



Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Annual Report

September 2022

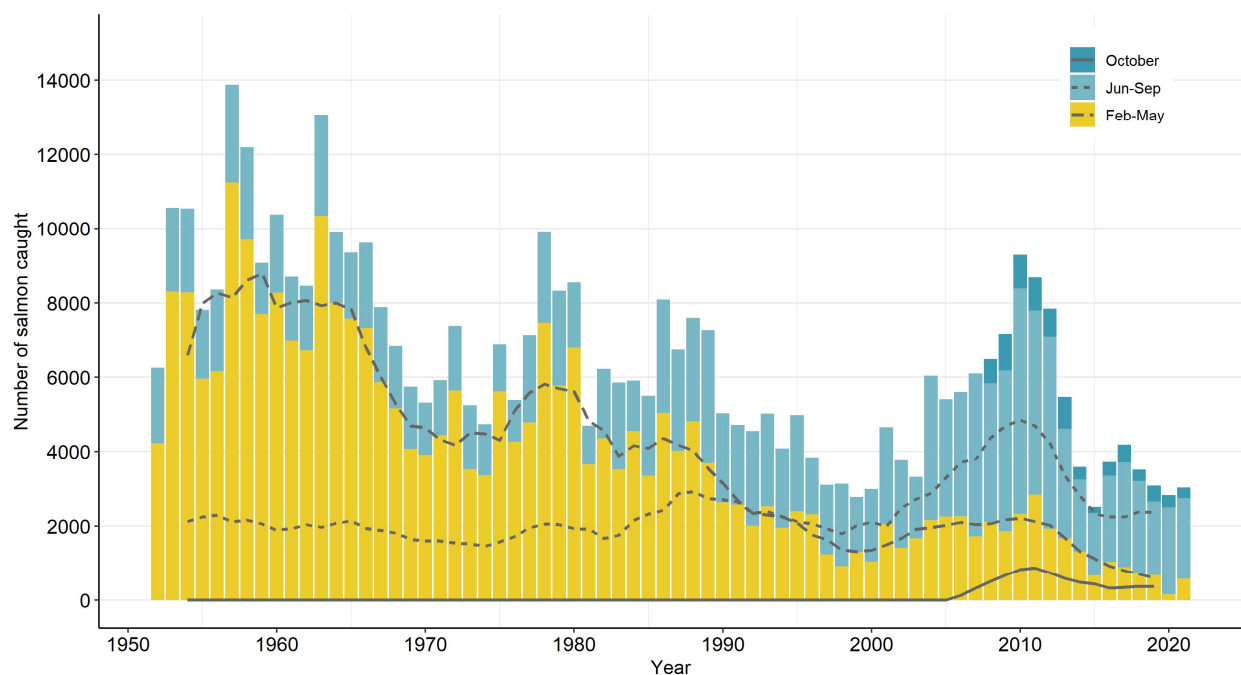
River Dee Annual report 2021-22

STOCK HEALTH

Catches

For the 2021 season, 3027 salmon were caught which is slightly better than in 2020. However, overall, this is a period of low catches, similar to that which occurred in the late 1990s.

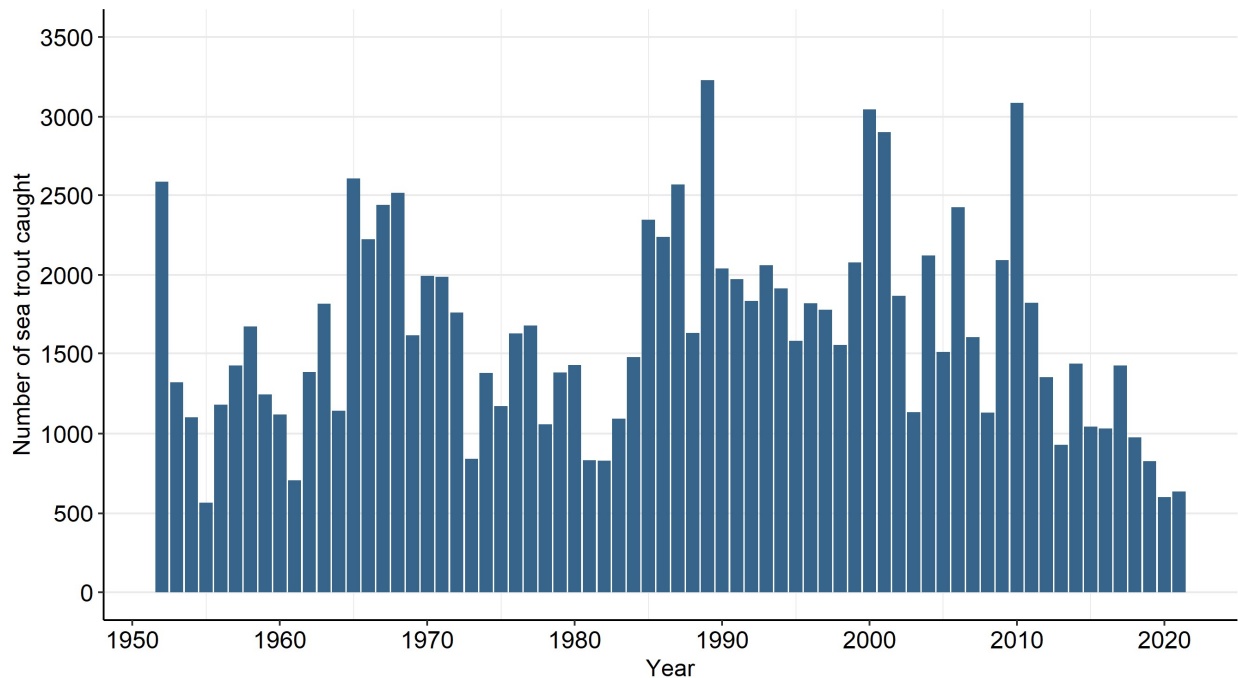
Spring salmon are the most precious of all salmon and their catches have declined to around 10% of what they were in the 1950s and 1960s. In 2021, 578 Spring salmon were caught on the Dee.



