

TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
MINUTE of Water and Wetlands Sub-group Meeting
10am, Wednesday 19 April 2006
Clunie Power Station, Pitlochry

Present:

Catherine Lloyd	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Alastair Stephen	Scottish and Southern Energy
Ross Gardiner	Fisheries Research Service
David Summers	Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board
Kjersti Birkeland	Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board
Susan Veitch	Perth and Kinross Council
Nicki McIntyre	Scottish Natural Heritage
Janet Croft	The Rural Access Committee of Kinross-shire (TRACKS)
Jo Long	Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Apologies:

Christine Hall	Scottish Agricultural College
Carolyn Warwick	Scottish Natural Heritage
Richard Averiss	Angus County Council Rangers Service

Corresponding members:

Doreen Bell	Scottish Water
Carol Littlewood	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
John Whyman	Dundee City Council Rangers Service
Uwe Stoneman	Scottish Wildlife Trust (now RSPB)

Agenda Item	Action
<p>1. BIRNAM RIVER ENGINEERING SEMINAR FEEDBACK & PLANS FOR A SECOND SEMINAR</p> <p>Most of the presentations from the November seminar are now on the TBAP website, as is an analysis of the feedback from delegates. There is demand for a follow up seminar, and some of the previous sponsors have expressed interest in sponsoring a second event. The group decided on mid (13th?) June 2007 as a good time to hold it; Jo to find out prices for Dewars Centre, new conference hall and SNH Battleby to host approx 150 delegates with lunch. The next event should be more accessible via public transport, so Dewars Centre is the favoured venue.</p> <p>Susan suggested an event (½day) aimed at updating councils on Controlled Activities Regulations guidance. Jo thought this may be included in the national roll-out of training but will check with SEPA CAR team and let Susan know. If there is no further training planned for councils the group may have to re-visit this.</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>JL</p>
<p>2. TRANCHE 2 HAPS AND SAPS</p> <p>These need to go on to the website as consultation drafts as soon as possible (any action lists should be tightly focussed, and not essential at this stage), so all the actions for editing below should be completed and passed to Catherine by 26th May.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Watercourses: requires some work to avoid crossover with Rivers and Burns HAP. JL to pass copy of HAP and RG's suggested amendments to SV for comment. Kate Farrer (SEPA) to complete edits. • Ponds and Pools: in good shape but would benefit from updating as projects have arisen since this was first written by John Whyman. CL to review and update. • Salmon: DS to review and update • Great Crested Newt: Dave Bell of ECOS to update (CL to contact him) • Water Vole: Alan Ross to update (CL to contact him) • Otter: Alan Ross to update (CL to contact him) • Slender Naiad: JL to incorporate SNH edits 	<p>JL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>DS</p> <p>CL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>CL</p> <p>JL</p> <p>CL</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphibians/Reptiles: includes adder, slow worm, common frog and common toad. CL to update. 	
<p>3. PROJECT UPDATES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRACKS, Loch Leven pathway project: JC gave the group a short presentation on this project being run by TRACKS which was very well received. The project has taken many years to develop but is now starting practical work on the ground which should be completed in three years time. <p>SNH are currently reviewing the management for the Loch, with the intention of including species such as water vole, tree sparrow, grey partridge and corn bunting. They have requested ideas from the group, to be fed back to SNH via Nicki. An initial suggestion of brown trout was noted. Vane Farm is shortly to host a water vole workshop; CL to write to JC.</p> <p>Jo noted that the Loch Leven catchment management plan is currently under review by partner organisations, with a scientific meeting scheduled for May to review monitoring and data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perth Lade: ECOS have produced a report on what is present in the Lade now, compared with the last survey 12 years ago, finding a vast improvement. PKC plan some enhancement works for later this year, although these have to be carried out so as not to compromise flood prevention measures. RG pointed out that there was a need for up to date fish information on the lade. He also pointed out that not all “enhancement” work carried out to date on the lade would be beneficial to fish populations. • WaterSense, Forfar Loch: a survey of local public awareness of phosphates indicated increased awareness of their environmental impact, although shopping habits have not yet moved towards to purchase of low phosphate washing powders etc. • Broughty Ferry Environmental Project, Following the Life Of Water: ongoing. • Dighty Alien Species Project: Dundee Rangers are supporting this project. They have completed otter, water vole and mink surveys with help from a university student. Otter evidence was found throughout the catchment, but no water voles were found. Mink were in evidence at a couple of locations. • Salmon in the Classroom: The website is now complete, and will shortly be accessible via the SNH website. 12 schools in Angus and Perthshire are taking part this year (Jo can provide a list if requested), with hatchery visits planned for next week. Dundee Rangers are pursuing the involvement of Dundee schools for the coming year (these may have to adapt the project to ‘trout in the classroom’). A recent photo-opportunity was taken, and SNH provided a press release. • Tay Estuary Project: a local landowner plans to develop access to the estuary and manage the area for wildlife. Various partners are being approached for advice and input to the plans. • A9 otter survey:SWT local volunteers have recorded 47 dead otters in the past 10 years between Perth and Pitlochry, with the Pitlochry bypass a particular hot spot. This information will be incorporated into the otter SAP. • Upland water vole project: this is being carried out in the Cairngorms and Grampian, and the Angus Glens and highland Perthshire should now also be included. 	<p>ALL CL</p>
<p>4. PROPOSED PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moulin Burn community project: this is being run by the local ‘in bloom’ group, and is at the research phase at present. RG wondered if the project might look into the knotweed problem on the burn too • Intchure Flooded Woodland Management: a survey is currently underway. • Kettins community wetland: Catherine is getting involved in this project to ensure it includes LBAP objectives. • River Earn catchment alien plant management: David tabled this idea, as various fishery managers are concerned about the amount of invasive plants. Initially the plan is to map their extent and establish the upstream limit; the Tay DSFB is looking for money to fund a student to carry out the surveys over the summer, and Dave Gilvear of Stirling University has identified a suitable MSc student. <p>Susan suggested that PKC could provide some data for mapping the plants at sites they visit during watercourse surveys, and also suggested that David contact Brenda Clough, PKC access, as the council may be able to get involved for areas with public access.</p> <p>Alastair highlighted the success of a similar project on the Tweed, and Jo directed David to the</p>	

