

## MINUTES OF TRUSTEES' MEETING

<b>WESTER ROSS FISHERIES TRUST OFFICES</b>	<b>PRESENT:</b> Mark Williams (MW) Vice Chair Ian Lindsay (IL) <span style="float: right;">Bob Kindness (BK)</span> Alasdair Macdonald (AM) <span style="float: right;">James Close (JC)</span> Melanie Smith (MS) via Skype
<b>DATE:</b> 30 November 2016	<b>APOLOGIES:</b> David Barclay (DB) <span style="float: right;">Richard Greene (RG)</span> Nigel Pearson (NP) <span style="float: right;">Isabel Moore (IM)</span> Derek Dowsett (DD) <span style="float: right;">Neil Cameron (NC)</span>
<b>OPENED AT: 11.00     CLOSED AT: 15.30</b>	
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b> Peter Cunningham (PC)            Mary Gibson (MG) Veronica Mullaney (VM)            Bill Whyte (BW) Peter Jarosz(PJ)	

### 1. **Minutes of Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016**

The minutes of the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016 were approved by IL, seconded by MW and confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

#### **Matters Arising**

**1.i** Item 2.i of the August minutes reported that MHS had agreed in writing to financially support the PhD telemetry project with a grant (over two years) of £18K – since the August meeting MHS has withdrawn that financial support for the project. S&WRFT will potentially guarantee that shortfall in the short term but additional fund raising effort will continue in order to seek the funding elsewhere and so reduce any financial drawdown from the trust’s resources. MHS financial support had been set out in a letter and so potentially MHS are contracted to the project. We, therefore, need to clarify with MHS that their “in-kind” contributions will be honoured. MS suggested that we need to consider the possible implications for the PhD project itself. Additionally, we need to understand Glasgow University’s (GU) thoughts as well as their obligations to the project. A key issue may be whether (or not) the telemetry aspect of the PhD project is critical to the delivery of the PhD. If it is then GU has a key role – if not, then it becomes a separate issue with WRFT having more of a role in resolving the shortfall. The next steering group meeting is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 when all of the above will need to be discussed. S&WRFT to be kept informed of any relevant outcomes following the next steering group meeting – but, in principle, S&WRFT will underwrite £12K of funding to the telemetry project, if it is required.

**1.ii** PJ reported that an extension, to the end of January 2017, had been granted for “held” ENTRUST funding to be spent on the Angling information project. This money will be spent over the next month.

### 2. **Meetings (DB) and Correspondence (PJ)**

**2.i** Following the RAFTS/ASFB EGM meeting in September 2016, at which nothing was resolved, the AGM meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 took place and a resolution was passed that effectively “moth-balls” RAFTS and re-named the new combined entity of RAFTS/ASFB as Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS). Alan Wells, back from his secondment with ScotGov, will be the new CEO with the new board elections taking place in January 2017. There is a need to ensure that West Coast boards/trusts are well represented on this new board and, to that end, BW will be nominated by the WRASFB while it is hoped that DB will be nominated by WRFT. It should be noted that only one of the two can actually be elected onto the new FMS board.

### 3. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

**3.i** The cash projections and the management finance reports had been previously circulated by email and there were no queries regarding the finances shown on them.

**3.ii** The current account remains stable with our deposit reserves of £55K. It is unclear if the MHS annual contribution (circa £8K) to WRFT will be forthcoming which makes the voluntary contributions from the Southern Proprietors more important. Four proprietors did not contribute last year so with this year’s invoices PJ will enlist the help of NP who will write a letter to the proprietors and the letter will accompany their invoice.

**3.iii** The River Carron proprietors did not pay last year and there seems to be a belief by certain Carron proprietors that their river will be exempt from the new FMO system. This will not be the case

and an attempt to meet up with them to explain the new FMO system will be sought via BK.

