

**THE  
FORTH DISTRICT  
SALMON FISHERY  
BOARD**

**Annual Report**



**2009**



# The Forth District Salmon Fishery Board

## **MEMBERS ELECTED BY UPPER PROPRIETORS**

(Chairman) J.M.B. Baillie-Hamilton – Cambusmore

(Vice-Chairman) D.A.J. Dickson – Lanrick

Mrs. F. Simpson – Mandatory for the Crown Estates

G.A. Cameron – Leny

## **MEMBERS ELECTED BY LOWER PROPRIETORS**

D. Jones – Mandatory for Stirling Council

J. McGarvie – Airth

## **CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

H. Shaw – Salmon Angler's Representative

F. Howieson – Salmon Angler's Representative

## **DIRECTOR & CLERK**

Patrick Fotheringham: The Lagg Aberfeldy, Perthshire, PH15 2EE

Tel: 07788 416788

## **SUPERINTENDENT**

Bill Cunningham

Tel: 01786 842122 or Mob: 07887 835549

**[www.fishforth.co.uk](http://www.fishforth.co.uk)**

# Chairman's Report

[www.fishforth.co.uk](http://www.fishforth.co.uk)

**Mike Baillie-Hamilton** – Chairman FDSFB & Vice-Chairman RFFT

2009 was the first full year in which we have had our full time Director and I am pleased to report that we have made useful progress on a variety of fronts. Having Patrick Fotheringham in the hot seat has been a great relief to me as I am now presented with solutions to agree to more often than problems to deal with. Apart from anything else it means I can write a shorter report and leave him to report on the details with which he has been dealing. He has several projects on the go or in the pipeline which I hope you will find very promising, as I do. I thank him for all the work he has done during the year which was probably more than he anticipated when he took on the job.

At a District level we now have our Catchment Management Plan in place, although it will be open to continual updating. Writing this plan has focussed our minds on just how much there is that could and should be achieved in our catchment – the fourth largest fishery board area in Scotland. With one Director and one Superintendent working in the area we obviously need to leverage in additional resources. We have therefore set up management groups on individual parts of our catchment and brought on board members of angling clubs and some proprietors. Our hope is that these locally based groups will be able to concentrate efforts on local problems and solve some of them. My personal thanks go to those people who have volunteered to help with these local management groups. As well as the local level we have begun to contribute at a national level in a modest way such as by hosting an invasive species site visit.

Bill Cunningham and his band of volunteer assistants have had another busy year. Our fears that the recession might lead to idle hands causing mischief have perhaps only partly materialised but from Bill's report you will see the trend was for a rise in illegal activity. We really are most grateful to the volunteer bailiffs, all of whom have submitted to and now passed the IFM bailiffs training course. Also on the positive side we have had considerable support from Police Wildlife Crime officers in Central, Lothians and Fife constabularies. As with the management work, leveraging in this assistance has been of great value to us. One particular bugbear, repeated many times over the years including last year, has been the reluctance of Procurators Fiscal to pursue some cases which seem slam dunks to us. We will be addressing this – again!

Having the River Forth Fisheries Trust live has also been a great help. Without it we would probably not have managed to do some of the projects we have achieved including employing a part time assistant to look at crayfish etc. I refer you to Ali Dickson's report for more on this.

Our accounts show a modest cash deficit of approximately £3,500 on a turnover of £110,000 for the year. Turnover was ahead of expectations largely due to Patrick's grant tapping efforts, whilst expenditure was also larger than budgeted due to replacing the Superintendent's vehicle slightly earlier than anticipated. Overall your Board consider both the annual financial result and the reserves to be satisfactory.

Last year I reported that Fen Howieson of the Cramond Angling Association had joined the board as an angling representative. He has been very active in setting up and running our website for which I am most grateful. Stirling Council recruited Davy Jones as their fishery manager and he now represents them on the Board. He, backed by Donald Balsillie, has been something of a breath of fresh air (or perhaps more accurately a tornado) in changing attitudes within the Council. He has been most helpful to us and if his

ambitions are realized we will continue to benefit from several initiatives such as having a temporary assistant helping Bill at no cost to us. Our triennial elections were held after the 2009 year end and so the result does not strictly belong in this report but I am happy to report that all the board members were re-elected.

Another matter which does not strictly belong in the 2009 report is the quinquennial revaluation of fisheries. However, notices and assessments will have reached proprietors very recently and I would like to mention this briefly. The assessors believe that fishings in Scotland have risen significantly in value in real terms. Consequently many of the valuations have risen by 40-50%. Also the assessor has taken a fresh look at our two largest fisheries including Stirling Council and has upped their valuations even further. In line with practice elsewhere they have also introduced a *de-minimus* valuation. Conversely, some unused or uneconomic fisheries have seen reductions. Overall the valuation roll has risen markedly. Even after reducing the poundage that we set, this has allowed the Board to budget for a significant rise in income. We have some genuinely exciting plans for using this money to expand what we do - part of which will be routed through the trust. We may have more to report on this by the time of our AGM to which all proprietors are most welcome.

## **The River Forth Fisheries Trust**

### **Chairman's Interim Report**

[www.fishforth.co.uk](http://www.fishforth.co.uk)

**Alistair Dickson** – Chairman RFFT & Vice-Chairman FDSFB

It is a pleasure to be able to report that since its inception in 2009 the River Forth Fisheries Trust has made considerable progress under the directorship of Patrick Fotheringham. Patrick, ably supported by a network of enthusiastic volunteers, has been responsible for preparing a comprehensive Management Plan for the Forth system and for establishing working groups across the catchment in order to prepare sub-plans for each of the District's rivers. These plans will be used to help identify appropriate and urgent remedial projects that will protect and enhance our fish stocks in the future. Data collected from such projects will also provide an invaluable picture of current environmental conditions in the Forth.

Funding for the Trust has been guaranteed for a minimum of three years by the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board and both bodies will work closely together to pursue their collective objective of improving the biodiversity of the system. In recognition of the importance of the work of the Trust, generous financial and logistical support has also been donated by Stirling Council. A full-time biologist / project leader will be appointed in the near future and exciting new projects are scheduled for the coming year as outlined in the Director's report.

The salmon is an excellent barometer of water quality and as such is not only a well deserved emblem for the biodiversity of the River Forth, but of the country as a whole. The Trust is enormously grateful for the support it has been given by the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board and we look forward to working with them for the benefit of all the Forth's fish species and the rivers in which they live.

