



**Iascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland**

Stock Management Plan - 2018

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Introduction In accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland current policies on both pike and trout, stock management operations are indicated for six lake catchments in the WRBD and one in the ShRBD as follows: Loughs Corrib, Mask, Carra, Conn, Cullin, Arrow and Sheelin all of which are designated managed wild brown trout fisheries. A separate management plan has been published in respect of the Owenriff system near Oughterard where pike are a recent introduction.

Gill netting and electrofishing (EF) operations are planned for all seven lakes and full details of the proposed start and finish dates are tabulated below and include projected costs and projected numbers of pike to be removed. Electrofishing operations will be carried out on Loughs Corrib, Mask, Carra, Conn and Cullin as there are three Pioner electrofishing boats located in these catchments. EF operations may be carried out on Sheelin and Arrow (for short periods) subject to redeployment of two of these boats.

The EF operations will be carried out in accordance with IFI's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for both electrofishing and gill netting operations. Where feasible pike captured during electrofishing operations will be relocated to recognised pike fisheries. The Pioner boats will be trialled for netting operations with a view to relocating some viable pike $\leq 85\text{cm}$ removed from the nets to recognised pike fisheries.

All staff handling pike will do so in accordance with IFI's SOPs and all have received fish welfare training. All pike carcasses will be appropriately disposed of with an approved rendering company.

It should be noted that the projected numbers of pike to be removed are estimates and the delivery of this plan is dependent on suitable weather conditions, availability of personnel and all equipment remaining fully operative.

In relation to quantifying the cost of stock management operations, the tables below include the estimated manpower costs. It should be borne in mind that, while the entire pay cost has been attributed to stock management, the staff involved will at the same time effectively be patrolling the lakes, monitoring angling activity, identifying water quality issues, monitoring for aquatic invasives or the spread of existing invasives and effectively maintaining a presence which acts as a deterrent to illegal activity.

Gill Netting Operations Netting will be concentrated into specific periods on each lake as detailed in table 1 below and will involve a total of 130 days netting which will require 580 man days. However, it should be noted that weather and other factors can impact on these operations and it is unlikely that the full periods will be fished on each lake. In general, gill nets will be set along the margins of the lakes to intercept pike moving in and out of known spawning areas. All pike will be handled carefully, quickly euthanised and all pike of $\geq 85\text{cm}$ will be returned immediately subject to these being viable. Should the Pioner boats prove effective, efforts will be made to relocate viable pike $\leq 85\text{cm}$ removed from the nets to recognised pike fisheries. Nets will be serviced daily and will not be set if there are concerns in relation to weather conditions the following day.

Table 1 Details of gill netting operations planned for 2018

Lake	Period	No days	Man days	Projected no. pike removed	Total estimated cost
Arrow	Feb - March	20	40	170	€7,440
Conn	Feb - March	25	100	400	€17,001
Cullin	Feb - March	10	30	200	€5,185
Carra	March - April	15	50	300	€9,775
Mask	Feb - March	20	100	700	€19,301
Corrib	Feb - March	20	140	800	€26,831
Sheelin	March	20	120	1000	€25,081

Electrofishing Operations Electrofishing (EF) operations have been scheduled for specific periods on Loughs Arrow, Conn, Cullin & Sheelin as detailed in table 2 below. The main focus of EF operations will be to target juvenile pike in the nursery areas around the margins of the lakes. Having regard to the fact that EF operations can be carried out year round, it is envisaged that EF operations on the Great Western Lakes (Carra, Mask & Corrib) will be carried out at any time during the year when weather conditions are suitable subject to the maximum number of days electrofishing specified for each lake. Electrofishing operations are scheduled for 105 days over the seven lake catchments which will require a total of 375 man days. Table 2 below quantifies the planned electrofishing effort on the seven lakes and includes EF operations planned for the lower reaches of a number of rivers within these catchments where pike are known to predate on migrating salmonids.

Table 2 Details of Electrofishing operations planned for 2018

Lake	Period	No days	Man days	Projected no. pike removed	Total estimated cost
Arrow	April - Sept	12	36	500	€6,150
Conn	April - August	8	24	200	€4,098
Cullin	Feb - August	10	30	300	€5,110
Carra	Jan - Dec	5	15	400	€2,933
Mask	Jan - Dec	20	60	1000	€11,282
Corrib	Jan - Dec	30	90	2000	€17,237
Sheelin	Aug - Oct	20	120	400	€24,881

Reporting Reports on the implementation of the stock management plan in respect of each lake catchment will be submitted monthly to Directors of the WRBD and ShRBD respectively.