

RIVER DOON DISTRICT
SALMON FISHERY BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Clerk to the Board: Iain K Clark, LLB (Hons), Dip LP, NP
c/o Gilson Gray LLP, 160 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2HQ
Direct: +44 (0)141 530 2025 **Mobile:** +44 (0)7908 022 304
Email: RiverDoonDSFB@gilsongray.co.uk
Website: www.doonfishing.co.uk



LIST OF CONTENTS

1	<u>River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board Members</u>	3
2	<u>River Doon DSFB Members' Attendance</u>	3
3	<u>Chairman's Report</u>	4
4	<u>Statutory Remit</u>	6
	(a) Aims of The Board.....	6
	(b) The Catchment Area.....	6
	(c) Key Features	7
5	<u>Summary of the Work done by the Board</u>	8
	(a) Report from the Clerk to the Board	8
	(b) Report on Fishery Assessments	10
	(c) Consultation Responses.....	13
	(d) Governance.....	14
	(e) Annual Catch Returns	17
	(f) Audited Statement of Accounts	19
	i. To 31 December 2019.....	20
	ii. To 31 December 2020.....	25
	iii. To 31 December 2021.....	30
	(g) Code of Practice	35
	(h) Enforcement Issues/Water Bailiffing.....	38
	(i) Scientific Report.....	39
6	<u>Future Work of the Board</u>	47
	(a) Report on Expected Budget	48
	(b) Proposed Works for Discussion/Agreement.....	49
7	<u>Acknowledgements</u>	56



1. River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board Members

Chairman:	Alan Macdonald	Doonside Estate
Board Members:	Iain Campbell Mark Colman (Mandatory) David Cosh Lawrence Dalglish Martin Donachy Carlos Van Heddegem Peter Kennedy	Smithston Fishing Club Smithston Fishing Club Doonfoot Fishings Blackhill, Rozelle Woodlands Holms Fishing Doonholm House (retired)
Co-opted Member:	Peter Kennerley	Auchendrane House
Associate:	Stuart Brabbs	Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Clerk:	Iain K Clark	Gilson Gray LLP, Glasgow

2. River Doon DSFB Members' Attendance

Date	Alan Macdonald	Iain Campbell	Mark Colman	David Cosh	Lawrence Dalglish	Martin Donachy	Carlos Van Heddegem	Peter Kennedy	Peter Kennerley
24/03/21	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
29/06/21	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
03/12/21	x		x	x	x	x	x		x
17/02/22	x		x	x	x	x	x		x





3. Chairman's Report

As I sit down to write this short introduction to our Annual Report, the Covid threat appears once again to be still with us. We must hope that this latest variant proves to be milder in its effect than some fears. The pandemic has damaged some people lives and damaged so many businesses in so many ways, however we are resilient and we are getting better and better at operating in this new environment.

It is against this background that the current Board were elected.

The election resulted in Martin Donachy being appointed to the Board and we thank Peter Kennedy, a past Chairman, for all his work in the past prior to his decision to retire from the Board.

Our Clerk to the Board, Austin Thomson, also retired last year and I am delighted to welcome Iain Clark as the new Clerk to the Board and he has been a breath of fresh air in shaping out exactly how the Board should operate going forward.

At the heart of the Board's attention is the health and wellbeing of the River Doon, in particular the wild Atlantic salmon. We all know that the Atlantic salmon is under pressure, facing as it does many threats. The Report from Dr David Summers of the Tay District Salmon Fishery Board on the 2020/21 season will come as no surprise and its message will sadly be repeated across many if not all the Scottish Rivers.

We must not lose sight of the fact however that the River Doon is a Category 2 River and we may well find that we have sustained our catch this year better than the other big 4 rivers in Scotland.

Catch return for the 2021 season was 498 salmon and this was a huge increase from the previous 6 years, where the average catch had been around 300 salmon. Let's hope the River Doon will continue with this upward trend that will undoubtedly help the Riparian Owners who let out their fishings.

The Board are acutely aware of frustration up and down the river about piscivorous birds and seals. These are national issues faced by most Scottish rivers. It is also fair to say that the opportunities through the licensing process to address these issues is increasingly difficult. The Board is aware that criticism is often directed at them for not providing solutions to these problems. Sadly this is a failure to understand the nature of the problem. This year the Scottish Government have rejected all Fishery Board applications to control seals under licence. However, we have again been able to obtain the license to shoot these piscivorous birds until the end of the April and my thanks go to David Cosh in his continued support in this direction.

Many of you will be aware that land use in Scotland has entered a period of sustained and landscape scale change. These changes could be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of rivers but equally they could be of benefit. Extensive



new tree planting of the right species in the right places could be good, as could large scale peat land restoration projects. The Scottish Government have just closed their latest consultation on the future of agriculture, with a clear drive towards sustainable food production, which again could be of benefit. It is vital that the voice of salmon fishing is heard throughout this period of change.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to the current Board. It is a pleasure and a privilege to lead them. They have worked hard to move the work of the Board forward over the last 12 months and I am sure their commitment and enthusiasm will see us through these challenging and changing times.

Alan Macdonald, Chairman, River Doon DSFB





4. **Statutory Remit**

The River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board was established under the 1862 and 1868 Salmon Fisheries legislation, as subsequently amended in the Salmon Act 1986 and the Salmon Conservation (Scotland) Act 2001. This legislation was later amalgamated under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 (**“the 2003 Act”**), which has subsequently been amended by the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Acts 2007 and 2013.

The River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board is empowered under Part 3 of the 2003 Act to manage the protection, enhancement and conservation of the Atlantic salmon and sea trout stocks in the River Doon. It also has a duty to ensure the general protection and improvement of the fisheries within their district.

(a) Aims of The Board

- Provide fishery protection.
- Police the purchase and sale of illegally caught and unseasonable fish.
- Ensure fish passage over obstructions to migrations.
- Protect juvenile fish and spawning redds.
- Reverse the trend in the decline of adult Atlantic salmon by implementing policies that safeguard and enhance the natural spawning stock.
- Conduct habitat, population and migration assessments to guide management strategies.
- Encourage good conservation policies to stop over exploitation of salmon.
- Conserve and establish sustainable fisheries for the River Doon.
- Extend fishery awareness.

(b) The Catchment Area

The head waters of the River Doon are the burns and streams feeding Loch Doon from the north edge of the Galloway Forest Park. The river is just over 63 kilometres long (including the Loch) and flows north-west, close to the town of Dalmellington, through the villages of Patna and Dalrymple before entering the Firth of Clyde just south of Ayr.

The loch has been dammed to supply and store water for the Galloway Hydro-electric power. There is a net loss of water to the system although there is a compensation flow agreement which maintains water quality and flow levels throughout the year.

The river has a catchment area of 324 square kilometres. The main land uses are rough grassland, improved grassland and woodland, the majority of which consists of conifer plantations. The only significant industry is open cast coal mining in the vicinity of Dalmellington.

The geology of the Doon catchment varies from the granite headwater hills to the limestone coal measures in the middle reaches. Water chemistry



mirrors the geology ranging from low productivity and intermittent acidic conditions in the upper tributaries to the highly productive, alkaline tributaries downstream of Dalmellington.

(c) Key Features

- The source of the Doon is Loch Enoch, high up in the Galloway Hills at an altitude of 500m.
- Loch Doon supports the only native population of Arctic Charr in the south west of Scotland. This population is considered to be under threat due to issues such as acidification, climate change and the introduction of alien species. Sentinel populations of Doon charr have been established in two other lochs in the south of Scotland to provide a pool of genetic material as insurance for the loss of the Doon population.
- The River Doon itself starts at the outlet of Loch Doon. The compensation flow of 45 million gallons/day was agreed as part of the Galloway Water Power Act in 1935.
- Below Loch Doon the river cascades down through Ness Glen, a spectacular gorge, dropping 130 feet in less than one mile.
- Although there are several small to medium sized sewage treatment works discharging into the river the relatively high flows in the Doon provide sufficient dilution to maintain water quality
- The Doon catchment is relatively narrow and there are few large tributaries below Loch Doon. The most significant of these are the Muck Water, Cummock Burn, Dunaskin Burn and Culroy Burn.
- Common fish species include salmon, brown and sea trout, arctic charr, stone loach, minnows, sticklebacks, eels, lampreys, pike and perch.
- Apart from Loch Doon there are several large stillwaters in the catchment, including Bogton Loch and Martnaham Loch. These lochs provide excellent habitat for pike and perch.
- The Doon was historically renowned for its pearl mussel fishery. There is still a remnant population present in the river although there is little evidence of recent successful spawning.
- The main stem of the Doon has an abundant population of Saucer bugs *Aphelocheirus aestivalis*. Saucer bugs, which require high quality water, are only found in 5 or 6 rivers in Scotland.
- There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the catchment e.g. Loch Doon, Ness Glen, Bogton Moss and Dalmellington Moss.



5. Summary of the Work done by the Board

(a) Report from the Clerk to the Board

Since I took over the role from the former Clerk, Austin Thomson, in April 2021, it is fair to say that there has been a considerable amount of work undertaken, due to the disruption caused to the former Clerk and his secretary by furlough of personnel / COVID-19 constraints. A summary of the work is noted below:

1. Meeting with, and various calls and correspondence over some months with the former Clerk and his secretary regarding information and documentation required to make an effective handover of the role; and to bring the Board's records up to date.
2. Dealing with the renewal of the Board's Registration as a data controller to process personal data with the Information Commissioner's Office under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
3. Extensive correspondence and various calls with various Riparian Owners, former Owners and New Owners, the Secretary to the Clerk to the Board regarding outstanding Fishery Assessments; and preparing and updating a detailed Fishery Assessment Spreadsheet (on an almost daily basis) to update the Board's records, as payments were made, queries made and answered; and to establish remaining Arrears of Fishery Assessments; and reporting to the Board.
4. Calls and correspondence with Senior Valuer at Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board to obtain Valuation Roll Extracts; and then liaising with her over months; and then submitting updated records to have the Valuation Roll updated to reflect the updating of the Board's records
5. Letters to Riparian Owners and Tenants enclosing Fishery Assessment Notices 2021/2022, and Reminders and Second Reminders
6. Detailed analysis of previous Assessment Rates and preparation of Reports for Board re Proposed Fishery Assessments Rates
7. Receiving transfer of funds from the former Clerk's firm and thereafter receiving processing, and accounting for the payments of Fishery Assessments and Fishery Assessment Arrears and making payment of the expenditure approved by the Board.
8. Review of financial position/Preparation of Finance Updates for Board
9. Correspondence with Azets regarding the preparation of the Draft Accounts to 31 December 2020, and 31 December 2021, and associated Corporation Tax Return
10. Issuing Calling Notices, collating and issuing Board packs, taking and extending Minutes for Board Meetings, including publication on the Board's Website and liaising with Ayrshire Rivers Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland for publication on their websites



