

Cromarty Firth District Salmon Fishery Board

January Report

Lieutenant Colonel Peter Hingston OBE

Sadly Peter Hingston died in hospital on Tuesday 22nd January after a short illness

Colonel Simon Vandeleur has written the below regarding Peters career.

He served in the Regiment from 1975 until 2002, commanding the 3rd Infantry Training Battalion at ITC Catterick from 1996 to 1999. He was awarded the OBE following an outstanding Grade One appointment at Headquarters Land Command as the lead staff officer responsible for the Reserve Forces and Cadet Associations. On retirement he took up farming in Aberdeenshire, and then Ross-shire, with his wife Charlotte and daughters Imogen, Phoebe and Rebecca. Typical of Peter's generosity and friendliness, the week he died, a party of officers from the 1st Battalion and Number 7 Company were shooting and stalking on his estate. Peter moved directly to RMAS, via Brigade Squad, following education at Wellington College. He joined the 1st Battalion in Windsor and moved to Fallingbostal in 1977. He then completed a three year tour with the AAC as a helicopter pilot. He was an outstanding Battalion Operations Officer in the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong in 1986-1987. He was a Company Commander in the 2nd Battalion in Cyprus and dealt with the terrible aftermath of the Troodos 4 tonner accident. He then began a long spell at the Depot and Catterick in the training world, as Training Officer, Staff Officer in the Headquarters, Second in Command and then Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion. Peter was a very fine Coldstreamer and family man, and he will be much missed by his many friends in the Regiment.

The funeral service will take place on **Monday 4th February at 12.30 p.m. in St Anne's Church, Strathpeffer, IV14 9DW**. There will be a reception afterwards at Coul House Hotel, Contin IV14 9ES.

Meig Smolt Trap

Planning for the installation of the acoustic barrier and trap continues. An Archaeological survey was carried out of the site as the first edition Ordnance Survey map identified a possible ancient burial ground. This has now been mapped and it is far enough away from proposed works not to affect them. A fresh water pearl mussel survey was also carried out at the end of January but no mussels were found in the area of the proposed acoustic barrier or smolt diversion channel. Further meetings are planned in February with the manufacturers of the acoustic barrier to go over site specific requirements.

University of the Highlands and Islands – Riparian tree planting and Nursery

Initial discussions have been had with the UHI regarding the proposed tree planting project which Simon had reported on at the last AGM. The University would like to investigate the opportunity to assist with the project as it may prove to be very useful as a practical learning aid for student, which may involve surveying, landowner liaison and management of a small tree nursery. Further proposal will be put forward to key stakeholders over the next few months.

Junior Angling

A very successful meeting was held with FMS to discuss the junior angling, this included initial ideas on progressing the program and future funding opportunities. This is an ongoing project.

Alness Smolt Capture – PhD project

Simon had discussed at the last AGM that there would be a PhD student looking to undertake pre-smolt capture on the Alness system. This would involve capturing parr above Loch Morie and parr in the Blackwater. The study hopes to identify the differences and survival rates in smolts traveling through a loch and smolts that do not have to travel through a loch. The project will likely start on site mid-March

Riparian Tree Planting

Arrangements have been made to take delivery of native trees from Forestry Commission Scotland. These will be planted within the district alongside rivers and burns. It is hoped the trees will arrive in late February or early March. The removal of self-seeded non-native trees continued during January alongside burns on the River Blackwater. The faster growing coniferous trees outcompete native species for space and light.

Trees planted over the past 5 years on the Rannoch Burn were checked. Many of the trees were put into tubes when planted and continue to thrive.

Bailiff Duties

Bailiffs conducted foot patrols at various times during January. These were to look for signs of illegal fishing for freshwater fish and out of season fishing for salmon and sea trout. Patrols were carried out on the Bran system, Lower Conon, River Peffery and the lower reaches of the River Alness. No illegal fishing was found, but these patrols will be ongoing.

Contin Hatchery

The first of the salmon eggs laid down in the hatchery in November began to 'eye' up in the middle of the month and these were 'shocked'. The procedure makes the infertile eggs turn white and also allows for the eggs to be cleaned of surface peat deposits. This process will continue as and when the eggs become ready. New sites for egg planting which have not previously been used were examined on the River Blackwater. The habitat was found to be excellent and will hopefully be stocked out into this spring.

SSE Fish Counter

A meeting was held with SSE to go through their software package for the mark 12 fish counters.

Finances

The last of the claims for the Government electro fishing program are due to be submitted next week and a couple of electro fishing projects will be completed shortly which will allow the remaining contract work to be invoiced.

01/02/2019

NJW, EMSR