



Fishing at its Best

**Report to South Armagh Tourism Initiative**

**Angling Potential of Selected lakes in the South  
Armagh Area**

**October 2006**



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## **Introduction**

In summer of 2006 Oriel Angling was awarded a contract by the South Armagh Tourism Initiative to survey the angling potential of a series of lakes in the south Armagh area. It was known for some time that appreciable stocks of both coarse and game fish were present in these waters but little quantitative information existed regarding their angling potential or their biological status. The main purpose of the survey was to advise the SATI on how these waters might contribute to sustainable tourism in the south Armagh area.

The terms of reference were broad and included:

### **To identify and assess waters by:**

- Name of water
- Area in hectares
- volume/depth assessment
- geographic location

### **Each water should be assessed in terms of:**

- assessment of available access for all possible users,
- identification of existing riparian rights with land owners/clubs/associated land owners and parties with vested interests e.g. clubs or societies
- identify the scope working with any clubs to help them plan developments for the future
- the provision of appropriate photographs where feasible

### **Report on water quality**

- using Trent Biotic Index or laboratory testing
- fish species and stock density surveys
- identify the possibility encompassing a disease test
- fish habitat enhancement potential

### **Creating a promotional and marketing strategy**

This should identify key markets

- Key trade promotional shows to attend
- Publications to be developed
- Making angling more accessible in South Armagh
- Encouraging clubs to open their waters to day ticket sales

The survey was carried out between July and October 2006 and comprised 14 separate lake surveys, all of which are listed in detail later in this report. Initially efforts were made to net the lakes selected for assessment but due to the dense weed growth encountered it proved impossible to trap a significant proportion of the fish present. As is standard practice in angling surveys it was decided to

concentrate on a rod survey but to supplement this approach with the collection of biological and water chemistry data. A cross section of fish were sacrificed and tested for the presence of unusually large concentrations of parasites and scales were taken and read from the fish sacrificed. Apart from these fish all catches were weighed and then returned alive to the water.

In all cases the fish stocks were in a very healthy condition and displayed no signs of heavy parasitic burdens or unusual external lesions. Some ulcerated pike were recorded from Lough Patrick and also black spot disease was noted on some roach in Loughs Patrick but these are common features of coarse fish stocks in Ireland.

Scale samples were examined from 6 lakes (Fig 1), comprising a selection of Roach, Rudd and Trout scales. Three sets of pike scales were also retained and read. In general the growth rate of the fish was closely aligned with the conductivity of the waters from which they came. The faster growing fish were in evidence in the waters with a higher level of alkalinity and the stunted or slower growing populations were in the more acidic waters.

The fastest growing fish recorded were roach from Peter's lake, while relatively good growth was also recorded from Patrick's lake and from Rudd resident in Lough Cullyhanna. In contrast the roach populations of Loughs Alina and particularly Drumvee Lough were slow growing and in the case of Drumvee could be described as stunted.

The trout examined from Drumuckvall displayed moderate growth rates but it did appear as if they had spent up to two years in small side streams before entering the Lough and that the growth in the Lough itself was moderate to good. It is interesting to note that these findings are in stark contrast with the angling results which were very impressive. The Lough is small, no more than about 5ha and it can be concluded that because of its remote and inaccessible location, it had not been fished for many years.

In general the soils of south Armagh are typical drumlin soils with a modest alkaline content and with acidity levels of around neutral (generally 6.8 to 7.0). This contrasts with levels of 7.5 to 8.2 in the midland waters and in the great western lakes. The productive potential of even the richest of the lakes surveyed is modest in comparison to the exceptional potential of the Irish limestone Loughs. Development of the undoubted angling potential of the South Armagh area should be tempered with the knowledge that we are largely at this time dealing with lakes which are little fished and that angling surveys are reporting on what are, for all intents and purposes, virgin waters.

In order to capitalise on the potential of these Loughs strictly enforced conservation measures are required, in addition to a clearly focused and well integrated management plan.

## Angling Report - Clay Lake G-4325

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
45.6H	4M-12M	6.8	0.196	9.85	0.11	5	5

Clay Lake is situated approximately 3 kms from the village of Keady and is designated DCAL water; it is at present used as a fresh water reservoir for the Keady area and is large and relatively un-fished water. Presently, the lake is controlled by Keady angling club. The use of Clay Lake as a public water amenity has influenced the angling regulations and certain prohibitions are in place such as a ban on the use of maggots and ground bait.

There is a large population of coarse fish namely roach, perch, Rudd, pike and bream but with the limitations of the bait ban, certain fish were observed but not caught i.e. Bream. If the bait ban were to be removed a more complete diagnosis in regards to fishing could be made

There are several areas in which angling is not permitted so the survey was restricted to the following locations, eastern and western sides of the lake. Angling at present is banned from the pump house side of the lake, which seems a pity as this side offers excellent access and excellent parking. The shoreline here is free from any obstacles.

There is a healthy population of Rudd, perch, and pike and although bream were observed actual populations can only be estimated. During the survey no other anglers were present which is a poor reflection on such a great angling venue. The ban on ground bait and maggots should be abolished as the angling would be first class and offer the coarse angler excellent fishing in a safe environment.

Clay Lake would be an ideal coarse angling match fishing area as it would have the perfect facilities to cater for the anglers, the long banks and easy access to pegs would allow the matches to be run effectively in an area which has lacked proper coarse fishing –match fishing for a long time.

If Clay Lake were to become a match venue, not only on a national but international stage, the local community would benefit from extra income by additional tourism revenue. Today there is a genuine lack of match fishing facilities and Clay Lake, as well as Lough Patrick, falls into the same category both venues could be turned into first class match fishing venues.