# Director's Report

[www.fishforth.co.uk](http://www.fishforth.co.uk)

## Patrick Fotheringham – Director FDSFB & RFFT

Given that 2009 has been the first full year in which I have been in post as Director, it has been a busy, eventful and, I hope you will agree, productive one. In addition to starting the ball rolling in terms of delivering fisheries improvement projects to our rivers, the year has largely been taken up with a radical restructuring of the way in which fisheries management is delivered across our rivers.

You will recall that in last year's report I highlighted the fact that the River Forth Fisheries Trust had produced a Fisheries Management Plan for the entire District. The plan is now complete and can be viewed on our web-site. The plan gives an account of what we currently know about the District's fish populations, highlighting the problems that they face, and it goes on to present generic solutions for those problems wherever they occur. What it is not, is a fully prioritised list of costed, timetabled projects and this is the next stage.

In order to deliver effective fisheries management at a local level, it has been necessary to split the District into ten management units. Namely: Leven, Devons, Allan, Forth & Teith, Carron, Avon, Almond, Water of Leith, Esks and Tyne & Biel. In each case, we aim to build fisheries management groups around committed volunteers whose first action will be to produce a sub-catchment management plan for their river(s) and a number of these are now complete. The Board/Trust will be positioned in the centre where it can provide advice and co-ordination, whilst also facilitating fund raising. In addition, the Trust hopes to be able to employ a full time biologist during 2010, at which point the Trust will be in a position to supply the type of scientific back-up on which all fisheries management decisions should be based. My thanks go to the many volunteers who have contributed to this process and I feel certain that if we work together we can provide really effective freshwater fisheries management to the Forth District.

2009 was a busy year for the bailiffs. I must extend my thanks to Bill and his team of volunteers for all their hard work. It is no easy task to police an area the size of the Forth District and frequently the job requires difficult hours and demanding situations. A number of arrests were made in 2009 and a large number of nets lifted and destroyed, but you will read more in the Superintendent's own report.

Whilst I have said that much of the effort this year has gone into planning and re-structuring, we have of course carried out a number of important projects. One of these, paid for by Scottish Natural Heritage, has involved an assessment of populations of potentially highly damaging North American Signal Crayfish. These non-native crustaceans have in the past been introduced to a number of locations in the Forth District including the rivers Teith and Tyne and also a burn in Fife. It is hard to overstate the potential for these creatures to cause severe damage to the District's fisheries. We would be very grateful if anyone who either finds a crayfish or knows where there may be crayfish populations would contact me at the Board's office.

Another excellent project, to which the river Forth Fisheries Trust has contributed, is the Fish Go to School initiative. This is an education project to which has now been run for a number of years where trout eggs are brought into schools in mini-hatcheries and once ready are returned as fry into local burns. Through the Trust's involvement it has now been possible to run this course in all of Clackmannanshire's schools and it remains an objective to roll this out to other parts of the catchment in the future.

In 2009 the Board and Trust once more carried out genetic sampling of the District's salmon populations and we await the publication of the results now that the samples have been processed. If as we expect this cutting edge technology is effective in identifying discrete salmon populations within the District's rivers then the results will be used to inform future management. Furthermore, this work has contributed to a larger project that is attempting to map the genetics of salmon populations across the country.

The most important work that the Board and Trust has carried out in 2009 in terms of the restoration of degraded rivers has involved the mapping of barriers to fish migration and the subsequent production of engineering assessments and fish-pass designs on a number of them. It is unquestionably the case that the most effective measures that can be taken to boost populations of migratory fish are those which open up additional high quality habitat that is not currently accessible to them. Not only is it likely to produce more fish on a sustainable basis than any other management intervention, but in comparative terms it also represents good value for money. We have identified over 60 barriers in the District and have now, with the aid of a proportion of Fisheries Management Planning grant from Government, together with money from the SEPA restoration fund, commissioned engineering reports on barriers on the Tyne (7), Biel, Teith (Calair Burn), Almond (9) and Allan. A number of these were carried out in 2009 and it is planned to complete the remainder in 2010. It is also hoped that in 2010 the first of the physical works will be carried out to install fish passes etc. It is likely that fish passage projects will remain the highest priority for the Board and Trust in 2010 and beyond.

Finally, if I may, a word or two about the future. The Board and Trust are seeking to find the means of employing a biologist in 2010. Modern, effective fisheries management requires that management decisions are based on sound science. District Salmon Fisheries Boards are statutory bodies and Fisheries Trusts are charities set up with scientific fisheries management research as one of their key objectives. Both bodies should be striving to maintain the highest standards attainable given the resources available and this cannot be achieved without good scientific backup. In the past we have bought this in as and when required at a considerable cost. Given that the arena in which the Board and Trust are now operating has expanded, it makes sense to bring in a biologist at this point. Scientists have not always been popular in angling circles and I think this is for a number of reasons, but not least that anglers do not necessarily understand what fisheries biologists are trying to achieve. To the non-scientist there is a long-standing stereotypical image when scientists are mentioned of a boffin wearing a white lab coat and thinking great, unintelligible and esoteric thoughts. However, what fisheries science at its best actually provides is high quality information that informs fisheries management decisions. In no other area of business would you make important decisions from an under-informed position and fisheries management should be no different. In addition to this, it will become increasingly important, and in particular when applying for grants, to be able to show through pre-project monitoring that management intervention is required and through post-works monitoring that the intervention has been successful in achieving its objectives. This process in itself goes on to inform decision-making on future project work and thus the quality of fisheries management that can be achieved should be continuously improving. The biologist we employ will be asked to work specifically towards project delivery and will help back up the sub-catchment management groups and help them to deliver their objectives. Importantly, if we have an in-house biologist it will allow us to carry out a wide variety of work on a contract basis that should attract additional funding to the Trust.

# Superintendent's Report

[www.fishforth.co.uk](http://www.fishforth.co.uk)

**Bill Cunningham** – Superintendent FDSFB

## **Prosecution Reports:**

Nine arrests were submitted to Procurators Fiscal at Stirling, Haddington and Livingston on charges ranging from fishing without legal right and illegal netting to fishing for trout during the annual closed period. To date only one of those cases has been successfully pursued in court and the offender had a £500 fine levied against him. Two other incidents went to court but, for one reason or another, the cases were not put forward. However, we have been informed that the Procurators Fiscal will look at poaching cases more closely in the future.

