

MINUTES OF TRUSTEES' MEETING

WESTER ROSS FISHERIES TRUST OFFICES		PRESENT:	
DATE:	10 October 2013	John Mackenzie (JM)	David Barclay (DB)
OPENED AT:	10.30	Mark Williams (MW)	Richard Wilson (RW)
CLOSED AT:	14.45	Angus Davidson (AD)	Nigel Pearson (NP)
IN ATTENDANCE:		APOLOGIES:	
Peter Cunningham (PC)	Matthew Curran (MC)	Henry Dalgety (HD)	Richard Greene (RG)
Peter Jarosz (PJ)	Veronica Mullaney (VM)	Melanie Smith (MS)	Bob Kindness (BK)
Mary Gibson (MG)			

1. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the 1st August 2013 minutes – which were proposed by NP seconded by MW.

2. WRFT Chairman

2.i Following his announcement, earlier this year, of retiring as chairman after five years in that office, John Mackenzie retired as chairman and resigned as trustee of WRFT. JM offered his thanks to all who have been with the trust over his period as chairman.

2.ii DB, on behalf of the trust, thanked JM for his five years as chairman – a post he originally took as a six month temporary “stand-in” arrangement.

JM then left the meeting.

2.iii Back in November 2011 when Barry Blake’s term of office ceased, DB was appointed vice-chairman with the purpose of his taking on the post of chairman once JM retired. DB was proposed as chairman by NP, seconded by MW and duly appointed by unanimous consent.

2.iv The new chairman then outlined his overview for future meetings:

- Meetings should be project orientated with the agenda fixed and circulated one week ahead of each meeting
- Chairman, RM and PJ to look at the finance details prior to each meeting so leaving only substantive questions for the meeting
- WRFT should be the scientific and doing arm of the board
- WRFT needs to acknowledge the presence of aquaculture and work on issues and solutions
- WRFT also needs to widen its scope of membership and involvement
- WRFT most importantly needs to strengthen links with WRASFB
- DB will approach WRASFB and individual members of the board.

3. FINANCE REPORTS

3.i Cash Projections

The current cash projection (end of September) needs updating with the latest budget figures (see 3.iii).

3.ii Management Reports

Management reports will now be dealt with in prior meetings (see bullet point 2 under 2.iv)

3.iii 2013-14 Budget

- A revised budget, prepared by VM and PJ, is indicating a £26K loss for this financial year. With £65K in both current and deposit accounts, this loss, though less than originally forecast, will nevertheless take the trust’s reserves down.
- WRFT needs more projects and hence more funding to reverse this financial downward trend – a 5year budget would best tackle this current lack of projects.
- WRASFB is currently offering £11k to WRFT for specific projects – could this be increased by making the case to WRASFB of the scientific role WRFT can offer and the value for money the service WRFT can provide.
- To this end it would be valuable for a WRFT trustee to attend board meetings and a board member to attend trust meetings.
- MC’s appointment is for 18 months but his role for WRFT is dependent upon the sourcing of funding by MC for projects that will cover his WRFT costs. This will need to be reviewed in the short term if funding is not found. Meanwhile, a meeting with UHI will be arranged to

- Because of a change of science teacher at Plockton it was decided not to do Living Lochs in that school this year. Next year we will do Living Lochs in two high schools followed by the third high school in 2014/5 - the funding is in place for Living Lochs for all three schools over the next two years and this has been agreed with the Nineveh Charitable Trust.
- We currently have no funding in place for S&T in the Classroom – though there is a possibility of MH funding. We need to clarify what content MH might want to see involved. There is also possible funding from SNH for a specific aspect of the project.
- The Angling Information web site is up and running but does need to be populated with links to hotels etc. Will be done over the winter but there is the need for someone to be responsible for it – MC will look at on-going funding opportunities for this.

3.iv Southern River Proprietors' Contributions

Re-appraisal of the contributions of the Southern River Proprietors' contributions has been on-going for some time now a four week consultation (with the Southern Proprietors) will now be undertaken by NP before any invoices are issued for this year.

