



Newsletter 3

2008

Project No. LIFE04NAT/GB/000250



Welcome to the third Newsletter of the CASS Project. A great deal of progress has been achieved since we last reported in 2006. A significant number of projects are nearing completion, and we have now passed a notable milestone in that the interim report and claim have now been submitted to the EC. Since our last newsletter, there have also been a number of changes in the management team. More on all this below. Further information can be obtained from the project team at the contact details provided at the end of the newsletter.

Project management & personnel

Colin Bull left his post in November 2006 to pursue a career with Stirling University. Colin originally graduated from Stirling University and maintained close links with Stirling throughout his career in

fisheries - we wish him well on his return to Stirling.

Samantha Hessey replaced Colin as Project Manager in February 2007. Samantha comes from an environmental management background, previously working in Australian Marine Protected Areas planning for New South Wales (NSW), and in threatened fresh water fish conservation and GIS (Geographical Information Systems) for the former NSW Fisheries. Project experience has come from working on state significant projects for the railways and roads departments in Sydney. With such a varied background, Sam is enjoying working with the diversity of partners involved in the CASS LIFE Project and is particularly enjoying seeing beautiful rivers with water in them - something rare in Australia!

Gill Gentry joined the CASS project in February 2006 to help with our European spreadsheets administration then became the CASS administrator in June 2006 when Claire Myles left. Gill also works part time at Loch Leven Nature Reserve as the office manager.

Interim Report & Claim

A major piece of work for the team was the production of the Interim report and interim claim. This was submitted to the EC in May 2007. This was a significant piece of work and something of a milestone. Kelly Ross (SNH) helped compile the financial interim claim and we would particularly like to thank Kelly for her help.

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Publicity/Promotional activities

- The website has been updated and partner newsletters have been added (Spey and GFT) - see <http://www.snh.org.uk/salmonlifeproject/index.asp>.
- ASFB have information banners and will be presenting them at events they attend
- Partners have been supplied with interpretation panels and they are deciding on locations and obtaining planning permission to install them
- The study tour to Denmark took place in September 06.
- Annual partner meeting was held in the Dewars centre in Perth in October 07.
- Planning has begun for the final project conference.
- Salmon in the classroom is continuing on the rivers Oykel, Moriston, Spey, Dee, South Esk, Tay, and Bladnoch.

Individual river project reports

River Oykel

- The KoSDSFB have held 2 stakeholder awareness raising events to promote the project and conservation policies.
- Board staff have been meeting regularly with anglers out on the river to promote catch and release policy and other conservation measures.



Catch & release of salmon is a valuable part of any conservation and management

River Tay

- Tay board staff have been on chainsaw courses so they could undertake coppicing work.
- The fluvial audit has been completed and discussions are underway with regard to the design and content of the Tay Code of Practice on gravel extraction and the Best Practice guidance for gravel extraction in salmon rivers in Scotland. A workshop will take place in September as part of SNH sharing good practice events to promote the guidelines.
- SSE have completed work to improve passage through the Borland lift pass and over 3 sets of natural obstacles on the Lochay.

River South Esk

- Fencing work has went out to tender and planning for improvement of Rottal burn habitat is underway.
- A management agreement has been drawn up between SNH and the board where SNH will finance repairs to the fenceline due to flood damage for the next 10 years.

River Tweed

- Installation of the VAKI counter and modification of the Gala Water fish pass has been completed. This makes the Tweed the first partners to complete actions for the project.

River Bladnoch

- GFT will purchase an electric trammel net and associated equipment to improve broodstock capture.
 - Debris removal has taken place on the Glassoch and Killeal burns. Fencing has taken place on the Killeal burn.
 - Extensive monitoring work has continued (electrofishing, eggbox work, scale sampling, smolt sampling).
 - Planning is taking place for log and xmas tree work on the Bladnoch to prevent bank erosion.
 - FCS have completed work on the Bladnoch
- The Polbae Dam was constructed across the Polbae Burn during the early part of the 20th century. The dam itself was constructed for ornamental and amenity reasons, creating a large garden pond upstream, as part of the gardens of Polbae House. There was no provision on the dam for free access upstream for migratory fish. No maintenance of the dam had taken place for years and the dam was in a state of disrepair, with the majority of water leaking under the dam and not flowing over it. As the dam was believed to be impassable to migratory fish, GFT through CASS funding, installed a Denil Fish Pass on the dam in June 2007. The new fish pass will now potentially open up >8000m² of available spawning and juvenile habitat on the Polbae Burn.





Polbae Burn Denil fish pass - before (left), and completed works (right)

River Moriston

- SSE has completed work on Ceannacroc heck and it is now passable to adults. Work on a smolt splash pool has begun.

River Spey

- Alcan are continuing work on fish pass improvements on Spey dam
- Fish pass modifications at Mortlach weir are complete (Diageo owned)
- The restocking programme is continuing
- Plans have been drawn up to improve passage over Batten burn A9 bridge apron and railway bridge apron.
- Plans have also been drawn up to improve passage through Milton Burn A9 culvert. All work will be carried out by Transport Scotland contractors.

River Dee

- Fencing, silt trap, coppicing and boulder placement work has continued (see figure 2. silt traps)
- Passage over the Beltie burn and Cattie burn weirs have been completed
- A design has been drawn up for the fish pass over the Coy weir (NTS)
- The board had a stand at the Banchory agricultural show in July 06 to promote the project.
- Woodland stand management plans have been completed by Forestry Commission Scotland for work on River Dee tributaries and work has been carried out. Some felling has already taken place.



Silt trap work in Dee catchment. Completed trap, left, before the installation, right .



Before fencing

Erection of cattle fencing to improve riparian zone.

After fencing





Contact the Project Team:

Delegates from the Scottish project team visit the Danish project in September 2006.

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