



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

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## Press Release

19<sup>th</sup> March 2010

### **Details of 1st Block Of Free Illustrated Talks Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick**

Mulkear LIFE today announces details of its first block of free Illustrated Talks. The block of illustrated talks form part of the four year Environmental Education Programme of the Mulkear LIFE project which will target primary and secondary schools and the wider local community within the Mulkear catchment in counties Limerick and Tipperary. The Mulkear LIFE project considers environmental education as being of the utmost importance and is delighted to announce the details of the Spring 2010 Series of four illustrated talks on the extraordinarily rich natural heritage of the Mulkear Catchment. The series will take place over four Wednesdays in April and will include leading experts sharing their knowledge of biodiversity and nature. The venue for all the talks is the Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick and all talks will commence at 8.00pm sharp. Admission to the talks is free of charge.

The first talk will take place on Wednesday 7th April. The guest speakers are Mr. Ruairí Ó Conchúir and Mr. Glen Wightman of the Mulkear LIFE project. The talk is entitled “An Introduction to Mulkear LIFE”. Mr. Ó Conchúir is the project manager and Mr. Wightman is the project officer of the Mulkear LIFE project. The talk will focus on the work undertaken to date on the EC funded LIFE Nature project and the plans for the next four years to restore degraded habitats along stretches of the Mulkear River and its tributaries for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and Otter.

Fran Igoe will guest speak on the 14th April and his talk is called “Biodiversity on Irish Rivers”. Dr. Igoe is well known in fisheries circles and within the fish conservation community. He has worked in the past for the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board and is presently working with the Southern Regional Fisheries Board. Dr. Igoe was instrumental in securing EC funding for the development of the Mulkear LIFE project and is actively involved in the Irish Char Conservation Group.

“Fishing for Conservation – The Perspective of an Angler and Inspector” is the title of the third talk in the series which will take place on Wednesday, 21st April. Mr. Ken O’Neill will be guest speaker on this occasion. The talk will give an overview of what fishing for conservation is all about from the unique and insightful perspective of years of field work of a fisheries inspector. Mr. O’Neill is employed by the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board as an Assistant Fisheries Inspector.

The series of illustrated talks will conclude on Wednesday 28th April with a talk by well known birdman Mr. John Murphy entitled “Birds on the Water – Birdlife within the Mulkear Catchment”. Mr. Murphy is a wildlife expert and director of Waxwing Wildlife Productions which made the six-part series “Alien Invaders” for TG4. The series focused on many of Ireland’s newest wildlife species. Mr. Murphy leads bird-watching trips on behalf of the Clare branch of BirdWatch Ireland and is regarded as one of the leading bird experts in Ireland.

Admission to all talks is free of charge and all are welcome. Further information regarding any of the talks may be obtained from [www.mulkearlifeproject.com](http://www.mulkearlifeproject.com) or [info@mulkearlifeproject.com](mailto:info@mulkearlifeproject.com) or from the Mulkear LIFE project / Shannon Regional Fisheries Board on telephone 061 300 238 / 087 062 5582

## 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](http://www.mulkearlifeproject.com)
4. Shannon Regional Fisheries Board 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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