## **Staffing:**

We rely heavily on our voluntary bailiffs who work long hours on an unpaid basis. Without this volunteer force, it would be impossible to carry out anti-poaching operations. I am pleased to report that in the last year, for the most part, morale amongst the bailiffs has been high and I would like to thank them for all that they do for us.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the Police Officers from Lothian and Borders and Wild-life Police Officers from Central Police Forces for their assistance throughout the year. We have been working closely with them and have had several successful operations with their help and we have several more operations planned in the coming year. In 2009 we removed many nets from the District's rivers and the photograph below shows a gill net being seized.

## **Note to Proprietors:**

As I have noted in the past, I know that issuing permits can take up people's valuable time and that it is not always a straightforward task. However, fishing for salmon is covered by legislation and it does state that when fishing for salmon or sea trout in Scotland, anglers must have legal right or written permission to do so. Proprietors that forget to issue permits make the task of checking that anglers are fishing legally very difficult.

Once again I would be most grateful if anyone who believes or suspects that illegal fishing is taking place would contact me on either of the numbers listed below. All calls will be taken seriously and investigated. I would like to assure proprietors that all the rivers are patrolled on a regular basis. Although bailiffs are not always conspicuous it does not mean we are not there.

Contact Bill Cunningham: Tel: 01786 842122 or Mob: 07887 835549



# Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS)

[www.rafts.org.uk](http://www.rafts.org.uk)

## Callum Sinclair – Director RAFTS

I am pleased to be able to provide a short report about the work of the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) to the annual report of one of our newest members; the River Forth Fisheries Trust. There has, of course been a fisheries trust before on the Forth which after promising beginnings proved to be unsustainable. The good work initiated, undertaken and planned by the new trust gives every indication that the River Forth Fisheries Trust is here to stay as it works closely with the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board (DSFB) to improve and develop the fish and fisheries across its patch. We look forward to continuing to work with and support the River Forth Fisheries Trust in the years ahead.

### **What is RAFTS?**

RAFTS itself is a membership based organisation working for and on behalf of all the Fisheries and Rivers Trusts in Scotland. Currently we have a shoal of 24 (soon to be 25) member trusts who work in the freshwaters of some 90% of Scotland. Our job is to support our members across a range of activities, to help them to do more, to develop and improve what they do, to work together in collaborative projects and to represent them in a range of national initiatives. We do this in a range of ways.

### **What do we do?**

Perhaps the most direct way we support our members is by our efforts to secure and distribute funds to support individual or collective projects and programmes of work. This fund generation and distribution function can help trusts complete some of the work they want to do in their area and is very much a developing strand of work. Increasingly RAFTS, working with the trusts, is seen as a safe pair of hands to manage and coordinate projects for funders and partners. In recent years this has seen us secure and deliver, for example, projects for Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) on freshwater pearl mussel and American signal crayfish and for the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, via the Water Framework Directive Restoration Fund, on the assessment of barriers to fish passage and delivering survey and treatment of invasive non native plants. All of these projects have directly supported work undertaken by trusts.

Over 2008 and 2009 RAFTS has distributed in excess of £820,000 to members.

Perhaps the three biggest collective projects currently under way are summarised below;

### **Fishery Management Planning:**

A full suite of fishery management plans have now been published as part of the Scottish Government / Marine Scotland supported fishery management planning programme. Plans are available for the 24 trusts and boards taking part in this exercise in 2008/09 and 2009/10. Though these plans have been very much a labour of love for those preparing them they are now becoming increasingly important as trusts take forward programmes and projects to implement plans and their priority projects. Scotland's trusts, with their DSFB partners, are now delivering an increasingly coordinated, planned and effective programme of fishery management which considers both migratory salmonid and other fish species.

This programme has another full year to run in 2010/11 under the current funding support. It is hoped that the work can be continued with further funding to help deliver good quality fishery management and management projects for all of Scotland's fish and fisheries.

You can have a look at the fishery management plans on the RAFTS website: [www.rafts.org.uk](http://www.rafts.org.uk)

### **Understanding Salmon Populations and Genetics:**

2009 saw the coming together of the Focusing Atlantic Salmon Management on Populations (FASMOP) Genetics project. Despite the rather dubious acronym this project is amongst the most exciting to be initiated by RAFTS and its members and has the potential to transform our understanding of Atlantic salmon populations in our rivers and, more importantly, how we protect and manage them.

Throughout Scotland fishery trusts are undertaking a sampling programme from salmon across their rivers which are now being analysed by a dedicated team of molecular geneticists based at the Marine Scotland laboratory in Pitlochry. The staff are employed by RAFTS and housed and supported by Marine Scotland under a Memorandum of Agreement between RAFTS and Marine Scotland. Genetic analysis was identified as a national and local priority for fisheries trusts and as such part of the Scottish Government funding for fishery management planning has been allocated to this work. Significant additional cash and in-kind contributions have been made by trusts, DSFB, grant giving trusts and SNH and this work, when set alongside the SALSEA Merge programmes demonstrates clearly the huge value in the public-private sector partnership approach when a common area of interest is identified.

It is fair to say that the RAFTS Director was not quite sure what a molecular geneticist actually looked like or how many of them wandered free in the world when starting this project but the FASMOP partnership have been able to appoint a strong team of Mark Coulson (joining us from Canada), Lucy Webster and Anja Armstrong to the project. Although the work is at an early stage we have high hopes that it will make significant strides in demystifying the genetic picture of our salmon populations so that managers can increasingly protect and manage that which is unique, valuable and different amongst our special salmon rivers.

### **Biosecurity Planning and Invasive Non-Native Species:**

The RAFTS Biosecurity planning programme continues to develop apace under the stewardship of Chris Horrill. Similar to the fishery management plans a number of Biosecurity plans are complete or nearing completion and a suite of projects to treat, control and /or eradicate invasive non-native species are in various stages of implementation, development or preparation ranging from fully fledged projects now being implemented, applications currently made to funders to ideas which remain but a twinkle in RAFTS eye. We are confident that this area of work will continue to expand and allow trusts to deliver genuine environmental improvement for our rivers, fish and fisheries and people. The Biosecurity Plan for the River Forth Fisheries Trust will be being prepared in 2010.

