

Request for Tenders

for

“The Trial of Alternative Water Sources for Cattle With Direct Access to the Mulkear River and its tributaries in the Mulkear Catchment and Monitor Improvements in Water Quality”

**MulkearLIFE
Inland Fisheries Ireland – Shannon River Basin District
Dock Road, Limerick**

January 2011

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1. Introduction

MulkearLIFE is a five year European Commission LIFE Nature project. Mulkear LIFE is a partnership based project with Inland Fisheries Ireland acting as the coordinating partner together with the Office of Public Works and Limerick County Council. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government is a significant co-financier.

Tenders are invited from suitably qualified and experienced parties to undertake the trial of alternative water sources for cattle with direct access to the Mulkear River and its neighbouring tributaries within the Mulkear Catchment and to monitor improvements in water quality. The trial which will include the implementation and monitoring of the programme of work will last for 2.5 years from 1st March 2011 to 31st August 2013. This Request for Tender provides an outline of the programme of work of the MulkearLIFE project.

1.1 Background

The MulkearLIFE project (www.mulkearlifeproject.com) is a €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Inland Fisheries Ireland (formerly the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board) is the coordinating project partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from NPWS and Tipperary County Councils. Other supporters include Coillte, ESB, Department of Agriculture, Teagasc, IFA and ICMSA. MulkearLIFE is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland and is a flagship EC LIFE Nature project – one of only two such projects awarded funding in Ireland in recent years. The Mulkear, together with its principal tributaries (Dead, Bilboa and Newport rivers), drains a catchment area of approximately 650 km² spanning counties Limerick and Tipperary. The Mulkear River is one of the top five salmon rivers in Ireland when its relative size is considered, producing a significant annual salmon run. It also holds substantial populations of Sea Lamprey and Otter are known to be widespread, however, recent evidence suggests numbers are in decline. The main project objective is to restore, through in-stream rehabilitation works, degraded habitats along stretches of the Mulkear River and its principal tributaries. This work, while beneficial to many species, is targeted at Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter. The project is due to run until the 1st January 2014 during which the following the key project actions will be delivered:

- Enhancing the populations of Atlantic salmon and Sea lamprey through in-stream rehabilitation work
- Removing obstacles to the annual adult sea lamprey river upstream migration for spawning and recruitment
- Monitoring adult sea lamprey river migration via radio-tracking to determine habitat use and how obstacles are approached
- Improving breeding, resting habitat and food supply for European otters
- Stopping and reversing the damage caused by invasive exotics (Giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed)
- Addressing local water quality concerns by working with farmers and farming representative bodies on alternative solutions to cattle drinks
- Promoting the MulkearLIFE's work through a range of events at a local and wider community level including illustrated talks, workshops, primary and post primary school visits, presentations and school field trips

The key expected results from the project include:

- Enhancement of the populations of Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and Otters in the Mulkear Catchment
- Greater awareness and understanding of issues affecting the SAC and how to manage the catchment
- Development of practical, costed and transferable management prescriptions for habitat rehabilitation for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otters for other Natura 2000 sites

1.2 Further Information and Query Handling

Every effort has been made to ensure that this documentation contains all the necessary information for completion of tenders. However, in the interests of equity, requests for additional information, clarification on the content of this document and all other queries of substance (other than in relation to purely factual or procedural matters) must be made in writing or by email. Any additional information elicited will be made available to all potential tenderers who have obtained a copy of this document via the e-tenders website or directly from MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland. It should be emphasised that the Request for Tender (RFT) is for guidance only and any queries regarding the details of this Section will be addressed at interview stage or following appointment.

