



# River Earn Improvement Association



## Minutes of the A.G.M. held at Crieff Hotel 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

**Present** – 13 members and 1 guest

1. **Chairman's Welcome.**--- Colin Lowson welcomed all present including 2 new members to the meeting. He then referred to the huge implications surrounding the W.F.R. proposals which will inevitably have a huge impact on the sport and directly affect the livelihoods of most people related to angling. The continued existence of local fishery boards is under direct threat and their functions likely to be centralised.
2. **Apologies**---The Secretary advised communications received from John Young, Mostyn Morgan, Bob Mitchell, Jim Fisher , Dr. John Ferguson Smith, Paul Welling and Bernard Walker.
3. **Minutes Of 2014 A.G.M.**----These were read by the Chairman , Proposed as accurate by Peter McDonald and seconded by Sandy McIntosh.
4. **Matters Arising.**---- None requested.
5. **Chairman And Secretary's Report.**---- The Chairman thanked David Summers for supplying 2014 returns for our statistical analysis. He referred to some dramatic collapses of adult salmon runs elsewhere in Scotland , much greater than those experienced in the Earn. He also made reference to the lack of young people entering the sport.  
Mark Liddeard , who resides on the banks of the Machany gave some anecdotal observations of the decline of salmon using that tributary over the past 3 years. Over that period he has noticed less spawning fish and kelts each year, with nothing observed last season whatsoever.  
The Chairman then added his personal observations of large runs of fish entering the river after the season end.  
**Website** Again we request as many photographs and stories as possible to maintain interest in the site.  
**Major Project Expenditure.** The Chairman thanked all volunteers for their efforts and stressed that continuing habitat improvement work is essential to the wellbeing of the river. John Robertson and Charles Crookshank offered their

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services as volunteers for future projects. Chainsaw projects are now progressing nicely with clearance work having been carried out on 4 significant spawning tributaries in recent months. Further projects will follow on a regular basis given the nature of windblown and other blockages that directly affect the upward migration of salmon and sea trout.

**Invasive Spraying.** Technically the land owner is responsible for ensuring nuisance invasives do not spread further. John Young has supervised spraying projects for the previous 4 years.

**National Park Funding.** To be pursued led by Derek Trevis.

**T. in the Park.** The Chairman stressed that the R.E.I.A. are not a statutory body and therefore could only be involved in ensuring that the Machany and its tributaries are not impinged upon by revellers, workmen and possible pollutants. A meeting to further these views was attended by Colin Lowson, Ian Dalglish and Sandy McIntosh on behalf of the Association. The main points discussed were water clarity, fencing and pollution. Confirmation that bridges are being installed, all water courses are being protected with no possibility of any trespass whatsoever. All of this is being supervised by 2 S.E.P.A. representatives on site.

Mark Liddeard informed the meeting of the high permeability of the plateau which he felt would inevitably result in a rapid outflow of all fluids into the watercourses. He also felt, that with 75000 scheduled to attend the chances of non compliance of toilet facilities are high.

Ian Dalglish has insisted on continual water purity testing throughout the period of the event.

Colin Lowson stressed the supervision by S.E.P.A. was a major plus and Jim Perritt was very positive in his support and faith in these officials.

John Robertson stated that there were no pollution incidents during the time the event was held at Balado

Derek Trevis spoke of 2 slurry events in the Mennie burn where S.E.P.A. did not respond well.

Jim Perritt stressed that D.F. Concerts cannot afford to get it wrong and in any case the 2 statutory bodies overseeing the event were S.E.P.A. and T.D.S.F.B. both of whom would be heavily criticised if any problems were allowed to develop.

**Hatchery Report.** It was noted that the kelt reconditioning project now held 40 Earn fish in the Almondbank tanks.

Alastair Hamilton questioned the belief that these fish were spring stock. The Secretary replied that all adult fish had been taken from the upper Ruchill and tributaries which was traditionally believed to produce spring progeny, but



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there were no guarantees that this would be the case.

6. **Treasurer's Report.** ----Ian Dalglish reporting that subscriptions were down year on year, as was membership. Despite these fact and our previous substantial investment in chainsaw equipment, the Association still held £32k In reserve. He asked for positive suggestions on projects meriting further expenditure.  
The accounts were proposed as accurate by Derek Trevis and seconded by John Robertson.  
Derek Trevis asked for an updated membership list to be circulated to the committee.
7. **Election Of Office Bearers.**---Nominations were requested from the floor of which none were received. Status quo was proposed and therefore remains.  
John Robertson offered his services as Treasurer on the retrial of Ian Dalglish at the next A.G.M.
8. **A.O.C.B.**---Peter McDonald gave an update on the somewhat uncontrolled spred of beavers throughout the catchment and particularly the population increase at Crieff.  
Jim Perritt added that the 2015 report on the beaver population is due. The biggest influence regarding their continued unhindered existence is the Habitat Directive which dictates that no interference with lodges with young is possible.  
Peter McDonald asked about the current situation with sawbill kill licences. Sandy McIntosh presently holds this licence on the river. Colin Lowson is to discuss the issue of firther licenses on the river.  
Peter then advised that he is now a certified licensed sprayer and would be carrying out intensive work on Crieff waters.  
Derek Trevis pointed out that we were not licensed to clear trees over 15 inches in diameter.  
Garden works at Ferryfield continue to be coordinated by John Young.  
Alastair Hamilton pointed out that the sandbar at the mouth oof the river could not be interfered with. asked for local volunteers to help on tributary clearance projects.  
David Milburn talked about the Flyer and considered the river had a good story to tell , with spring catches on one of our beats not only rivalling but eclipsing many top Tay beats.



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Colin Lowson asked for current river reports to be submitted for publication on the website and the need to better engage with anglers.

Tom Monaghan suggested he would contact Trout and Salmon to investigate the possibility of an article or editorial on the river.

Derek Trevis talked about the recent big fish caught at Dunning which should be publicised better.

Paul Turek expressed disappointment at the low turnout present at the meeting.

Bob Mitchell asked about promoting youngsters into the sport .

John Young said there were proposals for 3 schools in Strathearn to be included in the “Salmon in the Classroom” project sponsored by the Tay Board and Foundation. He could not name specific schools but would find out at the next Board meeting and report back. David Milburn offered further support for this activity and other proposals to engage junior anglers in our sport.

**Duncan Clarke** was presented with a bottle of the finest malt whisky by the Chairman in recognition of his 10+ years service as Secretary on the Trout Liaison Committee.

9. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00p.m. and once more thanked everyone who had made the effort to attend and contribute to a lively and interesting meeting.  
The date of the next A.G.M. will be advised to all members individually and posted on the website.