

A meeting of the Fowey Rivers Association
was held on Wednesday 21st January 2015 at Lostwithiel Social Club

Present

Bill Smith (Chairman)	Paul Jordan (Treasurer)
Roger Furniss (SWRA/Glynn)	Ivan Lyne (BAA)
Chris Bryant (LDAC)	John Tisdale (Treverbyn)
Chris Janes (RFC and Riverbed management)	Jon Evans (secretary)

Apologies

Roger Brake	Anthony Fortescue (President)
David White (LDAC)	Rob Williams (River Co-ordinator)

In attendance

Giles Rickard (WRT)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2014

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 15th October 2014 were agreed.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

- 1. CEFAS proposal and IFCA.** The Chairman said he wanted to place on record his thanks to Roger Furniss for his leadership of the outstandingly successful process to secure the abandonment of the CEFAS proposal. RF said he also wished to record his thanks to Simon Toms who had been hugely important in achieving this result. He also said that this may not be the final position and that the scheme may re-emerge in the future.

JT said that the IFCA seemed to have changed its stance from one of supporting commercialism to supporting conservation. He said that George Eustice MP had also made significant efforts to conserve bass stocks by influencing the EU Fisheries policy. John was thanked for his attendance at all Cornwall IFCA meetings.

It was noted that there was clear evidence of the value of making major efforts to influence politicians to encourage conservation policies. The CF meeting on 5th February would be a further opportunity to drive home these messages.

- 2. Trenant Stream.** The Secretary reported that he had been trying to begin the survey work on accelerating flows in the Trenant Stream (perimeter leat). This had proved difficult on account of the SWW work on renewing the Park abstraction licence. However, at the FFRG meeting on 19th January, it had been agreed to undertake the initial survey on 25th February at the same time as the FFRG members were considering siting of the new hatchery.
- 3. Ladyvale baffle.** Giles reported that he had been working with the EFF to obtain financial support for the scheme but that the downstream baffle to raise the water height at low water levels could easily be

retro fitted.

4. **Trezelland ditch.** It was noted that the issue of the Trezelland ditch had not been raised at the 19th January FFRG meeting but that there was a further opportunity at the subsequent meeting arranged for 14th April.
5. **Newsletter.** The Chairman expressed thanks to all contributors.
6. **Website.** The website had been redesigned by Richard Grieve and is now much easier to access and to update.

JE

3. Finance

The Treasurer's statement of finances to January 2015 had been distributed. This showed income of £5,209 and expenditure of £5,845 for the fourth quarter of 2014. The £5,050 from SWW had been transferred to FRAL to repay part of the loan to FRA.

Current balances are FRAL £1,161 and FRA £21,974, total £23,036.

Funds budgeted for 2015 include £1,600 due to WRT for part of the 2015 survey work, £2,000 required for Lewarne coppicing and £5,000 required as match funding for Ladyvale bridge.

It was agreed that the accounts should be noted.

4. 2014 Fry index survey.

Giles introduced the Fry Index Survey and the aggregated five year results, both of which had been distributed with the agenda.

He said that the results for salmon in 2014 were disappointing with only three class B scores and no class A scores. The poor salmon result contrasted sharply with the very good trout figures.

Giles said that heavy flooding in the early part of the year was likely to have inhibited salmon spawning/washed out redds in the lower reaches. In addition, the best gravels for salmon spawning seemed to be on the middle reaches of the main stem, at Bulland and at Palmers Bridge. Even so, it was necessary to have a critical mass of adult fish in the river. In general, the main spawning times seemed to have moved back from January/February and now took place in December/January.

In answer to a question from Paul about silt piling up below the weir at RWTW, it was agreed that a letter should be sent to SWW and the EA. It was also suggested that, like the Arundell Arms, there should be 100% catch and release. RF counselled against this at this time because the NLO revision was due in 2017 and it was important to keep options in reserve for negotiation at the appropriate time.

JE

Giles went on to suggest various improvements that might be made

1. Upper Draynes. Possible MIREs development using Upstream Thinking funds.
2. A30 run-off. Trapping and cleaning
3. Trenant stream. Flow enhancement in perimeter leat using Park Stannon Restoration funding.
4. Lower St Neot. Trash dam clearance around Carnglaze managed by FRA volunteers, and gravel enhancement at selected sites in the stream funded by PR14 after 2017.
5. Warleggan. Zinc and copper toxicity to be assessed and the source identified, monitored to assess possible adverse effects on fish and invertebrates. Aim to develop volunteers' invertebrate monitoring skills.
6. Cardinham. Forestry to clear trees from stream edge as part of routine work, and construct Ladyvale Bridge when funding is in place (EFF).

