

# ASFB – RAFTS Monthly update



## February 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 February 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 and marine renewables. ASFB attended the Marine Forum Strategy meeting on 20 February.
- **Police Scotland:** ASFB met with Police Scotland on 23 February to provide a briefing on the Wild Fisheries Review and consider a range of fisheries enforcement matters which might be relevant to the future in terms of water bailiffs.
- **Scottish Parliament:** The Parliamentary Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee (RACCE) took evidence from the Wild Fisheries Review panel on 18 February (transcript [HERE](#)) and from several DSFBs, Trusts and other wild fish organisations on 25 February (transcript [HERE](#)). ASFB assisted with co-ordinated briefings to help with members' responses at the meeting on 25 February. Further written submissions to the Committee can be viewed [HERE](#). The Committee will take evidence from the Minister and officials at their next meeting on 4 March. The agenda is [HERE](#). This can be viewed on Parliament TV [HERE](#).
- **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](#). RAFTS and ASFB will be responding to these in due course.
- **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. A briefing and questionnaire has been circulated to DSFBs and Trusts and ASFB/RAFTS are seeking initial comments **by 13 March**. This will be discussed further at the **ASFB/RAFTS members' meeting on 18 March** at Battleby to inform the formal consultation response.

## Review of Wild Fisheries Management

- Ministers are expected to launch a formal consultation on the review in Spring 2015. ASFB and RAFTS have formed a joint Working Group (JWG) to develop ideas and identify information requirements needed to inform the decision making process within both organisations. The aim is to give the members and their representatives an informed baseline from which to develop their response to proposals arising from the review and ensure they best meet our fishery management interests. A detailed briefing will be circulated very soon to provide full details of the JWG process. The JWG will issue regular briefings on its work and any updates on the WFR as they develop. Feedback from members will be essential during this process and ASFB/RAFTS will be encouraging full participation through a variety of means.
- **Members:** ASFB attended the Forth DSFB meeting on 25 February. ASFB are available to member Boards to attend local meetings should that be helpful.

## In-river barriers

- RAFTS has recently introduced the concept of barrier project 'de-centralisation' at its recent regional member meetings. RAFTS wishes to encourage member trusts to submit their own applications for barrier easement projects to the Water Environment Fund, and RAFTS feels well-placed to provide technical support when and where it is required. RAFTS continues to identify ways in which this process can be managed appropriately, and will continue to manage barrier projects where appropriate.
- RAFTS currently manages six 'live' 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 (initial surveys/sediment sampling) now complete and formally reported by Mott MacDonald. Phase 2 (feasibility and optioneering) application was approved in late 2014. The project scope is currently out to tender. We anticipate work beginning in March/April 2015 and concluding mid-Summer.
- **River Avon, South Lanarkshire** – 2 barriers: Phase 1 (feasibility and optioneering) is complete, with the exception of some coring investigations that have been hampered by river conditions. Subject to the findings, it is proposed that a Phase 2 (design) tender will be advertised in the coming months.
- **River Don, Tullynessie Weir** - 1 barrier: This project is on hold while technical issues are resolved by SEPA and RAFTS. However, it is expected that the project will be back on-line in the short-term.
- **Gottar Water Weir, Inverclyde** - 1 barrier: Phase 1 (feasibility and optioneering) application was approved in late 2014. The project scope is currently out to tender. We anticipate work beginning in March/April 2015 and concluding early/mid-Summer.
- **Creamery Weir, Dumfries & Galloway** - 1 barrier: Phase 2 (design) application was approved in late 2014. The project scope is currently out to tender. We anticipate work beginning in March/April 2015 and concluding early/mid-Summer.
- **Corrie Burn Weir, Spey** – 1 barrier: This project is on hold while RAFTS and SEPA determine a way forward in collaboration with the local authority. The project needs to address the concerns of Moray Council as the structure is situated close to the foot of a wall which supports a public road.
- A further two project applications will be made to the Water Environment Fund in April; one from the Outer Hebrides and one from Kyle of Sutherland.

**Bailiffing** - 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) the Western Isles (Amhuinnsuidhe Castle) and The River Tweed Commission Office, Drygrange.

### **Pearls in Peril LIFE Project**

- Updated the Pearls in the Classroom materials – these are now available on the RAFTS website
- Visited three potential additional instream habitat restoration on the River Dee
- Tendering process for instream restoration construction contracts on the South Esk and Dee is ongoing
- More 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
- SRDP water margin management advice provided to crofters on the Naver
- On-going support to farmers with existing SRDP contracts – helping with grant claims etc
- Diffuse Pollution workshop held for farmers on project tributaries in South Esk catchment
- Investigations still ongoing to find a suitable site for £20k riparian planting in the upper South Esk catchment
- Natalie Young will be taking up the post of Riverwatcher from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2015 until 31<sup>st</sup> of July 2015.

### **Scottish Mink Initiative (SMI)**

- Coordinator gave presentation on SMI progress at SFCC conference
- Annual SMI meeting between fisheries trusts, University of Aberdeen staff and Steering group members
- Spring newsletter produced

### **RAFTS Project Development**

- RAFTS' Director attended a project identification workshop of Living North Sea EU Interreg funding in Ghent, Belgium
- RAFTS' Director has registered for a training workshop for project development for Interreg V that will be facilitated by the Special European Union Programme Body (SEUPB)

### **Training & Meetings**

#### **Training**

- IFM, ASFB and SFCC are to meet in March to discuss a co-ordinated approach to fisheries management training availability and delivery in Scotland
- 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.
- A RAFTS regional meeting was held in Inverness on 12<sup>th</sup> February.

#### **Upcoming dates and events**

- Bailiffs Seminar, Waterside Hotel, Inverness **4/5 March 2015**
- Bailiffs examination **4 March (16.30 – 18.30)** various venues, see above.
- IFM Scottish Branch AGM **4 March, 18.45**, Waterside Hotel, Inverness
- ASFB/RAFTS members meetings and conference planned for **18/19 March 2015**.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> International Sea Trout Symposium, Crown Plaza Hotel, Dundalk (Ireland) **20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015**.