



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

Press Release

17th April 2011

Mulkear Conservation Volunteers Outing In Glorious Sunshine

In glorious sunshine a large party of Mulkear Conservation Volunteers meet at Annacotty on Saturday last (16 April 2011) to undertake a considerable body of work to implement the first phase of the Management Plan for Himalayan Balsam at this important high nature value and high amenity value site.

Members came from throughout the catchment to lend their considerable skill and effort to undertake riparian management at Annacotty with the work focused primarily on addressing the considerable problem of Himalayan Balsam.

During the outing it was noted that the Management Plan is designed to ensure that the infestation on Himalayan Balsam at the site is addressed on a sustained and long-term basis and that in time the site may be used as a public demonstration site regarding the dangers posed by invasive weeds.

While the work was backbreaking a great deal of enjoyment was had by all in removing tens of thousands of Himalayan Balsam plants. Earlier in the week, survey work had revealed densities in 1 metre quadrates of up to 82% coverage with on an average of 8 plants per square. Thus in the higher density areas over 600 plants per square metre were recorded. These plants were intermixed with native riparian vegetation and the Mulkear Conservation Volunteers worked to ensure that this vegetation was retained. A limited number of Giant Hogweed plants were also removed from the site.

The conservation outing also included a general clean up of the site and a discussion on habitat creation and the work of MulkearLIFE to ease Sea Lamprey passage over the Annacotty weir. The sea lamprey will return into the system within the next month and easement measures will be installed on site with the next number of weeks.

Thanks to all who gave up their Saturday morning to help make the outing such a success.

The next scheduled outing of the Mulkear Conservation Volunteers will take place on the 26 May 2011 and is scheduled for the Glasha River (Glasha Bridge site). It was noted that evening sessions may take place in the period between now and late May. Full details will be posted on this website. Membership of the Mulkear Conservation Volunteers is free and is open to all. The work programme is linked to and supported by the MulkearLIFE project. Full details are available here on this website under the ‘Reports & Resources’ section. Outings take place on Saturday mornings. If you wish to join or receive additional information please e-mail ruairi@mulkearlife.com or phone 061 498 769.

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.

Issued by:

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