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FORM PR4: STATEMENT

SERBD-2022-ENV03-OMG- AIDAN HYNES

Statement of evidence from Fishery Officer Gregory Roche of the Southeast River Basin District, Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Catchment: River Nore.

Watercourse: River Delour.

Townland: Derryduff, Co. Laois.

On the 30-09-2022 I was on duty and was given information that there was a machine seen digging inside the river Delour near Coolrain, Co. Laois. At approx. 1125hrs I was in the townland area of Derryduff and witnessed an excavator machine at the riverbank of the river Delour. I walked down to where the machine was operating which was placing large boulders along the riverbank. I had noticed that approx. 80 metres of the riverbed and adjoining riverbank had been disturbed and that riverbed material had been spread on the adjoining land. I approached the digger driver (later given the name [REDACTED] and identified myself as a fishery officer. I asked [REDACTED] was he the landowner and he replied that he was a contractor and was instructed by the landowner (given the name as Aidan Hynes) to carry out the works. I asked [REDACTED] did he contact Inland Fisheries Ireland and notify them about the works. He said he was not aware if any contact had been made. I instructed [REDACTED] that he had to cease his works immediately. I asked for his name, the name of the landowner and their contact details.

I then notified Assistant Inspector Declan Cullagh of my observations and he said he would meet up with me. At approx. 1535 hrs, myself, A.I Cullagh and Fisheries Environmental Officer Oliver McGrath returned to the site. D. Cullagh rang Mr Hynes and he asked could he come down to meet us at the site. FEO McGrath identified ourselves to Mr Hynes, and at 1545 hrs he was cautioned by O. McGrath. Mr Hynes provided his address as [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Officer McGrath asked Mr Hynes why he had carried out the works on the riverbank. Mr Hynes said that his land was constantly flooding and that the riverbank along his land was eroding and collapsing into the river. D. Cullagh explained to Mr Hynes

that there was a process that a landowner must go through before carrying out any remedial works to his land if it is adjoining a watercourse. Mr Hynes said he was aware that works being carried out had to be finished before the end of September. It was explained to Mr Hynes that any such works would have to get approval first, irrespective of the time of year. Oliver McGrath said he would have to carry out further inspections and would be in contact with Mr Hynes. Mr Hynes said he was apologetic and would carry out any rehabilitation works under instruction from Inland Fisheries Ireland. Mr Hynes was always courteous and answered all questions put to him. Oliver McGrath took some details from Mr Hynes and then we left the site.

Signed Fishery Officer Gregory Roche.

Date: 15/11/22