



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

Press Release

5th November 2010

Mulkear In Flood

Following very heavy rains over the past two weeks (which are set to continue into early next week) the Mulkear River is in flood today (Friday, 5th Nov 2010). Significant numbers of fish (salmon and trout) were seen jumping the weir at Annacotty during the week but with today's flood levels fish passage over the weir is likely to be under the water.

The increase in water levels in recent weeks has resulted in the cessation of all instream works by MulkearLIFE and its project partners, Limerick County Council and the Office of Public Works, for this year. Instream work on the main Mulkear channel will now not recommence until after the spawning season and the emergence of juvenile fish from the spawning gravels. The target date for recommencement of work is the 1st July 2011.

This week's flood event, which would be deemed a normal flood event, comes also exactly a year after the historic flooding of November 2009. On that occasion there had been a build of water in rivers and lakes for a number of weeks but from Thursday 19th November 2009 the situation became very serious. Heavy rain on this day and Friday 20th November 2009 caused record floods in Western, Southern and Central parts of Ireland, involving almost 1,500 evacuations. The whole Shannon watershed was affected, from counties Leitrim and Roscommon in the north to Clare and Limerick in the south. The Shannon River, the longest river in Ireland reached a record level of 39.2m in Athlone, Co. Westmeath, on the 25th of November with water levels remaining close to this level until the 30th of November. This was the most serious flood event ever recorded since records began 100 years previously. The focus area of the MulkearLIFE project, the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (the Mulkear catchment), was in flood with all of the main tributaries together with the main Mulkear channel in flood.

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:

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
Web: www.mulkearlife.com / www.inlandfisheries.ie

