

A meeting of the Fowey Rivers Association
was held on Wednesday 18th July 2007 at Lostwithiel Social Club

Present

Paul Eliot (Chairman)	
Roger Brake (Treasurer)	Ivan Lyne (Bodmin Angling Association)
Ray Burrows (Bodmin Angling Association)	Sir Michael Thompson (President)
Mike Bryant (Newbridge)	Godfrey Tucker (Vice Chairman)
Bill Eliot (River Co-ordinator)	Arthur White (Liskeard)
Roger Furniss (SWRA)	Rob Williams (Riverbed management)
Tyson Jackson (Water resources officer)	Jon Evans (secretary)

Apologies

Brian Muelaner (Lanhydrock)	Alan Hawken (Glynn)
Roger Lashbrook (Commercial interests)	David Phillips (Lostwithiel)

1. **Minutes of the AGM**

The minutes of the AGM held on 18th April 2007 were agreed subject to an addition from BE stating that the two clubs, LDAC and BAA had not agreed the restrictions. TJ said that the restrictions had been agreed by the Fowey Rivers Association Executive.

2. **Matters arising from the minutes**

Drinkers. TJ said that he and RW had visited the sites of the problem drinkers and discussed the issues with the farmer. He agreed to undertake the work within a budget sum of £1,500, and was thanked by the committee.

TJ

3. **Finance**

The Treasurer circulated a statement of account demonstrating income of £100, expenditure of £1,805.36, leaving a balance of £26,917.37 at the bank. It was noted that there is additional income expected from the Camel Fisheries Association (half the cost of the broodstock programme), and from the clubs, syndicates and riparians participating in the work of the Association, from SWW for 2006 and 2007, and individual members who had not been asked for their subscriptions. It was agreed that the Treasurer and Secretary should make the arrangements for getting the extra income.

RB/JE

The Treasurer also raised two questions of expenditure for which there is no approval

1. A bill had been received from Barfields Solicitors for abortive work on a draft lease for the hatchery. This had been commissioned by the previous Secretary and it was agreed that the account should be paid subject to seeing the draft lease that had been prepared.
2. The ACA had asked for their annual subscription. It was agreed that this should be paid as both owner and lessee of the sanctuary water. RF also agreed to discuss the rate with Mark Lloyd from the ACA

RB/JE

RB
RF

The accounts were accepted with thanks and it was agreed that the Treasurer should open a suitable High Interest deposit account and transfer funds so that additional income could be obtained from bank interest.

4. **Broodstock programme**

The Chairman said that he had returned 5,000 smolts to the river and was aiming to put another 8-10,000 fish into the Warleggan. He had raised 75,000 fry and planted 10,000 in the Warleggan, 5,000 in the Dewey, 5,000 into Hawkstor, 10,000 into the Draynes, 5,000 for the Twin Lakes, 10,000 into the main river and 10,000 into the smolt pond. There were another 10,000 to go into the St Neot and 10,000 into the main river.

The intention is to clip 10,000 fish for the St Neot as evidence that wild fish do not spawn in the St Neot.

51,000 Camel fish had been planted out, some from tanks in the Camel catchment.

It was agreed that Paul should be thanked for his continuing effort for both rivers.

5. **Redds**

TJ reported that he had submitted a paper to RFERAC and it had been approved. A large stock of alluvial gravel from Blackpool Pit had been bought up and some had been delivered to an experimental site at Allensford on the Camel system. A picture of the model was circulated for information, and would be piloted on seven redds on the Stannon at Allensford. An application for Land Drainage consent and a method statement had been submitted to the Environment Agency. If the scheme was successful, the model would be used throughout the Fowey and Camel systems wherever redds needed to be cleaned and renewed.

6. **Hemlock clearance**

RW reported that the success of last year's work had demonstrated the value of clearance of hemlock as well as other problem plants such as bramble and willow/sallow. 40-50 redds had been cut and hopefully had resulted in successful spawning. The work at Ashford Bridge and Treverbyn had involved moving gravels and some larger stones to protect the gravels.

This year's work would be starting around 22nd July and would continue for about eight successive Sunday at the Ninestones lay-by.

7. **Canoeing**

It was noted that the latest BCU publicity suggested that they are looking for a "right to roam" on water as exists on land. Their latest leaflets do not include the previous accurate interpretation that access is permitted on where

- a. There is owner's permission
- b. Waters are deemed navigable
- c. It is below high tide mark.

