



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

Press Release

18th February 2013

MulkearLIFE Present at LIFE+ Information Seminar

MulkearLIFE was delighted to be afforded the opportunity on Friday of last week (15 February) to present at the LIFE+ Information Seminar, held in Dublin. In what is a particularly important time for Ireland as it currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the EU, MulkearLIFE was thrilled to present to the large audience gathered in Dublin's Custom House.

The aim of the LIFE+ Seminar, hosted by the Irish LIFE Contact Point in the Department of Environment, was to inform potential applicants about the LIFE+ Programme and the process of applying for LIFE funding. Aside from current LIFE+ projects, the event was attended by a large number of NGOs, universities, state and semi-state bodies, government departments, together with a large number of LEADER companies and ordinary individuals with an interest in the LIFE programme from throughout the country.

MulkearLIFE's presentation outlined the practical measures to follow prior to making a LIFE application. The project outlined the Project's own experience in the start-up phase and the success the Project has achieved over the past number of years. MulkearLIFE's presentation outlined various practical tips (do's & don'ts) prior to the LIFE+ application stage and at application stage. The project also outlined the value of LIFE funding. The presentation also focused on the work of Inland Fisheries Ireland, as coordinating beneficiary, and the key functions of this important role. The work of the two main associated beneficiaries (or project partners), namely the Office of Public Works and Limerick County Council, was also outlined in considerable detail. The role of the project's main co-financer, the National Parks & Wildlife Service was also outlined in detail. The presentation also focused on the importance of information dissemination activities and the need to engage local communities and schoolchildren in particular. It was noted, MulkearLIFE has engaged over 1,700 local schoolchildren in its environmental education programme involving classroom presentations and river based school fieldtrips.

The seminar included an excellent presentation by Mr. Philip Murphy, Manager of EU Affairs with Coillte. The presentation outlined the success of Coillte's involvement in the LIFE programme over the past 10 years and gave details of the nature of Coillte's award winning LIFE projects. On the theme Policy and Governance, Gillian Bruton, Project Manager of the DEPOTEC project gave an update on the implementation of the UCC based project. Maura Walsh, IRD DuhallowLIFE and Brian Callanan, Tourism for Conservation LIFE Project, also gave interesting presentations. The seminar also included a presentation from Dr. Rebecca Jeffrey, the National Parks & Wildlife Service, outlining the priorities of the NPWS over the next number of years and the potential for LIFE+ projects in priority areas.

Ms. Anne Burrill, Deputy Head of the LIFE Nature Unit, DG Environment, European Commission, gave two extremely interesting and detailed presentations. One focused on the 2013 Call and the application process, including the E-proposal system. It was noted the 2013 call would be made tomorrow, Tuesday 19 February 2013.

Ms. Burrill also outlined the process followed by the project evaluators and the process by which applications are checked against the LIFE+ eligibility criteria. She outlined in detail the timeframes for the LIFE+ selection process and the awarding of grants to successful LIFE projects.

MulkearLIFE was delighted to have the opportunity to outline in person to Ms. Burrill, as Deputy Head of the LIFE Nature Unit, the nature of the project's restoration work and the success of the catchment management process to date. MulkearLIFE's plans to seek a project modification in the first quarter of 2013 were also outlined to Ms. Burrill.

MulkearLIFE is extremely grateful to the Department of Environment and in particular to Ms. Breda Bailey and Mr. Brian Earley from the LIFE+ Programme National Contact point and to Mr. Kevin Greene in the Department of Environment for giving MulkearLIFE the opportunity to present at this important networking and information-sharing event.

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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