



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
MINUTE of Water and Wetlands Sub-group Meeting
10:00am, Tuesday 15th January 2008
Freshwater Fisheries Laboratory, Faskally, Pitlochry

Present:

Catherine Lloyd (CL) Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
 Bruce Campbell (BC) Scottish Environment Protection Agency
 Alastair Stephen (AS) Scottish and Southern Energy
 Ross Gardiner (RG) Fisheries Research Services
 Susan Veitch (SV) Perth and Kinross Council
 Nicki McIntyre (NM) Scottish Natural Heritage

Apologies:

Kjersti Birkeland (KB) Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board
 Richard Averiss (RA) Angus County Council Rangers Service

Items discussed	Action
<p>Tayside Ponds If RA has any news on any of projects on the go or any potential new projects, the group would be interested to hear back. CL told the group about a project which the Golf Course Environment Group want to do as part of dragonflies project.</p> <p>The group was really keen to look out for opportunities to widen this out to other projects. A popular idea was a project in conjunction with schools which would have biodiversity and educational benefits.</p> <p>RG also told the group about new legislation which should come into force soon. There will be a database of lochans and ponds which contain no fish, it will then be illegal to put fish into these water bodies, anyone committing this act will be treated as if they had added alien species. The regulations for stocking with fish will also be tightened up in the near future. Any dates?</p>	RA
<p>Water Voles and Mink Project NM updated the group on the project which was carried out on Loch Leven, the view was that this survey had not been successful and Nicki indicated that this survey is likely to be repeated at some point in the near future. CL also told the group about a project which is being planned by Kindrogan Field Centre which will aim to benefit water vole and involve working with 3 farmers.</p> <p>CL also intends to continue to liaise with Clacks and Fife BAP's plus FWAG to push for the water vole conservation projects to be widened out to Kinross area initially.</p>	CL
<p>Freshwater Pearl Mussel Awareness-Raising and Translocation NM confirmed to the group that the intention of this project is not to increase people's awareness of the exact location on mussel beds. Only generic awareness raising is proposed if suitable locations can be identified e.g Stanley Mills.</p> <p>Plans to carryout the translocation of individuals to other catchments in Tayside have been put on hold for now given that two candidate rivers have been shown to support juveniles. RG raised his concerns about translocations given that recent studies have suggested that there may be unique genetic strains of pearl mussels, translocations could upset this balance.</p> <p>RG agreed to circulate a copy of the report he has seen on the genetic differences in pearl mussel populations.</p>	RG
<p>Salmon in the Classroom NM was able to confirm that the Salmon in the Classroom programme will continue in 2008 but the funding arrangements for this have changed with SNH now being the sole funder now that EU LIFE money has finished. Future beyond 2008 still not clear.</p> <p>At this point the group became aware that SNH will no longer be grant funding countryside rangers and</p>	