## Angling Report Cornahove Lake, Cullaville Grid ref H8814

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality rating	Potential
15ha	2 –16	6.9	0.188	7.0	0.11	3	4

Cornahove Lake is situated approximately 3km from the village of Cullaville in south Armagh. The lake is 15 hectares in size and has an accessible bank on the eastern side, which borders the road which leads to the main Dundalk-Castleblaney road. The lake is directly connected to Lough Ross via several feeder streams and contains the same species found there. The lake is surrounded on the western shore by reeds and marshy ground and was inaccessible to carry out any angling activity. The eastern shore is easily to access and can accommodate up to three vehicles at any given time albeit on rough ground.

The lake is serpent shaped giving it a peculiar status amongst the lakes previously surveyed, the typical drumlin features occur but are overshadowed by the shallow bays and wide expanses of reeds.

The lake is extremely deep and range from depths of 2metres at the perimeter to depths of 16m towards the centre, there are certain areas most notably at the southern end where depths of 18m were recorded.

Whilst angling activities have occurred here for a number of years, the lake bears no indication of pollution or illegal netting. There is a minor problem regarding litter which could be addressed by the erection of several litter bins at points around the lake, there has been some sporadic dumping of household goods but Oriel Angling informed the appropriate bodies and these have now been removed.

The roadside access to such a valuable water amenity has allowed local anglers and newcomers to park and fish in relative comfort, for this reason. This area would make an excellent wheelchair friendly venue.

### Species present

Roach are the dominant species and grow to exceptional sizes in this habitat; fish bordering specimen weight were caught and returned while the survey was carried out.

Although Rudd is also present, numbers are diminishing due to the fact that roach are so prolific and as a result hybrids are becoming more and more common. There is also a healthy pike population and specimens to 9 kilos were caught during the survey, no fish caught showed any signs of disease or poor handling.

Some very large eels were also caught and given the proximity of Lough Ross it would be realistic to believe that bream are also present.

Perch were also present but not in the same quantities as previous lakes in the South Armagh area.

The water quality is excellent and bears no traces of pollution; there is a healthy growth of mace and pondweed with heavy reeds in all areas. This aquatic plant life has contributed to a rich and diverse insect life in the lake, which boasts of invertebrate such as freshwater shrimp, freshwater beetles, snails and freshwater mussels.

### **Marketing and Future Development**

Cornahove lends itself as the ideal project for disabled anglers given the proximity to the water, the facilities that need to be added are minimal, one or two fishing stands and the erection of water safety devices.

Given the location of the lake and the easy access to major towns such as Crossmaglen, Dundalk and Castleblaney, cross border funding may be sought to enhance the programme.

Overall the lake is in excellent condition with healthy fish stocks and abundant wildlife, the lake also offers a safe alternative to Lough Ross in the event of hazardous weather as the angler can switch venues in a relative short period.

For the visiting angler the prospect of so many lakes in such a close proximity not only enhances the area but could be a major contribution to rural development in the tourist sector. The reoccurring problem of anglers killing for the table needs to be addressed, as in so many of the South Armagh lakes. By safeguarding fish stocks continued tourism will be generated for future generations for the benefit of the greater community.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

The lake is easy to access and requires very little to enhance it as a fishery. It would be perfect for development with a focus on lesser abled anglers, given the location of the lake anglers from both North and South could benefit.

The obvious weakness once again is the clandestine netting and killing of our natural resources. By erecting multi lingual signs and proper management this fishery has the potential to become an established and popular angling venue.

## Angling report - Cullyhanna Lough Grid ref H9119

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
20 He	4 -10	6.4	0.186	5.6	0.11	4	5

The lake is a typical drumlin lake fringed with a heavy growth of water lilies and a quite peaty acidic bottom; it was formerly used as a trout lake but has been abandoned for a period of time.

The lake is roughly 12 hectares in size and has access to parking on the lough road, the lake has two outlets namely two small streams at the western side of the lough. On the north east side there is certain boggy areas which would prove hazardous to the angler.

During the course of the report suitable bank facilities for the angler were found, these consisted of stable banks and a gravel shoreline.

At present there are the remains of several fishing platforms but at an advanced stage of rot, these are extremely run down and a potential risk to all future anglers.

The lough holds a large head of Rudd. Fish to 1kg were caught during the assessment. Numerous large pike are also present and indications suggest that the lake holds large numbers of perch and a few trout

The depth varies between 4 meters on the northern side to depths up to 10 meters on the western side. Actual fishing areas are restricted due to the presence of heavy water lily and pondweed.

The water is rich in insect life and a wide variety such as bloodworms, water shrimp, daphnia were found present during the insect field tests. To investigate pollution levels present in the water a test was carried out using ph testers, approx 10mls of water was tested and the results proved that the water was slightly acidic due to the peaty area of the lake location.

The water was also tested for Nitrates to establish whether there were too many nitrates present and thankfully the water has a consistent level tested over a period of four days.

Fresh water shrimp	670	40%
Bloodworm(chironomidae)	210	15%
Water mite	29	3%
Mayfly	3	0.2%
Freshwater snails	325	22%
Freshwater beetles	314	18%
Alder fly	0	
Caddis	0	
Stonefly	0	
Flatworm	0	

By looking at the Trent biotic index (above) it can be seen that Cullyhanna Lough has a diverse number of species. The overall aquatic content of the lake is rich, resulting in a balanced and healthy fishery.

### **Marketing and Development**

The lough has great potential as a mixed fishery, ideally a carp and tench fishery something the area lacks. There would be no initial spending required as the lake has suitable parking facilities and suitable fishing areas for the angler. The advantage of this venue is in its location, the lough is isolated and would provide revenue through day tickets purchases and overnight camping, bait could also be sold from the venue. Extra revenue would be introduced to the local area by visiting anglers availing of accommodation and food in the area.

The fact that there are no commercial carp fisheries in the Armagh area would provide income to an area deprived for so long. The minimum expenditure for the project would result in long term gains.

A questionnaire carried out by Oriel angling staff among the carp society in Ireland indicated the potential for this type of fishery in the area. Anglers are presently travelling to Mullingar to avail of a fishery which could be created on their doorstep.

The average carp angler spends approximately £200 per weekend trip; this indicates a feasible market for the Cullyhanna Lough and the immediate area.