Amongst the projects completed in 2009 has been, working jointly with SNH and Glasgow University, the development of a protocol to detect American signal crayfish and the completion of surveys across Scotland to refine understanding of the current distribution of this species with a view to developing better approaches to control the further spread of this invasive species and, perhaps, identify locations where eradication may be possible. Crayfish are present in a number of locations in the Forth and any new records should be reported directly to the trust Director and to RAFTS via the dedicated website developed as part of the Biosecurity planning project ([www.invasivespeciesscotland.org.uk](http://www.invasivespeciesscotland.org.uk))

**And some of the rest:**

Of course RAFTS works in many other ways to support our members and their aspirations. Amongst the other activities we are involved in during 2009 and 2010 are; Director of the Scottish Aquaculture Research Forum (SARF), Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries Steering Group Member, Management Committee Member of the Scottish Fisheries Coordination Centre and participant in a number of associated working groups, organiser of the annual RAFTS conference, visiting members on a rolling programme basis, supporting new trust formations, transferring of RAFTS from a charity to a company limited by guarantee, Chairing Steering Groups for FASMOP Genetics and Biosecurity Planning Projects, providing training opportunities to members on crayfish management, non-native plant identification and project development and management.

Working with our members, including the Forth Fisheries Trust, we aim to ensure that the work of trusts in the fields of fish and fisheries, wider environmental management and education are recognised and supported to maintain and develop the social, environmental and economic benefits they provide for us all.

## **The River Leven**

[www.fishleven.co.uk](http://www.fishleven.co.uk)

**Peter Mason** – Treasurer, River Leven Angling Club

The River Leven Angling Club was formed in the autumn of 2009 with a great deal of support from the Crown Estate and the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board. The River Leven had been without an angling club for a number of years, so it was great to see the level of support from the local communities at our initial meeting in October, when over 90 people turned up at the Methilhill Bowling Club.

The River Leven Angling Club was constituted in January 2010; a Committee was elected and formal Rules and Regulations were adopted. My thanks again go to the Board for assisting with this important milestone in the Clubs formation. The interest from local anglers has been excellent, with membership currently exceeding 80, and I'm sure numbers will continue to grow as the season progresses.

2010 is all about securing and building on these stable foundations. We have already started to build up strong relationships with Fife Council, SEPA and Fife Constabulary. The local Wildlife Liaison Officer is planning to attend one of our Committee Meetings. Fife Council has been a great help and I'm looking forward to taking them up on their offer of assistance once we have arranged our bank maintenance work parties, this is an area we plan to develop throughout the coming season.

In line with all the other rivers within the District, the River Leven Angling Club is about to start building its Sub-Catchment Management Plan. There isn't a great deal of information collated about the Leven catchment. However, I'm confident that information SEPA and other bodies can provide, along with local knowledge will help shape this during the next few months. We plan to distribute the Consultation Draft towards the end of the year.

The Committee would like to continue to develop our links with the community and it is hoped that over the coming years we can start to develop a Junior Section, a Lady's Section and introduce Club Social Nights. The River Leven Angling Club has a web presence now and as the season progresses we'll continue to add content and updates.

## **The Rivers Devon and Black Devon**

[www.clacksnet.org.uk/hosted/daa](http://www.clacksnet.org.uk/hosted/daa)

### **Dennis Toon – Committee Member, Devon Angling Association**

The majority of the River Devon below Castlehill is under the management of the long established Devon Angling Association (DAA). The DAA has managed the river for 105 years and has a sound record in maintaining the catchment environment and the quality of the river as a brown trout and salmon fishery. The river is impassable to salmon at the Cauldron Linn. However, the presence of a smolt farm adjacent to the A91 Fossoway Bridge, well upstream from the Linn, remains a potential threat to the genetic integrity of the wild Devon salmon. The upper waters of the Devon will take time to recover from the effects of problems at this smolt farm that occurred in 2008 and it is essential that bio-security of fish farms on the main stems of rivers is rigorously enforced.

The autumn salmon run in the Devon produced another good year for the salmon fishers. Again, it was a couple of spells of very high water that allowed reasonable numbers of fish into the river. This is typical of the River Devon where salmon runs occur over very short periods of time and numbers are dictated by water levels. The performance of the recently reconstructed fish pass at Cambus still cannot be quantified because of the flood conditions during the early salmon run. Average annual water levels need to prevail over the September / October period to allow for fair assessment of the pass's performance. In comparison with most of the rivers in the Forth catchment the Devon has relatively low salmon numbers; this makes it attractive to salmon fishers who enjoy the challenge of the hunt. Efforts are being made to increase the proportion of fish being returned to the river in keeping with good conservation practice as promoted by the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board. However, the brown trout fishing is, the main interest of anglers on the Devon and in excess of 600 permits are issued annually by the DAA. In addition, the DAA also operates the brown trout fishery at Glenquey Reservoir located in Glendevon.

A small management committee look after the interests of the river and the reservoir, elections take place annually at a general meeting of the annual permit holders. Committee members stand down on a rota basis and are open for re-election, some have served the association for more than 25 years, and all put considerable effort into maintaining the fishery. A number of voluntary bailiffs monitor angling activity on the river. The DAA has a formal management plan coupled with a five-year development programme and is active in the River Forth Fisheries Trust, the Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Partnership and the Ochils Landscape Partnership. Working parties spend a half day each week throughout the year working on the river. Activities include maintaining and improving access, debris clearance and fallen timber removal and the ongoing control of invasive species (Himalayan balsam is a big problem). Bank erosion as a consequence of flood conditions and invasive plant growth are serious at some locations. Last year at the Association's request Clackmannanshire Council removed six mature trees from the river at a single location, all had fallen due to bank erosion. The Ochils Landscape Partnership has completed the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) that supports its bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund; the bid has now been submitted. If the bid is successful the Association will act as the delivery

partner for three significant projects concerned with conservation of the river. One project will deal with stabilisation of the riverbanks at a number of locations where erosion is at critical levels. Reinstatement of natural wetlands is a second project. It aims to develop and plant some areas of the floodplain to provide wildlife habitats connected to the riparian corridor, thus improving biodiversity along the river. The third project establishes a three year funded programme to control invasive species. This last project may become the lead part of longer-term control activity across the Forth catchment. The DAA is again pleased to see the Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Partnership and the River Forth Fisheries Trust supporting the 'Fish Go To School' programme, which ran between January and March this year in all Clackmannanshire primary schools. The children continue to enjoy and benefit from this scheme.