Any queries should be submitted by email or in writing only, not later than 17.00hrs, 16th February 2011, to:

Name: Mr. Ruairi O Conchuir
 Address: MulkearLIFE
 Inland Fisheries Ireland – Shannon River Basin District
 Ashbourne Business Park
 Dock Road
 Limerick

E-mail: ruairi@mulkearlife.com

1.3 Timetable

The timetable in relation to this tender process is as follows:

Latest date and time for receipt of tenders	17.00hrs, 21 st February 2011
Possible interviews	23 rd February 2011
Award of contract (anticipated)	25 th February 2011
Contract commencement (anticipated)	1 st March 2011
Interim reports	1 st September 2011 and 1 st September 2012
Draft final report (including all datasets)	1 st May 2013
Full Contract delivery & Final Report	31 st August 2013

2. Specification of Requirements

2.1 Objectives

The principal objective of this tender contract is to develop, implement and monitor approaches to lessen the impact on water quality by cattle with direct access to the Mulkear River and its tributaries. The impact on water quality resulting from disturbance due to trampling and faecal disturbance is a concern and this tender contract will trial alternate water sources for cattle and monitor improvements in water quality which result from this.

Water quality has been identified as an issue in the Mulkear Catchment. While many of the agricultural sources of this population have been addressed and continue to be addressed through REPS and the Nitrates Directive certain problems continue. Trampling by cattle accessing water courses for drinking or just to keep cool during warm spells has been identified as an issue along the Mulkear River. Whilst REPS and AEOS has seen an improvement in this area MulkearLIFE's programme of work will promote the scheme through direct liaison with farmers (through the IFA, ICMSA and Teagasc networks). In addition, the project aims to promote water harvesting and sustainable water abstraction through co-operation with the farming community. Anticipated water quality improvements and habitat enhancement should improve the carrying capacity for the Atlantic salmon from between 2 to 4 times in degraded stretches.

MulkearLIFE is working to improve water quality in areas affected by cattle disturbance due to trampling and faecal disturbance. A minimum of 12 farms in the catchment are being assessed to pilot this action aimed at promoting good water stewardship within the SAC, through the development of sustainable water sources where farmers are relying on direct access or cattle drinks for cattle watering. The final farms will be selected from interested applicants who meet the experimental criteria (i.e., beef or dairy, upland or lowland, cattle drinks on land or direct water access to cattle). Farms in areas already identified as problem areas by the EPA 2005 Rivers Report will be prioritised (e.g. Cateen, Cahernahaille, Cappawhite and Dooglasha). Twelve farms subcategorised into beef and dairy and further subdivided into upland and lowland sites and will be used for experimental design for developing and testing sustainable water solutions.

The EPA Rivers Reports (2002 and 2005) identify cattle disturbance as a significant threat to water quality to sections of the Mulkear River, particularly in tributary streams where salmon spawn. Cattle need water and unless the farmer is within REPS or AEOS it is difficult to control the impacts of direct cattle access. In addition, even where cattle drinks are provided significant soiling can occur. The expected results of this work includes the provision of sustainable water solutions for cattle which formerly had direct access to the river. These solutions will range from water harvesting using farm sheds to collect rain water, to more novel solar powered water pumps where the former and other techniques are not feasible. These sites in turn will become demonstration sites for the project to encourage other farmers to set up similar systems. This particular aspect of the work of MulkearLIFE has strong linkages with the EU Water Framework Directive as it encourages sustainable water use and aims to protect the water environment (i.e., return to good ecological status).

Specifically, the objectives are:

- To ensure the establishment of best practice demonstration sites (pilot sites) for sustainable water use linked to agricultural management of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear Catchment)
- To contribute to improvements in the overall water quality within the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear Catchment)
- To ensure the development and implementation of focussed pilot aimed at maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of the environment of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear Catchment), in particular those habitats listed in Annex 2 of the EU Habitats Directive that occur within the Lower Shannon SAC
- To work towards an improvement in the conservation quality of the Annex 2 habitats (herein after referred to as ‘the habitats’), as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, by August 2013
- To maintain the high quality of the landscape and cultural heritage of the Mulkear Catchment

2.2 Tasks

The successful tenderer(s) will:

