



River Earn Improvement Association



Chairman & Secretary's Report 2017

Dear members,

2016 was dominated by the same 2 issues as 2015 but with different outcomes.. Firstly, the Wild Fishery Review and secondly, T in the Park. The campaign led by the R.E.I.A. brought some measured success in the former and the latter suffered from its own bad publicity and shortcomings.

Wild Fishery Review

As we are all aware, a great deal of work was done by many individuals in an attempt to avoid the perilous descent into the Cat 3 status which was to have a bearing on the clubs and associations along the Strath as quite inexplicably the legislation was forced through and implemented for season 2016.

All the work in defence of the status quo appeared to be for nothing and the effect on our clubs became tangible with the resultant loss of members and revenues needed to maintain their very existence.

However, the work continued in the background and continued lobbying of politicians during the year particularly by Pat Silvey of Comrie A.C., Peter MacDonald and Alastair Hamilton of Crieff A.C. obviously made some positive impact. Towards the end of the season we were delighted to hear the welcome news that the Earn had been elevated to Cat 2 status.

Well done to everyone involved and particularly to Dr. David Summers whose tireless efforts on our behalf in debunking the flawed science on which the categorisation was based became the absolute bedrock of our case for the defence of our river.

We can not be complacent, however, and it is vital from now on we make absolutely sure that our catch returns are complete and accurate.

T in The Park.

T in the Park came and went in a blaze of its very own mostly negative publicity. The very existence of the festival in such rural and peaceful surroundings appeared to cause its own downfall. Poor attendances on the back of the difficult inaugural year at Strathallan appeared to be the main reason for the decision not to hold an event at that location in 2017.

It is not yet clear if 2016 was therefore the final year at Strathallan but it looks to be the case. This will allow peace and quiet to return to the Strath this year



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and maybe to allow the Machany to flow once more without the threat of siltation caused by the huge footfall and ground run off created by the huge crowds packed into such a limited space and infrastructure.

Season 2016 Angling Report

2016 was a difficult season on the Earn due to the somewhat frustrating weather patterns experienced. Somewhat paradoxically though, very contrasting results were recorded. Spring in the middle river was considered by some to be more than acceptable with a few impressive scores from one or 2 individual rods. Then, like clockwork, came the drought which now seems to plague most of our fishing on the river.

When the rains eventually came in September, the river never settled and fluctuating flows seemed to encourage the fish to pass through the lower and middle beats quickly resulting in excellent catches around Crieff and Comrie throughout the last 6 weeks of the season. Those of us further downriver though, were left scratching our heads, mostly wondering where the fish had gone!!

Our sea trout fraternity encountered a difficult year also, but then the Earn was not alone in that respect as poor catches seemed to be reflected in many other rivers in Scotland. Numbers were down considerably possibly demonstrating the even sea trout need some water to run the river.

Despite the year of extremely difficult conditions, returns from the beats tell us that we landed 568 salmon and grilse (752 in 2015). All, of course, returned. Our sea trout catches reflected a more exaggerated drop in numbers, from 872 in 2015 to 370 in 2016.

So, overall, it would appear that the weather is now playing a massive part in the fortunes of the Earn and it would be very welcome to experience more settled water flows going forward. Again, though, it should be stressed that our river is in tune with most others throughout Scotland, simply reflecting the transition to long, dry, summers and autumns and mild, wet, winters. Not a great combination for game angling in spate rivers.



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Website Report.

I am now managing to find time to update the website after a year that has drawn heavily on my personal time available . Even my fishing suffered last year, not good! Please send photos and reports to

secretary@riverearn.org.uk and I will add them on a regular basis. I am always on the lookout for fresh material.

PayPal and Direct Debit are now acceptable methods of payment of subs along with Credit and Debit cards as well as the old reliable cheque by snail mail.

Major Project Expenditure

The work from our bank and tributary clearance team goes on, time and weather permitting. Projects are being planned and volunteers required to assist. If you are available, let us know and we will include you on our list.

Invasives Spraying

Our position on spraying remains unchanged and we hope for continued joint funding support from the Tay Board. Spraying this year will be focussed on May and September.

Hatchery Report.

Numbers of juveniles stocked in the upper reaches numbered 40000 last year. Hopefully a good number will survive for future generations. Our thanks go to Dr. David Summers and the kelt reconditioning project for this healthy injection of young stock to our river.

Membership email Addresses And Donations

Membership numbers continue to fall and requests of previous seasons do not change.

To this end we would again encourage everyone involved in and around the river to help us by donating, whether it be by joining and getting involved or simply a one off donation.

www.riverearn.org.uk



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We continue to incur heavy postage costs relating to members who do not advise their email addresses. If you have not already done so, please advise at your earliest via the link on the website.

The Chairman and Treasurer have expended a huge amount of personal time and effort in pursuing the offer from the John Rollo Trust of the gift of the Duncrub Fishings to the Association. The Chairman will expand further at the A.G.M.

Thank you,
Colin Lawson. Chairman R.E.I.A.
Tom Monaghan. Secretary R.E.I.A.