### Risk Assessment

At present parking permission must be obtained from landowners directly opposite the lake, warning signs should be erected indicating this. Multi language signs need to be erected to safeguard the water and fish stocks and to make rules and regulations known.

Because of the features of the lake i.e. boggy areas and deep water, water aids should be available to prevent loss of life. As the lake is being fished at present there is evidence of litter and this needs to be addressed as a build up of litter will definitely cause death to life stock in the area, litter bins should be erected to prevent further littering.

Species	weight	length	Line used
RUDD	2lbs	23	3LB
RUDD	2lbs 4oz	24	
RUDD	1lb 6oz	17	
RUDD	2lb	22	
RUDD	1lb9oz	21	
PERCH	10oz	12	
RUDD	1lb	19	
RUDD	1lb 4oz	20	

**Total hours fished 21**



## Angling Report - Drumlougher Grid ref H8919

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality rating	Potential
15hec	12	6.6	0.183	8.63	0.09	3	3

Drumlougher lough is located on the lough road approximately five kilometres from the village of Cullyhanna south Armagh, there is access throughout the lake and it is a designated protected environment, at present the lake receives little or no angling attention from Irish anglers given the fact that it is a protected water and permission is needed to gain access.

The lake is approximately 15 hectares in size and is easily accessed from all shores, the roadside parking is excellent and at present would accommodate up to five vehicles at any given time.

The lake hold a diverse and rich fauna with all the major invertebrate present, species found include Freshwater shrimp, Beetles, Bloodworm, and Hog lice. The major plant specimens are pondweed and water lilies. In the feeder stream which carries the lake water in a generally southern direction, Newts were also found. Given the protected environment of the lake numerous Ducks and Geese are also present.

The area is restricted and because of this the area has become a bird sanctuary were shooting is prohibited.

### Characteristics

The lake is a drumlin lake nestling in farmland and bordered by arable farmland, the depths vary from 3.5 metres at the perimeters to depths that exceed 12m in the centre; the water clarity is excellent and has no indications of any manner of pollution. The healthy balance of aquatic plants and relative absence of nitrates has given the lake the requirements to sustain a good stock density of fish which are in prime condition.

### Species present

Given the fact that the fishery is protected designated water Roach have not been established as the prime species. The indigenous Rudd is the most common, although no large specimens were encountered the average size augers well for the future.

Pike are present throughout the lake and have the potential to reach large weights in relative short periods given the amount of fodder fish and the absence of anglers.

## **Marketing and Development**

As the lake is a protected fishery it would be fair to say that it should be left to its own devices to safeguard the already established wildlife and fauna.  
By encouraging anglers to this particular lake could endanger a fragile habitat.

## Angling report Lislitreim Grid ref H8920

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
2	2-12	7.0	0.233	7.3	0.13	3	4

The lake is located in the heart of South Armagh 6km from Crossmaglen and 4km from Cullyhanna in a flat lowland agricultural area, the land is owned by a Mr Bellew who has access on both sides of the lake. Approximately 25 hectares in size Lisleitrim Lake is surrounded by a substantial growth of trees and heavy aquatic life which restricts any potential angling activity, there are few places where angling can be practiced in comfort given the nature of the lake at present, the abundant trees and limited angling positions available severely restrict all angling activities.

The location of Lisleitrim in regards to a well constructed and prosperous fishery such as Killybane is key, with some minor construction work in the shape of angling platforms and a possible car park this fishery could become a designated coarse fishery in a well populated area lacking coarse angling venues.

A well managed fishery would benefit from additional tourism and promote the South Armagh region as an angling base.

### Characteristics

The lake is easily accessed through farmland adjacent to the road but lacks proper car parking facilities at present, the lake is also known locally as the Island lake because of an Island in the centre of the lake, the fringe areas have an average depth of 2.5m with depths reaching 7m towards the centre. There are shallow areas in the southern tip of the lake with heavy extents of pond lilies where angling is again severely restricted. The lake could be developed to cater for boat anglers given the short distances involved from road to lake but once again some minor work would have to be carried out.

### Species Present

The lake at present holds a healthy stock of all coarse fish with the exception of Bream, during the course of the angling survey which lasted 21 hours all species were encountered with Roach being the most prolific.

An average catch of 6 kilos was common and comprised of Roach, Perch, Pike. Although the fish were of a smaller size than found in nearby lakes such as

Patrick they were free from any disease and were thriving in a rich habitat free from any heavy angling pressure.

The average Pike caught in the lake weighed 4kilo and evidence suggests that these Fish are growing at a fast pace because of the limited angling taking place and the absence of natural predators such as cormorants .

Killybane angling club have erected multi-lingual signs in the area, the close knit community and the strategic positions of dwellings near the lake have safeguarded the fishing until now.

Water quality is excellent and there is no evidence of pollution or high contents of nitrates, the pond life is diverse and species encountered during the survey work include Freshwater Beetles, Shrimp, Dragon fly nymphs, Bloodworm, Sticklebacks.

### **Marketing and Development**

The Lake could be developed as a general coarse fishery with the possibility of becoming a designated Carp and Tench fishery something which is greatly needed in the Northern part of the country. The habitat is ideal and the actual undertakings to develop are minimal. By establishing a carp fishery South Armagh would benefit from prospective visitors from the whole of Ireland and even abroad.

The income generated by visiting anglers would contribute to rural tourism throughout the year as Carp fishing is practiced all year round.

By approaching the local club, Killybane anglers, the lake would be well managed and safe from any clandestine netting which is rife in the area.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

The location of the lake is a prime strength as it is found in a remote sheltered area and offers scenic and excellent angling, the introduction of Carp would enhance the fishery and make it a possible destination for the visiting angler, the obvious weakness is the remote location as the threat of illegal netting is a possibility.

By managing this fishery be it by the local landowner or by a club would safeguard the future potential.



## Angling Report - Drumvee Lough Grid ref H9111

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
25 ha	2-12	7.0	0.233	7.3	0.13	3	4

Drumvee is located 3 kilometers from the village of Cullaville on the road to Carrickmacross. The lough is found by taking a left turn before the bridge over the river Fane and following the road for approximately 2 kilometers.

