

Monthly Report – December 2022

Loch na Croic Adult Fish Trap

As with November, our efforts in early December were mostly focussed on the broodstock operations at Loch na Croic. The late run we had been rather optimistically hoping for never materialised and as such, all fish were stripped by the 9th for a total of 374 with 189 being hen fish.

Anecdotal observations from a number of ghillies suggests large numbers of spawning fish throughout the main stem. It may be that, due to the unseasonably warm conditions and low water levels, a higher proportion of fish spawned in the lower river than is usual.

Healthy kelts were released downstream at the Contin hatchery and it is hoped that these fish will return to sea and potentially recondition. If a fin clipped kelt is caught once the season opens please let us know.



With the holding tanks emptied and stripping concluded Loch na Croic was cleaned down and closed up until next year. The screens were raised on the heck to allow free passage for any salmon that remained in the system and to allow free passage for smolts this coming spring.

With the arrival of warmer weather and lower water levels, staff will be returning to Loch na Croic to assess the condition of all equipment and infrastructure to ensure it is fit for purpose for next season.

Contin Hatchery

The final egg count for 2022 put down in the Contin hatchery is 808,547. Eggs remain in good condition with mortality still below 1%. The first eggs put down in the hatchery are now at 201-degree days, we will plant them out at around 250-degree days once the ova have eyed. This will see egg stocking on the Blackwater beginning in early February.

Dingwall Academy Science Week

The biology team were delighted to be invited to run some practical sessions at Dingwall Academy during their science week. Sunny and James delivered three sessions to their students during which they were able to fertilise salmon eggs *in vitro* and learn about the lifecycle of

the Atlantic Salmon and the responsibilities of the Fishery Board. The sessions were well attended, and the students all participated with diligence and enthusiasm.

Bailiffing Report

The enforcement team continue to patrol the rivers within the district with regular checks on the Conon, Peffrey and Alness. The enforcement team also undertook works to clear a large obstruction on the Dunglass nursery channel



Christmas Lunch

As a thank you to all of the ghillies who helped us through the trapping and stripping season the board invited them to attend our Christmas lunch at the Conon Bridge Hotel. Both the food and the company were fantastic, and it was a great way to see off the year on the river.

On that note, we wish you a Happy New Year and tight lines for 2023!