With the need for additional trustees a possible trustee from the Arnisdale area could prove invaluable in building and maintaining bridges with the Southern Proprietors – should he accept.

4 BIOLOGISTS' REPORT

4.i PC's Report - see report from Peter C (attached below).

Précising his report PC stated that:

- The Tournai trap, after some repairs earlier in the year, is now on-going. MH have again funded the trap and it was agreed that WRFT should invite D Hunter to come and see the trap and join the next meeting.
- The River Ewe proprietors meet on 1st October and agreed to fund a reduced stocking programme on the Bruachaig. The eggs from the current brood-stock will be used and there is a possible link to students' projects that could monitor the stocking and its results.
- Sea lice have been high in the north of the trust's area – this data along with other relevant information was used by WRASFB in its response to the Loch Kannaird application. Sea lice have also been high though later in the year around Loch Alsh, Arnisdale and Torridon.
- RW asked about rumours that he had heard of gill disease on some farms – PC said that he had not seen any this year though it had been a problem last year on a number of farms.
- There is the potential for two MPAs within the WRFT area so a joint response from both WRFT and WASFB would seem appropriate.
- WRFT is involved in the continuing mink programme – its role, funded through RAFTS, is one of monitoring.
- Two Glasgow university students are running a MSC project (under IBIS) on ferrox trout and arctic charr. This involves: collecting brood-stock of normal and ferrox trout (possibly sea trout); grow on eggs monitoring for any differences in growth rate. The fish used as brood-stock will be from the spawning burns of Loch Maree. There will be some genetic work as well to distinguish different populations and they will be looking at nitrogen signatures within these spawning burns.

4.ii MC's Report

- MC has been appointed as Research Assistant to primarily lead in developing projects proposals and their funding applications. He will improve links with other universities (Aberdeen and Glasgow) with student projects.
- He is working on developing a Project Framework which can then be utilised to turn ideas quickly into projects. The best projects (management related ones) will then be worked up into funding proposals for submission to relevant grant funders.
- Some initial ideas include:
 1. Predator/biodiversity study on the River Carron

3. Comparison of slice treated versus untreated smolts
4. Comparison of known heavily liced river versus unliced river
5. Signage for fisheries management on River Ewe and Loch Maree
6. Bruachaig restoration projects:
 - Research why there are no returning salmon to the Bruachaig despite the years of stocking
 - Identify the cause of the decline
 - Ideas to tackle the above – radio tagging experiment
 - PC is the key source of information
 - Genetics could prove the importance of questions you are trying to answer
 - Genetics could prove the importance of sample size
 - Genetics could prove techniques

5. PLANNING AHEAD

5.i Work Programme

PC will be working up the planned programme (core work, contracts, funded work) against the management plan and its headings.

5.ii Angling Advisory Service

See 3.ii bullet point eight..

5.iii Bruachaig

See points relating to the Bruachaig in BIOLOGISTS' REPORTS above.

5.iv New Trustees

Richard Wilson agreed to be re-elected on the understanding that he will retire early in the New Year – his decision was unanimously accepted.

The need for new trustees is now obvious and possible options were discussed including Ewen Ballantyne to whom PJ will send a letter of invite.

6. AOB:

6.i Sources of funding

Possible sources of funding for projects and work of the trust could include:

- Aquaculture companies
- Hydro-scheme companies
- Proprietors
- Student projects involving more strategic issues
- Charitable trusts

6.ii Crown Estate Meeting

PJ reported that the Crown Estate meeting (involving both Aquaculture, trusts and boards) aired a number of items of interest and agreed that a joint approach to the Scottish Government on a single issue might prove the worth of these meetings.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

NEXT MEETINGS	DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Trustees' meeting	12/12/2013	WRFT Office	10.30
Trustees' meeting	06/03/2014	WRFT Office	10.30
Trustees' meeting	TBA	WRFT Office	10.30

ADDENDUM: As well as RW being up for re-election Richard Greene is also due for re-election and this fact was overlooked during our meeting. Subsequently a "round robin" conducted by email has resulted in an unanimous vote of approval for RG's new term as trustee.