The lake is 25 hectares in size and has accessible bank on several parts of the lake, as the land adjacent is used by livestock care must be taken at all times.

Permission was obtained to carry out the survey from the landowners and it must be stressed that Mr. Sean O Neill was very reluctant to grant permission due to the litter caused in the past by visiting anglers, fishing line, hooks and empty beer cans and plastic bags had been discarded throughout the area which had endangered the live stock and caused a general eyesore. During the survey several plastic bags were filled with rubbish left by other anglers so preventive measures must be taken if permission to fish the lake is to be found. The erection of signposts and litter bins will certainly stand the angler in better favour and provide the assurance that further littering will not occur.

Drumvee lough is an oval shaped lake which nestles once again in a drumlin valley typical of the Monaghan –Armagh area, the shoreline is relatively safe and is bordered by sporadic growths of lilies and reeds.

The lake is quite deep and shelves from 2 meters to depths of 8 meters, the deepest area found was at the southern side of the lake with depths in excess of 12 meters, although it is easily accessed the reoccurring problem of littering remains an issue that has to be addressed.

Fish stocks were high with a healthy coarse population of principally roach, perch and pike, from local anglers information gleaned has indicated that pike to 16 kilo have been caught in the past and during the course of the report several fish to 9 kilo were caught.

The lake holds a healthy insect fauna and the kick tests carried out found a wide range of aquatic families such as mayfly, stonefly, shrimp, snails and bloodworm present. There were no signs of pollution and the water clarity was rich with a neutral pH count. The overall fishery is a balanced and accessible lake which

could be used as a general mixed coarse fishery, given its proximity to Crossmaglen and Cullaville it would be an ideal location for use as a field trip venue, furthermore the lake could lend itself to first time anglers as there is a heavy fish density and are not affected by angling pressure.

## Angling Report - Lough Patrick Grid ref –885194

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
65ha	5 - 20	7.1	0.169	8.2	0.009	5	5

Lough Patrick is situated four kilometres from the village of Cullyhanna in South Armagh; it is found in a deep agricultural valley and is bordered by arable farmland which occasionally is used for livestock purposes.

The lake is a long narrow lake with accessible points to the angler throughout, there are several different areas which can be used for fishing but land ownership is unclear in the overall context of the lake.

The lough is approximately 65 hectares in size and has all the characteristics of a drumlin lake, with sloping banks and deep water. The perimeters have depths of 5-6m and at a range of 30 meters these depths escalate to deeper water up to 20m.

A survey carried out by Queens University Belfast found areas of the lake to be deeper than 25m in certain areas such as the northern tip of the lake.

### Species present

During a total of 21 hours the lake was fished over certain areas and by diverse methods. The dominant species were roach, and perch. There were also bream present and hybrids coming from the cross breeding of roach /bream.

Large Pike were also present, although several fish to 8 kilo were caught, bigger fish were observed. All fish were free from any disease and the overall prospect of Lough Patrick as a designated coarse fishery is excellent.

The roach population is very large and numerous specimens to 1 kilo were caught, all fish were in excellent condition and seem to be fending well in the habitat.

Although the fishery at present receives scant attention from the angling world, the ever increasing problem of illegal netting is occurring.

### Catch details:

Over two separate sessions over 40 kg of fish were caught. Such a catch rate ratio is extremely high and augers well for the future. In one session lasting just

90mins, 23 kg were caught and weighed, all fish were returned alive to the water. The insect life found during kick tests in Lough Patrick reflected a stable and clean environment. All of the major nymphs were found, including mayfly and stonefly nymphs. There was also a large presence of freshwater snails and shrimp thus leading to the conclusion that Lough Patrick and the rich invertebrate life is totally unpolluted and free from any nitrate contamination.

### **Marketing**

The actual angling potential of Lough Patrick is immense, a fishery of this size and with such rich numbers of fish present is a plus factor, the lake is accessible and permission was granted by the landowner who expressed a desire to open the water to the general public.

The way forward with Patrick is to control the actual angling taking place by erecting multi language signs and preventing the killing of all coarse fish. The venue would be a perfect venue for the match fishing fraternity and could easily cope with large numbers of anglers at any given time. Given the safe nature of the banks and the depths from the shore, Patrick could provide a venue capable of holding an international event.

As for the pike angling which obviously is under threat from migrant workers, again Lough Patrick is in an unspoilt area, which could cater for the visiting angler be they from home or abroad.

The possibility of opening up this lake complex to boat angling would not only enhance the South Armagh area but would also offer extra income to the area by generating extra income through hotels, guides etc.



## Angling Report - Lough Alina .Grid ref-885184

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
20	3-12	6.9	0.188	8.0	0.11	3	5

Lough Alina is situated roughly 3kms from the village of Cullyhanna and is a sister lake of both Patrick and Peter. The lakes are all connected from Lough Patrick by several tributaries and feeder streams and contain the same characteristics as the above lakes.

A reasonable shore from where anglers can avail of excellent coarse fishing in a pristine area which has escaped the attention of anglers for a number of years. Alina bears the typical characteristics of the drumlin lake with two major feeder streams and a clean and healthy population of coarse fish such as roach, perch, bream and pike.

Access is via private land from which permission was granted to carry out the survey work; care must be taken as once again livestock are currently in the area.

### Characteristics:

Alina is a steep lough bordered by arable farmland and is found within 500 yards of a farmyard track. Access is through a field but can be reached by any vehicle which lends the lough to an ideal development plan.

During the survey work the lough was fished over a period of 21 hours and the catch rates were excellent. Roach were the dominant species and were found in great numbers and sizes as can be seen in the catch records below. Hybrids up to 1.5 kg were also caught so there are obvious bream present in the system, although none were caught fish were observed at a distance. The pike population is very large and fish were caught throughout the lough on a diverse range of methods.

All fish were disease free and in excellent condition.