<p>Tweed Forum website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference on fish stocks and predators: Alastair tabled this idea, as the Partnership could provide a non-confrontational host to a discussion of this contentious issue between fisheries interests, RSPB, SNH etc. A particular issue is the balance between protecting predators and fish where both exist alongside one another as qualifying features of designated sites. Catherine mentioned that she's involved in organising a 1 day workshop relating to licencing and designations for species such as swifts and barn owls, which could sit alongside as a 2 day conference with delegates attending one or other day depending on their interest. CL to speak to the Cairngorms LBAP Officer. Alastair is due to meet with the Scottish Executive shortly, and will report back to Catherine/Jo. Jo suggested that organisation of this should be run by a small project group consisting of Alastair to pursue speakers for the fish/predator day and an appropriate person (from outwith the water and wetlands group) to deal with the other day, and Catherine to liase between the two. • Tayside invasive plants survey: Jo will be pursuing the production of a leaflet/ID guide for use at Council Recycling Centres to prevent composting of alien plants, and for the public to report sightings. This is not likely to get underway for a couple of months. • Ponds Initiative: Catherine suggested the creation of an 'umbrella' title to encompass the various pond creation projects going on in Tayside, to help with funding applications etc. Her suggested title of the 'Tayside Ponds Initiative' was supported by the group • R Ardle Signal Crayfish: Kjersti described a planned project by the Tay DSFB to survey the River Ardle for crayfish to establish whether they have reached the river from ponds with a known long-term population. Stephanie Peay will be visiting in mid-May to advise on appropriate action if they are still confined to the ponds. Jo to pass details of colleague involved in a similar project on the R. North Esk last year to Kjersti/David. 	<p>CL AS</p> <p>JL</p>
<p>5. PUBLICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pond design: Catherine suggested the need for a simple guidance leaflet which could be linked to other, more detailed available documents. To be followed up. • Alien Plant Species: this is the leaflet mentioned above to be followed up by Jo. • Bats: a guidance booklet produced by the Environment Agency was flagged to Catherine as it would be very useful to have a Scottish version. Jo passed it to colleagues in SEPA who are liaising with SNH with a view to producing a Scottish version in the next few months. 	<p>CL</p> <p>JL</p>
<p>6. AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The latest Building Better Biodiversity leaflet is about to be distributed, but in the mean time Catherine can provide details of the various planned talks if requested. • Catherine reminded the group that the SITA Trust is now contributing £100k landfill tax monies per year for 3 years towards practical biodiversity projects. There is still £14k available for habitat enhancement projects (not including survey work) for projects needing between £500 and £30k for their projects. Applications are considered quarterly. Check the website for the next closing date. Guidance Notes and application forms can be downloaded from www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk. Successful applications from the first two rounds of applications include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Scottish Crop Research Institute - Living Field Study Centre (Flora & Fauna of Scotland's Arable Farmland) * Angus Ranger Service - Artificial Sand Martin Wall, Crombie Country Park * Broughty Ferry Environmental Project - FLOW (Following the Life of Water) - urban pond projects in and around Dundee * Forest Research - Small Cow Wheat Species Recovery Project (Perthshire) * Forest Research - Juniper Natural Regeneration Management Trials * Tay Ringing Group - Tay Reedbeds Management Ringing Project * RSPB - Tay Reedbeds Enhancement Project * Angus Council - Biodiversity Garden and Orchard at the Lilybank Resource Centre * Tay Ringing Group - Save Tayside's Ring Ouzels (radio tag tracking project) 	
<p>7. NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The group agreed that it would be useful to have a site visit to Loch Leven in the summer, possibly to have a look at some of the route of the TRACKS path. Jo and Catherine to arrange and pass out details.</p>	<p>JL/CL</p>