The Black Devon remains unregulated, but the prospect of a significant housing and recreational development at Forestmill does raise the possibility of developing the river's fishery potential and bringing it under the control of one of the fishery management groups. For this reason it is important that periodic population monitoring is carried out on the river and that proper assessment of access conditions for spawning salmon is made.

## **The River Allan**

[www.allanwaterangling.co.uk](http://www.allanwaterangling.co.uk)

**Tom McKenzie** – Membership Convenor, Allan Water Improvement Association

### **Angling Report:**

Angling throughout 2008 was at times difficult. Cold winds throughout the early part of the year were not conducive to good hatches of flies and trout and sea trout were difficult to catch. Having said that, trout up to 1½lbs. and sea trout up to 5lbs. were taken. Early summer saw a few multi-winter salmon enter the river and some were caught but, as water levels diminished, they became very difficult to catch. Despite excellent water conditions throughout July and August the grilse run did not arrive as expected and there were very few fish in the river at a time when the main run of fish would normally appear and this is reflected in the catches. Things did pick up a little however towards the end of the season but catches of trout, sea trout and salmon were all down on the previous year.

### **Farmed Salmon Escape:**

During the autumn some 10,000 juvenile salmon escaped from the smolt rearing facility at Waltersmuir Reservoir on the Wharry Burn. It is disappointing that despite many representations being made to the operators of this installation by both FDSFB and the Association that the prevention measures we were assured were in place were woefully inadequate in preventing fish escaping.

### **Conservation Issues:**

Of recent years there have been a number of upgrades of the A9 between Blackford and Dunblane and almost every burn on the left bank of the Allan has been culverted or affected in some way and access to hitherto prime spawning and nursery areas is now barred. Downstream of Blackford the river has been modified by successive dredging works carried out under the 1941 Land Drainage Act (now repealed). This almost continuous round of annual works severely degraded the habitat between Blackford and Ashfield as engineers sought to straighten the river channel to improve run off. This did nothing to

stabilize the riverbanks and simply exacerbated the problem. Modern farming practices and poor forestry practices have also added to the problem. Erosion, the legacy of these past policies, remains a significant ongoing factor and urgent remedial measures are required.

The Allan which is part of the River Teith Special Area for Conservation (SAC) for salmon and lampreys has natural populations of salmon, sea trout, brown trout, lamprey spp., minnow, eel, stone loach, and three-spined sticklebacks, and is home to a wide variety of birds including moorhen and kingfisher. Otter populations also exist on the river. There are still a few pearl mussel beds but these are now seriously endangered by transport of substrates during flood episodes and pollution. The downward pressures on the river and its fauna and flora are both numerous and complex. The Allan Water Angling Improvement Association has recognised that there are serious problems and, based on past data and a new report on the status of the river, it has drawn up a management programme to tackle these pressures, which can generally be broken down into three categories.

- Man-made obstructions and industrial processes that restrict/affect fish migrations.
- Siltation caused by excessive erosion
- Biosecurity

#### **Management Plan:**

The Association (AWAIA) as an owner and tenant of fishing on the River Allan has recognised that there are many improvements required to restore the river to good ecological status and has prepared a plan of proposed works which, with time, will achieve these improvements. It is recognised that a partnership approach is required to implement these and a proactive role, by dialogue with the River Forth Fisheries Trust, Forth District Salmon Fisheries Board, Stirling Council, Tayside Council, other owners of fisheries and other interested parties will be required if success is to be achieved.

A detailed operational plan has been drawn up for each identified action using data from electro fishing surveys by Iasgair Fishery Advisory Services (IFAS) and the Forth Fishery Foundation (FFF) and from the detailed habitat information in the report "The Allan Water – An inventory of current status of the River Allan and its tributaries" (T. McKenzie 2009). The detailed plan includes the actions required to quantify and execute remedial works, identify partners, identify costs and funding sources, time scales, and quantify the environmental benefits. Details of the required improvements and actions needed to realise these improvements have been forwarded to the River Forth Fisheries Trust for inclusion in their River Forth Management Plan.

Whilst this plan includes measures principally to enhance the riparian habitat with respect to its aquatic fauna and flora it should be recognised that the improvements will have much wider social and ecological benefits and that restoring the currently degraded habitats will also support a much wider and more diverse range of animal and plant species.

Progress on the plan is already on-going and a number of AWAIA members are to be trained by Stirling Council in hogweed spraying techniques and safety with a view to carrying out a comprehensive spraying operation throughout the river in 2010 in an effort to reduce silt transport. Progress is also being made on quantifying the improvements required to the Scouring Burn at Dunblane where migratory fish have been barred from excellent spawning areas for 150 years. It is proposed that the plan should be rolled out to a wider range of stakeholders who have interests in the river with a view to raising the issues on a broader platform.

It is expected that as the various issues are addressed and further improvements are made the fortunes of the river will again start to improve and perhaps the Allan can look forward to a time when the river and its fauna and flora have a successful real long term future.

## **The Rivers Forth and Teith**

[www.stirling.gov.uk/fisheries](http://www.stirling.gov.uk/fisheries)

**Davie Jones** – Fisheries Officer, Stirling Council and Chairman of the F&TMG

Stirling Council's Fisheries:

Stirling Council manages significant fishing interests on beats on both the Forth and Teith. Its policy is to allow salmon fishing at affordable prices whilst maintaining conservation of fish stocks.

In 2009, the Council appointed me as their new Fisheries Officer, to manage their interests on the Forth and Teith. There were a number of challenges to be met, not least the introduction of a policing strategy and a code of conduct to sit alongside the rules issued with every permit.

Council Bailiffs have worked alongside Crown Bailiffs and officers from Central Scotland Police on a number of operations which have resulted in a number of persons being arrested and charged. This has had a very positive effect and there are now only sporadic reports of any wrong doing on the fishery. The new code of conduct allows the Council to deal with minor offences and it has the flexibility to issue warnings, fines or indeed bans.

In order to assist in Policing the Fishery, the Council introduced a volunteer bailiff scheme. This has seen the appointment of five new bailiffs who can work alongside full-time bailiffs. Already we have seen the success of this scheme with poachers being arrested and handed over to the crown bailiff who reported the matter to The Procurator Fiscal. These volunteers will play a significant part in policing the fishery in the future.