The relative absence of anglers has allowed the fish population to prosper and grow to great sizes.

The lake holds a wide variety of insect life and all major species were encountered during the kick tests. The abundance of mayfly nymphs and stonefly nymph indicate rich water free from any pollution, the amount of freshwater snails and shrimp per area was impressive, leading to the assumption that the coarse population is thriving on such a rich and varied aquatic menu.



## Angling report for Lough Peter Grid-ref 878198

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality rating	Potential
20ha	4 - 10	7.1	0.150	7.7	0.11	4	5

Lough Peter is the second largest lake in the Patrick system and is by far the most scenic; it nestles in the same valley as Patrick and is fed by a feeder stream connecting it to Patrick. Around 25 hectares in size the lake is only accessible in two major areas given the boggy and reedy shoreline.

The lake is easily fished from a boat and a small craft can be launched from any one of two locations, which were found during the course of the survey. The lake is very rich water with a diverse number of aquatic plants and holds a rich insect life, which can be seen later in the report.

On an angling note the lake is a well mixed fishery and has all the characteristics of the sister lakes, Patrick and Alina.

The predominant species is roach and the actual fish are in superb condition, examples to 1 kg were caught and returned during the survey work. Large pike are also present and there is no shortage of smaller fish. Certainly the surprise for the survey staff was the large specimens of perch, again fish up to Irish specimen standards and perhaps beyond. There were no indications of stunted fish as had been the case in several other waters. This fertile water is capable of sustaining large numbers of fish to excellent weights.

The absence of anglers has once again been one of the principle reasons why Peter has flourished.

The lake is not very deep, with depths of 4 meters at the perimeter to depths around the island dropping to 10 meters, although there are shallower parts, namely at the northern point where the feeder stream connects Peter to Patrick.

Here shallow water was found and where several kick tests were carried out. The varied insect life such as freshwater snails, shrimp, bloodworm as well as a host of stonefly and mayfly nymphs give reason to believe that the water is unpolluted and in perfect condition.

**Species present:**

roach, perch, hybrids (roach x bream), pike and eels. The most notable aspect of the fishery were the large percentage of perch to 1 kg, sadly today there are few lakes in the complete Island which can boast of this.

Pike were present throughout the lake and there are large specimens present as testament from other anglers shows fish up to 35lbs recorded in the past.

Signs need to be erected for the welfare of the fish as well as for the protection of future angling.

**Catch details:**

The lake was fished over a number of days and the results collated as follows, a total weight of 29 kg of fish was caught over a 16 hour period, the ratio is excellent with roach and perch being the bulk of the catch.

<b>Species</b>	<b>weight</b>	<b>length</b>	<b>Line used</b>
ROACH	450gram	24	3lb
ROACH	380gram	21	3lb
PERCH	550gram	23	
PERCH	570gram	28	
ROACH	500gram	24	
PERCH	520gram	19	
ROACH	480gram	14	
PERCH	1 kilo	28	

**Marketing**

The lake would be an ideal venue to promote pike angling from a boat, the foreign anglers such as the French and Germans would welcome the opportunity to fish in these areas devoid of other anglers. The problem of illegal killing of fish must be addressed.

The erection of signs in several languages may work but a more determined policy by enforcement officers could rectify the situation of visiting anglers killing for the table. At present the water is free from any regulations and remains the property of several land owners, a joint venture from an angling body or tourist body could reap the rewards with the minimum outlay.

## Angling report for Corliss lake Grid ref H8818

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
8	3-12	6.9	0.188	8.0	0.11	2	3

This lake is situated approximately 2 miles from Crossmaglen in the direction of Castleblaney on the Alina road. The boarder runs through the lake. It is approximately 8 hectares in size. The lands on the southern shore are owned by a Mr Phelim Carragher of 14 Alina rd and the lands on the northern shore are owned by a Mrs Murtagh also of Alina road .Both were happy to allow us to cross their lands and attempt to fish the lake .

Unfortunately after several attempts to fish this lake it was found to be impossible due to the following combination of factors, over grown banks, unsafe banks and thick weed.

Local knowledge told us that the lake contains roach and pike and its location and similarity to the other lakes in the area we have surveyed would suggest this to be true. This lake could be opened up as a fishery with the agreement of the 2 land owners and a management plan implemented .It has many of the characteristics of a potential pike fishery. By catering for the specialist fly fishing market the lake could cater for 3 or 4 boats which the pike angler prefers. Pike fly fishing is a relatively new and fast growing area of the sport and has the potential for attracting over sea. Angler's .With some investment this lake could be run as a specialist pike fly fishery.

## Angling report Lough Sheetrim Grid ref H9019

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
10	3-12	6.93	0.187	6.99	0.11	3	3

Lough sheetrim is located approximately 4 kilometres from the village of Cullyhanna in S.Armagh; it is accessible along the road but can be only fished by accessing private land owned by Miss Bronagh Sheridan who granted oriel permission to carry out the survey work.

The lough is found in a depression between the undulating countryside and measures approximately 15 hectares in size, the lough is surrounded by farmland and care must be taken with livestock in the area.

The water clarity is very high and there are no signs of any contamination throughout the area bordering the lake, there are two small feeder streams leading from the lake and several boggy areas where care must be taken to avoid any possible accidents.

### Characteristics

The lake has a 3-4 metre shelf which drops to depths of 8metres and 12 meters according to where the fishing is taking place, there is an abundance of natural plant life such as water lilies and pondweed and around the perimeter of the lake there is a substantial growth of reeds.

Several key areas where found which would take little or no development to promote angling on the water.

The lake can be easily accessed in its entirety and would provide an excellent coarse fishery for immediate use.

Parking is available on private land belonging to the owner Ms Sheridan who expressed a keen interest in any development plans for the area

### Species

The species encountered during the survey were Perch, Roach, Rudd, and Pike of which all were in excellent conditions and showed no sign of disease or distress.

The Rudd caught were perfect finned fish showing that the habitat was ideal for their survival; specimens up to 2lb were caught during the survey.