11. Updating the Board's Angling Code of Practice, as directed by the Board, and in liaison with Stuart Brabbs of Ayrshire Rivers Trust; and sending this to the Riparian Owners, Clubs and Associations; and publishing on the Board's Website.
12. Liaising with various Board Members, Stuart Brabbs of Ayrshire Rivers Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland, in order to draft, revise and submit responses to various Consultations (see below)
13. Calls, correspondence and virtual meetings with Fisheries Management Scotland, supported by Stuart Brabbs of Ayrshire Rivers Trust, regarding a number of matters.
14. Attended the Missing Salmon Alliance ("MSA") Workshop on 22 June 2021, with Stuart Brabbs of ART, representing the Board to find out more about the work of the MSA and partner organisations.
15. Drafting and updating various Good Governance Documents: Draft Policy on Members' Interests, Draft Meetings Protocol and Draft Complaints Procedure (with input and assistance from Martin Donachy and Peter Kennerley) and publishing those on the Board's website after approval by the Board, and sending to the Scottish Ministers in accordance with the Good Governance obligations
16. Liaising with Stuart Brabbs, Ayrshire Rivers Trust re website access; and then making regular changes on the Board's Website (www.doonfishing.co.uk)
17. Calls and correspondence with Drax Galloway Hydros, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and ART regarding works at Loch Doon Dam; and arranging freshets as part of water compensation agreement, when required.
18. Dealing with all correspondence sent to the Board, as appropriate.
19. Providing general advice and support to the Board, as required, including consideration of matters relating to the escape of almost 50,000 farmed salmon from Mowi Scotland's Carradale North farm on 20 August 2020; and liaising with other organisations, as appropriate.
20. Letter to Riparian Owners, Clubs and Associations enclosing Annual Catch Return Forms, sending reminders; and liaising with David Cosh, Recorder and Board Member, and Stuart Brabbs of Ayrshire Rivers Trust, collating Annual Catch Returns, updating the Board's records, and preparing summary spreadsheet for inclusion in Annual Report
21. Correspondence with Board Members and Meeting of Sub-Committee of the Board re Bailiffs and Enforcement
22. Preparation of the Draft Annual Report, including drafting and collation of reports from various Board Members

Iain K Clark, Clerk to the River Doon DSFB



(b) Report on Fishery Assessments

The Clerk to the Board prepared detailed Reports to the Board for their consideration. A summary of the key points to note from the Board's reasoning and decisions is below.

i. Introduction

The Board has the power under *section 44 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 Act* to impose Fishery Assessments, which are “...assessed at such uniform rate as is determined for all fisheries in the district by the board and shall be exigible according to the valuation of a fishery as entered in the valuation roll.”

Therefore, the Board requires, each year, to determine the rate at which Fishery Assessments are assessed and issue Fishery Assessment Notices for payment by the Riparian Owners/Tenants. Ultimately, responsibility for payment rests with the Riparian Owners for the relevant year (which for these purposes, runs from 1 April to 31 March).

ii. Updating of the Board's Records regarding Ownership/Tenancies

It is critical, therefore, that the Board's records are fully up to date, to ensure that the correct persons receive the Assessments, as well as other information issued by the Board.

Following extensive investigations, correspondence, and the issuing of First and Second Reminders, as mandated by the Board, the Clerk to the Board has been able to comprehensively update the current Fishery Assessment List; and has been liaising with the Senior Valuer at Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board to ensure that the Valuation Roll is updated in accordance with the Board's Records.

It is worthy of note that there were many occasions where this process was hampered by out of date information; and the fact that a number of sales and transfers of ownership of land, associated Riparian Owners' rights and tenancies had not been notified to the River Doon DSFB or to the Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board.

It is critical that any such changes of ownership/tenancy are notified timeously. We therefore request cooperation and assistance from the Riparian Owners, Tenants, Clubs and Associations to maintain accurate records; and to notify us timeously of any change of ownership or tenancy, together with the date of transfer and any payment arrangements e.g. to apportion payment of Fishery Assessments.

Also, if you have not already done so, please email the Clerk to the Board with your email address and telephone contact numbers, which will aid more efficient communication with the Board (and help to keep costs down for the Board).



iii. Previous Fishery Assessment Rates – 2015 to 2020

In fixing the Annual Rate for Fishery Assessments, the Board considered matters in the context of previous decisions fixing the Rates of Fishery Assessment and the associated reasoning, summarised as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value of River</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Value from Assessments</u>	<u>Comments/Reasoning</u>
2015/2016	£68,250.00	None	£0.00	Scottish Government uncertainty re whether Boards to continue
2016/2017	£68,250.00	15p	£10,237.50	Low Assessment rate agreed
2017/2018	£62,090.00	25p	£15,522.50	River Value reduced by £6,169.00 after Re-Valuation
2018/2019	£61,240.00	35p	£21,434.00	More realistic rate – issued 1 May 2018
2019/2020	£61,040.00	25p	£15,260.00	River Value reduced by £200 following successful Appeals Rate reduced by 10p - falling salmon catches and other salmon fishing issues
2020/2021	£60,090.00	15p	£9,013.50	Rate further reduced by 10p – poor season, COVID-19 etc – N.B. not issued until 15/12/20 (after fishing season ended) – affected cashflow

iv. Fishery Assessment Rate for 2021/2022

The Board was fully aware that COVID-19 caused problems for everyone, including the fishing community. As a consequence of lockdown, falling catch numbers, lack of fishing effort and the fact that some clubs have been struggling, the Board took account of their decision in the previous year (2020/2021), for one year only, to set the Fishery Assessment Rate at a much reduced rate of 15 pence.

This was in the context of the previous Fishery Assessment Rates noted above and took account of the fact that, due to COVID-19, the Annual Fishery Assessment Notices were delayed in being issued in the previous year until 15 December 2020, and therefore affecting cashflow for the Board.

The Board met on 3 December 2021 and decided that, considering all these circumstances, but also the need to provide sufficient funds to cover necessary expenditure to meet the Board's statutory obligations of protection or improvement of the fisheries within the River Doon Catchment Area, the Assessment Rate for 2021/2022 was fixed at 30 pence.

v. Report on Fishery Assessments outstanding at 31 December 2021

Due to the significant disruption caused to the former Clerk and his secretary by furlough of personnel / COVID-19 constraints, the new Clerk to the Board required to undertake significant work, including a complete overhaul of the record-keeping, development of a new system of issuing, engathering and monitoring Fishery Assessments and Arrears of Assessments (some of them outstanding for several years) and the Current Assessments for the year 2021/2022, which were, due to the previous disruption, once again issued in December 2021.

The Summary of the Outstanding Assessments at 31 December 2021 was as follows:

SUMMARY POSITION AT 31 December 2021			
RECOVERED BY GGLLP	% RECOVERED	TOTAL OUTSTANDING	
£2,567.30	51%	£2,502.00	Arrears
£7,695.00	44%	£9,732.00	2021/2022
£10,262.30	46%	£12,234.00	TOTAL

vi. Update on Fishery Assessments to 31 March 2022

Following further enquiries, calls and correspondence, and the issuance of Reminders (and in some cases, Second Reminders), the Summary of the Outstanding Assessments at 31 March 2022 was as follows:

SUMMARY POSITION AT 31 March 2022			
RECOVERED BY GGLLP	% RECOVERED	TOTAL OUTSTANDING	
£4,084.80	85% *	£658.50	Arrears
		£517.50	* Excludes amount disputed (currently being investigated)
£16,773.00	96% *	£901.50	2021/2022
£20,857.80	94% *	£2,077.50	TOTALS
		£43.20	Written Off as Bad Debt
		£1,400.00	On Hold (AVJB discussions)

vii. Fishery Assessment Rate for 2022/2023

The Board met on 17 February 2022 and discussed that, based on all the circumstances, particularly acknowledging the difficult two years preceding (i.e. 2020 and 2021), but the desire to provide for monies to help fund projects on the river, and to provide for some degree of contingency, the rate would be fixed again at 30p per £. The Clerk will issue the Assessment Notices in April/May 2022, once the updated Valuation Roll has been provided by Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board.



(c) Consultation Responses

The Board considers that it is an important part of its role to respond appropriately to Consultations from Scottish Government, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and other organisations.

During 2021, Responses to Consultations were made on behalf of the River Doon Salmon Fishery Board as follows:

- i. In May 2021, Ayrshire Rivers Trust (“**ART**”) and David Cosh (on behalf of the Board) submitted Objections to the three Controlled Activities Regulations (“CAR”) licence applications for Dawnfresh’s proposed trout farms in the inner Clyde out for consultation via the SEPA website
- ii. On Friday 25 June 2021 a Response was submitted by the Clerk on behalf of the Board to the SEPA Consultation on the 3rd River Basin Management Plan, this SEPA Consultation, based primarily on the Response prepared by Stuart Brabbs of ART, whose considerable input was appreciated; and with input from Alan Macdonald and Martin Donachy.
- iii. On 5 July 2021, the Clerk, on behalf of the Board submitted a Response to the SEPA Consultation on Scottish Salmon Company Limited: North Arran CAR, submitted with the usual assistance of Stuart Brabbs, ART.
- iv. On 31 July 2021, the Response for the Board to the Scottish Government Consultation on Fish farm Containment Code of Practice was submitted (due to the combined efforts from David Cosh, Stuart Brabbs, ART and Clerk to the Board).
- v. On 3 November 2021, on behalf of the Board, the Clerk endorsed the Objection by Fisheries Management Scotland to Scottish Ministers relating to the CAR licence Application made by Dawnfresh Limited re Little Cumbræe.

Escaped farmed fish are shown to have negative impacts on wild salmon populations through genetic impacts arising from interbreeding. Hybridization between wild and escaped farmed salmon can reduce wild salmon production and survival, in addition to direct ecological interactions such as competition for food and habitat. If you capture a farmed salmon, it should be humanely killed. If possible, a sample of scales should be taken, which will allow us to confirm that the fish is of farmed origin.



WANTED

Please report any information on the above issues through our app by scanning the QR code opposite OR by accessing the link at <http://fms.scot/we-need-your-help-information-wanted-on-salmon/>





(d) Governance

i. Introduction:

The *Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013* requires all District Salmon Fishery Boards to operate in an open, transparent and accountable manner.

