

ASFB – RAFTS Monthly update



January 2015

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 January 2015

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, spring conservation measures, enforcement of the weekly close time, aquaculture and marine renewables.
- **Scottish Parliament:** Please note that The Conservation of Salmon (Annual Close Times and Catch and Release) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 came into force on 9th January. Further information is available [here](#). Please ensure that all proprietors and angling clubs in your district are aware of these regulations. If you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact ASFB.
- **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](#).
- **Beaver Salmonid Working Group:** The report of the BSWG has now been submitted to the National Species Reintroduction Forum. The report can be viewed [here](#). In addition, Marine Scotland Science have also produced a report which can be viewed [here](#).
- **Proposal for licensing system - killing of salmon:** Scottish Government are consulting on a proposal to create a licensing system governing the killing of salmon. The consultation may be viewed [here](#). ASFB and RAFTS will be responding to these proposals and will be discussing with members prior to the submission deadline of 30 April.

Review of Wild Fisheries Management

- 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.
- As you will be aware, ASFB has agreed to second Alan Wells to the Scottish Government's Wild Fisheries Review Team in order to help develop policy and legislation.

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.

- 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 (WEF).
- **River Almond, West Lothian:** 7 barriers – Phase 1 surveys now complete and formally reported by Mott MacDonald. RAFTS have now issued an invitation to tender for a phase 2 feasibility study, with the anticipation of work beginning early in 2015 and concluding in spring. We are pleased to report that the Forth Fisheries Trust have been awarded funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and this will add value to the current works being supported by the Water Environment Fund
- **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.
- In mid-January, RAFTS issued tender documents for three project phases; two of these relate to the next phases of ongoing projects (**Creamery** phase 2-design 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). This takes the number of barrier projects currently managed by RAFTS to six, encompassing thirteen structures.
- Existence of planning consents placing responsibility for barrier easement on a proposed development have resulted in the **Westfield Weir** project being no longer eligible for WEF support.
- RAFTS will meet with members of the SEPA WEF Unit and River Basin Management Planners in February to discuss harmonised approaches to barrier prioritisation. This will continue to enable trust priorities to be considered for prioritization within the second River Basin Management Plan.

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. ASFB met with the Partnership Against Wildlife Crime Poaching Sub Group in January. A meeting has been organised with Police Scotland to discuss various matters relating to the wild fisheries review and future enforcement.
- Notification of the Annual Bailiffs Seminar on 4/5 March 2015 has now been issued. This will be hosted by Ness DSFB and will take place at the Waterside Hotel, Inverness. A copy of the programme is [HERE](#)
- The next Bailiff examination will be held on 4 March 2015, at 16.30 – 18.30. The main examination will be held at the Waterside Hotel, Inverness. Regional venues have now been set for Ayrshire (Ayrshire Rivers Trust office) and the Western Isles (tbc, hosted by the Western Isles DSFB). More details will follow.

Pearls in Peril LIFE Project

- Stakeholder engagement has continued on the River Naver and River Mallart.
- PiP staff, Naver Fisheries staff and the AECOM hydromorphologist have had several site meetings with landowners and their representatives, crofters, and estates and fisheries staff to discuss in-stream restoration options. Meetings have been extremely valuable and we hope to be able to progress with some works in 2015.
- PiP staff also met with the curator at Strathnaver Museum in Bettyhill, and hope to provide them with a display about pearl mussels and the history of pearl fishing in the area, and to have input to updated interpretation boards on the Strathnaver Trail.

- Small tree enclosure contract on Upper Deeside is still progressing, weather permitting
- Delivery of 4500 trees, tubes and stakes, funded by the Woodland Trust, has been received, to be planted along the banks of the Gairn once the snow has cleared
- SRDP meetings with individual farmers and landowners have been held, and will be ongoing over the next few months, for diffuse pollution mitigation on the middle Dee.
- Case officer (SNH & FCS) meeting has been held to prepare for next SRDP round
- Funding for interpretation panels for Upper Deeside tree and woodland has been secured via SNH.
- Investigations still ongoing to find a suitable site for £20k riparian planting in the upper South Esk catchment

Scottish Mink Initiative (SMI)

- Quarterly report for October-December was approved by the Steering Group.
- Coordinator attended the GB Non Native Species Secretariat Local Action Group Meeting in Shrewsbury.

RAFTS Project Development

- The proposal for WEF support to continue invasive non-native species plant control was submitted on January 30th 2015
- Work on recoding Mink App will commence in February 2015
- Queries on the HLF multi-INNS application have been received indicating that the project proposal has passed initial screening.
- Initial application for sweep netting on West Coast prepared.

Training

- ASFB and IFM met 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. IFM, ASFB and SFCC will meet in March to discuss a co-ordinated approach.
- Following on from the success of the Introductory Fluvial Geomorphology courses in 2014, RAFTS is facilitating an 'advanced' course in April 2015. RAFTS has once again secured the services of Professor Malcolm Newson. At present the course is only open to RAFTS members, and details/booking forms have been circulated to all trusts.

Upcoming dates and events

- Bailiffs Seminar, Waterside Hotel, Inverness **4/5 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**.