

Dear Proprietors/Fishery interests,

Further to my correspondence (05/10/16) and in response to ongoing aquaculture problems in the Outer Hebrides of which you will no doubt be aware. I am writing to inform you of actions taken to date by OHFT with regard to these issues. There are currently two major issues facing the Western Isles emanating from the fish farming industry;

Firstly, there has been escapee farmed salmon caught by rod anglers fishing several rivers (Barvas, Fhorsa, Garynahine, Grimersta & Morsgail) in the Loch Roag area of the Isle of Lewis.

Secondly there has been a severe outbreak of Amoebic Gill Disease on fish farm sites in the West Loch Tarbert area of Harris.

The Outer Hebrides Fisheries Trust has undertaken the following points:

- Recorded all available evidence (Pictures and scale samples) of escapee fish and made these available to The Fish Health Inspectorate's (FHI) the authority appointed by Scottish Ministers to deal with fish health and escapees.
- Contacted the companies involved. In the case of Loch Roag a response from TSSC biologist was sent on 25.09.16 stating that they had not suffered any losses from their sites in Loch Roag. In the case of West Loch Tarbert a meeting was held on the 20.09.16 with senior Marine Harvest management to discuss the scale of the disease problem, treatment and management.
- The Fish Health Inspectorate's (FHI) have been informed by OHFT of both potentially harmful and ongoing aquaculture situations.
- OHFT have issued press releases both locally (<http://www.stornowaygazette.co.uk/news/local-headlines/plea-to-keep-communication-lines-open-over-fish-disease-1-4251773>) and in the coming weeks nationally through <http://www.salmon-troutscotland.org/>.
- OHFT have written at length to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar as the local planning authority in charge of consents for the Loch Roag sites. In their latest reply (20/10/16) I was informed they will be treating my last correspondence as a subject of complaint to be investigated.

Further information on Amoebic Gill Disease can be viewed at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0039/00393037.pdf>

Kind Regards, Paul

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