



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

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## Press Release

24<sup>th</sup> August 2013

### **The Magical Mulkear - Success of Field Trip**

The second event hosted by MulkearLIFE as part of Heritage Week 2013 took place today, Saturday 24th August 2013. The half-day field trip entitled ‘The Magical Mulkear: A Field Trip Of Discovery’ was a great success with a good variety of sites visited.

The bus excursion was designed to start at the confluence of the Mulkear and Shannon rivers. From there to progress upstream to visit a range of exciting sites throughout the catchment with a focus on the rich biodiversity of the Mulkear catchment (from source to mouth).

The field trip was a very enjoyable outing and the weather held-off for the most part. The event started at the confluence of the Mulkear and Shannon Rivers where issues including alluvial woodlands, non-native invasive plant species and flooding was discussed.

Progressing upstream, the field trip included visits to various barriers on the lower section of the Mulkear River reviewing both the natural and built heritage at various sites including Annacotty and Ballyclogh weirs. Grey Herons, mallards, dippers and kingfishers obliged us at various sites.

The field trip also included a review of the work of the Mulkear Conservation Volunteers over the past three years, including of the work undertaken in the Clare Glens.

Site visits were also undertaken to review the work of MulkearLIFE / Inland Fisheries Ireland and its main project partners, the OPW and Limerick County Council, to restore instream and riparian habitat. The rubble mats downstream of Brittas Bridge were viewed. This work, which was undertaken by Limerick County Council earlier this summer, has proven to be a great success.

Stimulating discussions took place on a range of issues as the group moved from site to site. This included topics such as conservation farming in High Nature Value (HNV) areas, otters and mink, the use of dippers boxes, protecting species rich grasslands and meadows, protecting our built heritage, tree planting and forestation and the industrialisation of upland areas of the catchment. The rain, as predicted, arrived in the afternoon but this did not dampen the spirits of the participants and a great day was had by all.

## 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](http://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:**

Ruairí Ó Conchúir, Project Manager – MulkearLIFE  
Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick Office)  
Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick  
Tel: 061 300 238 / Fax: 061 300 308 / Mob: 087 062 5582  
E-mail: [info@mulkearlife.com](mailto:info@mulkearlife.com)  
Web: [www.mulkearlife.com](http://www.mulkearlife.com) / [www.inlandfisheries.ie](http://www.inlandfisheries.ie)