Stirling Council strongly supports conservation and has resisted any attempt to remove the tagging scheme currently in place. Last season saw just over 800 salmon being caught, of which almost 60% were returned. A total of 430 sea-trout were caught of which almost 90% were returned. Whilst these statistics are good, and indeed the best we have achieved in terms of catch and release, we must not rest on our laurels and as such we will continue to strongly support conservation of our stocks. There is a clear change in attitudes from the anglers who use our fishery and the vast majority fully understand and support conservation.

In partnership with the Angling Centre Stirling and the River Forth Fisheries Trust we have introduced an initiative where we present anglers who have shown clear evidence of conservation with a fishing cap which has the words SAVING FORTH AND TEITH SALMON printed thereon. The hope is we see many anglers wearing these caps and promoting the message of conservation.

There has been a great effort to improve access to our fisheries and to this end we have constructed a new platform for disabled anglers at The Geisher Pool at Callander. We also put in a new path from the start of the Geisher to the Turn pool. We are currently constructing a new path from The Piers at Cornton Vale to run alongside the Forth to the main Cornton Road a distance of approx 2000 metres.

Along the way there will be new areas for anglers and new benches so that the area can be enjoyed by all who visit.

We have also installed a new cabin at The Dykes at Craigforth. This is open to bailiffs and anglers and there will be scales and a recording book for catches. The aim is to bring people together and to give anglers a sense of ownership of the fishery. This should assist with policing and the general running of the fishery.

The council are working very closely with the FDSFB and the RFFT on a number of issues. This partnership working has to be seen as the way forward and will be of mutual benefit in the future.

The Council's Fisheries web-site has been completely revamped and now gives a vast amount of information. There is a section which allows customer feedback and this will be put to good use to ensure we are making the very best of what we have.

Towards the end of last year we re-opened the hatchery at Wellgreen. This is an education project and has seen us engage with a wide range of community groups. We intend to continue with this project in the years ahead.

For the first time, the Council organised a grand opening day to open its fisheries for the new season. Sir Ian Botham did the honours and the day was enjoyed by all who attended. It is hoped to repeat this every year and already we are trying to recruit a celebrity for next year.

In conclusion, 2009 was a very busy year for us with many changes being made. The Council fully supports the FDSFB and the RFFT and will continue to work in partnership with them to achieve the long term aims and objectives.

### **The Forth and Teith Management Group:**

As far as wider issues go on the Forth and Teith it has also been a very busy year. We have now set up a management group made up of committed individuals and the process of surveying the river is now well under way.

Engineering surveys have now been completed with a view to improving fish passage into the Calair Burn. This is an unspoilt part of the catchment with ideal habitat for spring salmon production and is thus of great importance. As soon as the engineer's report is delivered the Board will examine the possibilities of a relatively large scale engineering project to resolve fish passage issues.

The Teith fisheries management group has now drafted a sub-catchment management plan and this is about to go out for wide consultation. The plan will be used to prioritise, timetable and cost a list of projects that will be delivered over the five year life-time of the plan.

## **The River Carron**

### **Tony Harris – Secretary, River Carron Fisheries Management Group**

The River Carron Management Group has now been set up to provide a management body for the entire river system. The aim of the group is to improve conservation of migratory and non-migratory fish stocks in the River Carron and to ensure they are managed as sustainable fisheries. Though independent, the group is set up under the banner of the River Forth Fisheries Trust and looks forward to working with it and with the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board to achieve its objectives.

In March 2010 Tony Harris of FCE Consultants compiled a 42-page report on migratory fish access and this report is used as the foundation for the first Carron sub-catchment fisheries management plan, which will highlight various improvement projects and initiatives for the river for the coming years. It will be reviewed annually and be a working document.

Though not strictly part of a report for the year 2009, I thought it might be helpful to update you on various initiatives that we are currently pursuing.

In April, baseline visual walking surveys were completed for the river Carron and its principle tributaries

The results of the surveys to date have recorded the following problems:

- 18 potential pollution sources were found of which eight were thought to be a current threat. Pollution incidents were, reported to SEPA and dealt with immediately.
- 19 full in-stream blockages (fallen trees, log jams, livestock fencing, blocked watergates, etc.).
- 65 partial in-stream blockages (as above).
- 14 watergates needing work done, renewed or improved.
- One major abstraction point (for Howietoun Fishery off Loch Coulter Burn)
- Five tonnes scrap metal, 85 tyres, 25 oil drums, 32 tonnes of mixed fly-tipping; debris and litter, 34 shopping trolleys, 30 traffic cones; many fly-tipping points which have been reported to SEPA.

On a positive note one tributary which will be used as a benchmark for the river system when surveyed visually showed 71 Salmon Parr, 10 Silver Smolts 67 Brown Trout and two Stone Loach.

Much of the spring has been spent gathering data, information and previous reports to establish the current status of the river system and to determine exactly what work is being done, by whom, and exactly what work and reports have been done in the past.

In March and April 2010 communications were ongoing with MacTaggart & Mickel Ltd., the housing developer of the Fankerton Carrongrove Mill site, who as part of their planning consent MUST build a fish pass a Fankerton. We have been in talks about the installation of the fish pass and micro-hydro scheme. We are representing the group on this matter for the best interests of the river. The engineering design must be fit for purpose and water abstraction for the micro-hydro scheme is a very important factor, as are others e.g. smolt screens, etc.

We have started investigations into the low compensation flows from certain reservoirs in the system in conjunction with SEPA. The long term goal is to install proper flow-recording devices, procedures and reporting to ensure Scottish Water provide the river with the compensation water flow rates as agreed in their SEPA CAR licences. There is also an investigation into the agreed abstraction flow for Howietoun Fishery from the Loch Coulter Burn (the main source of the Avon Burn) as 100% of the burn's flow is abstracted by Howietoun Fishery. It is known that the Loch Coulter compensation flow was set in the past to provide a minimum flow over the Headwood mill weir.

In April a Kick Sampling Kit was purchased for performing kick sampling for invertebrates on the river system for baseline surveys and to establish pollution and water quality problems. Many people have been contacted regarding kick sampling surveys including Jill Gillard (SEPA Edinburgh) who has provided information on the SEPA kick sampling program on the river system and has offered to meet in May on

the River Carron to demonstrate how to do it. We have identified certain sampling sites that SEPA currently do not do and others for the group.