The River Doon DSFB has prepared this Annual Report in compliance with the Guidance on Good Governance Obligations:

- *Section 44 (1)* requires preparation of an Annual Report and a Statement of Accounts (which shall be audited) relating to the activities of the Board. The report and accounts are to be considered by an Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors.
- *Section 44 (1A)* requires the Clerk of the Board to arrange for the final Annual Report and Audited Accounts to be published and a copy of these to be sent to Scottish Ministers. Publication is to take place as soon as practicable after the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors.
- *Section 44 (1B)* defines the final Annual Report and Audited Accounts as those submitted for consideration at the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors or, if they are revised following that meeting, the revised versions.
- *Section 46A* requires that the Annual Report contains specific information: a summary of the activity carried out by the Board under their statutory functions in the reporting year; a summary of the proposed activity of the Board for the year to come; information on complaints made to the Board during the reporting period (their number, a statement of the nature of each and how it was disposed of); and a statement of how the Board has complied with the good governance requirements of the *Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003* (**“the 2003 Act”**) during the course of the reporting year and how they propose to comply in the year to come.

ii. Statement of Compliance:

The River Doon DSFB has introduced policies and documents, as detailed below, in order to comply with the good governance requirements of the 2003 Act. As part of this the River Doon DSFB voluntarily adheres to the Scottish Government’s District Salmon Fishery Boards Guidance on Good Governance Obligations (August 2013) and proposes to continue to comply in the year to come in the same way.



In particular, the River Doon DSFB has operated as follows:

○ Meetings Protocol

- The Board's Protocol on Meetings is published on the Board's website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The Annual Meetings for 2020 and 2021 were postponed due to COVID-19 measures in place, following the Guidance issued by Scottish Government and Fisheries Management Scotland.
- The Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors was held on 31 March 2022 at the Western House Hotel, 66 Craigie Road, AYR KA8 0HA.
- This meeting was publicised on the Board's Website, and through the Websites of Ayrshire Rivers Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland. A copy of the notice was also sent to the Scottish Government on 24 March 2022. No members of the public chose to attend. The minutes from this meeting can be viewed at <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The Annual Public Meeting is due to take place on 28 April 2022 at the Western House Hotel, 66 Craigie Road, AYR KA8 0HA.
- This meeting was publicised on the Board's Website, and through the Websites of Ayrshire Rivers Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland. A copy of the notice was also sent to the Scottish Government on 8 April 2022.
- The minutes from this meeting will be published on the Board's Website at <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- Due to COVID-19 constraints, in 2020 and 2021, meetings were restricted.
- Meetings of the Board were held on 24 March 2021, 29 June 2021 (both of those meetings were held by Zoom in private due to COVID-19 measures in place, following the Guidance issued by Scottish Government and Fisheries Management Scotland) and in person on 3 December 2021 and 17 February 2022. These meetings were publicised on the Board's Website, and through the Websites of Ayrshire Rivers Trust and Fisheries Management Scotland.
- No members of the public chose to attend each Board Meeting.
- The minutes from these meetings can be viewed on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>

○ Declaration of Members' Interests

- The Board's Policy on Members' Interest is published on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The Register of Members' Interests and Declarations are retained by the Clerk to the Board and can be viewed on a written request to the Clerk
- We have included a standing item at each Board meeting inviting Board members to declare new/amend existing interests and all such instances are recorded in the minutes of these meetings.



○ Complaints Policy

- The Board has set up and maintains a Complaints Procedure, which can be viewed on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The procedure is reviewed annually. It was recently updated to reflect the new Scottish Government Good Governance email address for sending documents to the Scottish Ministers.
- There have been no formal complaints during 2021.

○ Annual Report and Audited Statement of Accounts

- This Annual Report will be published on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The Audited Statement of Accounts will be published on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>
- The previous Audited Statements of Accounts have also been published on the Board's Website at: <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/>

○ Reporting to Scottish Government

Since these procedures have been introduced by the Board, all required reporting has been made to the Scottish Ministers using the following address: DSFBGoodGovernance@gov.scot





(e) Annual Catch Returns

- **Summary of Data Collection**

Annual Catch Return Forms were issued to the various Riparian Owners and Tenants in November 2021, requesting completion of a simplified form of Annual Catch Return on behalf of the River Doon DSFB. This was in addition to the statutory requirement upon all Riparian Owners to submit the full Rod and Catch Return Form to Marine Scotland.

Annual Catch Returns were received and collated by David Cosh, Recorder to the Board, and the Clerk to the Board, analysed and the input to a spreadsheet (see below). The vast majority have been received (some after multiple reminders). This data is important, so the cooperation of all Riparian Owners, Tenants, Syndicates and Clubs is much appreciated.

The Clerk to the Board then prepared charts to help in the analysis of the Catch Returns from 2010 to 2021 inclusive.

- **Summary**

Although Ayrshire had drought conditions, the 2021 season was the best on the River Doon since the crash in 2015, where the catches dropped by 50% to 300 fish per season. This year the recorded catch for salmon and grilse was 498, a reasonable increase, unlike other local rivers, perhaps because of the compensation flow from Loch Doon.

It is the first year since 2015 that fish have held up in the lower beats, most of which had a much better season because of that. A slightly higher ratio of salmon to grilse than usual, but still no Autumn run, which historically was the best time on the Doon, although a few salmon were seen going over the Mount Charles Weir in December. The sea trout were virtually missing again!

The River Doon Board are thankful that there seems to be a much improved uptake of the Board's policy of strongly urging 100% catch and release throughout the season, with 95% of fish caught being released this year.

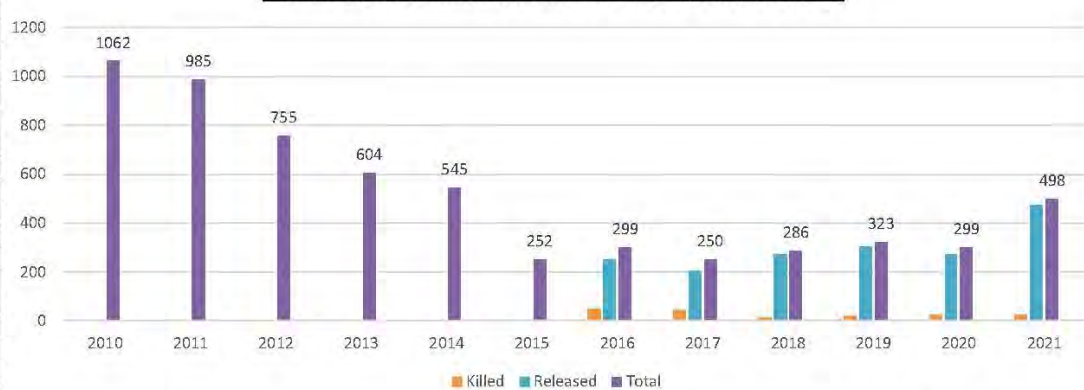
David Cosh, Recorder, River Doon DSFB Member



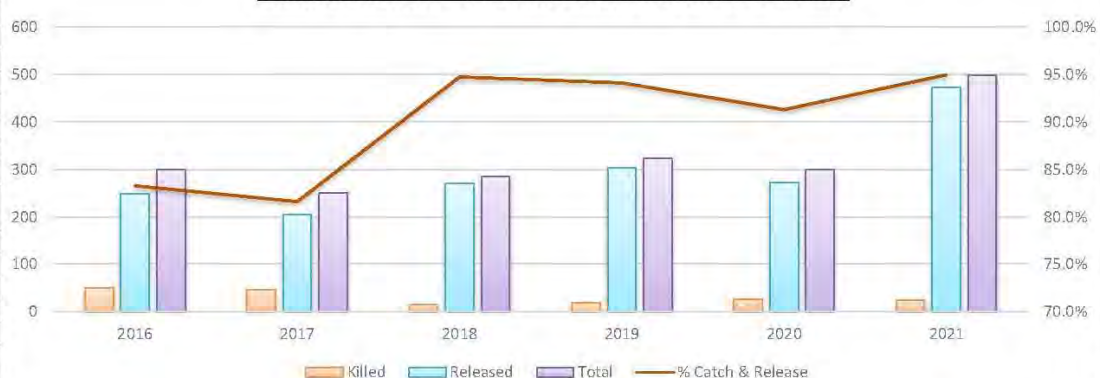
Reported Catches - River Doon - 2010 to 2021

Year		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Salmon & Grilse	Killed	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	46	15	19	26	25
	Released	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	249	204	271	304	273	473
	Total	1062	985	755	604	545	252	299	250	286	323	299	498
	% Catch & Release	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	83.3%	81.6%	94.8%	94.1%	91.3%	95.0%
Sea Trout		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	13	62	35	9	20

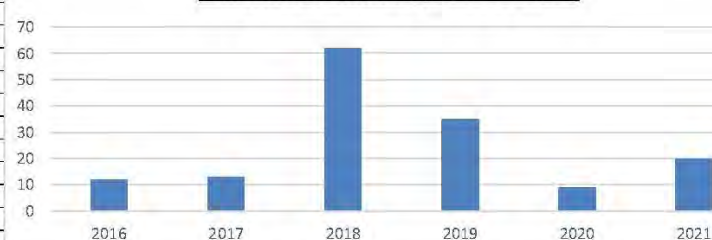
Summary of Salmon & Grilse Catches (2010 to 2021)



Salmon & Grilse - % Catch & Release (2016 to 2021)