Graph 1: Dee rod catches for salmon, 1952 – 2021.

Low numbers of salmon in the 1990s caused the Dee Fishery Board to introduce Catch and Release. It was the first river in the UK to do so, and now in its 26th year, this voluntary measure resulted in 99.4% of salmon being returned to the river by anglers in 2021.

638 sea trout were caught in 2021. Sea trout catches have also been in a low state for the last few years although they don't show the long-term decline of salmon.



Graph 2: Dee rod catches for sea trout, 1952 – 2021.

Monitoring

Spawning surveys ('redd counts') were carried out again in 2021 – 14 one-kilometre sites are repeatedly surveyed each week of the spawning season, and these are the same sites that are monitored each year. The redd count results in 2021 were similar to recent years but there was some evidence of a change in terms of spawning occurring earlier and extending until later in the season. This will continue to be monitored.

Electrofishing surveys to assess numbers of juvenile fish were carried out throughout the catchment in 2021. The National Electrofishing Programme Scotland resumed and the Trust surveyed 30 sites across the district to assess Dee population health and to contribute to the national picture. The conclusions from the data is that whilst salmon fry were overall healthy at a national scale, numbers of older salmon parr were extremely low. On the River Dee, numbers of both salmon fry and parr were very low, which was seen in all rivers in northeast Scotland.

The migrating juvenile salmon and trout - 'smolts' - were monitored in two Dee tributaries in spring 2022 – the Beltie burn and River Tanar. The Tanar had not been monitored before and we caught 4642 smolts, but the Beltie, which was monitored for the fourth year, had more than twice the highest number of smolts previously recorded (4248 smolts). Combined with traps in the upper Dee run by Marine Scotland Science, this indicated a good smolt run in 2022.

PROTECTING FISH AND THEIR RIVERS

Protecting fish migration

At sea

Our 4-year investigation into the marine migration of juvenile salmon and sea trout smolts from the Rivers Dee and Don has now concluded, giving us helpful information about the distribution of our smolts as they leave our coastlines. This will help identify potential for overlap between migrating fish and future marine development sites such as offshore renewables. The £700,000 of funding was provided by Vattenfall European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre and Marine Scotland Science.

In 2018, 2019 and 2021, tagged fish were tracked from the river, through the estuary and into the marine environment – extending to 20km from shore – using 158 fixed position receivers to detect fish location. 187 Dee salmon, 150 Don salmon, and 98 Dee sea trout were tagged.

Over the three years, salmon smolts consistently showed an east to south-easterly migration, providing strong evidence that this is the regular migratory route when emigrating from the Dee. This demonstrates that the local migration zone is widespread and an important consideration in any developments or activities that may impact on migration. At some point in their migration, smolts must change track to allow for a more northerly direction to the feeding grounds in the Norwegian Sea, however this was out with the scope of the study and the limitations of the technology.

The study also revealed important information about sea trout: The tracked fish showed highly variable migration strategies but the majority remained in the nearshore environment. Only 45% of tagged sea trout smolts showed marine migration whereas others remained within the harbour area or the lower river, showing the importance of these confined areas to the local sea trout population.

The DSFB responded to planning and development consultations throughout the year on three marine renewable developments that could impact on stocks and continue to work with Port of Aberdeen by consulting on the new South Harbour at Nigg Bay.

In the river

A further study to acoustically tag and track salmon smolts in spring 2022 was funded by Marine Scotland Science. This study was to look at losses within the initial river migration, and fishery organisations on the Rivers Spey, Deveron and Tweed also carried out smolt tracking as part of this project. The study was specifically to look at to what extent any in-river mortality could be a by-product of the tagging and study process.

The Trust tagged 138 smolts captured in the River Tanar tributary of the Dee, and tracked these smolts for 60km downstream to the harbour. 81% of the smolts reached the Harbour, which was the highest survival rate in the four study rivers by a substantial margin. The full study is due to be produced soon, which will give us further information on cause of losses from predation and tagging effects.

The Fishery Board responded to 41 consultations where works had the potential to impact on fish stocks. These works included onshore wind farms, housing developments, forestry creation and management, bridge repairs and flood protection schemes.

The Fishery Board and Trust continued to work with SEPA on a large project to remove the final impassable barrier to fish migration on the Dee – the Garlogie dam, in the Culter tributary. This is now scheduled for summer 2023, following a large number of preparatory assessments and consent for planning now anticipated.

Protecting adult fish

The Fishery Board dealt with 59 illegal fishing incidents over the year, resulting in 15 official warnings being given and two criminal charges. This work is becoming increasingly assisted by technology: In 2022, we used drones to patrol coastal bays to search for illegally set nets. Routine river patrols continued, providing a good deterrent as well as detection, and patrols were aided by our trial of bodycams throughout 2022. We also supported a training day for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to enhance their understanding of poaching crimes.

