



“Restoration of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear River) for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter”

Press Release

28th February 2014

February Closes Out With the Mulkear In Flood

In much the same manner as the opening of the month, February 2014 has closed out with the Mulkear River and the wider Mulkear catchment in flood.



A river of chocolate brown water, from bank to bank (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

It was a case of bank to bank chocolate brown water as yet another very significant flood event passed through the system on the final day of the month. This week's flood event marks the tenth consecutive week of unseasonably high water levels in the Mulkear with a minimum of five major flood events during February 2014 alone.

The land is supersaturated and this has resulted in the land not being able to soak up the water from the intense rainfall events. The water table is extremely high resulting in springs emerging and surfacing in multiple places.



The floods have brought down some interesting material (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

Regrettably, mature trees have continued to fall along riverbanks and into rivers throughout the catchment. Given the nature of the supersaturated soil it is likely that this will continue to be the case for a considerable period of time even in the absence of gale force winds.



Trees have continued to fall throughout the catchment (Image: Ruairí Ó Conchúir)

As February 2014 closes out it is still unclear when water levels will begin to fall to near normal levels in the Mulkear Catchment.



Full extent of flooding on the Mulkear River at Annacotty today (Image: RÓC)

Notes for Editors

1. High Resolution Digital Images are available to accompany this Press Release.
2. Interviews can be arranged with the Project Manager by using the contact details below.
3. MulkearLIFE is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (with a focus on the Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website www.mulkearlifeproject.com
4. Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) is lead partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from National Parks and Wildlife Service. Other supporters include Teagasc, IFA, ICMSA, and local angling groups.
5. The project is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland. It is a flagship EU LIFE Nature project –covering some 650 sq km which contain a variety of habitats and protected species. Much of the area is designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EU Habitats Directive and forms part of the Natura 2000 Network.

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