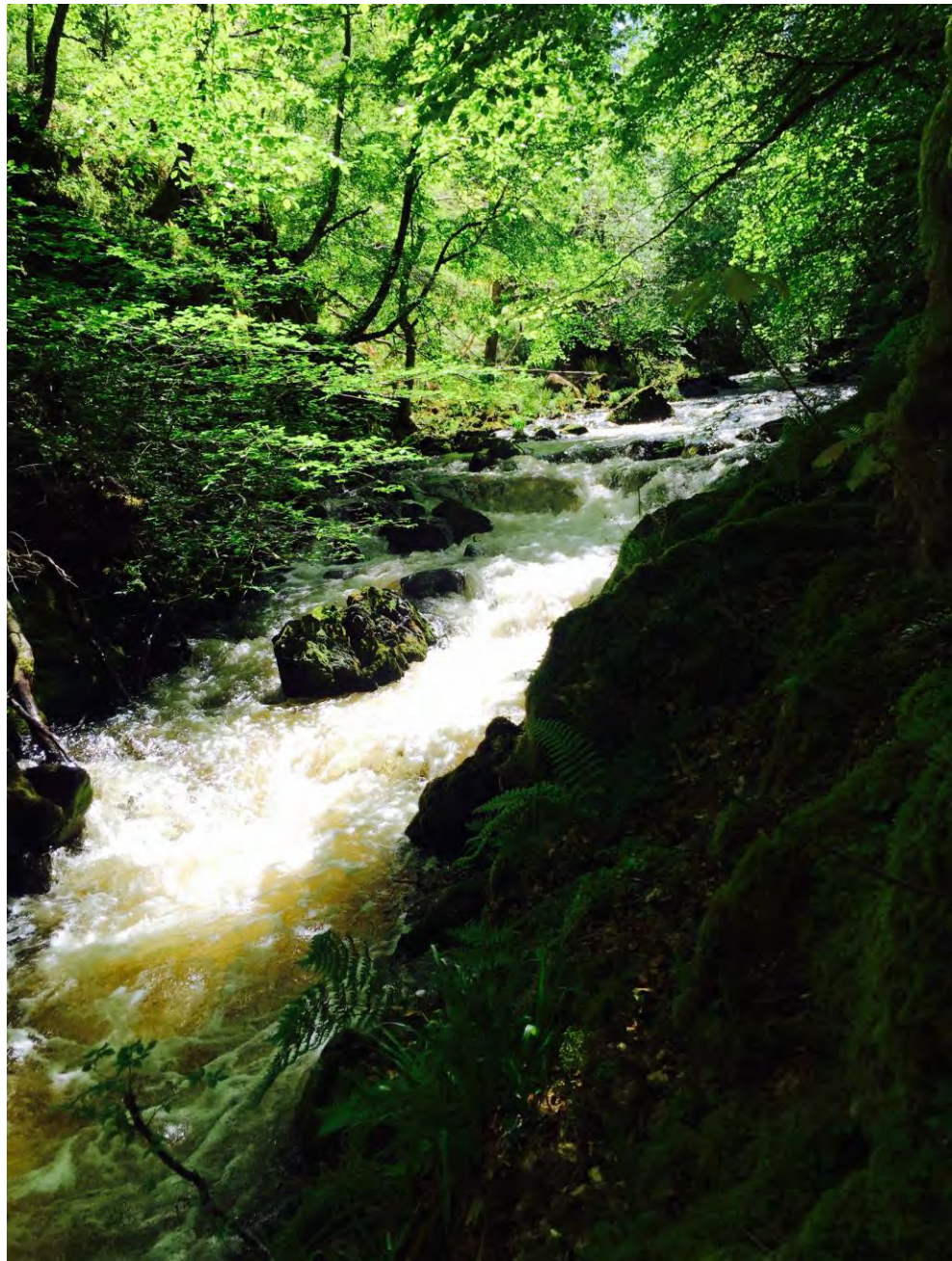
Sea Trout Released (2016 to 2021)



(f) Audited Statement of Accounts

The Audited Statement of Accounts for the years to 31 December 2019 and 31 December 2021, due to the postponement of the Annual Meetings from 2020 and 2021. However, they were approved by the Board at its meeting on 17 February 2022 and were subsequently posted on the Board's website at <http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/about-us/> on 20 February 2022. They are also produced in this Annual Report.

The Draft Audited Statement of Accounts to 31 December 2021 were produced for review and approved at the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors on 31 March 2022.





i. To 31 December 2019

THE RIVER DOON FISHERY BOARD

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RIVER DOON FISHERY BOARD

We have examined the financial statements on pages 2 to 4.

In our opinion, the financial statements, which have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out on page 4, are consistent with the records and vouchers of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2019 and of its surplus for the year then ended.

Azets
3 Wellington Square
Ayr
KA7 1EN

22 December 2020

**THE RIVER DOON FISHERY BOARD**

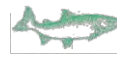
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

	Year to 31.12.19	Year to 31.12.18
	£	£
INCOME		
Assessments	14,469	22,186
Bank and building society interest	<u>162</u>	<u>128</u>
	<u>14,631</u>	<u>22,314</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Bailiffs' expenses incl. travel, dinner	1,050	1,419
Insurance	-	666
Association of Salmon Fishery Board subscription	-	844
Ayrshire Rivers Trust annual contribution	6,418	6,037
Hatchery expenses	-	1,533
Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed control	-	500
Loch Doon project	-	1,000
Clerk's fee (incl. stationery and postage)	3,960	3,960
Accountancy fee	420	420
Sundry	87	475
Taxation	<u>29</u>	<u>24</u>
	<u>11,964</u>	<u>16,878</u>
Surplus for year	2,667	5,436
Surplus brought forward	<u>24,465</u>	<u>19,209</u>
Surplus carried forward	<u>27,132</u>	<u>24,465</u>

**THE RIVER DOON FISHERY BOARD****STATEMENT OF FUNDS ON HAND AS****AT 31 DECEMBER 2019**

	As at 31.12.19	As at 31.12.18
	£	£
ASSETS		
Bank balance	8,524	7,877
National Savings Bank balance	14,603	14,487
Debtors – unpaid assessments	<u>9,831</u>	<u>7,625</u>
	32,958	29,989
LIABILITIES		
Accruals	(420)	(420)
Creditors – overpaid assessments	(1,265)	(993)
Tax payable	(181)	(151)
Due to clerk	<u>(3,960)</u>	<u>(3,960)</u>
	<u>27,132</u>	<u>24,465</u>
Represented by:		
Retained surplus	<u>27,132</u>	<u>24,465</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 17 February 2022



THE RIVER DOON FISHERY BOARD

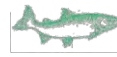
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL

STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR

ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- Except to the extent noted below, the financial statements include cash income and expenditure received and paid during the period.
- Liabilities and income outstanding at 31 December 2019 have been incorporated in the Financial Statements.

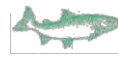


ii. To 31 December 2020

RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERYBOARD

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

We have examined the financial statements on pages 2 to 4.

In our opinion, the financial statements, which have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out on page 4, are consistent with the records and vouchers of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2020 and of its deficit for the year then ended.

Azets
3 Wellington Square
Ayr
KA7 1EN

17 December 2021

**RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD****INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	Year to 31.12.20	Year to 31.12.19
	£	£
INCOME		
Assessments	8,664	14,469
Bank and building society interest	—	<u>162</u>
	<u>8,664</u>	<u>14,631</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Bailiffs' expenses incl. travel, dinner	648	1,050
Fisheries Management Scotland	1,258	-
Ayrshire Rivers Trust annual contribution	6,418	6,418
Fencing	1,514	-
Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed control	-	-
Loch Doon project	-	-
Clerk's fee (incl. stationery and postage)	3,960	3,960
Accountancy fee	480	420
Sundry	40	87
Taxation	—	<u>29</u>
	<u>14,318</u>	<u>11,964</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(5,654)	2,667
Surplus brought forward	<u>27,132</u>	<u>24,465</u>
Surplus carried forward	<u>21,478</u>	<u>27,132</u>

**RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

**STATEMENT OF FUNDS ON HAND
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

	As at 31.12.20	As at 31.12.19
	£	£
ASSETS		
Bank balance	3,084	8,524
National Savings Bank balance	7,603	14,603
Debtors – unpaid assessments	<u>17,357</u>	<u>9,831</u>
	28,044	32,958
LIABILITIES		
Accruals	(900)	(420)
Creditors – overpaid assessments	(1,525)	(1,265)
Tax payable	(181)	(181)
Due to clerk	<u>(3,960)</u>	<u>(3,960)</u>
	<u>21,478</u>	<u>27,132</u>
Represented by:		
Retained surplus	<u>21,478</u>	<u>27,132</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 17 February 2022

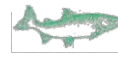


NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- Except to the extent noted below, the financial statements include cash income and expenditure received and paid during the period.
- Liabilities and income outstanding at 31 December 2020 have been incorporated in the Financial Statements.



iii. To 31 December 2021

RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

We have examined the financial statements on pages 2 to 4.

In our opinion, the financial statements, which have been prepared on the basis of the accounting policies set out on page 4, are consistent with the records and vouchers of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2021 and of its surplus for the year then ended.

Azets
3 Wellington Square
Ayr
KA7 1EN

**RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD****INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

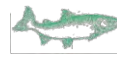
	Year to 31.12.21	Year to 31.12.20
	£	£
INCOME		
Assessments	13,259	8,664
Bank and building society interest	<u>97</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>13,356</u>	<u>8,664</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Bailiffs' expenses incl. travel, dinner	-	648
Fisheries Management Scotland	654	1,258
Ayrshire Rivers Trust annual contribution	6,218	6,418
Fencing	-	1,514
Clerk's fee (incl. stationery and postage)	2,970	3,960
Accountancy fee	500	480
Sundry	99	40
Taxation	<u>18</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>10,459</u>	<u>14,318</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	2,897	(5,654)
Surplus brought forward	<u>21,478</u>	<u>27,132</u>
Surplus carried forward	<u>24,375</u>	<u>21,478</u>

**RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD****STATEMENT OF FUNDS ON HAND****AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021**

	As at 31.12.21	As at 31.12.20
	£	£
ASSETS		
Bank balance	1,678	3,084
National Savings Bank balance	-	7,603
Gilson Gray Deposit account	12,207	-
Debtors – unpaid assessments	<u>12,234</u>	<u>17,357</u>
	26,119	28,044
LIABILITIES		
Accruals	(980)	(900)
Creditors – overpaid assessments	-	(1,525)
Tax payable	(170)	(181)
Due to clerk	<u>(594)</u>	<u>(3,960)</u>
	<u>24,375</u>	<u>21,478</u>
Represented by:		
Retained surplus	<u>24,375</u>	<u>21,478</u>

The financial statements were approved by the board on 31 March 2022

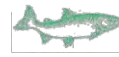
.....
Alan Macdonald
Chairman



**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- Except to the extent noted below, the financial statements include cash income and expenditure received and paid during the period.
- Liabilities and income outstanding at 31 December 2021 have been incorporated in the Financial Statements.



(g) Code of Practice

During 2021, the Board has reviewed and revised the Code of Practice, particularly to reflect its promotion of 100% catch-and-release throughout the season, to support conservation measures in the wild stock of salmon in our river.

The current Code of Practice (approved on 3 December 2021) is as follows:



RIVER DOON DISTRICT **SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

Clerk to the Board: Iain K Clark, LLB (Hons), Dip LP, NP
c/o Gilson Gray LLP, 160 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2HQ
Direct: +44 (0)141 530 2025 Mobile: +44 (0)7908 022 304
Email: RiverDoonDSFB@gilsongray.co.uk
Website: www.doonfishing.co.uk

The River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board has produced this Code to conserve our fish stocks for now and the future.

1. **Mandatory by Law:**

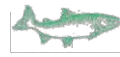
- (a) For the River Doon, the Salmon & Sea Trout Season is from 11 February to 31 October inclusive. The Brown Trout Season is from 15 March to 6 October inclusive.
- (b) It is a criminal offence to retain a salmon or grilse before 1 April, so they must be returned
- (c) It is a criminal offence to kill a coloured/gravid salmon.
- (d) All salmon, grilse or sea trout caught must be recorded in your catch returns.

