

**Argyll Area Advisory Group Meeting
Cameron House, Oban**

**Minutes
10/10/2013**

AAG Representative	Initials	Organisation
Jim Frame	JF	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Jenny Davies	JD	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Paul Griffiths	PG	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Steve McFarland	SM	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Iris Krammer	IK	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Craig MacIntyre	CM	Argyll Fisheries Trust
Lucy Symonds	LS	Scottish Water
Elaine Jamieson	EJ	Forestry Commission Scotland
Corrina Mertens	CM	Scottish Natural Heritage
Adam Reeves	AR	Regional Marine Planning Marine Scotland
Sheena Warnock	SW	Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation

Apologies; Drew MacFarlane Slack (SLE) Walter Speirs (SSGA) Richard Hearnden (RioTinto) Olivia Burns (LLTNP), Diane Baum (LFT)

Welcome and introduction, Jim Frame Chair

JF welcomed the group, thanked everyone for attending and ran through the apologies. The group did a round table introduction and JD introduced herself as the new coordinator for the group. JD will cover the North Highland, Outer Hebrides, Argyll and Lochaber and National Advisory Group and will hope to keep the groups well connected, sharing best practice and examples of good practice.

We ran through the outstanding action of which there was only a few. A diffuse pollution focus for the spring meeting was discussed following the action to set up a diffuse pollution sub group. JD to action. Discussions around the continuation of the INNS sub group and logistics – who should lead this group and how they should communicate as well as forming links with the North Highland Invasive Forum. **JD to action**

The updated action log from 10/10/13 meeting can be found on the Argyll and Lochaber AAG page [here](#)

Presentation 1 Implementing the first plans

JD gave a presentation on the first plan implementation work underway including the pilot catchment work (link to the web page [here](#)) also an update on the priority catchment diffuse pollution work and the new Water Environment Fund unit.

The restoration plan has been published and can be found [here](#).

ROUND TABLE UPDATES

Creran – this project has stalled with regard to morphological improvements in the woodland section due to stakeholders having differing opinions and WEF funding is directed to water bodies at moderate or below. A hatchery was set up on the river but was unsuccessful in 2013 the AFT intend to support the stakeholders in the

catchment to try again in 2014. CMc asked about the classification for morphological impacts, PG explained that the classification was based on the bed of the river and a small riparian zone on the banks on the stretch of the water body. FCS have an interest in the re planting of this catchment to reinstate significant areas of native planting to reconnect the ancient woodlands that are designated as SSSI and SAC. CMc asked if, within the catchment during the replanting work drains would be blocked and re-meandered. EJ responded that where they will be in planting and working within the catchment they will do that work. EJ requested a copy of the scope report **JD to action**. EJ commented that the Creran is also an area where the FCS have been working to eradicate Rhododendron to protect the SSSI. This catchment will be used to demonstrate stem injection eradication method – Gordon Grey Stephens is the contractor for this work (this is of particular importance due to the Larch fungal outbreak across Scotland). Discussion about the Lever and Mulch eradication method where the plant is broken near the root. CM commented that John Parrot from Collie alba has done a critical review of the Rhododendron control strategy. Not sure why people tend to use a single type of control method on a single site possibly funding related. **EJ actioned** to inform the group of the eradication example day.

Black Lynn Burn – community group with support from SNH, AFT and the wild trout trust. The community group would like to improve the aesthetics of the water body, have been planting natives and working to tackle invasive species within the catchment. AFT hosting a “Balsam Bashing” session next spring. Discussed the morphological alterations to the catchment and being at moderate status it could be eligible for WEF funding to improve the habitat for the trout population and provide spawning for sea trout.

