

ASFB – RAFTS Monthly update



November 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.

Key Activities/Outcomes for November 2014

Scottish Government/Parliament/Agencies

- **Scottish Government:** Following the election of Nicola Sturgeon as First Minister, Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Environment and Climate Change has been replaced by Aileen MacLeod, Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform. On 26th November, Scottish Government announced its [Programme for Government](#). Paragraph 266 relates to the Wild Fisheries Review.
- **Marine Scotland:** ASFB and RAFTS have been in regular contact with Marine Scotland on a number of issues including: the wild fisheries review; spring conservation measures; marine renewables, aquaculture and beaver reintroductions.
- **Beaver-Salmon Working Group:** ASFB attended the final meeting of the BSWG in order to finalise the chapters of the final report. The report is due to be completed by the end of the year.
- **National Species Reintroduction Forum:** ASFB attended the NSRF which is a stakeholder group designed to inform SNH on future species reintroductions. In addition, ASFB and RAFTS attended an event, organised by the NSRF, in which the latest information on beaver reintroductions in Scotland was presented.
- **INNS Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Working Group:** RAFTS attended the second meeting of this group and updated members on work of Trusts and Boards.

Review of Wild Fisheries Management

- The recommendations of the Wild Fisheries Review were discussed at a joint session held following the ASFB and RAFTS AGMs. Both organisations have subsequently issued a questionnaire to allow us to fully understand the detailed views of the DSFBs and Fishery Trusts across Scotland. If you have not yet returned the questionnaire, we would urge you to do so as soon as possible.

Aquaculture

- ASFB and RAFTS attended the Interactions Working Group, part of the Ministerial Group on Sustainable Aquaculture.
- ASFB attended the Ministerial Group on Sustainable Aquaculture.
- ASFB met with Crown Estate and SSPO to discuss various initiatives designed to improve communication and joint working between wild fish organisations and the industry at a local level.

- ASFB attended the Board meeting of the Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum.

Renewables Developments

- ASFB attended a stakeholder meeting to discuss the developing national strategy into strategic research for offshore marine renewables and diadromous fish. ASFB are a member of the steering group for this strategy.
- ASFB met with the developers of the larger Moray Firth wild farm to discuss their proposals for research on migratory salmonids.

In-river barriers

- 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. Subject to formal confirmation of funding support, we anticipate work beginning early in 2015 and concluding in spring.
- **River Avon, South Lanarkshire** – 2 barriers: Phase 1 feasibility almost complete. 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 – one of the outputs was to make the work of the group more widely known, and in addition to the usual communication channels, it has been agreed that the Scottish Government will publish the minutes and other matters arising from the work of the Group on the official Marine Scotland website – details and a link will follow once this has happened.

Pearls in Peril LIFE Project

- Agricultural Project Officers have carried out first visits to crofters and fishery staff in the Naver catchment to investigate potential for agri-environment management.
- PiP staff gave presentations at the Dee Catchment Partnership seminar and delegates were taken on a site visit to PiP buffer strip along the Tarland Burn.
- Fencing and planting work for the small tree enclosures in Upper Deeside is still in progress, with funding for an additional 17 enclosures sourced via private companies, the River Dee Trust and Dee District Salmon Fisheries Board.
- South Esk – further investigations ongoing to find a suitable site for £20k riparian planting, after site located last month was identified as ineligible for LIFE funds.

- PIP have been granted permission by Cairngorms National Park and SEPA to carry out river restoration works on the river South Esk and its White Water tributary. Thirteen sections of rock armour bank protection – a total of 873m – will be removed, and the banks re-profiled in May 2015.
- PIP received the draft reports for the hydromorphological assessments carried out on the rivers Naver and Mallart by AECOM. Proposals for in stream restoration on the rivers Naver and Mallart are currently being considered by land owners and crofters.
- Riverwatcher monitored sites on the Naver, Borgie, Ardnamurcham, Moidart, Glen Beadale, Rannoch Moor, South Esk, Oykel and Evelix.
- A Riverwatch scheme covering 4 SACs in Lochinver was launched.

Scottish Mink Initiative (SMI)

- Quarterly report for July –September was finalised and presented to the Steering Group.
- Coordinator was interviewed for BBC Radio 4 [Farming Today Programme](#) broadcast on the 7th of November.

RAFTS Project Development

- Met with representatives from the Special European Union Programmes Body and Queens University Belfast to discuss follow on project to the EU Interreg Controlling priority Invasive non-native species and Restoring Biodiversity (CIRB) project.
- Stage 1 application for multiple INNS project in northern Scotland was submitted on the 28th of November.
- RAFTS attended the dot Rural Impacts Review Panel meeting to discuss future project opportunities.

Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group

- ASFB have re-engaged with the SCSTG and attended the last meeting of the Group in November. This will help ensure that the angling and fishery management aspects remain a key part of the Group's remit. The Group works closely with all country sport sectors, and has support and representation from Scottish Enterprise and Visit Scotland. For more information, see the [SCSTG website](#).

Training Courses

- RAFTS organised the EU Interreg IVA supported Controlling priority Invasive species and Restoring native Biodiversity (CIRB) end of project conference that was attended by 60 delegates from Ireland, Scotland and England on the 25th and 26th of November .

SFCC Membership Online Survey

- The SFCC management committee have requested that members fill out a brief [survey](#) on their website. The results will help formulate objectives for the coming year, and improve the service provided by SFCC.

Upcoming dates and events

- 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**.