Giles was thanked for his excellent presentation and it was agreed that the work should continue unto 2015. The Chairman agreed the get in touch with Bruce Stockley to arrange this.

BS

5. **Walkover surveys**

Giles said that the walkover survey would be picked up as and when time permitted. Members asked of they could be given the mapping pdfs for areas already surveyed. Giles agreed to do this.

6. **Management plan for Fowey rivers**

Chris introduced his paper. He made three specific points

1. Carefully selected small changes in the river can produce great benefit
2. All the redds recently seen on the upper Draynes were the result of activity by volunteers
3. Fowey anglers tend to fish mainly for either Sea trout or salmon

It is essential to continue the work on the Draynes but the volunteers need organising.

Chris proposed a programme of walkovers to identify, on a relatively regular basis, the areas of the catchment that were at risk of becoming blocked/damaged and where early intervention would be cost effective. Chris Bryant said that he was willing to help by undertaking the walkovers. This was gratefully accepted. It was suggested that Richard Grieve should also be approached because many of the trash dams were on the St Neot between St Neot and Carnglaze. It was agreed that the ideal frequency

would be monthly on the main river and tributaries (Draynes, Warleggan, Cardinham), and annually just before spawning on the side streams (Clinnick, Golden Lake). CB agreed to develop a process with CJ and report results to each subsequent FRA meeting.

CJ CB

The Treasurer said that the FRA could fund the programme to the tune of £750 for the work, mainly undertaken by CJ with Stuart Fullwood, and £250 for expenses such as fuel and other consumables. This would be for the current year only and should be reimbursable through the SWW funding. This would be FRA work and would be under FRA insurance arrangements.

Chris was thanked for his proposals.

7. **2015 AGM**

Anthony Fortescue had confirmed that we could use Boconnoc again for the FRA AGM.

It was agreed that Roger F would ask Pete Kibel from Fishtek and BS agreed to approach Tim Smith to see if either would be our guest speaker.

RF
BS

8. **FFRG**

The Chairman reported on the FFRG meeting held on Monday 19th January.

He tabled a copy of the PR14 project plan from SWW. This would be updated but demonstrated that the project was clearly under way and had a very definite timescale. Specifically, the hatchery would proceed and detailed planning could proceed after April 2015 which would require a decision on siting between Colliford and Park. The timetable was likely to be too tight to permit Wainsford to be considered. The two possible hatchery sites both had power and there were security concerns. There is funding for both the capital cost and revenue cost including limited staff costs. A gravity feed system would be difficult at Park but available at Colliford. Site selection will be made at the next FFRG meeting in April.

Habitat developments on the St Neot would be delayed to 2017 but the total funds would all be spent up before 2020.

SWW is also liaising with the EA on the possibility of 'storing' the compensation flow when regulation releases are made, enabling an increased Fisheries Water Bank. They are also working on the possibility of taking some of the water direct to Restormel via the existing pipeline to reduce the adverse impact of excessive flows in the St Neot in summer. Increased flows when needed at spawning time may be possible with the increased Water Bank.

The current level of mitigation funding was still under discussion and the results would be reported to the July meeting. The NLO review was to be undertaken by 2017. Ideally the result would be a reducing limit of zero.

The next FFRG meeting would be held after the SWRA Council meeting on 14th April.

9. **SWRA**

The SWRA Secretary reported from SWRA meeting held on 13th January 2015.

1. Simon Toms who was attending from the EA was supportive of hatcheries where they complied with the criteria already agreed by the Council. Specifically in the case of the St Neot, the river would not repopulate itself without artificial support.
2. Council had supported the proposition that rivers should calculate the economic value of the fishery. Trials of the method would be undertaken on the Teign and the Dart but other rivers were encouraged to undertake their own using the template RF had developed.
3. The river reports were by and large quite depressing for salmon but most sea trout rivers had good sport. Salmon spawning seemed to have occurred later in the season.
4. The AGM would be on Saturday 14th March at the Arundell Arms.

The FRA noted the report.

10. **Trout and Salmon reports**

It was noted that Richard Bristow would be compiling the monthly Cornwall reports for Trout and Salmon for the 2015 season.

11. **Dates of 2014 meetings**

AGM	15 th April 2015
Committee	15 th July 2015
Committee	21 st October 2015
Committee	20 th January 2016