Although Roach are present as of yet their numbers are not large and overall seem to be small fish indicating that Roach have only recently entered the system.

The pike in the lake are in perfect condition and the large numbers and sizes show that the lake has suffered very little in regards angling pressure. Fish up to 9 kilos were caught and even bigger fish were hooked and lost. The availability of

natural prey fish has given the pike in the area a healthy diet and the results are quick growing fish capable of reaching high weights with the minimum effort. The potential of the lake as a pike fishery is excellent but again the reoccurring problem of Ethnic anglers and their non legal methods must be addressed. Given The location of the fishery and its proximity to the road care must be taken to prevent this lake declining like so many in different parts of the country. The simple erection of multilingual signs and fishery rules might provide a safe environment for a rich coarse fishery.

The lake holds a diverse and rich variety of insect life; all major groups were encountered such as Mayfly, Caddis, Bloodworm, freshwater snails, freshwater mussels. The terrestrial fly life such as crane fly was amazing and the hatches of olives were on a larger scale than anywhere in the area.

### **Marketing and Development.**

The lake lends itself to an ideal mixed coarse fishery which would provide an excellent return to particularly the pike angler, the overall size of the lake means that it can fished comfortably in a short period of time. The construction of several angling stations would increase the angling area given that certain areas are boggy, the minimum outlay would make the lake accessible and available to a greater number of anglers thus promoting the angling in the area.

Given the location of the lake and the proximity of several other lakes in the immediate area, it would appeal to the visiting angler who could cover several waters in the optimum time.

The safeguard of multi-lingual signs and fishery rules will protect the water and conserve the fish stocks from being exploited.

The only real development work needed is the parking for anglers, although at present it is not a problem, if the lake becomes popular which it more than likely will given the fish present, further car parking will be needed.

## Angling report for Drumuckavall Lake

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
8	1-6	7.03	0.185	6.33	0.16	3	3

Drumuckvall Lake is located on the Armagh –Louth border, approximately 2.5 km from Crossmaglen, it is found on private land belonging to a Mr. Kevin mc Shane who granted permission to Oriel angling to carry out survey work. The lake is found at the end of a private laneway on Farmland and access is through private farmland.

The lake is 10 acres in size and is fringed in a heavy growth of reeds and water lilies, the lake at present can only be accessed for anglers at one particular location due to the marshy surroundings. The water quality is clear and the insect life abundant as can be seen from the kick tests and the compiled results in the Trent biotic table

The lake holds a large head of Brown trout and during the survey several fish were caught up to 1 kilo, the fish were in great condition and showed no signs of disease or contamination, the rich feeding in the lake and the absence of anglers has generated a perfect habitat in which these fish are thriving.

No coarse fish were recorded during the survey but a large number of sticklebacks were found during the kick tests, as the lake is on private land it has received slight angling attention and due to the nature of the location on the very border would have been very difficult to exploit in the past.

### Characteristics

The lake is approximately ten acres in size; it has an oval shape and is only accessible in one area at the moment .The depths range from 1.5metres at the perimeter to depths of 5.8m in the centre. The lake is drained and fed by two inlets which are found on the eastern side of the lake, the inlets provide a steady stream of water and nutrients from the adjacent farmlands.

Access is through private land and permission must be granted prior to any visit from the landowner.

Caddis fly	<u>120 samples</u>
Fresh water shrimp	<u>1100 samples</u>
Fresh water snail	<u>1700 samples</u>
Mayfly	<u>83 samples</u>
Freshwater beetles	<u>700 samples</u>
Bloodworms	<u>145 samples</u>
Chironomidae	<u>2340 samples</u>
Sticklebacks	<u>414 samples</u>
Freshwater worms	<u>3 samples</u>
Dragonfly nymphs	<u>32 samples</u>

The above results indicate rich nutrient water with no pollution or no contamination present. The diverse insect life and the water clarity show that the lake in question is capable of sustaining the majority of aquatic organisms because of the lack of nitrates or chemicals. Kick tests were carried out at several locations and on several different times to formulate the above table.

Catch details: over a period of hours fished a total of 72 fish were caught, the only species encountered was Trout and excellent fish up to 1 kilo were caught. The majority of fish were returned and several were forwarded to Doctor Ken Whelan for a scale reading and a synopsis on diseases.



## Angling report for Gentleowens lake Grid ref H8330

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
232	1-7	6.45	0.184	6.33	0.009	3	5

Gentle Owens is a long thin narrow lake nestling in a valley in the North Armagh area; it was once used as a Trout fishery but from what we can ascertain the lake has been abandoned for a long time. The lake has limited access through private farm land and parking is restricted to grass verges on the adjacent farmland. The shoreline is covered in heavy bulrushes and in the deeper areas water lilies, the water quality is excellent with no signs of pollution or eutrophication and the insect life is abundant as can be seen from the Trent Biotic table later in the report.

Over a period of four days the lake was fished and the results are as follows, there are a large number of Roach present in the water, specimens to 1 kilo were caught and returned, there was no previous details of Roach being present in the waterway thus indicating that these fish have found their way into the system and have adapted perfectly to the new habitat.

Large numbers of Perch fry were observed in the shallows indicating a successful breeding season, no larger fish were encountered but the fry in such vast numbers indicate a healthy population. The lack of Trout in once was a Trout fishery was apparent, no fish were observed during the four days and from speaking with locals it appears the lake has not been stocked for a long time.

### Characteristics

The lake has all the characteristics of a drumlin lake, lying in a valley and fed by two inlets and several outlets, the shoreline is accessible in its entirety save certain marshy areas which require safeguards such as warning signs.

The shoreline offers steep gradients of differing depths, the water depth varies from 1.5m to 3m in the Northern side to depths of up to 5m in the eastern and western sides of the lake.

From depth finder indications the water is very deep in certain areas, depths of up to 34metres in the centre and depths to 25m in several spots along the western shore. There is no direct access to the lake and access is available only through private farm land of which permission must be granted prior to angling. At present there are no facilities available at the lake but in the Marketing section of this report some suggestions have been made.