We have used media coverage to highlight this challenging work, including the Press & Journal, as we rely on help from the public to report suspicious incidents to us. Please continue to do so – our **24-hour number is 01339 880411**.

Fish Disease

A record number of diseased fish were reported in 2022, acting as a good reminder of how important biosecurity is. We ask all anglers and other river users to disinfect their equipment before enjoying the river. At the start of the fishing season, working with TwinPeakes Fly Fishing and with the support of the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative, we opened a disinfection station on the Dee at Milton of Crathes for any angler to use free of charge. Thanks also to Robson Green, who helped with the launch to better protect our river.

CALL TO ACTION

Our iconic wild Atlantic salmon are in crisis throughout their North Atlantic range, and Scottish Government's recognition of this was the driver behind the Wild Salmon Strategy produced in January 2022. In March 2022, the Dee Board and Trust launched a Call to Action to ask Scottish Government to take urgent action on areas that they could make a difference to the salmon crisis. This was subsequently picked up by FMS and turned into a national call.

We thank everyone who got behind this call, writing to their MSPs to ask our government to protect water quality, protect salmon from predation, fund restoration of the environment and reform the Forestry Grants Scheme. This call is not over until these actions are delivered though, and so we ask everyone to continue making the case and protecting Scotland's rivers and wild salmon stocks.

Protecting water quality

We continued to support land managers and farmers to protect watercourses. Our Riparian Habitat Advisers visited farms to help riverside management to be incorporated into farm applications for government grants. We also help fund works that go beyond legal compliance, and this year included 7km of fencing and troughs in Glen Muick installed thanks to Biodiversity Challenge Funds managed by NatureScot, with aspen and birch planted within the fenced riverside areas thanks to trees donated by

Glen Tanar Estate. 0.4km of riverside fencing was also installed on the Clunie tributary thanks to funding from the Woodland Trust Scotland.

To assess water quality around the catchment, the Trust has been developing invertebrate monitoring. This has been much aided by specialist support from the charity Buglife. Sampling in Spring 2022 focused on the Clunie and Feugh tributaries and above and below the Aboyne Waste Water Treatment Plant. We also sampled four locations around the River Gairn in the summer to look for any indication of pesticide pollution. Further sampling is planned for the autumn and new locations will be investigated in future years, with any concerning evidence highlighted to SEPA and investigated further.

The Fishery Board responded to 18 pollution incidents over the year. The majority related to housing developments and Scottish Water Waste Water Treatment sites. As a result of continued pollution incidents, we are taking a firm stance against pollution. We continue to report all incidents to SEPA but we also highlight these incidents to the general public to support the wider concern of how watercourses need greater protection.

We ask for anyone who notices pollution to report it to SEPA (the regulators) and also to us; as we will follow up on incidents. We also highlighted a couple of example incidents to Scottish Government, who are following up on these concerns with SEPA.

Managing predation

There was an unprecedented number of seal sightings in the river during the springtime, with seals traveling up to nearly 30km inland. We have continued to work with the Sea Mammal Research Unit to identify individual seals and develop and test non-harmful methods of moving seals back to the coast. The aim is to reduce predation on salmon, particularly the most vulnerable of our stocks – the spring salmon. We hosted a Cabinet Secretary visit to the Dee in the spring to discuss the harm being caused to fragile salmon stocks and to press the urgency of developing in-river deterrents.

As part of our annual monitoring of piscivorous birds we carried out six surveys along the river. During the spring, when smolts are migrating and vulnerable to predation, we shared information from the smolt traps with river community to encourage disturbance of piscivorous birds during the key migration times. During April and May, our 'Smolt Survival' project was supported by ghillies and volunteers who undertook early morning patrols of the river to move piscivorous birds on whilst the salmon were migrating through.

We participated directly in the Scottish Government's Fish-eating bird Policy Review Group, which formed as a result of government's Wild Salmon Strategy. The Marine Scotland study on piscivorous bird diet was also published, showing that the diet of goosanders on the Dee is 50% juvenile salmon, which was higher than any other river in the study.

RESTORING FISH AND THEIR RIVERS

Glen Muick

Our work over the last 4 years in Glen Muick, in the upper Dee south of Ballater, has become a great example of how to restore our river and natural environment at a landscape scale. The collective work,

done with Balmoral and Glenmuick Estates, was a case study in Scottish Government's *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy to 2045* and was shortlisted for a Nature of Scotland Award.

Over the 2021/22 winter, two riverside woodland planting projects were delivered after obtaining £167,000 of funding from Scottish Government's Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS), enabling planting of 55,000 trees over 40 hectares. Also, along the River Muick, over 6,000 trees were planted with funding from the Biodiversity Challenge Fund (BCF, managed by NatureScot), Woodland Trust Scotland and Capita. A further 15 small planting areas (totalling 450 trees) were created thanks to generous public donations to sponsor enclosures, which are helping to connect woodland zones along the river.

Another key restoration measure which goes alongside riverside woodland is the creation of 'Large Woody Structures' which provide diverse habitat for fish spawning and rearing of juveniles, shelter from predators and floods, pools that provide habitat during low flows and structures that help retain nutrients and attract invertebrates.

33 of these structures, made up of 138 large wind-blown trees, have been placed in the River Muick and one of its side streams this year (with a total of 70 now created here). We observed salmon spawning occurring adjacent to these structures just one month after they were installed, showing how rapidly they improve fish habitat. Early monitoring results also show significantly more juvenile fish associated with these structures compared to control sites.

