



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

Press Release

21st June 2011

Second year of School Environmental Education Programme Completed

In sunny and showery weather, which has been typical for much of the ‘Irish Summer’ to date, MulkearLIFE yesterday completed the second year of its Environmental Education Programme with a wonderful group of students and teachers from Monard National School.

The Programme targets primary and post primary schools within the Mulkear catchment and has to date reached more than 850 school children, their teachers and teacher assistants in over 30 schools. The Programme involves two engagements – a classroom presentation by MulkearLIFE and a field trip within the Mulkear Catchment. Events take place during the academic year in the hope that the field trips will take place in glorious sunshine in April, May and June.

The Programme gives the school children involved a heightened sense of “environmental ownership” and recognition of the importance of the river catchment as an important natural resource. In particular, it promotes awareness of the catchment and the habitats and species in the rivers and streams. Developing this greater understanding and respect for the flora, fauna and physical habitat is of a great help to the school children and their teachers to begin to comprehend the positive and negative environmental impacts of our own daily actions.

The Programme highlights the significance of Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter in the Mulkear and the conservation issues which surround them in the catchment. The work also focuses on the wider biodiversity surrounding us all and how this can be enhanced and protected through supporting the principles of Leave No Trace.

Field trips to the river put theory into practice as the children learn about the wonderful natural heritage of the Mulkear River. This is done through real practical research; kick sampling for invertebrates, assessing water quality, electro fishing, assessing the impact of invasive weeds, habitat survey work and general fun of exploring rivers and riparian zones.

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.mulkearlife.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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