### Trentbiotic tables

Caddis fly	<u>213 samples</u>
Fresh water shrimp	<u>1200 samples</u>
Fresh water snail	<u>700 samples</u>

Mayfly	<u>87 samples</u>
Freshwater beetles	<u>1100 samples</u>
Bloodworms	<u>165 samples</u>
Chironomidae	<u>1340 samples</u>
Sticklebacks	<u>164 samples</u>
Freshwater worms	<u>39 samples</u>
Dragonfly nymphs	<u>24 samples</u>

From the above table results, the diversity of species encountered shows that the lake is clean and shows no indication of pollution, the species such as Mayfly will not tolerate any pollution and were present throughout the lake and the inlets. Although the lake is located in prime farming area there are no indications of pollution by nitrates as this would have an immediate effect on the aquatic life. The Trent Biotic table was established as a result of various kick tests being carried out in differing areas of the lake which gave rise to the table above.

### **Marketing and Development**

The ideal proposal for the lake is as a Trout fishery, the habitat is ideal as well as the location. An option would be to have several boats present at the lake for hire, giving anglers an opportunity to try something different as well as generate additional income to the area. There is also the possibility of generating tourism revenue through accommodation as nearly all dwellings in the locality are farms. The infrastructure of the lake requires very little to be operational and the minimum expenditure would be needed to start any future projects. As the lake was formerly a DCAL water fishing rights should be clarified prior to any development and possible joint proposals discussed.

## Angling report for Straghans lake Grid ref 822307

Area	Depth Range (m)	pH	Sp Conduct	O <sub>2</sub> mg/l	Sal ppt	Quality Rating	Potential
8	1-8	6.38	0.173	6.33	0.008	2	2

Straghans Lake is a small lake which is found just off the main Keady-Castleblaney road, it is a designated protected water approximately 9 hectares in size. The lake is relatively shallow around the perimeters but has deeper areas on the western shore. During the survey depths of up to 9m were recorded. Access is limited to very few fishing areas given the widespread growth of pond lilies and pondweed.

During the survey the lake was fished on several occasions from diverse parts of the lake and the principal species encountered were Roach, Perch, and Pike. Although the fish numbers were abundant the actual size of the specimens was smaller than in the adjacent lakes of Clay and Gentle Owens.

There was no indication of disease and all fish caught were free from any infections and safely returned to the water.

The lake is surrounded by private farmland and permission was granted to Oriel by local landowners who are keen to see any development.

The fact that the lake is designated water limits the actual angling potential and angling can only be practiced by gaining permission from the relevant government bodies.

In regards future development the lake could be managed as a wildlife sanctuary or an educational field trip venue as it is rich in natural fauna and wildlife.

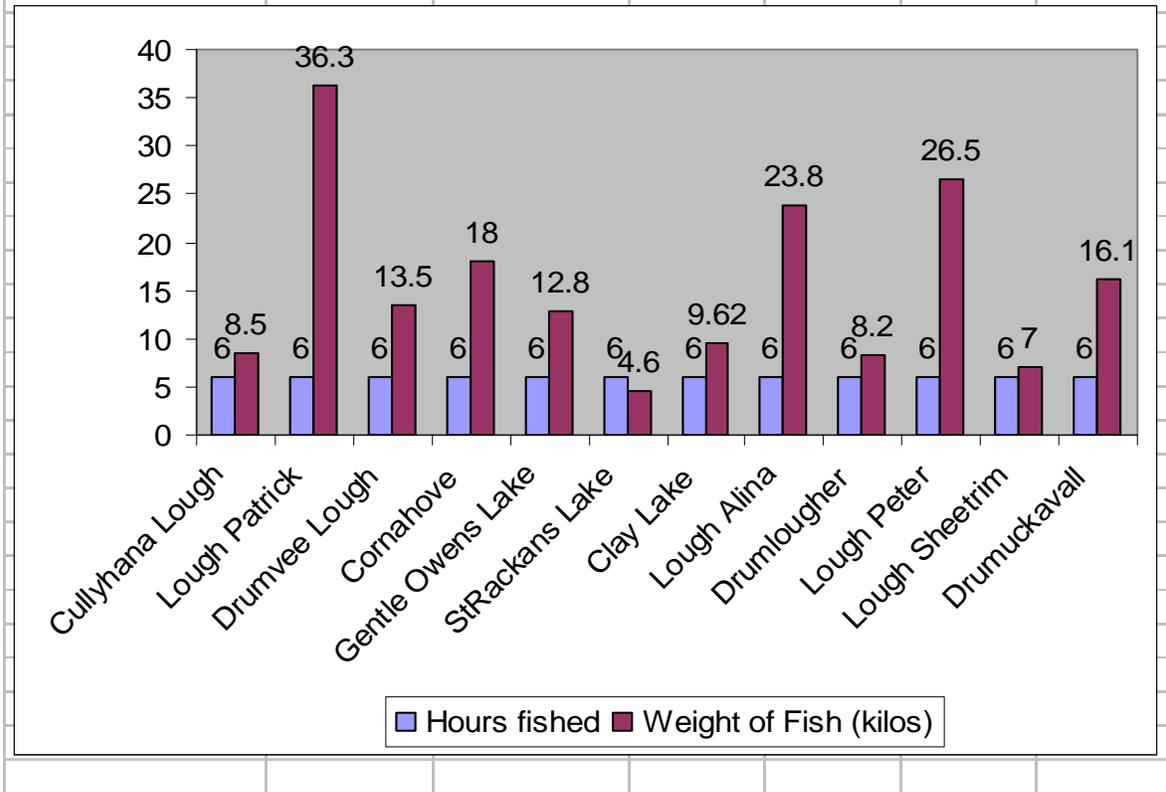
In terms of angling the lake offers little to anglers, the fish density is low and no above average specimens were encountered.