We have also created 78 leaky dams and 112 debris dams on side streams of the River Muick which are helping to block moorland drains and manage water flows: they hold back water during heavy rainfall, but slowly release water in low flows. These were installed with the help of a Habitat Assistant, funded for 4 months by the Biodiversity Challenge Fund.

20 wetlands have been created and enhanced through blocking and diverting small ditches, restoring ponds and creating wader scrapes; these are all helping to make the Muick floodplain function effectively.

A historic side channel on the River Muick was also reconnected in autumn 2021. This 375-metre channel was blocked in the 1830s to help drain the land for arable use. The reopening of the channel has now created fish habitat, particularly much-needed spawning habitat, and provided room for flood waters.

The Glen Muick restoration to date has cost £650,000, of which 83% has been funded by Scottish Government and 17% by the private sector. Thanks to: The EU Life Pearls In Peril project, Woodland Trust Scotland, Biodiversity Challenge Fund, NatureScot, Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), Balmoral Estate, Forestry Grant Scheme, Glenmuick Estate and Capita.

Tree planting

94,329 trees were planted over the last year during the winter and spring planting season. Trees are the key to our upper catchment's restoration, with the primary benefit being their shade helps to cool our rivers and combat potentially lethal effects of climate change. They also stabilise banks, provide nutrients and woody structures for the river and support biodiversity.

Alongside the River Muick planting, 20,000 alder trees were planted on the Slugain burn near Braemar thanks to funding from Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund.

45 volunteers helped us to plant 3,270 trees through the upper and middle Dee catchment. Many of the trees were provided by The Conservation Volunteers and planted by school groups led by the Trust's Education Officer, Aberdeen Soroptimist Group, Aboyne and Upper Deeside Rotarians, Ronnie's Rockets, CNOOC and Capita. Many thanks to Apex Tubulars for sponsoring three of the events.

We worked with the National Trust for Scotland and Mar Lodge Estate to develop riverbank tree planting along the banks of the River Geldie, which received funding approval from Scottish Government's FGS in summer 2022. The aim is for around 100,000 trees to be planted next winter over 120 hectares to enhance more than 15km of important spring salmon nursery habitat. With Balmoral Estate, we have also been successful in an FGS application for 17ha riverbank tree planting on the Gelder burn, which will see more than 25,000 trees to be planted over the coming winter.

A scarification trial started in March 2022, thanks to funding from the CNPA. We will be monitoring it over the next several years to see whether scarification helps the natural regeneration of trees within Glen Muick.

One Million Trees

Our One Million Trees campaign featured on STV news, BBC Radio Scotland, Original FM radio news, Scots Radio and newspapers including The Press & Journal and The Guardian, and magazines including the Scottish Field. The campaign is helping us gain more and more support for this critical restoration work: The public and local communities have supported tree planting events, funded tree enclosures and purchased trees, local businesses Burn O'Bennie and Apex Tubulars are supporting the campaign with significant financial contributions, and politicians and Scottish Government are recognising the importance of riverbank planting. We will keep on campaigning!

Restoring floodplains

Projects to reconnect rivers to their floodplains on the Garbh Allt near Abergeldie and on the Beltie Burn by Torphins were both completed in 2020 and have shown good news for spawning fish. Both sites had fish spawning in the restored sections in 2021 where spawning had not occurred previously.

15 Large Woody Structures were additionally installed at the Beltie site in 2022, thanks to £10,000 funding received from the CNPA and windblown trees provided by Forest & Land Scotland. The Dee Catchment Partnership also gained funding to add substrate gravels to create two spawning beds and to re-distribute naturally during high flows and give the instream habitat a kick-start. The Beltie restoration won the 2021 Nature and Climate Action award at the Nature of Scotland Awards.

A River Clunie Restoration project will be getting underway soon, as we have been awarded £210,000 of funding from Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund. This will be used to improve fish habitat, manage and moderate water flows and enhance water quality. The work on the Clunie catchment, part of Invercauld Estate and south of Braemar, will involve the creation of 96 Large Woody Structures, 60 leaky and debris dams, 24 wader scrapes and three side channel reconnections. Funding from the CNPA, Mossy Earth and Cairngorms Trust Nature resilience Fund will additionally create 140 small tree enclosures (5,600 trees planted) along 9km of the Clunie riverbank. Designs for the Large Woody Structures are completed, and all work will be delivered by April 2024.

We are excited to be contributing to the Heritage Horizons Cairngorms 2030 Climate Resilience Catchments project, which is being led by CNPA. This project, currently in its design phase, has been awarded funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and will include the restoration of 145 hectares of the Mar floodplain above Braemar.

Controlling Invasive Non-Native Species

The Trust delivers the control of invasive non-native plants and mink through the Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI), funded by Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) and NatureScot. The Trust's Invasive Species Officer is funded through this project and leads on all control work, which is carried out on the Rivers Dee, Cowie and Carron using volunteers.

The plant, Japanese knotweed, was controlled in autumn 2021 on the mainstem Dee, where it occurs in isolated patches from Ballater downstream to Ardoe, and on the Rivers Cowie and Carron and the Gormack and Durris burns. All known sites infected with this plant were treated, and it was noted that their presence was significantly less than previous years.

