

ASFB – RAFTS Monthly update



December 2014

Please find below our monthly update which highlights the recent work of both ASFB and RAFTS. Please forward this to anyone you think might be interested. We hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**** Reminder**** Please can all members ensure that they complete and return the annual survey form no later than Friday 21 December – returns are required to update the information in the Annual Factsheet and Annual Review which will be published early in 2015

Key Activities/Outcomes for December 2014

Scottish Government/Parliament/Agencies

- **Marine Scotland:** ASFB and RAFTS have been in regular contact with Marine Scotland on a number of issues including: the wild fisheries review and spring conservation measures.
- **RACCE Committee:** The Committee considered The Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Times and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 on 17th December. Such ‘negative instruments’ may be annulled for a period of 40 days after they are laid. Any member may, within the 40-day period, lodge a motion for consideration by the lead committee recommending annulment. The Committee agreed to make no recommendation, and therefore it is very likely that the regulations will become law in early January. The committee papers can be viewed [here](#) and the Committee’s consideration of the regulations can be viewed [here](#) (5m50s in).
- **River Basin Management Plans:** SEPA have produced two consultations that propose objectives and measures for the water environment for the next two RBMP cycles, up to 2027. The consultation for the Scotland river basin district can be viewed [here](#) and for the Solway-Tweed river basin district [here](#).

Review of Wild Fisheries Management

- We have produced a [briefing](#) to explain the ongoing process for the Wild Fisheries Review.
- If you have not yet returned the completed questionnaire on the WFR recommendations please do so as soon as possible. This will inform our approach to the WFR going forward.

In-river barriers

- RAFTS are developing a range of project management tools to ensure projects can be controlled and managed more effectively. These may be useful for other trusts, and once fully developed, these would be available for use elsewhere. RAFTS are in the process of undertaking training in project management and NEC contracting which will further build capacity to aid delivery of existing and future projects.
- ASFB continues to assist RAFTS with the project management of barriers and fish passage issues in Scotland. RAFTS currently manages six projects concerning the easement or removal of in-river barriers to fish

migration. These six projects encompass thirteen currently impassable structures, and funding for scoping, design and physical works is provided through regular applications to the SEPA Water Environment Fund.

- **River Almond, West Lothian:** 7 barriers – Phase 1 surveys now complete and formally reported by Mott MacDonald. Phase 2 application has been submitted to support feasibility studies for fish passage at these barriers. Whilst formal confirmation of funding support is still to be received, RAFTS will be tendering for a phase 2 feasibility study in January, with the anticipation of work beginning early in 2015 and concluding in spring.
- **River Avon, South Lanarkshire** – 2 barriers: Phase 1 feasibility almost complete – the appointed consultants are presently awaiting a weather-window to complete investigative coring at the weirs. Subject to the findings, it is proposed that Phase 2 (design) will commence early in 2015, and concluding in spring.
- RAFTS has been successful with three further applications to the Water Environment Fund; two of these relate to the next phases of ongoing projects (**Creamery** phase 2-design and supervision of works and **Almond** Phase 2 – Feasibility and Optioneering (F&O) of seven barriers, and one is a completely new site (**Gottar Burn** Phase 1 - F&O, design and supervision of works). This takes the number of barrier projects currently managed by RAFTS to seven, encompassing fourteen structures.
- Since the last update, easement of **Culburnie Bridge Apron, Beauly** has been completed and is being closely monitored.
- RAFTS has met with SEPA to discuss impact of identified barriers on WFD classification. These barriers have been identified as impassable by Trusts but this is not reflected in classification. This is part of the process for defining the priorities for the second round of River Basin Management Planning.

Bailiffing

- The Bailiff Development Group met in October – the minutes are now available on the [ASFB website](#) and will also appear on the Scottish Government website in due course.

Pearls in Peril LIFE Project

- The last month's efforts have been concentrating on the delivery of the small tree enclosure contract in the Upper Dee catchment– site inspections, liaison with contractors, resolving issues after severe flood incidents
- Funding for additional enclosures has been secured via Cairngorms National Park Authority.
- Contacts with farmers and land managers on rivers and tributaries identified for diffuse pollution mitigation are being instigated – in the mid Dee catchment and South Esk area
- Investigations still ongoing to find a suitable site for £20k riparian planting in the upper South Esk catchment
- The Riverwatcher work for 2014 has ceased and will resume in March 2015.

Scottish Mink Initiative (SMI)

- Quarterly report for October-December was finalised and presented to the Steering Group.

RAFTS Project Development

- Work has started on preparing a proposal for WEF support to continue invasive non-native species plant control
- Funding has been secured for work to make the Mink App more user friendly

Training

- ASFB and IFM are due to meet in January 2015 to discuss training availability in Scotland in an effort to ensure that the full range of skills and professional development opportunities required for fisheries management are available.

ASFB Website

- We are in the process of updating various pages on the ASFB website. New pages on [training](#), the [bailiff development group](#) and [angling](#) (including [angling season](#) information) have been added and the [policy page](#) has been updated. It is anticipated that further updates will take place in early 2015.

Upcoming dates and events

- ASFB Management Committee Meeting **28 January 2015**
- RAFTS Board meeting **29 January 2015.**
- Annual Bailiffs Seminar planned for **4/5 March 2015** – hosted by Ness DSFB.
- Next Bailiff examination – **4 March 2015.**
- ASFB/RAFTS meetings and conference planned for **18/19 March 2015.**
- 2nd International Sea Trout Symposium, Crown Plaza Hotel, Dundalk (Ireland) **20th-22nd October 2015.**