Introduction

The Moy Fishery is Ireland's best known and most prolific salmon rod fishery. It comprises approximately 2.5 km of tidal water and approx three miles of single bank freshwater. The main stretch, in Ballina town, consists of seven separate beats, all but one of which must be booked in advance.

The angling season extends from 1 February to 30 September each year with the peak of the salmon run occurring during the period from late May to mid August. During these months, the three best beats (the Ridge Pool, the Cathedral Beat and the Ash Tree Pool) are heavily oversubscribed and the equitable allocation of rods can be difficult. The Board, therefore, has a series of criteria whereby rods are allocated in the fairest possible manner while ensuring that the maximum benefit to the local economy is achieved. All of the criteria are taken into account in deciding the allocation of angling. These criteria are as follows.

1. **History**

   Many anglers who have been coming to the Moy for a number of years either rent or own houses in the area or have an ongoing arrangement with an accommodation provider. They usually visit the Moy catchment area to enjoy a variety of angling types e.g. trout angling on L. Conn, sea trout angling on the Moy Estuary etc. as well as salmon angling. These anglers would, therefore, visit for an extensive period around the same time each year. They frequently bring friends with them and usually share rods on a number of days on the Moy Fishery. Anglers with this type of history in the Moy Catchment area are usually given priority when booking rods.

2. **Size of Group**

   Anglers who apply for fishing as part of a group and who are prepared to share rods are considered better value to the local economy and are often given preference over lone applicants. In general, lone applicants will not be allocated more than one rod, per prime beat, during the prime season.

3. **Proposed Length of Stay**

   Applicants are requested to provide details of their proposed visit to the area. Those that propose to simply pass through the region or visit for a short period are usually given low priority. Anglers who intend to stay in the Mayo/Sligo area for a longer period are of greater value to the local economy and are, therefore, given preference.

4. **Place of Origin**

   Although many regular Moy Fishery anglers come from other parts of Ireland, it is the policy of the Board to increase the number of overseas anglers visiting the Moy Fishery as this is likely to be of greater benefit to the tourism industry generally. The Board, therefore, tries to ensure that a significant number of those applying from countries outside Ireland are allocated angling.
5. **Number of beats Booked**

Although the three beats listed above are in very high demand, four other Moy Fishery beats are rarely fully booked in advance. Anglers who request a variety of beats in their application are usually given priority as it enables management to optimise the available fishing as well as retaining visitors in the area for a longer period.

6. **Prompt Application**

All applications for angling on the Moy Fishery must be received on the official application form by 31 December in respect of the following angling season. Notwithstanding this, many applications do not arrive until after this date. Late applications are only dealt with after the first round of allocations has been completed while applications received on time are given priority.

7. **Gender and Age**

Although the number of females and juveniles applying for angling is relatively small, the Board has a policy of promoting angling amongst ladies and juveniles. Therefore, a certain level of priority is given to female and juvenile applicants.

8. **Feasibility of Request**

Although all applications are considered and every effort is made to accommodate applicants on the dates requested, clients who are not aware of the demand for prime beats sometimes make unrealistic requests for rods at peak angling times. Such requests cannot be accommodated and priority is given to anglers, or groups of anglers, who make requests that are reasonable with regard to numbers of rods and time of season requested.

9. **Cancellations**

For a variety of reasons, anglers who have booked specific days may be unable to avail of their booking. In such situations, the Board tries to accommodate visitors to the area who do not have an advance booking. Limited access to the prime beats can also become available in situations where bag limits have been reached as rods may be reallocated subject to restrictions aimed at conserving salmon stocks.

10. **Local Anglers**

Local anglers are well catered for by the Board through the licensing of two stretches of the Moy Fishery to local angling clubs and the provision of angling, at a nominal charge (free for juveniles), on the Cathedral Beat after 6.00pm daily. However, neither these provisions nor the above criteria preclude the accommodation of local anglers on prime beats subject to availability and where such accommodation fits in with the Board’s overall strategy for the promotion of tourist angling.

11. **Evidence of Accommodation Bookings**

In relation to criteria outlined above, the Board reserves the right to require anglers to provide evidence in regard to accommodation bookings. Alternatively, the Board may request evidence in regard to accommodation utilised by applicants during the previous season.