Treatment of the invasive plants, giant hogweed and American skunk cabbage, were also completed this year. This included treatment on the River Feugh and the mainstem Dee from Park to Ardoe (18km). 4 km of giant hogweed on the River Carron was also treated. Four new volunteers are currently being trained in spraying to help in the future.

The final invasive non-native plant that we control, Himalayan balsam, is very widespread and has not been possible to fully control yet in a single year. Instead, several volunteer days, including one corporate day, were organised to control this plant along the Dee at Ardoe, Peterculter, Maryculter and Altries. Control was also undertaken across the Logie, Crynoch and Sheeoch burns (total of 23km). The balsam on the River Cowie was completely controlled for the first time (2km).

The Trust is now supporting a NatureScot bid to the Nature Restoration Fund for a further 6 months of invasives work once the current, HLF-funded, SISI project ends in October 2022. We are then looking to be part of a multi-year, multi-river funding application for INNS treatment from 2023 so that we can continue control without any breaks in the programme.

Mink control

North American mink are still present in the lower Dee below Banchory with activity recorded this year at Maryculter, Drumoak, Dess and Crathes; however, they are not abundant. Mink sightings upstream of Aboyne are very infrequent. Following the large-scale flooding in October 2021, many rafts were displaced or damaged and so the system needed significant refurbishment this year.

The volunteers continued to manage mink rafts and mink traps throughout the year. As a result, eight mink were captured on the Dee. Please continue to report any sightings so that we may target control in these areas and stop the spread of this non-native predator.

Education

The Trust's education programme delivers science-based environmental education to provide young people with experience of the natural environment. We offer people the opportunity to learn about the river, its management and nature conservation, and to give inspiration to find STEM and nature-based careers.

This year, the Trust's Education Officer delivered 135 visits to 81 classes, engaging 1941 school children. This included 170 secondary school children. The visits included classroom, playground and river visits, with all visits tailored to suit the requirements of the class.

The Trust also delivered presentations to 15 local community groups, which involved hundreds of adults hearing for the first time about river restoration. We have also resumed our Walk & Talk events and our public riverbank sessions — which enables local people to help enhance and restore their local biodiversity. These sessions include activities such as tree planting to contribute to our Million Trees campaign (see news coverage <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-scotland-51311634>) and the removal of invasive non-native plants from our riverbanks to protect native biodiversity.

We are hugely grateful to the following businesses for funding the education programme over this year:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| ❖ CNOOC | ❖ Maryculter House Hotel |
| ❖ CNR International | ❖ Neptune Energy |
| ❖ Harbour Energy | ❖ TAQA |

Communications

COP26 was held in Scotland in late 2021 and provided an international platform to highlight the plight of Atlantic salmon. With Channel 4, we created a short film for their news programme in advance of COP26, highlighting the climate risks to salmon and what is being done here to save them. - <https://www.channel4.com/news/warmer-temperatures-threatening-biodiversity-in-scotland>

The [Salmon School](#) exhibition (created by artist Joseph Rossano and supported by the Missing Salmon Alliance) was exhibited at COP26, and then in 2022 was installed at Balmoral Castle as part of the Jubilee celebrations, complete with information boards created by the Trust. It was viewed by over 73,000 visitors.

Our messaging about threats to salmon was also covered in the press, including the Press & Journal and STV news. We also contributed to 'Riverwoods' (the Big Picture Production) film featuring the restoration work on the Dee and by the Fishery Board in the face of the salmon crisis, and this was shown at private screening events throughout the country and including here at Banchory. View [trailer](#).

Our communications platforms were given a boost by the development of a new River Dee website this year, developed by The Castabroad Collective, thanks to a Digital Development grant from Business Gateway. The website remains at www.riverdee.org.uk

To support our local fishing businesses, we also ran three workshops to provide social media training on Facebook and Instagram to proprietors and ghillies. Future 1-1 training sessions will also be offered.

We continue to support and grow our social media platforms:

- ❖ Twitter @RiverDeeTeam
- ❖ Instagram theriverdeeteam
- ❖ Facebook @theriverdee
- ❖ Facebook @fishdee

Fundraising

The Trust has continued to work hard throughout the year to raise charitable funds to support the River. An annual online auction, which has been delivered for many years, this year raised its highest total yet - £26,000 – thanks to generous donations of 80 lots.

Due to the continuing concerns over Covid-19, the Trust decided not to hold its fundraising Living River Dinner prior to the 2022 Opening Ceremony. However, due to a number of successful collaborations the fundraising was not only possible but our most successful yet.

A hugely generous offer by Burn O'Bennie distillery in Banchory was made to sell 30 limited-edition whisky casks and give a donation to the Trust for each cask sold. These 250-litre casks, named *Wood Masters of the River Dee*, were launched at the River Opening Ceremony in early 2022 and each donation will go toward the One Million Trees campaign. Total sales will bring £100,000 to the river's restoration work.

A whisky and art collaboration with the Burn O'Bennie Distillery and renowned Scottish artist, Peter Howson, raised £6,000 for the River through a sale of a limited-edition 30-year-old whisky and the first preparatory sketch in a series of three, at Bonhams auctioneers. The prints are on an environmental theme entitled "World is on Fire". Two further auction lots, each consisting of a special whisky and a print of the second and third artworks in Peter Howson's environmental theme, have also been offered to the Trust. The original artworks of Peter Howson are now installed at the International School in Aberdeen.

The Strong Water Co, based in Banchory, relaunched its Macbeth Pale Ale and has agreed to donate 50p for every bottle sold.

