



**SAVE
THE
SPRING**

Save the Spring October 2024 Update



The River Dee



■ Asghar Fazel joins the team as River Restoration Coordinator, plus new information from our wild fish repopulation work.

Save the Spring is a partnership between the River Dee and Atlantic Salmon Trust, supported by the University of Stirling and UHI Inverness.

riverdee.org.uk
atlanticsalmontrust.org

Taking the Lead

- **Asghar Fazel joins the team as River Restoration Coordinator, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and experience from major international environmental programmes, including for the United Nations.**

We are delighted to announce that Asghar Fazel has joined the team as River Restoration Coordinator.

Asghar brings with him a wealth of experience from a career managing major international environmental and sustainability programmes, including for the United Nations, European Union and numerous other public, private and non-governmental organisations.

His extensive career has spanned leading, developing and consulting on multi-million dollar projects across the world, including major conservation work in central Asia such as the development of biosphere eco reserves and national biodiversity strategies.

In an educational capacity, Asghar has taught courses on Nature-based Solutions, Human and Environment Interactions, and Multilateral Agreements.

This appointment to our team will enable the scaling up of Save the Spring at a strategic and management level, as well as bringing a huge skillset to the project to enable its growth, fundraising capacity and ultimately positive and long-lasting impact in the catchment for wild Atlantic salmon and their environment.



Asghar has led and developed multi-million dollar environmental and sustainability projects around the world.



Native woodland restoration in the River Muick priority area

First genetic analysis of wild post-smolts completed.

In the wild fish repopulation element of the programme we can report that the first detailed analysis of the 80+ wild salmon 'post-smolts' currently in the smolt-to-adult (S2A) rearing programme is underway.

Preliminary analysis of tissue samples at UHI Inverness indicates that 61% of the fish are females and 39% are male. This analysis is good news for the programme as we aim to rear the fish to maturity before releasing them back into the wild, at the location of their initial capture, to spawn. Having a good number of female fish with the ability to deposit eggs is seen by the team as a huge positive, both in terms of the potential amount of egg deposition which might be achieved, as well as the range of genetic diversity which comes from a larger number of parent individuals.

The fish continue to grow extremely well under the care and supervision of the University of Stirling Institute of Aquaculture on-shore marine facilities. The largest individuals are now around 35cm in length.

Over the winter months the team will continue to adapt feeding techniques to maintain growth and condition, and into the early part of 2025 will start to look for positive signs of maturation.

We look forward to providing a further update on the programme's S2A work early next year.



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Fundraising

SUPPORT US

You can support Save the Spring as an individual or an organisation. Contact the Atlantic Salmon Trust's Corporate Ambassador, Mark Cockburn, to see how you can help.

mark.cockburn@atlanticsalmontrust.org

Volunteering – Boots on the ground

If you would like to register your interest as a project volunteer, either for the habitat restoration or fish capture elements of the programme, please contact the River Dee team at **info@riverdee.org**

Spread the word – Your voice matters

In order to maximise the potential of the Save the Spring initiative, we need you to help spread the word! Follow and share our **#SaveTheSpring** social media posts to help the project reach an even wider audience.