

# SLANEY RIVER TRUST

Registered Charity No. (RCN) 20063214 CHY 17141

10<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Members,

On the approach of the 2024 season, it is my pleasure to invite you to our AGM which will be held on Friday 22nd March at 7 pm in Redmonds Bar, Main Street, Bunclody.

The number of salmon returning to the Slaney in 2023 along with other systems generally was well below normal levels, even by more recent standards. This reduced return serves to remind us of the fragile nature of the freshwater and marine environment and affirms our need for action and vigilance to ensure we will see healthy stocks of salmon and trout into the future. As an organisation, through the combined will and support of our members, we maintain a significant influence on policies affecting the health of fish stocks in the Slaney system. We remain optimistic for more normal returns in the 2024 season commencing on 17 March.

The issues surrounding the passage of fish at Clohamon remained the primary focus over the past year and we have been busy as a committee with several constructive meetings including Government, IFI and other state agencies. We had the opportunity to make representation at a recent Joint Oireachtas Committee meeting in Leinster House, which brought the problems surrounding fish passage at Clohamon to the fore. We were the only community group to have had the opportunity to present a briefing. These opportunities arise not only from the efforts of committee members but also from your continued membership and support.

Through much hard work, including huge individual efforts, the planning application for the tail race barrier at Clohamon was completed and submitted. The completion of this application involved extensive environmental surveys and satisfaction of the requirements of IFI, NPWS, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, OPW, Wexford County Council and other stakeholders. The application is currently stalled pending agreement from the landowners. This difficulty only surfaced at the final stage of the application and consultation is in progress. We expect to have an update at our AGM.

Recent developments in relation to state policy on barrier mitigation are very promising. On 29 February 2024, Cabinet approved a new capital programme within Inland Fisheries Ireland for the National Barriers Mitigation Programme, noting a required initial capital funding of €100 million and non capital funding of €10 million from the Infrastructure, Climate and Nature Fund. It is worth highlighting that Clohamon has been selected as one of a few priority pilot projects in this initiative. We have had a significant input to this outcome.

Through our meetings with IFI, we have agreed to work in partnership to progress both the tail race and the weir passage projects. We are hopeful for a renewed momentum given the resources now available and we would like to thank IFI Director Lynda Connor for her efforts and assistance over the past year. We would also like to extend our thanks to Minister Noonan and Minister Ryan for their due recognition and decision making which gives us optimism for the future of freshwater fish passage.

**Registered Office: Ballinabranna, Milford, Co. Carlow, R93WK06.**

**Trustees: P Boaden, R Burgess, B Connolly, D Dobbs (Treasurer & Deputy Chairman), R Harvey, K Keegan, K Murphy, S Orr, S Rubalcava, D Ryan (Secretary), P Wadding, K Whelan, C White (Chairman)**

**Slaney Rodfishers Association is affiliated with Slaney River Trust Ltd.**

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I would like to wish all members an enjoyable season ahead and I would also like to thank you for your continued support of the Slaney River Trust. I look forward to seeing many of you on the 22nd for your valuable input for an important year ahead. Importantly, please continue to support the SRT by joining in 2024 (see attachment on how to pay/join).

By joining you will be covered under our Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance cover, details of which can be found on our website. You will also be emailed a password for the River Cam. Please also note the annual Slaney River Trust and Slaney Rodfishers Accounts (attached) have been prepared and are also available to view on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Colin White  
Chairman

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