Silver Ghosts, written by Will Shropshire in both paper- and hard-back went on sale at Christmas, with all proceeds being donated to the Trust. This can be purchased through our website [shop](#).

The Trust added a new design in the neck warmers it has launched, created by artist and Trustee, Mel Shand. These can be bought from our [shop](#) – modelled by Robson Green.

CREATE THRIVING FISHERIES

Our second FishDee24 event went ahead in June 2022, a successful mix of fundraising and angling promotion. We received 58 applications for 30 places in this event. All participants were challenged with raising a minimum of £500 and in total, £24,600 was raised for the Trust. Amongst the participants of FishDee24 were TV stars Robson Green and Jim Murray. The event was filmed for a prime-time ITV programme that will air in Spring 2023. 12 fishing beats donated their rods and the event brought many new anglers to the Dee for the first time, who are all now planning to come back and fish again. The event relied on over 80 volunteers to support the participants. Event sponsors without whom this wouldn't have

been possible were Banchory Lodge Hotel, Maryculter House Hotel, FishPal, Somers Fishing Tackle, Twin Peakes Fly Fishing and Mel Shand.

The Fishery Board supported a very successful Ladies Day at Invery and Tilquhillie in September, hosting 11 ladies who were supported by volunteers and TwinPeakes Fly Fishing. An article in The Guardian focusing on women in fishing as a result of this event and the Dee Damsels group, run by Trustee and Board member Tara Spiers.

Aberdeenshire Fly Fish 50 (AFF50), a volunteer-led group organised by the Fishery Board to encourage new participants into angling, ran three series of events to develop new anglers this year. Over three weeks, a weekly evening event was run in May at Loch Inch Fishery to help support 11 participants new to angling. A further series of events was delivered in June at Tullich Fishery with 10 participants, and a third series was delivered over July and August at Logie Fishery with 10 participants. A Come and Try day in May run by AFF50 welcomed a further 9 new anglers onto the River Dee. AFF50 has grown over the year and now has a pool of 18 volunteers who make this angling development possible.

The River Opening Ceremony on 1st February 2022 gained press coverage focusing on the crisis facing salmon and the encouragement of new anglers to the sport. This was driven, respectively, by the announcement of quarter-million trees planted through the One Million Trees (OMT) campaign, and by the ceremonial first casts being carried out by two young ladies, Camryn Stewart and Naomi Bell. Press coverage included STV news, BBC Radio Scotland, Original FM radio, Scots Radio, The Press & Journal, The Guardian, Scottish Field and coverage across social media. We are grateful to everyone who helps share our messages.

2022-2023 Work Plan

Protecting Fish Stocks and their Rivers

- Work with FMS to seek coordinated national monitoring of impacts of offshore developments on fish migration
- Promote protection of migrating smolts in Aberdeen Harbour
- Monitor predatory bird numbers and promote control of bird predation on smolts, including increased lethal control
- Run the Smolt Survival project with volunteers to help reduce bird predation during the smolt run
- Support SMRU trials to develop automatic video detection of seals
- Work with others to seek better methods to control seal predation on salmon
- Promote good fish handling techniques throughout the river
- Promote biosecurity and uptake of measures, including use of disinfection station
- Highlight pollution incidents that occur and press for regulatory action
- Undertake spring and autumn invertebrate surveys to assess water quality
- Control invasive plants and mink through the SISI project
- Deliver the Trust's school and community education programme

- Undertake smolt monitoring, juvenile electrofishing surveys and spawning surveys and maintain a tributary fish counter
- Monitor water temperatures throughout the catchment
- Monitor pink salmon in the Dee in 2023 through angler reports, drone surveys and eDNA sampling

Restoring Fish Stocks and their Rivers

- Support creation of buffer strips and protected riverbank
- Plant 55,000 riverbank trees
- Continue Million Trees Campaign to raise funds and awareness, including for reform of the Forestry Grant Scheme
- Maintain riverbank trees through development of volunteering and staff capacity
- Contribute to develop the Mar floodplain project in partnership with CNPA
- Deliver the NRF-funded 'Glen Clunie River and Wetlands Restoration' project
- Monitor restoration impacts including Large Wood Structures
- Secure funding and install at least 30 large wood structures
- Remove the Garlogie dam
- Develop further public and corporate volunteering opportunities
- Review Dee policy on Stocking following 5+ years since the last review was undertaken
- Fundraise through a Trust dinner and auction
- Develop LinkedIn profile to build messaging to businesses and corporate groups

Create Thriving Fisheries

- Seek anglers' views to understand challenges faced in selling fishing and guide marketing strategy
- Promote angling through digital marketing for experienced, casual and novice anglers
- Promote angling through a River Opening ceremony
- Support fishing beats with digital media promotion
- Continue to develop and deliver AFF50 programme, with aim of creating 50 new fly fishers per year; monitor success

The Statute

This report is required under the terms of the Aquaculture and Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013. The period for this report, bar the financial accounts, runs from 1st August 2021 to 31st August 2022. The website www.riverdee.org.uk is kept up to date and holds information on the detailed activities and governance of the Dee DSFB. The Dee District Fishery Salmon Board was elected at its Triennial meeting held on 5th September 2019.

Governance

The Dee Fishery Board voluntarily adheres to the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) Code of Good Practice (<http://fms.scot/governance/>).

The Dee DSFB holds meetings on a quarterly basis within Deeside, for which in-person and online attendance is available. All meetings are open to the public and are advertised on our website, along with a draft and final agenda. The subsequent minutes of these meetings are also published on the website.