- In consultation with MulkearLIFE, co-ordinate and administer the trial of alternative water sources on a minimum of 12 pilot farmers in the Mulkear Catchment
- Liaise with MulkearLIFE, Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Food (DAFF) and Teagasc on the preparation of the trials
- Liaise with participating farmers (and their planners where required) regarding the appropriateness of the pilot on the farm holding and the changes if any to their farm plans.
- Provide scientific advice, training and other support to the farmers (and / or their planners) during site visits on water quality and the impact of direct access by cattle to the water course / and the importance of water conservation and appropriate management
- Process farm plans and make recommendations to MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland regarding capital infrastructure
- In consultation with MulkearLIFE, DAFF, Teagasc and the participating farmers co-ordinate the purchase and installation of the required capital infrastructure
- The installation work will include, amongst other measures, the erecting of a minimum of 9,000m of fencing, the installation of watering harvesting equipment on a minimum of 12 farms (gutters, brackets, stop ends, drop boxes, down pipes, storage tanks and related concrete bases and fittings), gravity feed solutions on a minimum of 12 farms (piping & troughs), pasture pumps on a minimum of 6 farms (pump, piping and fittings) and costs solar pumped solutions on a minimum of 6 farms (pump, controller, solar panels, hardware and wiring, troughs, fittings and plumbing)
- Liaise with MulkearLIFE, DAFF, Teagasc and maintain close cooperation with the participating farmers to ensure a full monitoring programme takes place on all sites
- In consultation and in conjunction with the work programme of MulkearLIFE develop monitoring protocol for each of the pilot sites and continue monitoring for the duration of the pilot
- In consultation and in conjunction with the work programme of MulkearLIFE establish and populate a well organised databases on all appropriate aspects of the pilot
- Be available for a maximum of 6 half demonstration days on the pilots sites and provide scientific advice and other supports to farmers attending such days
- Produce interim and final report which will include guidelines and information for MulkearLIFE to utilise with farmers and planners farming in the Lower Shannon SAC
- Produce annual reports on the operation of the scheme and a final report
- Oversee all financial aspects of the trials including the purchase of capital infrastructure

2.3 Deliverables

A well-run and focussed pilot of best practice demonstration sites (pilot sites) for sustainable water use linked to high quality agricultural management in the Lower Shannon SAC and which contribute to improvements in the overall water quality within the Lower Shannon SAC. These pilots will act as demonstration sites during their lifetime and more importantly will provide a template for the future management of water courses in other SAC catchment areas. Appropriate management of the water course will lead to an improvement in water quality in aquatic ecosystems and ensure the maintenance of and/or improvement in the conservation status of the Annex 2 species and the associated habitats and enhance the conservation status of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear Catchment). Specifically, the successful tenderer(s) will deliver:

- A well-run, controlled and focused pilot of best practice demonstration sites to the satisfaction of all parties, including the participating farmers

- The administration, implementation and co-ordination of the trial of alternative water sources on a minimum of 12 pilot farmers in the Mulkear Catchment
- Appropriate monitoring of all pilot farms within the trial and results of monitoring
- A set of detailed, comprehensive and regularly updated databases on all aspects of the trials and results of the monitoring work
- Two (2) interim reports and one (1) final report, including full accounts of all costs

2.4 Qualifications and requirements

The winning tender should consist of a person (or persons) who should be able to work well with MulkearLIFE and have expertise in the followings areas:

Agricultural science or similar, a good understanding and experience of agricultural systems and agri-environmental schemes (REPS & AEOS), a good knowledge of the Mulkear Catchment and its habitats and a proven ability to work well within the farming community, together with extensive practical and field experience (GIS and field mapping). Project management experience, good report writing and communications skills are also essential.

All tenderers must have access to a suitable vehicle, proof of current, clean driving licences, and insurance. A health and safety statement may be required.

3. Format of Tender

All tenders must address all the requirements and must be in the format requested below. Tenders not in this format will not be considered.

