

SLANEY RIVER TRUST

Sean Kyne, T.D.,
Minister of Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment,
Inland Fisheries Division,
Elm House,
Cavan Town.
H12 A8H7.

27th November 2017

Ref: Objection to Draft Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Regulations – River Slaney

Dear Minister,

We are writing to you on behalf of anglers, riparian owners and fishing clubs along the River Slaney. While we welcome the proposal to open the river to salmon fishing on a catch and release basis in 2018, we strongly disagree with the proposal to postpone the opening date to 12th May.

This time last year, the Slaney River Trust vehemently objected to the proposed closure of the river to salmon fishing in 2017. Our appeal to reverse what we all know now was a serious mistake was ignored. We predicted whole sale poaching and stated that “the draft proposal, however well intentioned, had taken no account of the much increased mortality to salmon from poaching that would arise under the proposed regime”. We felt that IFI did not have the man power to protect the river. And without the support of legitimate salmon anglers on the banks, they would be simply out numbered by those illegally exploiting the Slaney’s precious salmon resource. This is exactly what happened.

The mortality rate of salmon due to poaching in 2017 was significant and far higher than if the river had been open to salmon fishing. The miniscule number of salmon that could have been lost due to catch and release was replaced by wholesale killing of illegally caught fish. Without legitimate anglers out in force, assisting in the protection of the river, the poachers took over. This poaching was most prevalent during the salmon run which peaked, as it always does on the Slaney, from March to May. We have a large file of recorded poaching incidents including water keeper records, video footage of poachers killing salmon, Facebook posts showing photos of dead salmon taken from the Slaney in addition to a log of reports made directly to IFI and to local Gardai. Despite IFI’s very best efforts, including catching a number of individual’s red handed, they simply had no way of dealing with the scale of poaching along the system.

Office: Ballybawn Lane, Rathnure, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.
Committee: R Burgess, (Chairman), D Dobbs (Treasurer & Deputy Chairman), K Dodd, R Harvey, T Mernagh, K Murphy, D Ryan (Secretary), N Scott, K Whelan

Slaney Rodfishers Association is affiliated with Slaney River Trust Ltd.

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The majority of these incidents took place between mid March and mid May, the time at which your proposal will prohibit legitimate anglers fishing for salmon in 2018. The only way to avoid a repeat of last season's fiasco is to revise the proposed opening date to ensure the river is protected at its most vulnerable time.

We would ask you therefore that the river Slaney be open to salmon fishing in 2018 on the traditional opening day of 17th March, rather than the proposed date of 12th May.

Yours Sincerely

Derry Ryan
Secretary
Slaney River Trust
secretary@slaneyrivertrust.ie

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