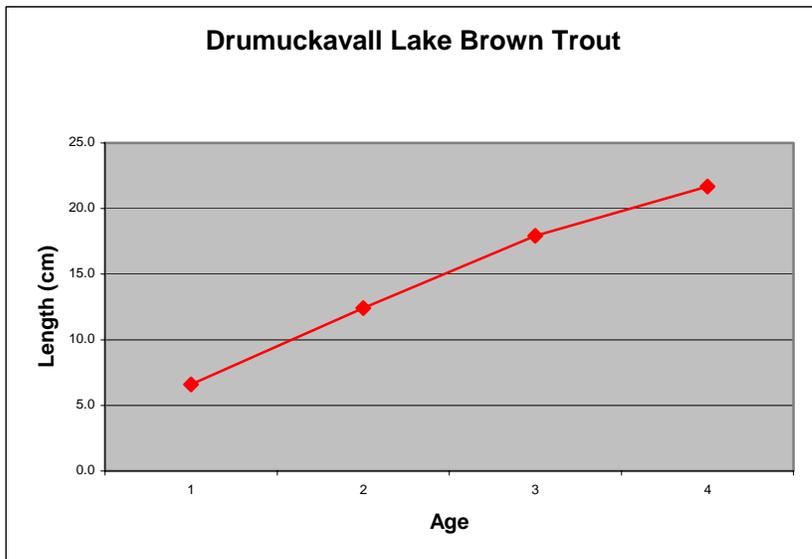
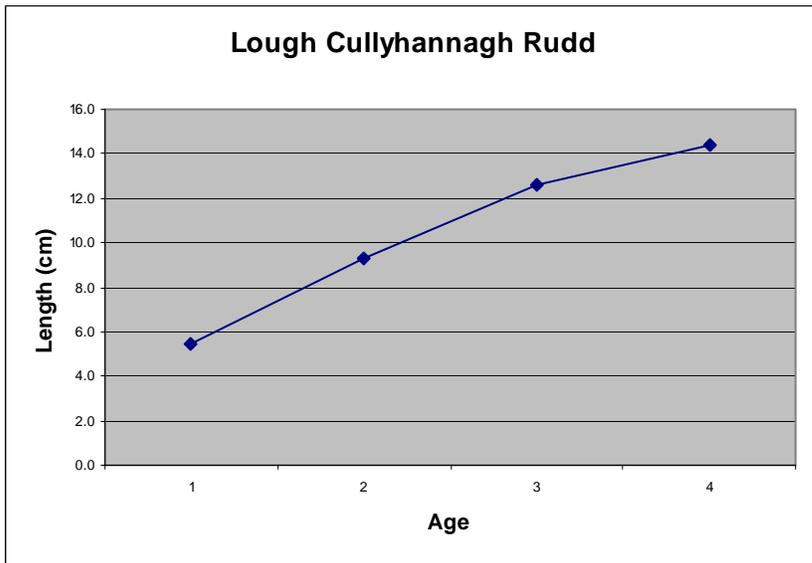
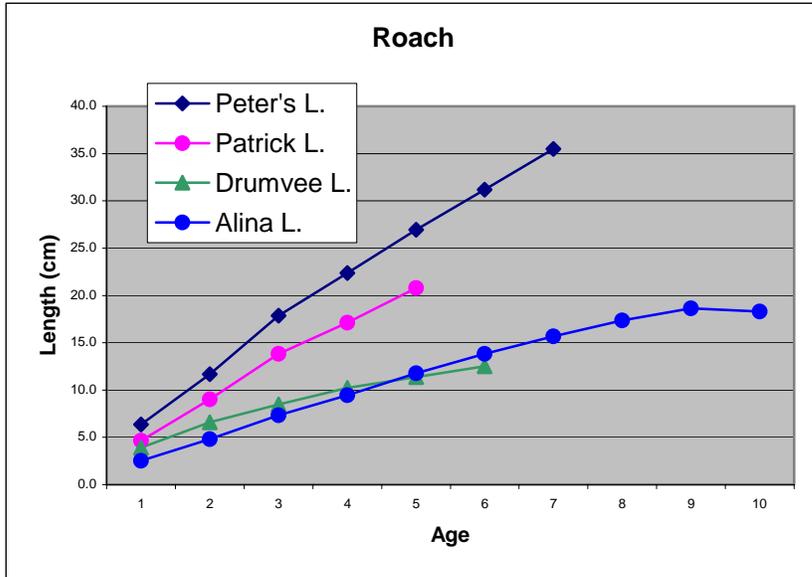
Straghans should remain a protected environment and free from any angling plans or activities.

Given that there are several other lakes in the vicinity with better development prospects such as Gentle Owens and Clay Lake, any future plans should incorporate these waters and allow Straghans to stay a protected natural habitat.

### Statistics

	Hours fished	Weight of Fish (kilos)			
Cullyhana Lough	6	8.5			
Lough Patrick	6	36.3			
Drumvee Lough	6	13.5			
Cornahove	6	18			
Gentle Owens Lake	6	12.8			
StRackans Lake	6	4.6			
Clay Lake	6	9.62			
Lough Alina	6	23.8			
Drumlougher	6	8.2			
Lough Peter	6	26.5			
Lough Sheetrim	6	7			
Drumuckavall	6	16.1			





<b>Lake &amp; Species</b>	<b>Back-calculated Fish Lengths</b>									
	<b>Age (yrs)</b>									
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
<b>Peter's Lake Roach</b>	6.4	11.7	17.9	22.4	27.0	31.2	35.5			
<b>Patrick Lake Roach</b>	4.6	9.0	13.8	17.1	20.8					
<b>Drumvee Lake Roach</b>	3.9	6.6	8.5	10.2	11.4	12.5				
<b>Lough Alina Roach</b>	2.5	4.8	7.4	9.5	11.8	13.8	15.7	17.4	18.7	18.3
<b>Lough Cullyhannagh Rudd</b>	5.4	9.3	12.6	14.4						
<b>Drumuckavall Lake Brown Trout</b>	6.6	12.4	17.9	21.7						