3.1 General Documentation/Information to be submitted

The following must be supplied in triplicate:

- a. Detailed work schedule and outline of how the project will be managed
- b. Proposals for scheduling and prioritisation of work on a minimum of 12 farms within the Mulkear Catchment
- c. A brief curriculum vitae, including details of relevant education, qualifications, experience and training, should be provided. If more than one party will be working on the project their details should also be included. Where more than one party is to be involved the tender should indicate clearly the roles of each member of the team. MulkearLIFE are to be informed should the work schedule or personnel differ from that on the tender. Approval of MulkearLIFE personnel is required if changes are sought
- d. Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and fax number of tenderer
- e. Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of any third parties involved in the tender
- f. Confirmation of acceptance by the tenderer and any third parties of the conditions of tender described in Section 5 - General Conditions of Tender

Additionally, the following will be required prior to the signing of any contract with the winning tender:

- g. Copy of Tax Clearance Certificate or relevant paperwork as per Section 5.7 - General Conditions of Tender
- h. Copy/proof of Insurance, e.g. Professional Indemnity Insurance and/or Public Liability Insurance and/or Employer's Insurance
- i. Copy/proof of Full Clean Driving Licences
- j. Copy/proof of Health and Safety Statement

3.2 Proposals

A written response on a point-by-point basis describing how the requirements specified in section 2 will be delivered. Please include a list and descriptions of similar work programmes carried out.

3.3 Schedule of Costs

- 3.3.1 Provide a detailed breakdown of the overall complete costs. All unit costs must be quoted in **euro (€)** inclusive of any generic overheads and exclusive of VAT.
- 3.3.2 Indicate the applicable rate of VAT in respect of the item/service being proposed.

3.4 Contract

A contract will be concluded with the tenderer whose tender is deemed to be the most economically advantageous as outlined in Section 4.2.

Please note the following:

- a. Tenderers should demonstrate a capacity to fulfil the terms of the project by the end of 31st August 2013
- b. Any terms and conditions in the proposed contract do not imply acceptance by MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland
- c. All works carried out shall be governed by the Laws of Ireland and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Ireland
- d. MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland may cancel the tender process at any time prior to a contract being entered into.
- e. All information and material collected and reports relating to this work, including photographs, digital data bases, derived data sets and GIS shall be the exclusive property of MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland and MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland shall become the sole owner thereof upon delivery and copyright therein shall belong to MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland. MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland will remain the sole owner of all end-products irrespective of whether or not the project is terminated prior to its completion
- f. The contractor appointed may be required to sign a formal confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement

3.5 Other Information

Tenderers should provide any other information that may be relevant to this proposal.

4. Examination and Evaluation of Tenders

4.1 Initial Examination

Tenders will be examined initially by reference to the following:

- a. Completeness of proposals and tender documentation as specified in Sections 2 and 3 (Specification of Requirements and Format of Tender) of this document
- b. Stated ability of the tenderer to understand and meet all the requirements specified in Section 2 of this document and to complete the project on time

Only those tenders which satisfy conditions in relation to the above will be eligible for inclusion in the award process.

4.2 Award Criteria

The contract will be awarded to the **most economically advantageous tender** of those meeting the specifications set out in Section 2, and not otherwise validly excluded, on the basis of the following award criteria:

- Expertise, skills and experience of person (or persons) in providing the type of services described in Section 2 (*100 marks*)
- The structure proposed to deliver the requirements of the work (*100 marks*)
- The quality of the tender document (*100 marks*)
- Value for money (*200 marks*)

Tenders which score below 50% in any category will not be considered suitable.

4.3 Communications

During the evaluation period clarification may be sought in writing from tenderers.

Responses to requests for clarification may not materially change any of the elements of the tenders submitted.

No unsolicited communications from tenderers will be entertained during the evaluation period.

Tenderers may be invited to interview and may be requested to make a presentation on their proposals for the purpose elaboration, clarification and / or aiding mutual understanding. If held, these presentations will take place on 23rd February 2011. Any proposed subcontractors may also be required to participate.