2. The Board **strongly urges** Anglers to adopt a 100% catch-and-release culture throughout the season, to support conservation measures in the wild stock of salmon in our river. Therefore, we are asking Anglers not to kill **ANY** salmon or grilse.

3. *Gyrodactylus Salaris* Declaration Forms must be signed by Anglers before fishing.

4. **The Board recommends:**

- (a) On any spinning lure, only one treble hook should be used.
- (b) The use of barbless or crushed barbed hooks, so Anglers can return fish without unnecessary damage.
- (c) Against worm fishing for salmon. However, where worm fishing takes place, please use circle hooks, so Anglers can return fish without unnecessary damage.
- (d) Against the use of prawn, shrimp, or any organic baits at any time.



- (e) Try to minimise out of water and handling times. When returning fish, please be gentle and do not lift fish by the tail or gills. Always use both hands under the belly of the fish, facing upstream until sufficiently recovered.

5. Farmed Salmon / Pink (Pacific) Salmon

If you capture a farmed salmon or pink (pacific) salmon, it should be humanely killed and the Board informed on the above contact details. Scale samples (in the case of pink salmon, the whole salmon) should be taken and sent to Ayrshire Rivers Trust. The capture should also be reported on the Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) Website Reporting tool at:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/1b8632f1d06c48c89bbac8901d084346>

FMS Guidance on identifying farmed salmon can be found at:

<http://fms.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/200908-Aqua-Guidance-for-Anglers.pdf>

Ayrshire Rivers Trust's video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwKwPv1yGBM&t=271s>

FMS Guidance on identifying Pink (Pacific) Salmon can be found at:

<http://fms.scot/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/210519-INNS-Statement-Pink-salmon.pdf>

6. Giant Hogweed /Japanese Knotweed / Himalayan Balsam

See Ayrshire Rivers Trust leaflet at:

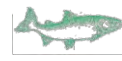
<http://www.doonfishing.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ART-Invasive-Weeds-Information-30.06.21.pdf>

- 7. Be aware of safety on and around the River. Anglers approach the River at their own risk.

The Board recognises that observance of the Code is voluntary but expects that responsible Anglers will observe it as far as possible.

Please spread the word on this Code of Practice. Your Board are investing in the future so that we all can continue to enjoy the sport on the River.

Approved by River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board: 3 December 2021





(h) Enforcement Issues/Water Bailiffing

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions imposed across Salmon Seasons 2020 and 2021, bailiffing activity was curtailed, with no new Bailiffs trained and no specific offences formally prosecuted or court cases pursued. However there have been occasional anecdotal reports of illegal poaching activity on the River Doon towards the end of each salmon season and into the post-season spawning time.

This has prompted a review by the Board of current bailiffing arrangements on the River Doon, particularly in light of current Statute and the formal guidance offered by Fisheries Management Scotland. What has become clear is that the current national situation, particularly in respect of Volunteer Bailiffs on whom the Board has been reliant in the past, has become confused, unworkable, and fraught with legal contradictions making the guidance unfit for purpose in a modern day context. Consequently the Board has decided at this juncture not to seek to recruit and approve any new warranted Volunteer Bailiffs or renew previous warrants issued to past volunteers. This is not to diminish the past efforts of previous Volunteer Bailiffs; their contribution to the preservation of salmon stocks over the years has been much valued.

Looking forward the Board intends engaging directly with the Scottish Government and Fisheries Management Scotland in respect of informing the development and delivery of the new Scottish Wild Salmon Strategy (Scottish Government 2022), particularly in respect of the review of enforcement powers in relation to salmon poaching and other offences.

On a local basis the Board recognises that “anglers are often the ‘eyes and ears’ on our riverbanks, reporting illegal activities and pollution incidents and actively working with others to improve habitats and protect our aquatic environment”. The Board wants to build on this expertise and enthusiasm and encourage all River Doon anglers to act as ‘River Watchers’ and custodians of future salmon stocks, linking-in with the prevention of Wildlife Crime activities of Police Scotland.

The Board is also exploring commissioning specific, targeted monitoring of the River Doon at key points in the coming season thus fulfilling its statutory responsibilities in respect of preventing illegal poaching activities.

Martin Donachy, River Doon DSFB Member





(i) Scientific Report



Ayrshire Rivers Trust

working to improve Ayrshire's rivers and lochs

Ayrshire Rivers Trust Braeside
Burnbrae Lodge
Mauchline
KA5 5HE
Tel: 01290 518130

17th February 2022 - Biologists report for the River Doon Proprietors and DSFB

To support the Doon DSFB, Ayrshire Rivers Trust (ART) biologists undertake comprehensive annual monitoring of the Doon's fish stocks each year to inform management approaches and to understand issues arising. We also monitor developments that have the potential to impact freshwater production and water quality (wind farms, pylon routes, hydro schemes etc.). With ART's involvement, the Board are kept informed of problems arising, failures or incidents affecting salmonid stocks through the results of the monitoring. Pressures that are identified and recommended mitigation measures are detailed within a fishery management plan that the Board use to guide their management approach. This allows problems to be prioritised and addressed.

Since the 1960's smolt survival across Scotland has declined from an estimated 30%, to just 2 – 3%. It is therefore little wonder that returning adult numbers have plummeted. These losses occur largely during the marine phase of the lifecycle and are therefore mostly beyond the control of river managers. Understanding where and why these losses occur is essential but not easily qualified or quantified and often disputed. Climate change, altered food resources and feeding grounds, aquaculture and by-catch to commercial fishing boats, have all been implicated to some extent. Addressing these declines relies on international agreements and approaches to be effective. This takes time and time is not on our side.

Much focus has been placed on conservation measures and angling as a means to prevent further declines. While anglers are not responsible for the huge declines we experience, they can play an important part in conserving the remaining salmon population. We are concerned that any easing of government conservation restrictions (e.g. a return to category 1 and permissible harvesting of salmon) would be detrimental and reduce spawning numbers. We believe Category 2 is currently an accurate assessment of the situation but suggest it is a somewhat pointless grading as it leaves opportunities for those less sensitive to stock fluctuations, to exploit stocks to the detriment of the overall salmon population. Therefore, we would support an immediate move to Category 3 and mandatory catch and release as a conservation measure for the sole purpose of protecting stocks and increasing spawning numbers. An automatic move to category 3 may be inevitable should recruitment decline beyond government thresholds over a 5-year average although currently it appears stable. Similarly, improvement may result in an increased grading to category 1. We think this unlikely in the foreseeable future.

Further reduction in marine survival may affect particular cohorts of the stock and could easily cause a collapse in natural production within the overall stocks. Thus, each unique stock component such as spring or autumn run salmon are valuable, vulnerable and their loss may be irreplaceable and catastrophic.

While the overall assessment of current salmon stocks may appear gloomy, it is not all bad and there



are reasons to be encouraged.

The current status of salmon stocks within the catchment

Encouragingly, 2021 produced the best reported rod catch for some years (since 2015) with 498 salmon recorded. It is possible that increased rod effort due to the drought experienced on other Ayrshire rivers accounts for greater catches this season but similarly it may as easily be as a result of improved marine survival and increased numbers of adult salmon returning to spawn. It may also be linked to good smolt escapement from the catchment in previous years.

Across Scotland, angling participation is in decline so it isn't unreasonable to conclude that the number of fish captured is proportional to angling pressure. Several once productive beats on the Doon are no longer fished and clubs report declining memberships. This reduction in rod effort inevitably impacts on total river catches. Recording rod effort (hours/days spent fishing) and catches should be a simple but effective means to better assess adult salmon returning to the river.

The vast majority of salmon caught in 2021 were released unharmed and will hopefully have survived to spawn and complete their lifecycle. Theoretically, with increased adults returning to the river, juvenile production should be improved in 2022 but this doesn't always follow and we won't know until assessment of the 2022 electrofishing survey results later this year.

Between years, natural fluctuations in salmon numbers must be expected and are not easily explained. The greater the variation, the more likely this is as a result of significant changes in number of spawning salmon or the average size of salmon returning (the number of eggs deposited is proportional to size).

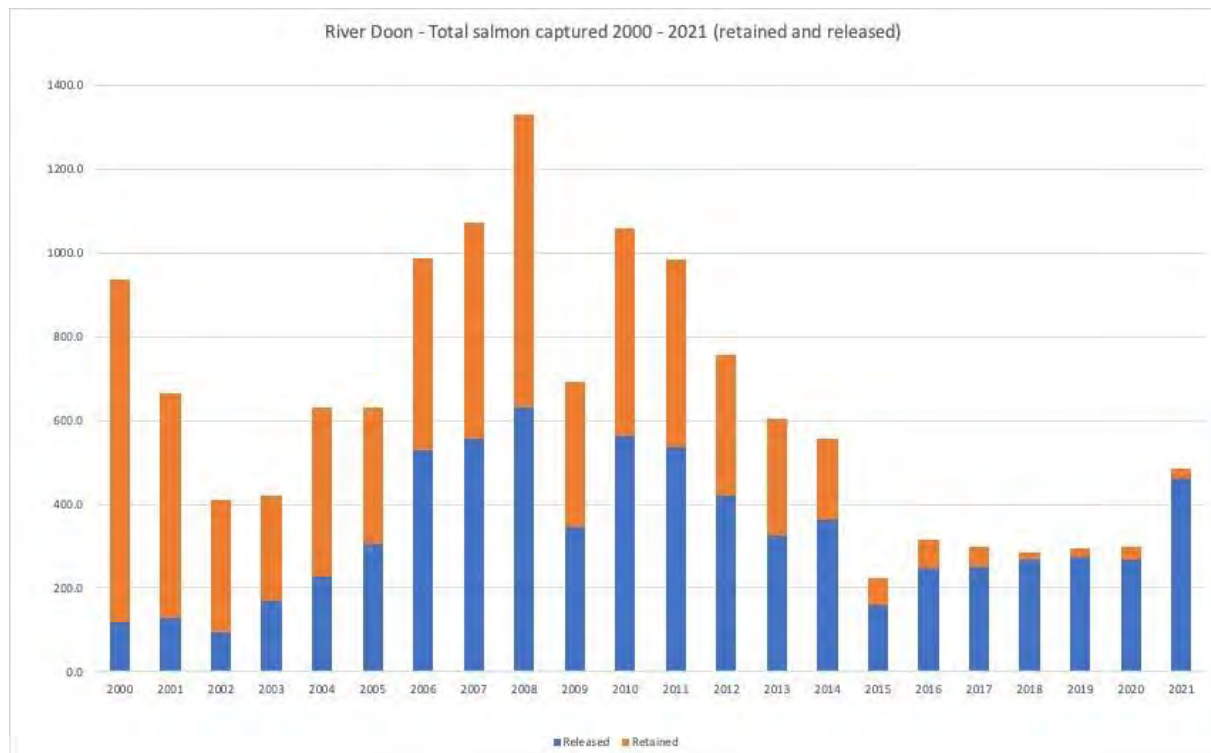


Figure 1: Reported rod caught salmon on the River Doon 2000 – 2021 (retained and released)

The DSFB continues to recommend that all salmon are released in order to protect the stocks and maximise spawning potential. While this is largely observed by most anglers, there is still room for improvement. ART whole heartedly supports DSFB calls for 100% catch and release in the current



climate. Anglers can make a positive contribution when numbers are low by returning all fish to help the species survive and stocks increase. Catch and release has risen from around 50% to over 95% in the last 10 years and this is encouraging.

