



**TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP**  
**MINUTE of Water and Wetlands Sub-group Meeting**  
**9:45am, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007**  
**SEPA Perth Office Tay 2 Meeting Room**

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

**Apologies:**

Susan Veitch (SV) Perth and Kinross Council  
 Nicki McIntyre (NM) Scottish Natural Heritage

| Items discussed   | Action    |
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| <p><b>Tayside Ponds</b><br/>           RA provided an update on what has been happening at Keptie Pond, Arbroath. Since the last meeting the banks have been prepared and school children have been out planting up the banks.</p> <p>There has been no progress with the ponds at Rosemount, Montrose; it is likely to be a while before any works on the ponds gets underway due to other priorities. Some TBAF funding was seen as a way of kick starting a project. RA to continue to liaise with Fred Conacher, the Angus Tree Officer, to progress the situation.</p> <p>Duns Dish, House of Duns potential project, again RA will stay in contact in case anything develops.</p> | <b>RA</b> |
| <p><b>Water Voles and Mink Project</b><br/>           CL confirmed that there was potential for existing LBAP projects in Clackamannan and Fife to be extended into the Kinross area but as yet nothing has been finalised.</p> <p>AS had previously agreed to find out if a contact had any spare mink traps but there were no spares.</p>   | <b>NM</b> |
| <p>The group was keen to hear about the results of the Water Vole Survey which was carried out around Loch Leven. It was hoped that NM could give the group a short summary of the findings.</p>  | <b>NM</b> |
| <p><b>Freshwater Pear Mussel Awareness-Raising and Translocation</b><br/>           The group was not best placed to comment on progress with this project. However it was believed that funding for the project this year had not been approved. Members of the group did have concerns about awareness raising but if done in a generic way the group were generally pleased about the aims of the project. The group were interested in an update on the project from NM.</p>  | <b>NM</b> |
| <p><b>Salmon in the Classroom</b><br/>           There were concerns raised about the future of this project given that EU LIFE money is intended to run up until mid-2008. KB reiterated that the TDSFB would be keen to continue supporting the project with electrofishing and hatchery work if required. If NM had any news on future funding the group were interested to know more.</p>   | <b>NM</b> |
| <p><b>River Tay Tributary Improvement Initiative</b><br/>           Scottish Native Woodlands Project<br/>           Some discussions about this project and the benefits it would have. The group agreed that we would keep a watching brief on the project and feed into certain parts of the project if required.</p> <p>Dalhonzie Burn, Comrie<br/>           BC and AS gave the group an update on a site visit they made in late spring after a dry period of weather. The burn was clearly at or below summer level, it crossed the tail race from Dalhonzie power</p>   |           |

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| <p>station and then further downstream slowly disappeared into an area of freshly deposited gravel. An attempt to dye trace where the water was going proved futile due to the slow rate of dissipation and so no firm conclusions on where the water was going could be reached. In case the lack of water was 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>   | <b>AS</b>                           |
| <p><b>Kinnaird and Black Spout Burns, Pitlochry</b><br/> BC and RG gave the group an update on progress with the Kinnaird Burn.<br/> BC arranged for a representative from the River Restoration Centre (Jenny Mant) to come out and assess the Kinnaird Burn to get ideas for restoration options. RG and AS gave Jenny an overview of the issues and works carried out to date. Jenny also took a quick look at the Black Spout Burn. Jenny has since produced a report which RG has distributed to members of Pitlochry Angling Club. The approach recommended by RRC is generally quite "soft" with no radical changes advocated at this stage. The main recommendation was to anchor woody debris to the existing gabion baskets on the river bed. This would narrow the low flow channel by encouraging siltation. The silt would also encourage colonisation by plants and accelerate the rate at which spaces in the gabions were filled, thus reducing the likelihood of the bed being de-watered. BC was to liaise with Jenny Mant to get an updated version of her report produced.</p>                     | <b>BC</b>                           |
| <p><b>Inchewan Burn</b><br/> Work has progressed with this over the summer and current reports suggest that the aim of restoring a sequence of pools has been successful.</p>  |                                     |
| <p><b>Otter Road Death Survey</b><br/> CL gave the group an update. Perth Museum has some records of Otter mortalities in Tayside. Dundee is currently looking into the potential for setting up a Biodiversity Records Centre but nothing formal was available; it is likely, in the meantime, they will have old records of otter deaths in Dundee and possibly Angus. CL confirmed that Perth Museum would be preparing a web-based Mammal Atlas which may ultimately be expanded to being Tayside-wide. It had been proposed that the Otter Road Death Survey be re-named "Mammal Road Death Survey" to link in fully with the Mammal Society surveys.</p>   |                                     |
| <p><b>Perth Lade Project</b><br/> CL gave the group an update on current issues surrounding the lade, these included repairs to the off-take weir near Almondbank, proposals for sediment removal and future meetings of the Lade Management Group. BC was asked to find out if sediment management in the lade was permitted under SEPA's new Controlled Activity Regulations. The group were keen to get an update from SV regarding flooding risk associated with the lade and detail of sediment management regimes, just in case this could compromise any future biodiversity work. BC, NM and SV were going to attend a Lade Management Meeting at the end of October. BC to raise the possibility of an informative leaflet to promote the Lade's history and biodiversity. Also express the groups wish for a guided tour.</p>  | <b>BC</b><br><b>SV</b><br><b>BC</b> |
| <p><b>River Earn Invasive Plants</b><br/> KB gave the group an update on the project. The project has been widened to other parts of the Tay including major tributaries such as the Isla. A funding proposal for £40K has now been submitted for a 3 year project and a decision is awaited. There will be a need to train up ghillies, river keepers etc but there is a chance that the project could start in 2008.</p>   |                                     |
| <p><b>Tayside Lochs</b><br/> BC and CL gave the group a summary of the project, how it came to be and what it aims to do. FWAG are taking a lead on the Fingask and White Loch sub project supported by SEPA and at the time of the meeting a decision on TBAF monies was awaited (since approved £21k to be match funded). Work on Fingask and White Loch is progressing, with the intention being to produce a promotional tea-towel for local residents, businesses, golf course members and anglers by the end of the financial year. The tea-towel will encourage people to "make the link with their sink". CL had contacted the company which produced a tea towel for a similar project on the Euchar catchment to get costs for a design; funds would be from the SNH Promotions Fund and the SITA TBAF. It had been hoped that the Perth &amp; Kinross Ranger Service would be able to work with a local school to design the tea-towel, but this was declined due to other staff commitments. BC was to investigate if SEPA could help to produce a detailed GIS map of the catchment and its boundary.</p> | <b>BC</b>                           |
| <p><b>UK List of Priority Species and Habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan</b></p>   |                                     |

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| The group discussed the updated list and notable new inclusions like eels. The list can be downloaded via <a href="http://www.ukbap.org.uk/NewPriorityList.aspx">http://www.ukbap.org.uk/NewPriorityList.aspx</a> . |  |
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**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is planned for the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008 10am at the Freshwater Fisheries Lab, Pitlochry. Lunch will be provided. Topics for the agenda will include an update on the Lade biodiversity project, and the Scottish Rural Development Programme. The sub-group will also discuss the potential for a second Partnership River Engineering Seminar, members are invited to think about ideas for this by the time of the next meeting.