In April we attended two “Clean up the River Carron” events organised by CACA and Keep Scotland Beautiful. To date an estimated 500 bags of litter plus several truckloads of fly tipping metal, metal, household rubbish and commercial rubbish were removed from the paths and from the water. Clean-ups have taken place in Fankerton, Stoneywood, Dunipace/Denny, Abbotshaugh Community Woodland and Skinflats and also in Bainsford, Carron, Carronshore, Langlees, Grangemouth and Larbert. These included, but were not limited to, clean-ups sponsored by Carron Connect, Upper Forth Wild Fowlers Association, CGI and Glenwood TRO.

A list of funding agencies is also in the process of being drawn up for future funding applications.

We are currently in the process of applying for £1,500 from the River Forth Fisheries Trust’s Fisheries Management planning Grant, to enable us to remove all full in-stream blockages on the Avon Burn tributary and hope to have this project completed by August 2010 at the latest in time for the autumn salmon run.

Communities Along The Carron Association (CACA) formed in April 2010 and we have two representatives of the RCFMG on CACA. We will work in partnership with CACA to receive funding for common projects on the river. We will provide a steering function to help CACA understand the needs of the river system and the statutory requirements for improvement projects on the river system.

It is envisaged that the river projects and improvement initiatives will be identified by the sub group, then communicated to CACA and the Forth Fisheries Trust with the aim of gaining grant funding to complete the various projects.

For the rest of 2010 the work program is likely to be as follows:

- Publish the Fishery Management Plan.
- Identify a priority list of projects for the system and make a plan for the next five years.
- Identify river management improvements with regard to human impacts, better reporting and declaring of fish caught in the system by anglers, promotion of catch and release and new incentive schemes. Identify ways to increase C&R rates and ways to educate young or inexperienced anglers with the intention to increase C&R rates.
- Gain funding for our first migratory fish access improvement project. Complete that project on time.
- Finish the remaining visual surveys – Little Denny Burn and the main river from Bonny Water to Grangemouth.
- Identify all the pollution sources in the system and create a list for continual visual monitoring. Continue to inform SEPA of any current pollution incidents as found during the surveys.
- Start frequent pollution source monitoring and recording.
- Inform polluters and landowners by letter of the existence of the new RCFMG and that the pollution monitoring programs have started in partnership with SEPA.
- Gain funding to carry out baseline electro-fishing surveys to determine fish populations on all tributaries to determine if a major pollution incident has occurred in any of these in the recent past.

- Start kick sampling surveys at certain locations in the system to establish baseline data and as part of a new ongoing pollution survey program.
- Carry out redd count surveys in November/December to determine where the fish are currently spawning in the system.
- Identify Water Framework Directive and River Basin Planning Improvements for the River and report these into to Patrick Fotheringham.

The future is bright for fisheries on the River Carron.

## The River Avon

[www.l-a-c.co.uk](http://www.l-a-c.co.uk)

### **L. McFadzean – Chairman, River Avon Federation**

The River Avon rises south east of Cumbernauld and flows for around 28km in a north-easterly direction before meeting the Forth estuary at Kinneil, near Grangemouth. Including tributaries, there is a total length of almost 76km. In addition to the moving water, there are four significant bodies of standing water that all discharge to the River Avon. In total the Avon system drains an area of approximately 200km<sup>2</sup>. There are three significant population centres within the catchment, with a total population of approximately 50,000 people. Land use includes arable, grazing, hill farming, and forestry with peat extraction in some upland areas.

The Avon catchment has suffered for many years since the Industrial Revolution from agricultural and industrial pollution, including discharges from ten Sewage Treatment Works (STW), and from washings from a paper mill at Westfield, which combined to effectively render the river virtually fishless up until the late 1960s.

Fishing on the River Avon is controlled through leases with landowners by the local fishing clubs, Slamannan Angling Club, Avonvalley Angling Club, Linlithgow Angling Club and by individual riparian owners. These clubs have had leases for around 40 years on different stretches of the river.

Due to the efforts of the clubs, the industrial pollution has been addressed and the water quality improved significantly, to the point where the Avon is recognised nationally as a first class trout fishery. Significant numbers of trout are caught each season, often on imitative dry flies. There are plans in progress to upgrade the STWs and reduce the current level of phosphate enrichment which continues to be a problem, especially at times of low water.

The Avon is primarily a wild, brown trout water. Over the years the population has been augmented with stocking of trout varying in size from eyed fry to takeable trout from Howietoun. In addition the river has a small, single-figure run of both salmon and seatrout, which has only been evident for around five years. Migratory fishing on the Avon is controlled by a Crown Lease to the River Avon Federation and on the tidal reaches, by the Avon & Kinneil Angling Association.

The River Avon Federation was founded in 1998 by Slamannan Angling Club, Avonvalley Angling Association, and Linlithgow Angling Club when the Migratory Fishing Rights were offered by the Crown Estate. In total the river is divided into six beats, five of which are controlled by the Federation. Members

of each of the three clubs have access to two common beats, and a beat reserved for each of the individual clubs.

The Federation introduced Howietoun-bred seatrout fry each year from 1999 to 2005 with the exception of 2001 because of F&M disease, to both the main stem and selected tributaries. Linlithgow AC also stocked the Mains Burn with pre-smolt sea trout parr in 2008 following an agricultural pollution incident. Stocking with brown trout has been carried out historically by each of the three clubs, though Linlithgow AC phased it out around 2003.

In 2005 Slamannan AC started a 5 year, phased project to improve part of the Avon that had suffered from ill-advised dredging in the 1970s using grant assistance. This project won a Wild Trout Trust award in 2008 and has opened significant stretches of the river for spawning by all species of fish, which should further improve the fishing.

## **The River Almond**

[www.fishalmond.co.uk](http://www.fishalmond.co.uk)

**Fen Howieson** – Member, FDSFB & Secretary, Crammond AC

Following in the footsteps of the River Forth Fisheries Trust, Cramond Angling Club started to develop the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for the River Almond during 2009. There was a great deal of information and knowledge available to the author, provided by a number of different sources, so it was a relatively quick process to produce the Consultation Draft.

The theme of the FMP is “enhancing the River Almond through partnership”, which is key to taking all the activities forward. It focuses on six key issues; Biodiversity, Water Quality, Morphological Alterations, Siltation, Biosecurity and Exploitation. The consultation draft was produced and issued for comment during Q3 2009 and feedback has been received from SEPA, SNH and several other parties. In whole the FMP has been widely adopted as “best practice”, with a focus on surveying and gathering further detailed information regarding the potential issues across the main-stem and the tributaries. The surveying is due to commence in May 2010, as bank-side vegetation needs to be taken into account, along with invasive species mapping.