ART's 2021 electrofishing report for the DSFB reveals juvenile salmon numbers improved compared to recent years and was the second best on record since 2003. Despite the rod catch for 2020 season being rather poor (276) and broadly consistent with the previous 5 years (average 279), juvenile salmon produced in winter 2020/21 and surviving to summer 2021 were recorded as above the 10-year average. This, despite a very long, wet and cold winter that is often assumed to reduce survival. Therefore, we consider egg to fry survival to have been good. Therefore, rod catch on its own cannot be regarded as an indication of the juvenile stock. There are many factors affecting rod catch and juvenile recruitment that extend beyond the obvious comparisons.

From a scientific perspective, freshwater productivity appears to remain adequate to repopulate the River Doon with salmon each season. Natural population fluctuations are to be expected in any system between years and are not always easily explained.

Juvenile timed electrofishing results indicate that productivity in the upper river is reasonably consistent and the lower to mid river sites have improved slightly.

SITE	LOCATION	SALMON/ MIN	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
TDM9	Top of Swallow Braes	FRY	16.8	23.6	11.2	1.4	3	4	7.4	3	3	6.2
TDM4	Doonholm, d/s Garden Pool	FRY	5	31	7.6	2.4	0	19.2	9.6	7.6	15.8	19.6
TDM25	Auchendrane Weir, side channel	FRY		20.4	11.2		0.8	4	7.3	2.6	7.6	10.2
TDM23	Monkwood, u/s Lemon Pots	FRY	4	45.2	10.4	5.8	2		9.2	20.2	16.2	19.6
TDM8	Holms, wide weedy riffle	FRY	7.4	20.4	9.6	13.2	4.6	17.4	19.8	20	8	19.2
TDM13	u/s Dalrymple	FRY	9.8	27.8	8	16.4	7.6	10.2	13.6	14.2	12.2	12
TDM15	Torr Bridge Skeldon	FRY	7.8	9.2	4	1.4	1.4	5.8	13.8	5.6	7.6	4
TDM20	Smithston, u/s Rabbie's Pool	FRY	12.6	14.6	12.2	13	0.8	8.8	8	9.8	5.6	5.2
TDM27	Craigengillan, d/s of stone bridge	FRY					38.4	53.3	23.4	20		39
TDM24	Craigengillan	FRY	28.2	11.2	19.2	46.6	28.8	23.2	20.8	18.6		44.4
MEAN		FRY	9.9	22.6	10.4	12.5	8.7	16.2	13.3	12.2	9.5	17.9

Figure 2: 10 years of timed survey protocol results

Quantitative assessments of the tributary sites around Dalmellington and in the upper river appear to indicate productivity is good to excellent in these areas (where the can access) for both salmon and trout.

Site Code	Location	Grid Ref		Minimum estimates per 100m ²			
		Easting	Northing	Salmon fry	Salmon parr	Trout fry	Trout parr
DCU3	Culroy Burn, at Minishant weir	232050	614300	0	19.4	174.8	12.3
DCU2	Culroy Burn d/s Minishant roadbridge	233200	614400	0	3.8	130.2	3.8
Ayrshire_0205	Purclewan Burn	235283	614387	0	0	0	5.1
Ayrshire_0193	Chapleton Burn	232711	61440	0	0	1	0
Ayrshire_0189	River Doon at Dalrymple	234666	614209	25.7	9	6.2	0.6
DRE6	Red Burn	245117	606552				

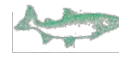


DKB1	Keirs Burn	243696	608618	0	0	0	0
DME3	Meikleholm Burn	242298	609409	2.1	0	23.6	4.2
DDRUM	Drumgrange Burn	242627	609466	1	0	16	1
DPO2	Polnessan Burn	241737	611658	0	1.6	59.7	4.7
D60	River Doon	241112	612619	24.1	9.9	2.2	4.4
DDU1	Dunaskin Burn	244500	608200	55.7	15	22.8	6.7
DDU3	Dunaskin Burn u/s pipe culvert	244546	608260	56.9	8.5	12.1	0
DCB10	Cummock Burn near SWS compound	251145	607460	0	0	11.1	9.9
DCB9	Cummock Water d/s White Burn confluence	249922	606756	0	0	4.7	7
DCB6	Cummock Water at Chestnut tree	248225	606421	62	6	59	10
DCB7	Cummock Water Sillyhole Bridge	247566	606424	29.2	7.3	20.1	3.6
DCLN1	Linn Water d/s culvert	252174	607837	0	0	40.0	9.4
DCLN2	Linn Water	252854	607068	0	0	0	0
DMD1	Mossdale Burn at Mossdale Farm	249500	604300	17	1.1	10	0
DTR1	Trough Burn u/s confluence with Mossdale DS bridge	249751	604183	6.3	9.4	72	9.4
DMD4	Mossdale Burn u/s Trough Burn confluence	249648	604229	18.1	2.4	8.4	0
DMD3	Mossdale Burn d/s Benbrack Burn confluence	250981	605587	0	0	17.4	11.8
DMW3	Muck Water at Lay-by	249870	603229	8.2	8.2	60.8	10.5
DMW5	Muck Water u/s Culvert	234666	614209	0	0	7.6	5.5
DMW8	Muck Water Armco barrier d/s culvert	251013	602152	81.5	3.2	20.9	12.3
DMW9	Muck Water	246216	606227	16.9	0	34.5	8.5
DMW7	Muck Water at Dalmellington d/s Footbridge	248140	605866	17.3	21.6	11.9	2.2
Ayrshire_0198	Muck Water d/s Dalmellington Craignegillan roadbridge	247407	605927	201	9.3	0	0
Ayrshire_0182	River Doon at Craignegillan	247886	603527	64	7.7	0	0
DPN1	Polnaskie Burn	251757	600573	0	0	21	7.8
DPN2	Polnaskie Burn	251604	600648	0	0	8.4	0

Figure 3: Quantitative electrofishing results from 2021

Inconsistent or less productive areas exist where extensive alterations have been made to habitat or the impact of agriculture is more noticeable. Historic engineering to improve angling is responsible for reduced spawning habitat in some reaches and this may take decades to recover, if at all.

Severe erosion contributes to poor egg survival and ART and the DSFB addressed these issues on the Culroy Burn with noticeable improvements to water quality and habitat achieved. Trout fry numbers have soared to exceptionally good levels since this work was performed and although sporadic, salmon have been recorded returning to this tributary. It is early days but we fully expect this burn to produce both salmon and sea trout in improved numbers in future as a direct result of this work. Anecdotally, the Culroy was an important sea trout producing burn and ART has data that suggests it still is. Sea trout stocks are very low and restoration of spawning tributaries may help address the underlying causes of their decline.



It is important that we continue to monitor developments that may impact habitat or fish in these areas. Further wind farms are planned and we engage with these developers fully to ensure they understand the importance of these watercourses and adequately protecting these most important spawning areas. ART contribute to the planning process and respond to all consultations that arise from developers on behalf of the DSFB. This is essential on many fronts, not least the planned expansion of the aquaculture industry that is planned for the Forth of Clyde that may threaten local salmon stocks.

Future priorities

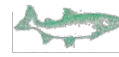
Under productive mid river tributaries such as Purclewan and Chapelton Burns would benefit from similar habitat restoration approaches as the Culroy Burn received. This is to be encouraged.

Maximising output from the freshwater life stages should always be the priority for river management. With a lifecycle being 4 or 5 years depending on whether the fish are grilse or multi sea winter salmon, a large proportion of their life is spent where local management and land use can influence productivity. Most Doon salmon leave the river as S2 smolts (circa 75%). Consequently, preventing mortality of juvenile fish as they develop or prepare to leave the river may bring significant benefits in the numbers of returning adults some years later and aspects of this should be achievable by the DSFB and ART as fishery managers and advisors.

Research elsewhere has shown that in-river mortality of smolts is a major factor affecting output with losses approaching 50% in some rivers. Piscivorous birds undoubtedly take a large number of smolts as they head downstream. However, smolts are most vulnerable around man-made obstacles where their numbers accumulate, making them easy prey for these birds. The DSFB applies for and secures a control license each year in order to reduce predation. The recently published Scottish Wild Salmon Strategy acknowledges predation pressures and hints that there may be reforms in the way licenses are issued and the limits on control increased. ART welcomes this but we also continue to encourage the removal of redundant weirs in all catchments and increased smolt shepherding in key locations at peak migration times. Increasing the rate of migration out of the rivers and away from waiting birds is achievable.

Through River Basin Management Planning (RBMP), SEPA has targets for all rivers to reach good ecological status by 2027. As we enter the third and final stage of RBMP, we should see much more effort made by the regulator to address outstanding and unresolved issues such as smolt migration delays through Loch Doon dam and potentially easement of other weirs on the river. While funding for weir removal will be limited, the DSFB and ART could seek external funding to ease redundant barriers if there is a will to do so.

The RBMP process and SEPA's diffuse pollution initiative has brought substantial improvements for water quality in some areas but the DSFB's own initiative with ART's assistance, to deliver subsidised fencing and bank stabilisation has achieved equally good results. We encourage more of this type of approach and are currently seeking funding from National sources to allow this approach to be rolled out across Ayrshire which of course would include further works in the Doon catchment, if successful. Other priorities include reducing pollution, managing levels of predation, controlling poaching, habitat improvements, tree planting to ensure resilience against erosion and predicted temperature rises and easing barriers etc., will only benefit fish stocks.