5. General Conditions of Tender

Tenders should be prepared in English or Irish and are subject to the following:

- 5.1 This Request for Tender shall form part of the contract documents.
- 5.2 MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland will use its best efforts to hold confidential any information provided by tenderers subject to their obligation under law, including the Freedom of Information Act which came into force on 21 April, 1994. Tenderers should indicate when tendering, what parts of their tenders are commercially sensitive and which they consider should be kept confidential should an FOI request be received. MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland will consult with tenderers about any such sensitive information before making a decision on any FOI request received. Similarly, MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland requires that all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender will be treated in strict confidence by tenderers.
- 5.3 Tenderers should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety.
- 5.4 Tenderers must have regard to statutory terms relating to minimum pay and to legally binding industrial or sectoral agreements in preparing tenders.
- 5.5 Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information.
- 5.6 Any conflicts of interest involving a tenderer must be fully disclosed to MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tenderer. Any registerable interest involving the tenderer and the MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland, members of the Government, members of the Oireachtas or their relatives must be fully disclosed in the response to this RFT, or should be communicated to MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland immediately upon such information becoming known to the tenderer, in the event of this information only coming to their notice after the submission of a bid and prior to the award of the contract. The terms 'registerable interest' and 'relative' shall be interpreted as per section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1994.
- 5.7 Before a contract is awarded the successful tenderer (and agent, where appropriate) will be required to promptly produce a Tax Clearance Certificate, or in the case of a non-resident tenderer, a statement from the Revenue Commissioners confirming suitability on tax grounds. Non-residents should contact the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Revenue Residence Section, Government Offices, Nenagh Co. Tipperary. In addition, contractors must retain records of tax reference numbers for any subcontractors where payments exceed €650 (incl. VAT). Tenderers should note that the provisions of Department of Finance Circular 22/95 apply and the MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland may require sight of Tax Clearance Certificates for any subcontractor where payments exceed €2,600. Forms are attainable from the following address: Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Sarsfield House, Limerick. Where a Tax Clearance Certificate expires within the course of the contract, MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland reserves the right to seek a renewed certificate. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the contractor(s) being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.
- 5.8 In the event of a group of respondents jointly submitting an acceptable offer, the contract will be awarded by the MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland to one contractor / who acts as the agreed prime contractor. The prime contractor is responsible for the delivery of all services provided for under the terms of the contract and shall assume all the duties, responsibilities and costs associated with the position of prime contractor.
 - (a) The successful tenderer shall be responsible for the delivery of all services provided for within the contract on the basis of a fixed price agreement set at the beginning of the contract. Prices quoted in the tender cannot be increased during the currency of the tender. Similarly, terms and conditions cannot be altered.
 - (b) MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland retain the right to withhold payment where a contractor has failed to meet his/her contractual obligations in relation to the delivery of services to an acceptable level of quality.
- 5.9 MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of tenders or any associated work effort.
- 5.10 Responses to this RFT will be evaluated in their own right. No recognition will be given to information previously submitted.
- 5.11 MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender submitted.
- 5.12 All Intellectual Property Rights title and interest in all reports, data manuals, developed software, other materials or programs (including without limitation all and any audio or audio visual recordings, transcripts, books, papers, records, notes, illustrations, photographs, diagrams) produced for the purposes of this request for tender (collectively "the Materials") (or any part or parts thereof) shall vest in MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland. For the avoidance of doubt the tenderer shall assigns all Intellectual Property Rights, title

and interest in the Materials to the extent that any such Intellectual Property Rights title or interest may be deemed by law to reside in it in the Materials to MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland. The contractor should secure copyright approval (where necessary) for any illustrations or other 3rd party material used.

