

**Minutes of Public Meeting of  
The Ythan District Salmon Fishery Board  
Held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 at Newburgh Golf Club**

**1. Present:**

Eric Ritchie	representing Ramornie Fishings
Ron Coutts	representing Newburgh Angling Club
John Pirie	representing Ogsten
Robert Dey	representing ADAA
Alec Paterson	representing ADAA
Charles Buchan	Auchmacoy

**2. In Attendance**

A Milne	River Superintendent
M H T Andrew	Clerk to the Board

**3. Apologies for Absence:**

Charles Wolrige Gordon.

**4. Update from Clerk and River Superintendent**

After very good finnock fishing in the spring, considered by some to be the best for several years, the sea trout fishing in the estuary had been going reasonably well with fish of 3lbs being taken. Around 40% of fish caught were seal damaged. Newburgh Angling Club were collating evidence of damage.

2 salmon had been caught at Ellon.

**5. Update on Wild Fishery Review**

The Clerk and Alec Paterson updated members with current information. This followed a joint meeting by the Board and ADAA with Dr Aileen McLeod MSP, Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform on 11<sup>th</sup> June and a recent government roadshow, attended by Alec Paterson.

- (i) Sea trout were being seriously considered for inclusion in the Licence to Kill proposals.
- (ii) Tags (for taking fish) were likely to be issued on a river basis with the cost being included in administration costs. Marine Scotland would be dealing with issues.
- (iii) There was insufficient information to date on Fishery Management Organisations and their funding but it was agreed that the Clerk should enter into discussions with the Deveron as it was likely that a unit covering the Ythan and Deveron (with the Ugie) could form the local FMO.
- (iv) It was agreed that the Clerk should write in support of The Rt Hon Alex Salmond's suggestion that Community Groups (including fishery organisations) should have pre-emptive rights to acquire netting stations.

**6. Restraint of Netting by USAN**

The Clerk confirmed that agreement had been reached with USAN by a consortium of Boards not to net during 2015 in return for payment of £20,000. This was funded by the Ythan, Dee and Don Boards and half of the money had been paid. The balance would be payable at the end of the netting season provided no netting took place.

**7. Update on Seals**

Numbers of seals had dropped in recent weeks to around one half of previous week. There was no known reason for the decrease but the recent sighting of a pod of killer whales was hoped to be the cause.

The number of marked fish was of concern to members.

**8. Conservation Code for 2016**

As Licence to Kill legislation was expected prior to the new season, the Code may become redundant but would be considered at the following meeting.

**9. Any Other Business**

- (i) Mr Ritchie suggested that worm fishing should cease within the District. Mr Dey and Mr Paterson disagreed with the suggestion as frequently river conditions left worm fishing as the only viable method. It would be up to individual proprietors to determine what methods of fishing were acceptable. Although seen as more likely to cause death through deep swallowing of a hook, it was equally possible to reduce such incidents by using non barbed or circular hooks.
- (ii) It was noted that work at Mill of Elrick was to take place during the summer. An update would be provided in due course.
- (iii) It was agreed that the November fishing should take place once again although it had not been very well taken up in the previous season.

**3. Date for next meeting**

To be advised.