Finally, and on a cautionary note, the RBMP process may see SEPA revisit the compensation flow agreements for the Doon catchment. The 'Save the Doon' campaign secured a victory against proposals to cut the compensation flow in 2011. SEPA indicated they would revisit these agreements by 2019 but to date this hasn't been done. ART expects SEPA will raise this matter again in the final round of RBMP3. 2021 was a drought year across Ayrshire and there's no doubt that angling on the river benefitted from the guaranteed compensation flow of 45 Million Gallon per day. Angling all but ceased on other local rivers while the Doon fared rather better, easily returning the best catch of all Ayrshire rivers

Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager, Ayrshire Rivers Trust



River Doon DSFB / ART projects / improvements in recent years

- Annual electrofishing to assess stocks
- Electrofishing monitoring of stocked salmon survival
- Smolt trapping to assess stocked salmon survival Cummock Burn
- Smolt trapping and PIT tagging to assess smolt survival Garpel Burn, Loch Doon
- PIT Tagging and counter installation to assess smolts passing through Loch Doon Dam
- Fencing on Meikleholm Burn 630m approx
- Fencing Drumgrange Burn 330m approx
- Fencing Kiers Burn 130m approx
- Fencing Macmanniston on main river Burn 750m approx
- Fencing on Culroy burn at Black Byres 935m approx
- Fencing at Sauchrie on Culroy 600m approx
- Fencing at Minishant on Cluroy Burn approx. 400m
- Fencing at Holms on main river 300m
- Tree planting within fencing where appropriate
- Redundant weir removal at Sauchrie
- Bank stabilisation at Sauchrie
- Green engineering at Blackbyres

Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager, Ayrshire Rivers Trust

An example: Culroy Burn Revisited

15 March 2022

During the course of the last few years, the River Doon DSFB and Ayrshire Rivers Trust have joined forces, (the Trust with their expertise and manpower and the River Doon DSFB's financial assistance) to improve watercourses that are failing within the catchment. This is a planned and prioritised approach to management that allows us to focus on addressing key issues affecting both habitat and fish productivity.

The biologists at ART sought the River Doon DSFB's assistance in 2015 to address erosion on a large scale occurring at Blackbyres on the Culroy Burn. While some erosion may be beneficial, it was ART's opinion that the accelerated erosion at Blackbyres was due to livestock pressures and was having a detrimental impact on water quality and fish production. In fact, they were extremely concerned by a lack of naturally produced juvenile salmonids throughout the length of the burn. Blackbyres was not the only area of concern and further works were delivered upstream at Sauchrie that have helped improve the outcome however, more on that another time.

Agreements were reached between the River Doon DSFB, ART and the landowner and work commenced to stabilise the erosion in September 2015. A combination of green engineering techniques, mechanical re-profiling of the eroding banks and stock fencing were installed. Initially all was well but Hurricane Alice arrived in November causing severe flash flooding and a large tree washed down the burn and damaged the newly graded banks, leaving a gaping hole and the new fence suspended in mid- air.



The once eroding bank is stable in 2022 with willow trees sprouting from the spilling installed in 2015 and 2016.

In 2016, the Board agreed to further assist the Trust to reinstate the damaged banks and this time, all went well. Trees were planted, willow weaving and green engineering methods used and all burst into life knitting the bank together.

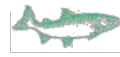
Fast forwards to winter 2021/2022 and there have been further changes at this site. The eroding bank remains stable and the green engineering is flourishing. However, the river has cut a new channel upstream of the worked area creating a new braided channel through some scrub and low lying areas. The trust biologists are not too concerned by this change, pointing out that increased spawning opportunities have been created and more diverse flows will benefit different age classes of fish. It is impossible and would be wrong to constrain any burn or river. Watercourses must be expected to move over time and while preventing land loss is possible in some instances, in other's it may be best to allow nature to take its course. Each situation is unique and ART staff are there to offer advice and assistance to anyone that wishes their help. ART will continue to monitor changes and keep the Board informed as things progress.



An aerial view of the stabilised bank and the new braided channel that opened up in winter floods 2021/2022. High value land loss has stopped and with it, suspended sediments have reduced

So the question has to be asked – what has this work achieved so far? The answer is encouraging. Silt loading in the main river downstream of Minishant clears noticeably quicker as spates subside, than it did previously. David Cosh, proprietor of the Swallowbraes beat reported the river clears up to 2 hours quicker than before. Water quality has also improved and the habitat in Culroy Burn is at last free of the thick layer sediment that once smothered spawning gravels and eggs.

Electrofishing surveys over the last few years have shown salmon numbers are slowly improving although this remains sporadic from year to year. However, trout numbers are now amongst the best recorded anywhere in Ayrshire. This bodes well for the future and is potentially very encouraging for sea trout stocks for which this burn was anecdotally, renowned. Trees planted across the worked area are developing although there has been an issue with deer within the fences. The Trust staff planted another mixture of bare root trees on 15 March 2022.



Incredible growth on these willows that developed from cuttings planted in 2016



Alders planted in 2016 are doing well and erosion has ceased at this lower site due entirely to managed livestock grazing taking place.

Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager, Ayrshire Rivers Trust



6. Future Work of the Board

The Board intends to carry out further work over the balance of 2022 and going forwards. In order to do so, there is a question of having the necessary funds to carry out work; and the priorities for such work.

(a) Report on Expected Budget

Summary of Financial Position of the Board at 31 March 2022

Current Balance of Funds held at 31 March 2022 **£22,359.45**

[Plus Current Debtors - Fishery Assessments to 2021/2022 **£ 658.50]**

LESS Estimated Regular Expenditure to 31 December 2022:

Information Commissioner's Office – Annual Registration Fee - £ 40.00

Fee to Gilson Gray LLP – Advice re Disputed Riparian Rights - £ 180.00

Azets – Accountancy Charges for year ended 31 December 2021 - £ 500.00

Ayrshire Rivers Trust – Est Annual Affiliation Fee 22/23 - £ 6,450.00

Fisheries Management Scotland – Est Annual Membership 22/23 - £ 654.00

HMRC – Corporation Tax (Estimate) - £ 30.00

Gilson Gray LLP – Interim Fee for Clerk to the Board to 30/06/22 - £ 2,400.00

CE Project Management – Web Hosting/Domain Renewal 2023 - £ 59.00

Gilson Gray LLP – Interim Fee for Clerk to the Board to 31/12/22 - £ 2,400.00

Total Estimated Regular Expenditure to 31 December 2022 **- £12,713.00**

Estimated Remaining Credit Balance to 31 December 2022 **£9,646.45**

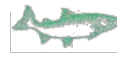
PLUS Estimated Income from Fishery Assessments 2022/2023 + £17,000.00

Estimated Remaining Credit Balance to 31 December 2022 **circa £26,646.45**

Recommended Reserves: £10,000 to £15,000

Recommendations from the Clerk to the Board:

The Board currently holds funds of £22,359.45, with £22,319.45 on deposit and £40 set aside to pay the Annual Registration Fee for the Information Commissioner's Office. For budgetary purposes, the total expected regular expenditure is approximately £13,000 to 31 December 2022. That leaves an amount of approximately £9,000.



In addition, following the Board's fixing of the Assessments for 2022/2023, we anticipate additional income of £17,000 in the year to 31 December 2022, if all Assessments are paid. We currently have Debtors of only £658.50 (with the exception of the one disputed beat). So we could cautiously anticipate recovery of around £16,000 of the 2022/2023 Fishery Assessments during the year to 31 December 2022 (hopefully all), meaning that the Board might consider that there is a sum of approximately £25,000 available for consideration in fixing an Annual Budget for planned project works.

My recommendation would be to retain a sum for Reserves sufficient to cover contingencies (and it is for the Board to determine what sum that might be, but I suggest it would be a minimum of £10,000, perhaps as much as £15,000). However, that would mean that the Board could (and I would respectfully suggest, should) be considering budgeting to spending perhaps £10,000 to £15,000 in the coming year, on planned project works to be undertaken in conjunction with and, as recommended by Ayrshire Rivers Trust.

The Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors on 28 April 2022 approved the above regular expenditure and agreed to fix capital reserves at a minimum of £10,000.

That leaves an Annual Budget for planned works of £10,000 to £15,000.

(b) Proposed Works for Discussion/Agreement

The Board requested our technical advisers and partners, Ayrshire Rivers Trust, to produce a report with recommended possible works, subject to discussion by the Board and for discussion and the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors and Annual Public Meeting, now produced as follows:



Ayrshire Rivers Trust

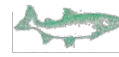
working to improve Ayrshire's rivers and lochs

River Doon Catchment - Priority issues for river and fishery management

Priority issues for river and fishery management

There are numerous priorities that would improve the fishery and these range from relatively minor works to large scale intervention and restoration. Some of these priorities have already been included within external funding applications. ART await a decision on these grant applications.

The River Doon District Salmon Fishery Board has the ability to raise levies in order to fund works and river management strategies however, this comes at a cost to owners and anglers. The scale of some projects inevitably will require considerable external funding should they ever go ahead.



The list below is in no particular order and it is for the Doon DSFB to decide which they wish to progress. ART are able to advise on the merits and limitations of each as required and can provide outline costs.

Invasive Weeds Control - Rank 1 (requires an annual commitment)

ART recommends the Board continues with efforts to tackle invasive weeds but these should be bolstered for Himalayan Balsam and Japanese knotweed where possible. Invasive weed species cause river bank erosion, reduced water quality and a reduction in biodiversity. Eradication will always be a challenge if reliant on the Trust, owners and anglers to achieve this.

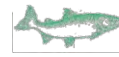
- **Japanese knotweed-** This plant is potentially the easiest to eradicate (or suppress) over the long term as it responds well to stem injection. The Trust can deliver a programme of stem injection over several years that will effectively address this species and prevent further spread. **Allow – Circa £800/yr over 5 years**
- **Himalayan balsam-** Despite several years of targeted action, this plant remains a threat and requires constant vigilance and appropriate action during a short window of opportunity each year. ART does not have the necessary manpower or resources to undertake complete control themselves and so the Board should either coordinate angling and owner's interests to perform this task each year or engage a professional weed control specialist. **Allow – Circa £2000/yr over 3 - 5 years**
- **Giant hogweed-** There are low density outbreaks of this noxious plant near Auchendrane, at the Springwater Fishery, Dalrymple and in the tidal areas. ART spray these areas each year and will continue to do so with the aim of eradication at an unknown point (once the seedbank is exhausted). **Allow – Circa £400/yr over 5+ years**

Chapelton Burn

Most areas within this sub catchment require extensive restoration. This burn is the largest under producing burn within the lower catchment and suffers from historic geomorphological alterations that date back to the 17th/18th Centuries. How restoration may best be achieved requires specialist fluvial geomorphological assessment and advice.