A copy of the Dee Fishery Board complaint procedure is available at <https://riverdee.org.uk/who-we-are/#board> In the last year no complaints were received.

All members of the Dee Fishery Board are asked to complete and keep up to date a declaration of interests relevant to their position on the Board. This information is available at <https://riverdee.org.uk/who-we-are/#board>

The annual accounts are included at the end of this report.

River Dee Funders & Supporters

- ❖ HM The Queen
- ❖ Aberdeen City Council
- ❖ Aberdeen Sorooptimist Group
- ❖ Aberdeenshire Council
- ❖ Aboyne and Upper Deeside Rotarians
- ❖ Apex Tubulars
- ❖ Anne Woodcock
- ❖ Ballogie Anglers
- ❖ Balmoral Estate
- ❖ Banchory Fishings
- ❖ Banchory Lodge Hotel
- ❖ Bert McIntosh
- ❖ Biodiversity Challenge Fund – managed by NatureScot
- ❖ Buglife
- ❖ Burn O'Bennie Distillery
- ❖ Business Gateway – Digital Development Grant
- ❖ Cairngorms National Park Authority
- ❖ Cairngorms Trust Nature Resilience Fund
- ❖ Capita
- ❖ CNOOC
- ❖ CNR International
- ❖ FG Sandison
- ❖ Fisheries Management Scotland
- ❖ FishPal
- ❖ Forest & Land Scotland
- ❖ FortyTwo Studio
- ❖ Glenmuick Estates
- ❖ Grampian Escapes and Tours
- ❖ Grampian Orienteers
- ❖ Harbour Energy

- ❖ Heritage Lottery Fund
- ❖ Hugh Mackay
- ❖ Invery & Tilquhillie Fishings
- ❖ Dr Jim Milne
- ❖ Jim Murray
- ❖ Loch Inch Fishery
- ❖ Logie Fishery
- ❖ Lucy Campbell
- ❖ Marine Scotland Science
- ❖ Maryculter House Hotel
- ❖ Maurice McBride
- ❖ Mel Shand
- ❖ Mossy Earth
- ❖ Nature Restoration Fund – managed by NatureScot
- ❖ NatureScot
- ❖ Neptune Energy
- ❖ Peter Howson
- ❖ Port of Aberdeen
- ❖ Robert Harries
- ❖ Robson Green
- ❖ Ron Duff
- ❖ Ronnie's Rockets
- ❖ Sea Mammal Research Unit
- ❖ SEPA – Water Environment Fund
- ❖ Shell
- ❖ Simon Poett
- ❖ Skippers Beard
- ❖ Somers Fishing Tackle
- ❖ TAQA
- ❖ Tesco Banchory
- ❖ The Strong Water Co.
- ❖ Tullich Fishery
- ❖ TwinPeakes Fly Fishing
- ❖ The Conservation Volunteers
- ❖ Vattenfall European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre
- ❖ Ward McKimm
- ❖ Woodland Trust Scotland
- ❖ Will Shropshire

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended

31st March 2022

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board



Company information

Board members:

Lawrence Ross Chairman
Victor Beamish
Craig Fleming
Edward Humphrey
John McB (Ian) Murray
Scott Rutherford
Tara Spiers
Mike Wilson
Iain Wood
Keith Young

Clerk to the Board:

Carol Mair

Co-opted Board members:

Aberdeenshire council
Cairngorms National Park Authority
Dee Ghillies Association
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Nature Scotland

Craig Stewart
Andy Ford
Shane Christie
Samantha Fleming
Gavin Clark

Registered office:

River Office
Mill of Dinnet
Dinnet
Aboyne
Aberdeenshire
AB34 5LA

Auditors:

James Milne
Chartered Accountants
5 Bon Accord Square
Aberdeen
AB11 6XZ

Solicitors:

Mackinnons
Ballater Road
Aboyne
AB34 5HN

Bankers:

Virgin Money
62 Union Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1WD

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Report of the Members for the year ended 31st March 2022



The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board is an organisation reporting under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003, and the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.

The purpose of the Board is to execute such works and incur such expenditure as may appear to it expedient for the protection or improvement of the fisheries within the district.

The Board members who have served during all or part of the year and the professional advisers are detailed on page 1 of the report.

Board members' responsibilities

The members are responsible for preparing the annual financial statements in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003, and the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013 require the Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. The members have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Practice and Applicable Law).

The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Board and of the surplus or deficit of the Board for the year. In preparing these financial statements the members are required to:

- (a) select suitable accounting policies and apply them on a consistent basis;
- (b) make judgments and estimates that are prudent and reasonable;
- (c) follow applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- (d) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Board will continue in operation.

The members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Board and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law and regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Board and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Board on *1st September 2022* and signed on its behalf by

Lawrence Ross
Chairman



Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

We have audited the financial statements of The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board for the year ended 31st March 2022 which comprise the income and expenditure account, balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

This report is made solely to the Board members, as a body, in accordance with Section 44 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and Section 24 of the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Board's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Board's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Opinion on the financial statements

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Board's affairs as at 31st March 2022 and of the surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements of our report. We are independent of the Board in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters to which the ISA's (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Board has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Board's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Responsibilities of the Board members

The Board members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or other error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board members are responsible for assessing the Board's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board members either intend to wind-up the Board or cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.



