

Bill Goggins

From: Slaney River Trust SRT <slaneyrivertrust@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday 20 November 2021 15:59
To: IFD Public Consultations
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: River Slaney Opening Date 2022

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Below please see submission in relation to the Wild Salmon and Sea Trout Tagging Scheme Regulations 2021, to provide for the management of the wild salmon and sea trout fishery by Inland Fisheries Ireland from 1st January 2022.

This submission relates to THE RIVER SLANEY and in particular to the opening date for salmon anglers. In the absence of a date published within the draft we have been left with no choice but to make the assumption that opening and closing dates will be in line with 2021.

On Wed, Oct 20, 2021 at 9:28 AM [REDACTED] > wrote:

Dear Minister Ryan,

First of all, thank you in advance for taking the time to read my email. I will try to keep it short and to the point.

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been a fly fisherman for 28 years on all of the rivers of Carlow. For me personally, I have enjoyed years of peace & contentment on the river bank and I hope to pass on this beautiful past time & love of nature to my own 4 kids.

Conservation of the fish and the habitat is without question the most important element to recognize and express when I describe my own love of angling.

I feel passionately about conservation and from my own experience & perspective, the precious rivers of our country have sadly been declining in both habitat and fish quantity year on year. To try and slow the decline, the majority of anglers like myself, spend as much time walking the river banks, cleaning and preserving this resource as we do fishing. I have practiced 'catch and release' voluntarily on every river I fish for the last 20 years, regardless of the club regulations or the fish species. I believe angling with correct 'catch and release' practices, is a practical balanced approach to fish conservation and angling enjoyment!

And so, this brings me to my email.

I have stated effectively, I hope, my reason and passion for the conservation of our rivers & fish.

Now I would like to propose how we can make a difference.

Early Presence on the River

The Slaney, above all other rivers in our locality has maintained its natural habitat, through the efforts of local clubs, trusts and licensed anglers all along the river - we all want to keep it this way! In my humble opinion , allowing clubs to open and 'control' the local river banks as early as possible in the year is absolutely key to saving our rivers for all our kids to enjoy in the future.

Presence on the river, brings not only habitat protection from dumping and anti-social behaviour, but also brings a level of protection to the fish populations by restricting the level of poaching on the river. In my own experience I have seen poachers instantly leave the river bank when anglers approach. The reality is the bailiffs cannot police the entirety of the river and the presence of angling clubs is a key deterrent to poaching and ultimately the illegal removal of fish from the river by poaching.

Further to this; the Slaney is a river that has a strong 'run' of fish in early Spring and is particularly vulnerable to poaching in February and March, when high fish numbers are present within the system and no permitted angling presence is observed. Poachers know this and without doubt exploit it.

Catch and Release is also extremely effective for fresh run Salmon within the colder months and another sensible factor to consider.

It is my own & our clubs collective belief, that allowing the angling season to open on a 'catch and release' basis from the 1st of March 2022, will be a deterrent to illegal activity and will benefit both the fish and the anglers who give so much of their time to this beautiful resource.

So, to summarize Minister Ryan,

I would plead with you to consider these points openly and objectively.

I believe completely, that allowing clubs to open as early as possible, with a continued catch & release policy for its licensed members, will protect the river, the fish and enhance conservation.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this.

Kind Regards