The present Fowey Canoe Access agreement was discussed at length. It was noted that it had not been reviewed as it should. After discussion it was agreed that the Secretary should get in touch with Mr Hobba to renegotiate the revised agreement which should include

1. The responsibility of the BCU to enforce the agreement and manage the access
2. The BCU should install signs demonstrating where access is and is not

- permitted
3. Access should be limited to 12 people per half day.
 4. The agreement should be for one year only but renewable
 5. The agreement should start on 16th December and finish on 31st March following.
 6. A fee of £250 per annum should be paid for the agreement as a contribution to the maintenance of the river
 7. Insurances should be shown to the Secretary of the Fowey Rivers Association
 8. Copies of the records of usage of the river should be returned annually to the Secretary

It was also agreed that a solicitor's opinion should be sought on the Association's liabilities and the ACA was suggested.

JE

8. **NLO**

It was noted that Simon Toms had submitted a paper to RFERAC suggesting a reducing NLO from two to one nets for ten years, subject to retaining the existing voluntary measures including catch and release at 60%. This had been approved at RFERAC on 6th July, although there had been some concern that at the CAFF meeting on 17th May, Simon had said that he would consult all clubs about voluntary restrictions, and this had not yet happened.

It was noted that in terms of stock levels, there is no need for net reductions, and that if the Association does not retain the voluntary measures as presently stated, the Association will be seen as being against control of unrestricted exploitation.

It was also noted that the process is that the Environment Agency will submit the NLO application to DEFRA, provided the Fowey Rivers Association maintains the voluntary restrictions. The application requires ministerial approval.

9. **Voluntary restraint**

The Chairman reminded members that the main purpose of the meeting had been to review the voluntary restraints, although other items had, of necessity, been included on the agenda.

It was agreed that the purposes of voluntary restraint were

- a. To make sure that there are plenty of fish in the river
- b. To make sure we are managing the population of fish in the river
- c. To recognise the socio economic value of the fishery and make sure that everybody gets a fair crack of the whip and shares the cost of the maintenance of the river
- d. Education of the angling fraternity

There was a general agreement that Simon Toms uses the voluntary restraints as a ratchet and there are never relaxations, even as stock levels improve. It was also noted that very few anglers are affected by the bag limits, and that "catch and kill" followed by no fishing would, in practice, have less impact on the environment.

BE said that he agreed that limits should be set for each river, rather than all Cornwall, but that he believes that it is essential that bag limits are related to stock levels. He suggested that 5 salmon per season is reasonable and that the daily limit should be lifted to 2 per day and made the same as the weekly limit. There was

much discussion about this and opinion was divided. The importance of retaining the five per season and two per week was accepted but a change to the daily limit could not be agreed.

The Chairman suggested that if there was any relaxation of any element of the restraints, there would need to be a compensating tightening of something else, such as the abolition of the use of treble hooks for spinners, as is required in many other countries.

Bag limits were again linked to the NLO reduction. It was agreed that a formal letter should be sent to Simon Toms objecting to his use of the existing restraints as a condition of the NLO in his RFERAC paper without honouring his commitment to consult clubs and associations about restraints. The Fowey Rivers Association accepted that the NLO application should proceed and that the voluntary restraints would remain in place at their present level. This would be subject to ST giving a written commitment to a five year review with the option of voluntary restrictions going either up or down depending on stock levels.

It was noted that at the agreement reached at the January committee meeting was that for the 2007 season, all clubs, including LDAC, would accept the current bag limits, and therefore there was sufficient time for further consideration of bag limits for subsequent seasons. It was agreed that the salmon limit, the September catch of sea trout and the size of sea trout should be discussed at the meeting arranged for 17th October 2007. It was also agreed that data should be sought from the clubs to ascertain how many anglers were affected by the existing bag limits.

JE

JE

10. Park and Stannon Pits

TJ reported that in view of the imminence of SWW submitting an application for abstraction from Park and Stannon Pits, he had prepared a paper for consideration by all interested parties, other than SWW, at a meeting arranged at the Environment Agency offices on 25th July.

The paper would bring out the need for annual refill, connection of the pits to their feeder streams and other environmental improvements. It was important that all interested parties were consulted so that a united front could be made to SWW and the requirements incorporated into their application for abstraction.

11. Future meetings

Future Fowey Rivers Association committee meetings will be held on Wednesday 17th October 2007 and 16th January 2008