	Action
	Martin Janson Philippa Cliff Robert Rattray	
2	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28th March 2019	
	LC welcomed all attendees and introduced MI who was standing in for Robert Rattray. The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as being an accurate reflection of the previous meeting and they were approved by the Board.	
3	MATTERS ARISING	
	To be dealt with during the meeting.	
4	FINANCE UPDATE	
	<p>NW advised that the yearend figures had not yet been calculated due to the to the timing of the Board meeting being in March but reviewing the accounts to date the assessment collected for the year has been £85,145 with a grant of £5905 received from the Scottish Government for the national electrofishing program. A total of £91,050 income.</p> <p>In regards to expenditure the Board spent in the region of £83,000 for the year. This leaves a surplus of £8050. The surplus has been created as a result of increasing the assessments from the 1st of December in order to pay for the study being carried out by Jon Watt. The assessment levels for 2019 will be a total of £105,000 and there may be a further grant from the Scottish government to undertake more electrofishing surveys.</p> <p>NW ran through the annual expenditure and noted that there was no extraordinary expenditure.</p>	

5	HEAD BAILIFFS REPORT	
	<p>ML ran through his Bailiffs report and commented that the last part of the season has been successful with fish being caught but the main summer had been poor due to warm weather and low water.</p> <p>All the government survey work was completed bar one site which was not completed due to high water levels at the end of the season. All data is now being recorded scientifically and being entered into the Scottish Fishery Co-ordination Centres data base, this will allow the data to be access and used by Jon and ensures the data is stored securely for the future.</p> <p>ML did note concern regarding some gravel beds that had been cut as redds but they had been done some time ago and there was no signs of fish.</p> <p>River maintenance work has continued throughout the season. LC commented that the river looked to be in good order. ML noted that a long handled pruner had been purchased and it had proven very usual for brush clearing and keeping paths open.</p> <p>ML commented that the Toyota Hilux should be replaced in the near future. NW suggested that we look at this for the 2020 budget year.</p> <p>All equipment and machinery has been serviced and is in good order.</p> <p>NW noted that a meeting had been held with the 3 angling clubs at Gordonbush and it was a very worthwhile exercise, the intention is to engage more with the clubs and keep them informed on Board activities. ML commented that he wished to take any interested parties out electrofishing to show members what is involved and to see the Boards other activities in practice.</p> <p>NW explained that the town water permits have also been updated to bring some of the rules in line with the main river and a modern plan has been produced that goes with the permit to aid visitors.</p> <p>ML discussed the hot weather that was experienced last year and the need to protect fish in those circumstances. The Board discussed the recommend cessation of fishing at the recognised water temperature of 18 Degrees Celsius. There was concern about low water and warm temperatures last year and Gordonbush temporarily ceased fishing on serval pools. The Board agreed that the Head Bailiff should make the decision as to when a section of fishing should be closed and the fish should come first. The Board members present unanimously approved this approach.</p>	
6	SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT – CONSERVATION MEASURES	
	<p>NW explained that Marine Science Scotland’s provisional categorisation of the Brora has been upheld and it is presently category 1. Marine Science Scotland intend to ‘freeze’ the categorisation for 2 years to allow for some stability given that rivers such as the Brora were constantly changing.</p> <p>The Government intends to use the electrofishing data to assist with their assessments in the future.</p>	

	NW noted that all proprietors must now record catch effort for the Marine Science Scotland return forms.	
7	CONSERVATION POLICY	
	<p>NW explained that the proposed conservation policy for category one had been circulated earlier in the year after discussion with each proprietor.</p> <p>ML suggested that it would be helpful to get the town and angling clubs more involved with the main river, especially during the early season when there are no bookings. The Board agreed this would be a good move and would help the catch records.</p> <p>The town water was discussed, it is presently on a different conservation policy to the main river, this is partly to do with how it has been managed historically but the intention is to bring it more in line with the main river and loch. NW suggested that for the 2020 season the Board looks at having one policy for the main river and loch.</p>	
8	RIVER STUDY AND MANAGEMENT PLAN	
	<p>NW ran through an update from Jon Watt and noted that his team are presently going through all the data gathered from last year's surveys and they are producing a draft management plan. Jon will also produce an electrofishing plan to assist with his report, these extra surveys will be aimed at identify whether some areas of the catchment have good or poor results for juveniles, based on their previous walked over habitat surveys.</p> <p>ML commented that the survey work carried out last year showed a healthy number of juveniles in the river.</p> <p>LC commented that NW has instructed Hamish Moir to review the lower river for Cadogan Estate and in particular the area from the Madman to the Pots. NW responded that Hamish hopes to start the survey in the summer.</p>	
9	AOCB	
	NW is to produce a newsletter at the end of the season to update anglers and stakeholders on the progress of the study and any other activities the Board is involved with.	
10	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	Date of the next meeting is to be the 8 th of August 2019	