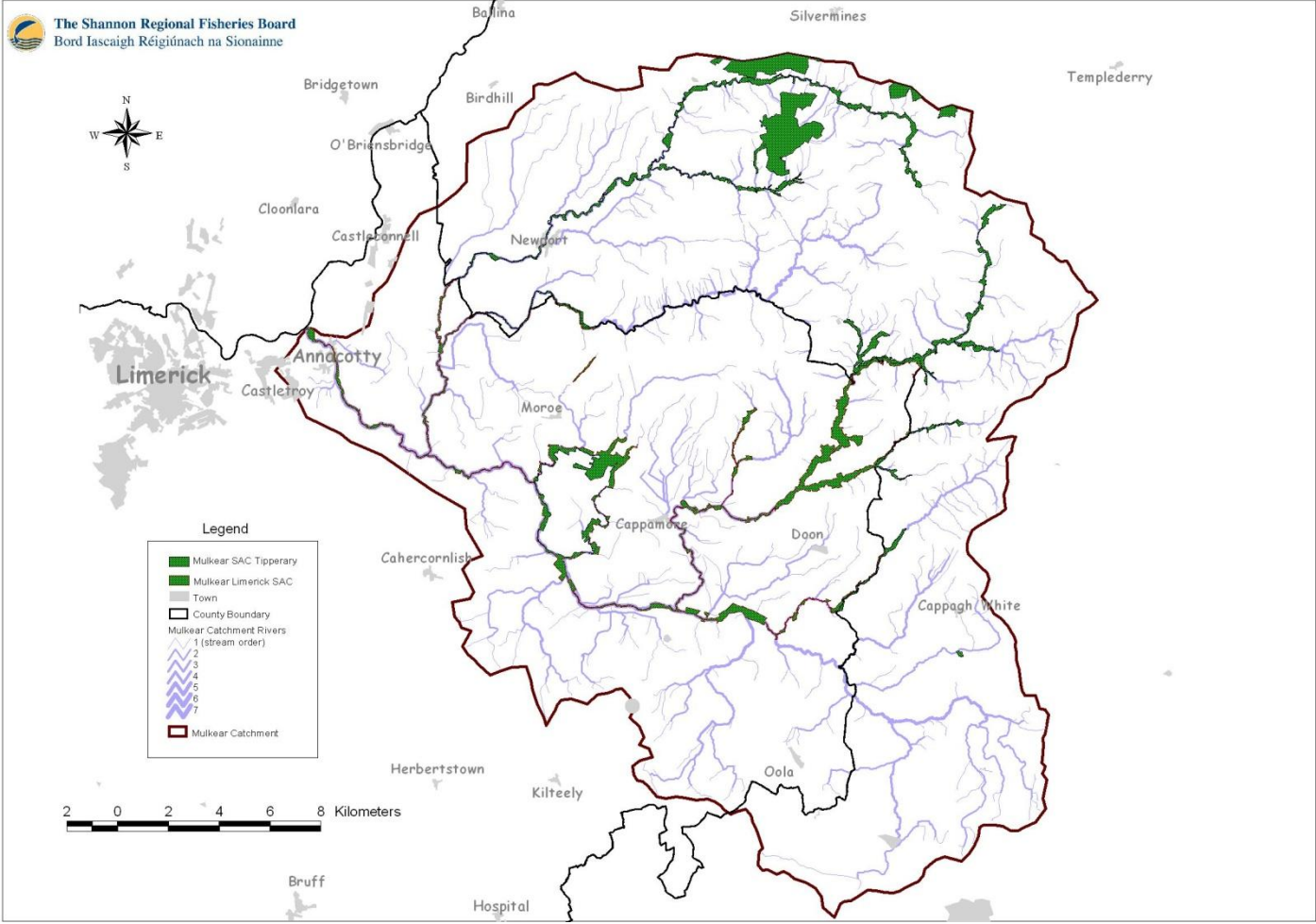
- 5.13** Tenders must be completed in accordance with the format specified in *Section 3*. Tenders which are incomplete will not be evaluated.
- 5.14** Three (3) copies of the tender, with numbered pages, along with an electronic copy on CD or memory stick, in a sealed envelope with the address of the tenderer on the outside, marked “The Trial of Alternative Water Sources for Cattle With Direct Access to the Mulkear River and its tributaries in the Mulkear Catchment and Monitor Improvements in Water Quality” should be addressed to:

Name: Mr Ruairí Ó Conchúir
 Address: MulkearLIFE
 Inland Fisheries Ireland – Shannon River Basin District
 Ashbourne Business Park
 Dock Road
 Limerick

Tenders should be delivered to the above address not later than 17.00hrs on Monday 21st February 2011. Tenders delivered after this time will not be accepted and will be returned unopened.