#### 4. **BIOLOGIST' REPORT**

PC summarized his report (that he had previously emailed out):

- Following the ScotGov's 2017 river Conservation Assessment, there was considerable response to them over their categorization of the rivers within the WR area. The responses brought about a consultation process that resulted in a re-assessment of all rivers. Most rivers have now been categorized as per 2016 though the Kerry and the Badachro rivers are now category 1.
- At this point PC's report was interrupted to allow JC and three students from the Gairloch High School to report the progress they have made in the production of an App for the Angling Information project. The App will be able to report fish catches and Invasive Non Native Species though on different platforms. It will also be capable of supplying information on local weather forecasts and fishing locations. PayPal could be added as a paying feature for license costs. It will be a simple, clear interface allowing user-friendly technology. The next step is to work up data collection template for the transfer of data back to the web site – this will "focus" the information into a standard format for uploading. The meeting was very impressed with the progress the three students have made and commended their work to date.
- PC mentioned that Sea Change has plans for dive surveys in December within the WR MPA area. BW said that, as well as diving the areas around the new proposed fish farm areas within the WR MPA, dives will place in areas of former fish farms – such as the former sites in Loch Ewe.
- PC noted that apart from their problems with sea lice, fish farms are having increasing problems with amoebic gill disease and there is a need for real focus on identifying and undertaking mitigation measures and not just fine words. There is little doubt that WRF Ltd seems to have developed a good regime of sea lice management – is it simply down to biomass size or a positive management approach or a combination of the two? PC will arrange a visit to Ardmair to see at first-hand what is being carried out.
- SELF/Sea Change have applied to the HLF for funding for a marine survey of the south Skye sea lochs. They have links with SNH and Universities for this project that has the main emphasis on collecting data/information. Once collected, the data/information can be used to make informed responses to future aquaculture planning applications.
- There is on-going discussion regarding fishing for sea trout in sea lochs – in particular, how best to inform the public about the law on fishing for sea trout.
- There is still on-going concern relating to ScotGov's Assessment of Salmon Conservation Status despite the fact that input from WRASFB has changed the status on a number of rivers within our area. However the Badachro and the Kerry remain as Category One rivers. There is to be a meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 to discuss/improve methodology.
- PC said that there is a possible project on Loch Maree spawning burns with a view to improving their habitat. PC will progress and set up various workdays.
- There is also a potential project on wrasse – possibly in conjunction with WRF Ltd. PC will work this project up and present it to the WRFT board of trustees.
- DD will undertake Salmon/Trout in the Classroom at his nearby primary school (Carbost).
- It was noted that the River Kishorn (owned by the Applecross Trust) has not been classified under the ScotGov's Assessment of Salmon Conservation Status due to lack of any information and has therefore automatically been classified as Category Three. Some fishing occurs on the lowest beat (Mark Pattinson has the fishing rights here) of the river but there is no management, as such, of the river.

#### 5. **Planning Ahead**

##### **5.i Telemetry project – see 1.i**

##### **5.ii & iii FMO Plans.**

Following considerable consultation of both Skye and WRFT trustees and members, there is clear support for the amalgamation of Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trusts' areas as our desired FMO. The resultant proposal document (with input from a number of sources including Barrie Blake) sets out the case clearly and succinctly and will be put to ScotGov as soon as possible. It should be noted that the long awaited "Template" from ScotGov is still unavailable but our document will include

information regarding a robust business and enforcement plans. ScotGov's vision (relayed via FMS) sees FMOs as amalgamations of both boards and trusts with relevant assets going to the new FMOs. But where the existing Fisheries Trusts are charities transfer of assets will not be allowed except to a similar registered charity.

FMS has a role in short to medium term and to that end the amalgamated Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust should join FMS (for a subscription of £1K annually). Failing to join FMS means that any fisheries trust would be left isolated.

We need to be aware of timescales as well as up to date information on charitable status.

#### **5.iv FMS – do we join?**

It was agreed unanimously that the S&WRFT would join FMS.

## **6. AOB**

### **6.i Angling Information Project**

See 4 bullet point two.

### **6.ii FMS (Board) Member Nomination.**

BW stated that he was prepared to be nominated by the WRASFB as a candidate for the FMS Board Member elections in January 2017. The meeting agreed that this nomination was important for West Coast representation on the new FMS Board.

## **7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
23/03/2017	WRFT Office	11.00	Proposed
22/06/2017	WRFT Office	11.00	Proposed