

Slaney River Trust

2006 Conservation Report

SRT and the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board (ERFB) have now completed the programme of habitat works scheduled for 2006. Works such as the protection of river banks, creation of new pools and spawning beds, and the installment of fish passes are tried and tested methods for increasing the number of juvenile salmon. These methods have been employed extensively on many rivers around Ireland and Britain and in the United States. Dr. Martin O'Grady (CFB), who has been advising SRT, recently published the definitive book on the subject called 'Channels and Challenges – The Enhancement of Salmonid rivers'.

Habitat improvement works took place on the Little Slaney in June. This tributary rises close to the main Slaney on the western slopes of Lugnaquilla, runs through the Glen of Imaal, and joins the main Slaney near Davidstown, Co. Wicklow. The picture below shows how badly eroded the banks had become in some areas. The eroded banks were built up using pine logs with Christmas tree tops attached. Gravel suspended in flood water will catch in the Christmas tree branches and gradually build the banks back up. A similar technique was used on the River Derreen last year and has worked well.

Works started on the Carrigower in 2005 were continued this year in June. As well as important fencing work, several new pools and corresponding spawning areas were created. The Carrigower has traditionally been an important spawning tributary for Slaney salmon but has seen a decline in the number of redds counted in the last few years. However the ERFB reported the positive news that redd counts were up in areas where works had been carried out last year.

In August a fish pass was built into a weir which was blocking access to the Douglas 1 river just upstream of Aghade Bridge, Co. Carlow. It is hoped that a greater number of spawning salmon will now be able to access the spawning beds in this tributary. Work was skillfully overseen by Richard Burgess (Treasurer of Tullow Salmon and Trout Anglers' Association).

Photographs of the works are available in the September 2006 Newsletter, found in the 'News & Info' section of the website.