- 5.15** Under EU Public Procurement Directives MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland is required to publish a Contract Award Notice in the OJEU containing certain information, including the name of the successful tenderer, relating to the award of this contract.
- 5.16** The availability of monies under and in accordance with this Request for Tender is subject to the financial resources made available to the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in the relevant budgetary year. No commitment to drawdown of any amount of monies is guaranteed under this RFT.
- 5.17** No commitment of any kind, contractual or otherwise will exist unless and until a formal contract has been executed on behalf the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources / MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland. The award of the contract shall not give rise to any enforceable rights by the tenderer. MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland may cancel the process at any time prior to a contract being entered into. MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland may subsequently commence another public procurement competition.
- 5.18** Tenderers must produce a current certificate of insurance in accordance with Employers and Public Liability Acts with their proposal together with confirmation of their ability to obtain professional risk indemnity insurance to an adequate level. All insurances must remain valid for the term of the contract.
- 5.19** The contractor shall indemnify the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland and hold MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland blameless in respect of any loss, damages, proceedings, suits, third party claims, judgments awards expenses and costs (including legal costs and expenses) whatsoever and howsoever arising as a result of the negligence, wilful default error omission act or breach of contract of or by the contractor, his employees, agents or subcontractors.
- 5.20** The Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources reserves the right to terminate any contract without cause at any time following 28 days notice to do so. However, any breaches of contract may result in immediate termination of the contract.

Appendix 1: Map of Mulkear Catchment – Lower Shannon SAC



Appendix 2 MulkearLIFE - 1 Page Project Summary



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

One Page Project Summary

The MulkearLIFE project (www.mulkearlifeproject.com) is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Inland Fisheries Ireland (formerly the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board) is the coordinating project partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from NPWS and Tipperary County Councils. Other supporters include Coillte, ESB, Department of Agriculture, Teagasc, IFA and ICMSA. MulkearLIFE is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland and is a flagship EC LIFE Nature project – one of only two such projects awarded funding in Ireland in recent years. The Mulkear, together with its principal tributaries (Dead, Bilboa and Newport rivers), drains a catchment area of approximately 650 km² spanning counties Limerick and Tipperary. The Mulkear River is one of the top five salmon rivers in Ireland when its relative size is considered, producing a significant annual salmon run. It also holds substantial populations of Sea Lamprey and Otter are known to be widespread, however, recent evidence suggests numbers are in decline. The main project objective is to restore, through in-stream rehabilitation works, degraded habitats along stretches of the Mulkear River and its principal tributaries. This work, while beneficial to many species, is targeted at Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter.

Key Project Actions:

- Enhancing the populations of Atlantic salmon and Sea lamprey through in-stream rehabilitation work.
- Removing obstacles to the annual adult sea lamprey river upstream migration for spawning and recruitment.
- Monitoring this via radio-tracking of sea lamprey to determine habitat use and how obstacles are approached.
- Improving breeding, resting habitat and food supply for European otters.
- Stopping and reversing the damage caused by invasive exotics (Giant hogweed and Japanese knotweed).
- Addressing local water quality concerns by working with farmers and farming representative bodies (IFA / ICMSA) on alternative solutions to cattle drinks.
- Promoting the MulkearLIFE's work through a range of events at a local and wider community level including illustrated talks, workshops, primary and post primary school visits, presentations and school field trips.

Expected Results:

- Enhancement of the populations of Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and Otters in the Mulkear Catchment.
- Greater awareness and understanding of issues affecting the SAC and how to manage the catchment
- Development of practical, costed and transferable management prescriptions for habitat rehabilitation for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otters for other Natura 2000 sites.