ART recommends that the River Doon DSFB should consider engaging the services of [CBEC Eco Engineering Ltd](#) or [the River Restoration Centre](#) to prepare a feasibility study and plan of action, if considered appropriate. This may then be used to secure funding to help with any restorative approaches. **Guesstimate for CBEC assessment, report and recommendations Circa £3000 - £5000**

The scale of the problems on the Chapelton Burn and any large-scale restoration approaches will inevitably require third party funding to achieve this. Never the less, this would be extremely beneficial and the board should seriously consider



prioritising the initial feasibility study to inform further actions. **Restoration cost unknown at this time**

Fencing

There are a few areas within the catchment that would benefit from managed grazing and riparian buffers created by fencing. In some areas, fences require repair, in others, agreements need to be reached to allow fencing to be erected.

- **Cummock Burn** Sillyhole Bridge upstream, Dalmellington. Fencing erected in 2004 requires some repair **Estimated cost £1340 + vat (probably less)**
- **Purclewan Burn** –Fencing at Dusty Hall to the viaduct
The lower burn around Holms farm requires fencing. **Estimated cost £4488 +vat**
Guestimated Bridge cost £1000 +vat
- **Main river Doon** **Ranked 3**
Dalrymple to Lindsayton (left bank) - Barnford Farm beat is top priority and would benefit wherever livestock have access. **Estimated cost for 3 field initially £4460 +vat**
- Holms downstream of the Burn Pool to the top of Woodlands (**Estimated cost £3060 + vat**) and the HowRiggs field require fencing **Estimated cost £2640 + vat**
- **Brock Loch Burn** Upstream of the B742 has suffered in recent years from excessive livestock poaching. There are two areas that require fencing if agreements can be reached with the landowner. **Estimated cost of fencing £2520 + vat (inc water gate)** and lower priority section. **Estimated cost £1960 +vat**
- **Lower Drumgrange Burn** A short stretch between the railway and the river requires fencing and a new bridge to carry a quad bike **Estimated fencing cost £1646 + vat**
- **Netherton Burn** **Ranked 4**
Upstream of Netherton Farm requires fencing or a change to land use. ART believes the farm is currently on the market and when sold, progress towards more sensitive land management may be more easily achieved. **Estimated cost £9088 +vat**

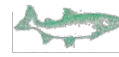
This is not a comprehensive list of all the fencing requirements within the catchment.

Fencing estimated at £8.00/m +vat with additional cost of £60 +vat per strainer required.

Water gates and rails extra.

Netherton Burn. **Ranked 6**

In James Hamilton's report of 1859, the Netherton Burn was described as an important sea trout spawning tributary on the lower river. Currently its condition is not conducive to good spawning activity.



A small weir upstream of the farm should be removed to allow any migrating trout and salmon to progress to the upper reaches. This weir could easily be removed with basic equipment.

In the same area, the road culvert would benefit from baffles bolted to the base. This would improve the passability of all species.

Both actions could be delivered concurrently and cost in the order of **£1500** or less by ART.

Gravel Cleaning

Ranked 5

Lower Brochloch Burn. The burn continues to produce low density salmon and trout juveniles however, the lower reaches and best spawning habitat are heavily impacted by silt and may require gravel cleaning to restore them to good condition. SEPA would require to approve such actions prior to implementation

Estimated cost £750 – £1150

Tree planting

Essential but difficult to rank

– perhaps an ongoing commitment to plant 1000 - 5000 trees per annum?

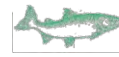
Tree planting within buffer areas should be increased on the main river, particularly on the south west bank in the upper reaches between Patna and Dalmellington. There may be other areas such as downstream of Dalrymple on the main river and several burns elsewhere that would benefit from additional shade and cover provided by native deciduous trees.

Combined with fencing and managed grazing, tree planting will help to address erosion and mitigate against climate change and predicted warming water temperatures.

ART deliver water temperature monitoring for the Scottish River Temperature Monitoring Network (Marine Science Scotland) and using their App, we can better plan where the greatest benefits from tree planting may be achieved.

ART has our own funds of circa £5000 that we would be willing to contribute to planting a native riparian woodland on the upper river between Dalmellington and Patna should we be able to find a suitable area of land and a landowner willing to allow this. We suggest the Board may also wish to contribute to this as it will be designed to benefit the river, fish and biodiversity. Apart from just the trees, necessary items such as stakes, guards and fencing will also be required.

The Board may qualify for grants for trees for this purpose. ART can investigate this and report back.

**Erosion Control**

Ranked 2 But again cost could be spread over several years with small amount of progress made each year.

Bank erosion is common between Patna and Dalmellington. High and often sheer banks lack any vegetation and contribute significant amounts of alluvial soils and silts to the river. This negatively impacts on water quality and fish habitat.

There are opportunities to stabilise these areas through sensitive green engineering approaches and extensive tree planting.

Each site has its own unique issues and will require custom designed solutions but this is an area where the Board can focus their activities that will bring benefit to all areas downstream and of course fish production at reasonable cost.

If the Board could allocate an annual sum of eg **£2500 towards this, progress could be made and volunteer assistance could be secured to increase value and the reach of these actions**

Experimental Instream Weed cutting

Weed cutting and root removal prior to the onset of spawning may help improve spawning success. ART has identified several areas where excessive weed growth may limit productivity and reduce available spawning opportunities, causing salmon to overcut redds leading to reduced survival.

ART has agreed with the DSFB to perform limited experimental weed cutting in 2022 and monitor juvenile numbers the following year. If successful at increasing stocks, this should be extended where required.

The Burn Pool, Holms, Dalrymple, Waterside meander near Dalmellington and within Craigengillan Estate are three areas where we will trial this approach.

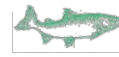
Estimated cost £750 – £1150 or possibly within ART's annual agreements with the River Doon DSFB

Translocations

On selected tributaries, once recommended actions are completed, ART recommends careful and appropriate translocation of naturally produced salmon fry taken from high density areas (shortly after emergence from the gravels), to these burns would be beneficial and help kick start recovery where salmon are absent. Fry to parr survival should be continually monitored and assessed over a 5 year period.

Trials of this approach elsewhere in Ayrshire are underway.

Translocations would be included within ART's annual fishery monitoring/management actions at no extra cost once improvements have taken place



Barrier Removal

ART continues to recommend that the Board recognises barrier removal or easement as a high priority action that will benefit fish stocks.

The river has 9 remaining redundant weirs, some of which are redundant and others that have no fish passage components. Ownership of at least two of these weirs may be uncertain.

All weirs have an impact for both upstream and downstream migrating salmon and trout. While adult fish may be able to ascend them, they often cause delays and slow upstream progress. It is downstream migrating smolts that are often most impacted and their emigration from the river can be fragmented as a result of these structures.

Moreover, there is always great concern amongst anglers and owners that piscivorous birds impact stocks and efforts are made to cull a proportion of these species under license. These birds are known to predate heavily on smolts accumulating behind weirs as their descent of the river is slowed. Therefore, the removal of redundant weirs would not only benefit the rate of upstream adult migration and downstream smolt emigration but also reduce the not insignificant predation losses that occur.

At very least, downstream migration through weirs could be improved by simply notching and reducing the crest of the weir at a point where smolts may be expected to pass. Alternatively, and perhaps more beneficial, the breaching or full removal should be considered and prioritised wherever possible.

Remaining Weirs/Dams on the river include:

Mount Charles weir – Redundant. Non technical fish pass included **Needs properly assessed**

Auchendrane Weir – Redundant. Non technical fish pass included **Needs properly assessed**

Dalrymple Weir – Used to supply flow to fish farm. No fish pass included **High priority for fish pass easement. Needs properly assessed**

Skeldon Garden Weir - Redundant. No fish pass included **Needs properly assessed**

Skeldon Mill Weir* - Used to supply flow to hydro. No fish pass included **High priority for fish pass reinstatement**

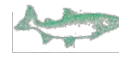
Patna weir 1 - Redundant. No fish pass included **High priority for easement/removal**

Patna weir 2 - Redundant. No fish pass included **High priority for easement/removal**

Ness Glen gauging dam – used to calculate flow in river. No fish pass included. **Low priority**

Loch Doon Dam – In use. Technical fish pass installed (poor function) **Medium to High priority***

***Loch Doon Dam is the focus of ongoing discussions with SEPA over improvements**

**Other Barriers**

Partially eased pipe bridge Cassilis (operation requires assessment)

* ART arranged with the operators of the Skeldon Hydro scheme to have timber baulks added to this weir to improve upstream adult migration. This was performed in 2018 but a local resident objected to SEPA on aesthetic and safety grounds and SEPA instructed the baulks removed. ART suggest the Board challenge SEPA on this matter as timber baulks are in use elsewhere in Scotland and present no real safety concerns.

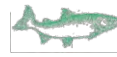
Smolt migration issues through Loch Doon Dam

Address downstream migration issues for smolts from the upper catchment through Loch Doon dam. This is an ongoing process with SEPA and ART already having discussions on what is required but fundamentally the regulator will have to take action to ensure DRAX make changes to the way they operate that will benefit salmon smolt emigration from the loch which is currently unsatisfactory and limiting productivity.

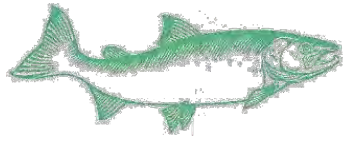
Included within the work ART already delivers to the River Doon DSFB

Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager, Ayrshire Rivers Trust





7. Acknowledgements



RIVER DOON DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

Thanks the following for their support in its work:



Ayrshire Rivers Trust

working to improve Ayrshire's rivers and lochs

Stuart Brabbs, Trust Manager
Muir Glendining, Biologist

Struan Candlish, Assistant Biologist

Office Address:

Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Braeside
Burnbrae Lodge
MAUCHLINE
KA5 5HE

Email: info@ayrshireriverstrust.org

Telephone: 01290 518130

Website: www.ayrshireriverstrust.org
www.facebook.com/AyrshireRiversTrust
www.youtube.com/user/ayrshireriverstrust

Funders and partners:

- All River Doon District Salmon Proprietors and Tenants (48 Fisheries)
- Fishery Managers, Ghillies, Club and Association Committee Members
- Fisheries Management Scotland
- Accountants: Azets, Ayr
- Solicitors: Gilson Gray LLP, Glasgow
- Web hosting and Domain Renewal: CE Project Management
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Police Scotland
- South Ayrshire Council
- Ayr Joint Valuation Board
- The many landowners who allow access and work to be undertaken
- The volunteer water bailiffs
- And other volunteers who give up their time to support our efforts

Clerk to the Board: Iain K Clark, LLB (Hons), Dip LP, NP
c/o Gilson Gray LLP, 160 West George Street, Glasgow G2 2HQ
Direct: +44 (0)141 530 2025 **Mobile:** +44 (0)7908 022 304

Email: RiverDoonDSFB@gilsongray.co.uk

Website: www.doonfishing.co.uk