<p>that the decision to create and maintain these posts will now reside with local councils. The group was disappointed to hear this news with concerns that those who carryout much of the biodiversity work on the ground could be affected. The group decided to have this raised at the Steering Group Level, CL to flag this with Martin Price.</p>	<p>CL</p>
<p>River Tay Tributary Improvement Initiative Scottish Native Woodlands Project The group was aware of the consultation document which has been produced for this project and the feeling was that we should all read this and collate a response on behalf of the Water and Wetland sub group. BC to send out a link to the consultation document, collate responses and discuss with CL before resending to everyone for final comments.</p>	<p>All BC/CL</p>
<p>Dalhonzie Burn, Comrie Roll forward. In case the lack of water is a natural phenomenon due to the nearby River Earn backing up and depositing gravel AS agreed to invite a hydromorphologist along to assess the site.</p>	<p>AS</p>
<p>Kinnaird and Black Spout Burns, Pitlochry Following the initial distribution of the RRC report, SV has passed the report on to her colleagues for discussion. SV to provide feedback on the councils view. RG has also passed the report on to PACC members and feedback to date has generally been positive. RG is also in some discussions with Matrix who own the adjacent site. RG to continue discussion with Matrix</p>	<p>SV RG</p>
<p>Inchewan Burn, Birnam Work has progressed with this over the summer and this project is now complete. BC, SV, CL and NM had a quick look at the site after the meeting.</p>	
<p>Otter Road Death Survey (New Name “Mammal Road Death Survey”) The group approved the name change to this proforma. BC updated the group on a situation which had been spotted on the A90 near Kinfauns (Perth). At least 3 dead otters had been observed this year possibly due to the erection of a new security fence. BC and CL have sent a letter off to the organisation believed to be responsible with no response to date. BC and CL to agree an alternative approach.</p>	<p>BC/CL</p>
<p>Perth Lade Project SV summarised the outcomes from the last meeting of the Lade Management Group. The intention is to try and get a local house builder to make some improvements to the section of the lade affected by their development. SV also informed the group about the difficulties with repairing the damaged weir which supplies the lade with water. Costs of the repair could range from £100-40k depending on the extent of repair. SV also confirmed that the council has no intentions to carryout any significant sediment removal from the lade unless there are exceptional circumstances.</p>	
<p>AS brought to the groups attention a project being undertaken by the Wild Trout Trust. “Trout in the Town” will aim to improve local circumstances in urban watercourses and could become relevant to the Perth Lade.</p>	<p>BC</p>
<p>River Earn Invasive Plants BC cascaded the news for TDSFB that they had been successful in their funding bid for £20k towards non-native plant eradication.</p>	
<p>The group then had a presentation from Alison Mole (ADAS Scotland) about the consultation process she is involved in with regard to identifying and ultimately managing non-native aquatic alien species. Alison has a questionnaire she would like completed, so everyone agreed to participate. BC to circulate email addresses to ADAS.</p>	<p>BC</p>
<p>Tayside Lochs Catherine updated the group on progress with this to date. Richard Locket (the lead for this) is currently on secondment but this is not anticipated to cause as much disruption as was initially feared.</p>	
<p>Catherine also updated the group on progress with the informative tea towels aimed at raising awareness of the water quality issues in the catchment. In the end, Catherine needed to get quotes back from 3 companies. This is where things are currently at and the successful firm will be approached soon to make the towel a reality.</p>	<p>CL</p>
<p>In SEPA some investigative work regarding a problematic combined sewer overflow (CSO) has been undertaken. Staff have also acquired a drainage plan of the area highlighting households which may</p>	

<p>directly influence the water quality because they have private sewage systems.</p> <p>Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) CL gave the group an update on this. The group heard more details about this plan and the implications it will have. All grant aid will be brought together not just agricultural. It is expected to be launched in February or March and will have 32 regional priorities with quarterly deadlines for reporting. CL is to circulate details of all the priorities</p> <p>UK List of Priority Species and Habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan The group discussed the updated list and notable inclusions including Eel, Brown trout, Sea trout, Charr and a Rivers category (still to be fully defined). AS highlighted the fact that in the future he envisaged their being genetic work carried out on trout which would help determine the importance of certain populations. AS, RG and possibly Dave Summers agreed to put together some notes on background issues to help focus any future projects which could include the species outlined above.</p> <p>The list can be downloaded via http://www.ukbap.org.uk/NewPriorityList.aspx.</p> <p>Engineering Seminar The group agreed that another one of these seminars would be worthwhile given the interest first time round and continued popularity of information contained on the TBAP website.</p> <p>The intention is to again use the Birnam Institute and a provisional date of the end of January 2009 was agreed. Given the success of the last seminar, AS agreed to resend the requests for funding which were sent out last time. It was thought that we would need to raise about £1.5k to fund the seminar.</p> <p>CL announced that she thought the partnership would be able to provide support to put together any informative packs required on the day.</p> <p>Initial ideas for topics to discuss were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A speaker from Perth and Kinross Council to outline the implications of the new flooding bill. • SEPA to provide a brief introduction to CAR and update on how things have progressed to date. • The group also thought that it would be really useful to have someone from RRC discuss options for green engineering alternatives. <p>A representative from FRS was suggested as a suitable Chairperson for the day. RG, AS to confirm if this is the preferred choice and see if this candidate is available.</p> <p>The group are asked to have another think about additional topics for the day.</p> <p>Next meeting CL to email David Bell about a walk along the Lade on the 23rd April.</p> <p>Thanks to RG for accommodating the group at FRS, Faskally and providing lunch, refreshments and a tour.</p>	<p>CL</p> <p>AS, RG, TDFB?</p> <p>AS</p> <p>RG/AS</p> <p>All</p> <p>CL</p>
<p>NEXT MEETING ARRANGEMENTS The next meeting is planned for the 23rd April and is likely to be held in the SEPA Whitefriars building (will confirm with agenda). The group would really like to meet David Bell to get a tour of the Perth lade and a better awareness of the options for biodiversity projects.</p>	