Project Budget:	Total budget is €1,740,818 - 50% funded by the EU LIFE Programme
Project Partners:	Inland Fisheries Ireland (formerly the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board) is the Coordinating Beneficiary and Office of Public Works and Limerick County Council
Project Supporters:	NPWS (Co-financier), North & South Tipperary County Councils (Co-financiers), IFA, ICMSA, Coillte, ESB and Shannon, Mulkear & District Anglers Associations (Project Supporters)
Project Team:	Project Manager; Mr. Ruairí Ó Conchúir, Project Officer; Mr. Glen Wightman
Project Timeframe:	To 1 st January 2014
Contact Details:	MulkearLIFE, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick, Ireland
E-mail:	info@mulkearlifeproject.com Web: www.mulkearlifeproject.com
Tel:	+ 353 (0)61 300 238 / Fax: + 353 (0)61 300 308 / Mob: + 353 (0)87 062 5582 / (0)87 7713695

Appendix 3

Illustrated Summary of MulkearLIFE's Work With the Farming Community



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

Proposed Work With The Local Farming Community

The work of MulkearLIFE with the local farming community is focused on building a partnership based approach to examine practical cost effective ways by which river water quality on farms can be improved. River water quality is a concern in areas affected by cattle disturbance due to trampling and faecal disturbance. The proposed work is of a pilot nature and is designed to be a learning process for MulkearLIFE and the local farmers involved. It is hoped that it will help inform policy and the implementation of progressive agri-environmental measures with other farmers on how riparian zones (watercourse margins) can be better managed. It is proposed that 12 farms within the Mulkear catchment will be assessed to pilot this work. Participation will be entirely voluntary and it is hoped that pilot sites will help promote good water stewardship within the wider SAC through the development of sustainable water solutions where farmers are relying on direct access or cattle drinks for watering their cattle.

Selection Process

Farmers will be invited to meetings organised by Inland Fisheries Ireland – Shannon River Basin District (formerly the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board) in co-operation with the local branches of the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) and the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA). These meetings will be organised with the support of Teagasc. Sites will be selected from interested applicants who meet the experimental criteria namely that there is a beef or dairy enterprise on the farm and that there is a substantial watercourse on the land. Sites from both upland and lowland SAC areas in the catchment will be selected.

Nature of the Problem

Rivers affected by cattle disturbance (trampling and faecal disturbance) have been identified as a problem by Teagasc and by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Areas identified in the EPA river reports will be prioritised. Such areas include Cauteen, Cahernahaille, Cappawhite and Dooglasha which were identified by the EPA as problem areas in their river reports in 2002 and 2005. In these reports the EPA identify cattle disturbance as a significant threat to water quality in sections of the Mulkear River, particularly in tributary streams where salmon spawn. Cattle need water however and it is difficult to control the impacts of direct cattle access. In addition, even where cattle drinks are provided significant soiling can occur. Therefore, MulkearLIFE is examining innovative, cost effective, ways in which to address these concerns and help farmers avoid penalties.

The Extent of the Problem in the Mulkear Catchment



It is hoped that this work will help develop sustainable water solutions for cattle which formerly had direct access to rivers / watercourses. These solutions will range from fencing and water harvesting using farm sheds to collect rain water, to more novel solar powered water pumps where the former and other techniques are not feasible.

Planned Work

MulkearLIFE is working to ensure that grazing animals do not have direct access to watercourses and will work with the pilot farmers to provide an alternative water supply and drinking troughs. The aim of the pilot is to ensure that animals do not have access to any watercourses on the farm and ideally these watercourses will be fenced. Water troughs will be provided for cattle in fields adjoining the river / watercourses but away from the river / watercourse in question. There must be one trough per field or plot. All work will be part of a whole farm plan and the site and location of troughs will be marked on a farm map / plan.

Looking at Practical Cost Effective Solutions – Use of Nose / Pasture Pumps



Expected Results

These sites in turn will become demonstration sites for MulkearLIFE to encourage other farmers to set up similar systems. This work has strong linkages with the Water Framework Directive as it encourages sustainable water use and aims to protect the water environment (i.e., return to good ecological status).

Looking at Practical Cost Effective Solutions – Use of Fencing and Controlled Access



Looking at Practical Cost Effective Solutions – Use of Solar Powered Pumps



For further information please contact:

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