The Sub Management Group (SMG) has now been formed and by the time this article is published the first meeting will have happened, the SMG consists of members of the Cramond Angling Club, SEPA, SNH, West Lothian Council and local anglers within West Lothian. The purpose of the first meeting will be to agree and adopt the FMP, with a view to confirming the next steps. As Chairman I am very appreciative of the support that both the Board and Trust have provided and look forward to sharing best practises with the other District Sub Management Groups.

The FMP has already provided some very useful information and with the aid of the River Forth Fisheries Trust we have been successful in obtaining SEPA Restoration Funding to carry out a feasibility survey of the man made obstruction throughout the catchment. These will be site specific assessments of each barrier to consider whether removal or modification works should be undertaken. The assessment will include hydromorphology (sediment disturbance, flow and increased erosion/deposition potential

downstream) and ecology considerations plus logistics. The contract is currently out to tender and I look forward to providing the Trust with further information once the assessments have commenced.

Exploitation is next on the agenda, as with all recovering systems it is very important to protect the fish you have. Thankfully the trend of “Catch & Release” has been widely adopted on our Sea Trout (96%) stocks in recent seasons, but there is room for improvement regarding our salmon catches (57%). Cramond Angling Club have in recent years reduced the number of fish anglers are allowed to retain and have fully adopted the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board’s Conservation Policy.

The Club has an excellent relationship with SEPA and their Freshwater Ecologist and this has led to a couple of initiatives, as well as a speedy response to all incidents reported. SEPA ran a “kick sampling” session for the members and those who attended were amazed by the diversity of invertebrates and by the numbers. This has led to an approach to the Riverfly Partnership and I would hope that next year I can provide you with some further information regarding this. The club also provided some scales samples to SEPA and the readings have provided the members with some useful food for thought. The majority of the run consists of grilse, with the odd salmon appearing, most spending two winters in the river. I hope to collect more scale samples this year, with the priority being sea trout.

During 2009 the Club funded a Junior Outing at Allandale Tarn, which proved to be an excellent day out for the kids, with tuition provided by Paul Buchanan. Our future angler base is increasing with 27 junior members so far in 2010 (50% increase) and this is something the club is keen to develop. The 2010 Junior Event has been arranged by our Vice Chairman and is already fully booked.

## **The Water of Leith**

[www.waterofleith.org.uk](http://www.waterofleith.org.uk)

**Patrick Fotheringham – Director, FDSFB & RFFT**

Until May 2009 there had been no real contact with anyone on the Water of Leith. However, a management plan has been prepared for the Water of Leith on behalf of the Water of Leith Action Group. The plan, which contains a fisheries management element, has been funded by Scottish Natural Heritage and City of Edinburgh Council and is an action-led plan aimed at the organisations who actively manage the river. The Action Group welcomes the input of those who have an interest in the management of the river prior to the plan being finalised. This represents an opportunity for the Board and Trust to re-engage with those on the river and it is hoped that through negotiation with the Honorary High Bailiff of the Water of Leith, the Water of Leith Conservation Trust and the Water of Leith Action Group, a Sub-Catchment Management Group can be set up and a specific fisheries management plan produced.

## **The Rivers North and South Esk**

**Patrick Fotheringham** – Director, FDSFB & RFFT

The Esks sub-catchment now remains the only part of the District not covered by a Sub-Catchment Management Group and an associated Sub-Catchment Management Plan. This is in part due to the informal nature of the rivers fisheries but also due to the fact that we have thus far been unable to make contact with a nucleus of volunteers who might be able to deliver fisheries management to the Esks. If anyone knows of suitable contacts in this part of the District then we would be most grateful if you could contact the office and let us know.

## **The Rivers Tyne and Biel**

[www.fishing@elaa.co.uk](mailto:www.fishing@elaa.co.uk)

**Brian Davidson** – Director, ASFB & Secretary, East Lothian Angling Assoc.

2009 was a busy and progressive year for fisheries management on the river Tyne and a number of important initiatives were taken forward. However, there were two key areas where particularly important progress was made. Firstly, the Board's bailiffs took serious steps to combat the ever-present poaching threat to the river, and secondly, the long term objective of making the river fully passable to migratory fish was brought a huge step closer.

The East Lothian Angling Association would like to thank Bill Cunningham and his team for working with the police to combat poaching and all their help in making a number of successful arrests is greatly appreciated. Between September 2008 and September 2009, twenty-five nets were seized and destroyed. Lothian and Borders Police work closely with Forth District Salmon Fisheries Board to eradicate illegal netting on the Tyne. Constable Gavin Ross at Dunbar Police Station is the Division's Wildlife Officer and regularly liaises with Superintendent Bill Cunningham who is the Head Bailiff for the Forth District. Anglers are the eyes and ears of the river. If you find any nets or have any intelligence about poaching or wildlife crime, please contact the nearest police station as soon as you can: Dunbar 01368 8627180, Haddington 01620 824101 or contact Bill Cunningham 07887 835549. Calls can be made in confidence.

However, on a more positive note that River Forth Fisheries Trust, with assistance from the ELAA and with a substantial grant from the SEPA Restoration Fund, has commissioned engineering reports on seven weirs on the river Tyne and one on the Biel. The assessments are complete and the reports will be delivered in the late spring of 2010. It is hoped that actual works stemming from these will be begun during 2010.

In 2008, ELAA secured £10,000 lottery funding for a comprehensive electro-fishing survey of the river. Due to high water levels in 2008, work was delayed and the full survey, including 30 sites, was completed in the summer of 2009 by the Clyde River Foundation. The survey covered the headwaters, the lower Tyne, and tributaries. A number of interesting findings were made: much wider salmon distribution than previously thought and good numbers of juvenile trout in the upper river, as well as identifying a small number of poorer sites where fish numbers are low.

This survey is incredibly helpful in allowing a much greater understanding of the fish populations, distribution and population structure in the Tyne and will serve as a baseline for future surveys.

The ELAA has agreed to work with the River Forth Fisheries Trust to produce a Sub-Catchment Management Plan for the Tyne and Biel. This will be the next move in delivering fisheries improvement projects and will be a huge step forward. Hopefully, the Tyne's fisheries have a bright future.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

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**(Director)**

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