Independent Auditors' Report to the Members of The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board (cont'd)

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISA's (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Board and determined that the most significant are those that relate to Section 44 of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 and Section 24 of the Aquaculture & Fisheries (Scotland) Act 2013.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Board's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by discussing this with management and understanding where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud. We performed audit procedures to address the fraud risk. These procedures including testing manual journals, reviewing books of prime entry and were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error.
- Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures involved reading minutes to identify any non-compliance with laws and regulations; enquiries of those charged with governance and reviewing books of prime entry as outlined above.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <http://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit-Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

James Milne & Co

Chartered Accountants and
Statutory Auditor
5 Bon Accord Square
Aberdeen
AB11 6XZ

6/9/22

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board
Statement of Income and Expenditure
for the year ended 31st March 2022



	2022		2021	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Assessments	332,943		249,710	
Contract income	8,057		4,912	
Project income	320,428		190,330	
Rent received	28,800		31,275	
Fisheries development	5,700		5,000	
Don DSFB service charge	46,233		45,745	
Miscellaneous	230		600	
Bank account interest	6	742,397	6	527,578
Expenditure				
Staff cost	414,720		385,268	
Donation to The River Dee Trust	40,000		40,000	
Contract expense	7,057		-	
Project expense	265,882		95,746	
Fisheries Development	9,837		1,062	
Policing and predator control	690		1,400	
Administration and office costs	72,726		67,894	
Depreciation	13,374		16,250	
Loss/(gain) on sale of fixed assets	2,916	(827,202)	420	(608,040)
(Deficit)/surplus for year		(84,805)		(80,462)

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Balance Sheet at 31st March 2022



	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	5		950,020		1,146,930
Current assets					
Other debtors and prepayments	6	194,962		48,808	
Fixed Term Deposit Account		5,808		5,802	
Current account		166,875		246,470	
Petty cash		121		121	
		<u>367,766</u>		<u>301,201</u>	
Current liabilities					
Other creditors	7	(173,555)	194,211	(212,543)	88,658
Net assets			<u>1,144,231</u>		<u>1,235,588</u>
Financed by:					
Revaluation reserve	8		162,338		168,890
Revenue reserve	9		981,893		1,066,698
			<u>1,144,231</u>		<u>1,235,588</u>

Approved by the Board on *1st September 2022* and signed on its behalf by

Lawrence Ross
Chairman

Carol Mair
Clerk to the Board

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2022



1. General information

The address of the Board is River Office, Mill of Dinnet, Dinnet, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, AB34 5LA.

2. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain land and buildings, and in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, and also in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102, Section 1A, "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Incoming resources

Assessments are recognised when invoiced.

Project work income and contract work income are recognised to the extent to which the work has been completed on the project or contract.

Rental income and bank interest are recognised when receivable.

Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised as resources expended as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Board to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Land is not depreciated.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

Buildings	-	No depreciation is provided on buildings, as in the opinion of the Board, the residual value is in excess of the value shown in the accounts
Office equipment	-	33% reducing balance
Furniture and fittings	-	25% reducing balance
Motor vehicles	-	25% reducing balance
Bailiffs equipment	-	25% reducing balance

3. Operating surplus for the year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Operating surplus is stated after charging:		
Depreciation of fixed assets	13,374	16,250
Loss/(gain) on sale of fixed assets	2,916	420
Operating lease rentals	1,279	1,279
Audit fees	750	750

4. Staff numbers

The average number of persons employed by the Board during the year was 11 (2021: 11).

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2022



5. Tangible fixed assets

	Land and Buildings £	Fittings and office equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Bailiffs equipment £	Total £
At cost or valuation					
At 1st April 2021	1,095,000	24,413	105,237	21,144	1,245,794
Additions	-	1,464	-	-	1,464
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	(185,000)	-	-	-	(185,000)
At 31st March 2022	910,000	25,877	105,237	21,144	1,062,258
Depreciation					
At 1st April 2021	-	22,878	57,787	18,199	98,864
Charge for the year	-	784	11,855	735	13,374
On disposals	-	-	-	-	-
At 31st March 2022	-	23,662	69,642	18,934	112,238
Net book value					
At 31st March 2022	910,000	2,215	35,595	2,210	950,020
At 31st March 2021	1,095,000	1,535	47,450	2,945	1,146,930

6. Other debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	188,927	42,806
Prepayments	6,035	6,002
	<u>194,962</u>	<u>48,808</u>

7. Other creditors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	10,418	72,349
Accruals and deferred income	163,137	140,194
	<u>173,555</u>	<u>212,543</u>

The Dee District Salmon Fishery Board

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2022



8. Revaluation reserve

	2022 £	2021 £
At 1st April 2021	168,890	168,890
Movement for year	-	-
Released on disposal	(6,552)	-
At 31st March 2022	<u>162,338</u>	<u>168,890</u>

As noted in the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018, the Board had the properties professionally valued in March 2020 and adjusted the revaluation reserve accordingly.

9. Revenue reserve

	2022 £	2021 £
At 1st April 2020	1,066,698	1,147,160
(Deficit)/surplus for year	(84,805)	(80,462)
At 31st March 2021	<u>981,893</u>	<u>1,066,698</u>

10. Related party transactions

The River Dee Trust is a charitable company with which the Board has a close working relationship in respect of management of the river and stock conservation. Victor Beamish and Tara Spiers are also trustees of The River Dee Trust.

During the year, the Board contributed £40,000 (2021 - £40,000) to the work of The River Dee Trust.