River Awe - the INNS project lead by AFT and funded by EU funding. Excellent work done to date and the AFT have been approached to re apply to extend the project for another 5 years. CM raised the issue of lack of clarity regarding INNS funding. JD commented that the INNS supplementary plan is due for publication imminently and will circulate to the group. **JD Action**

Ballahulish ponds crayfish eradication – successful eradication of this isolated population using the chemical Pymethroid between SNH and Lochaber Fishery Trust. SNH shall continue to fund monitoring for 4 years to ensure no crayfish have survived. Ecological surveys have showed that other ecology has survived the chemical treatment

Lochy, Coe, Laroach and Nevis INNS SNH updated that there has been some issue with locating landowners to agree access for treatment. Also raised that there has been issues with road side strimming and crass cutting of Japanese Knotweed. It is thought this is an issue that could be raised with the Councils, Highland Invasives Forum and an Argyll INNS sub group.

Glensanda Quarry a freshwater biodiversity initiative with the quarry and the Lochaber fisheries trust. This project is in the early stages and it is hoped Lochaber Fisheries Trust will provide feedback at the next meeting. **JD Action**

Rannoch Moor the population on pearl mussels had been thought to be sustained by brown trout but a recent survey found salmon fry in the area getting access through Glen Lyon.

River Fyne salmon population seems to be recovering after 10 years of salmon being missing from the river snorkel surveys have shown good numbers in the river.

CM SNH provided an update on the work underway in Ardnamurchan to restore habitats to support FWPM, this work would include the remeandering of a stretch on tiber. Also tackling 2 weirs on the Sanna to allow fish passage, these are owner by Scottish Water, and re planting native woodland at the top of the catchment. SNH had the RRC look at eth River Coe because of the scouring and erosion beside the A82 damaging FWPM habitat. They are waiting for the report.

LS SW – gave the group a summary of the SW Sustainable Land Management project that started in April 2013, 100 applications have already been granted to landowners to improve water quality within selected catchments (none of which are within Argyll and Lochaber at the moment) to mitigate diffuse pollution. It is hoped that this project will be expanded in the future. Further information can be found <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/about-us/corporate-responsibility/sustainable-land-management>

Discussion about funding for projects from WEF due to the Carradeale and Creran projects – rivers should be at moderate and below to secure funding unless there is a risk of deterioration. **Action JD** to pass on the Carradale and Creran scope reports to EJ

Presentation 2 Current condition and challenges for the future

PG gave a presentation on the CCCF report and associated forthcoming consultation. The presentation can be found here.

The presentation highlighted that there is, as was expected, a lag between doing improvement works and seeing the improvements in the monitoring work.

Highlighted that the 2 issues that are not on track of achieving the 2015 targets are the morphological (physical condition) pressures and the pressures from diffuse pollution whereas the measures being covered by regulation are largely on target for 2015.

PG explained that the changes in classification in Argyll and Lochaber were mostly due to the development of small scale hydro power schemes that have bee through the CAR derogation process in licensing. PG also commented about the Scaddell river fish ecology downgrades and said investigative monitoring would be scheduled. JF encouraged the group to respond to the consultation and comment on the proposed management options.

Presentation 3 Developing the second river basin plans

JD gave a presentation on the development of the second plans including the proposed changes, engagement and consultations activities that will take place as we develop Scotland and the Solway Tweeds second plans.

The group were asked to comment on the proposed engagement opportunities, CM asked if RAFTs would be involved with the diffuse pollution work. **JD to action EJ** asked if the web tools would be able to create shape files to be exported **JD to action**.

AOB and close

The group discussed membership and venues to maximise attendance – the idea of VC from Lochgilphead to Fort William was proposed and there was general agreement that this could be trialed. **JD to set up for the next meeting**

It was suggested that representation be sought from Forest enterprise JD to action and council representation from both councils. Richard Wallace from FCS was also mentioned although he is also included with the North Highland and Outer Hebrides AAGs therefore could maybe become a corresponding member providing written update instead of attending in person. JD to action. LA representative names were discussed and JD will action approaching these people.

Action from LAG afternoon session JD to circulate a map of the AAG boundary for members reference.

DRAFT