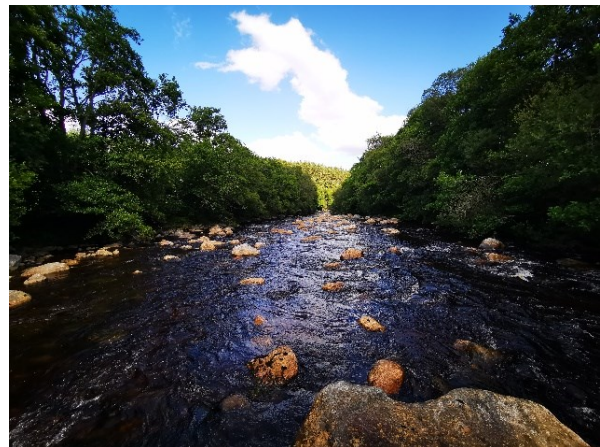


Monthly Report – July 2023

National Electrofishing Program Scotland (NEPS)

July saw the start of the electrofishing season proper. The Cromarty Board are participating in the National Electrofishing Program Scotland (NEPS) which sees us fish 30 randomly generated sites across the district. This approach is novel in that, at times, it sees us surveying sub optimal habitat that we might otherwise ignore. It can be surprising to find juveniles in habitat that we would not normally consider suitable. We have already completed 20 of the 30 sites on the program and should be finished up by mid-August at which point we will turn our attention to other surveying projects.



Electrofishing training

The Cromarty Board were pleased to host the Electrofishing training courses in Contin during July. In total, two introductory courses were delivered as well as a Team Leader course. The courses were delivered by both Cromarty and Ness Board staff.



AST Laxford

Staff visited the River Laxford to learn more about the large-scale river restoration and monitoring program the Atlantic Salmon Trust (AST) are undertaking within the catchment. It is hoped that we will be able to follow suit in the coming years and start to make a positive difference to the quality of our upstream habitats.



River Restoration and Funding

Over the past few months, we have held several meetings and catchment tours with key stakeholders in relation to large scale river restoration projects. We have also met up with the head of green finance and river restoration from FMS to discuss how 'ambitious plans' to restore Scotland's forests can be made financially viable for landowners. The board hope that we can regain significant momentum toward restoration of rivers through tree planting, green engineering and the removal of obstacles to fish passage.



Invasive Species

Our SISI Project Officer has run a number of volunteering days during July controlling Himalayan balsam within the district. With the seed pods now forming on some plants, August will see this control come to an end and attention will switch to Japanese knotweed.



As always please let us know if you see any signs of American mink.



Bailiff Report

Regular patrols were carried out across the district with particular attention placed on migratory pinch points such as fish passes. With the long-awaited arrival of some rain, fish were finally seen to be actively moving upstream making these pinch points more vulnerable to exploitation.

The enforcement team have also been undertaking regular checks at Loch na Croic to ascertain whether fish have started to hold at the heck. Numbers are starting to build, and fish can regularly been seen ascending Rogie fish pass.