



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

Press Release

5th October 2010

2nd Year of Environmental Education Programme Kicks Off

MulkearLIFE has been thrilled with the take up by local schools on the project’s Environmental Education Programme the second year of which kicked off this week. As part of project’s Environmental Education Programme last year (2009/2010 academic year) 20 local schools (15 primary and 5 post-primary) were visited from January to March 2010. An illustrated PowerPoint presentation, a quiz and a prize giving ceremony formed part of the classroom engagement. However, it was the half-day field trips, which proved to be the highlight for most schools. Students especially enjoyed identifying fish species from electro fishing, examining and identifying invertebrates like mayfly and stonefly and seeing how these invertebrates could act as water pollution indicators.

This year (2010/2011) 20 schools will again be included in the programme with an initial 7 classroom engagements already completed. The field trips will follow and will be designed to be a student led voyage of discovery where the staff of MulkearLIFE and Inland Fisheries Ireland play a facilitating role. The field trips will focus on the work of MulkearLIFE and through group work explore the major themes of river restoration work, removal of alien invaders, general river / riverbank biodiversity, indicators of otter life along the river, life cycles of Atlantic salmon and sea lamprey, other fish species and invertebrates and water quality indicators. An upstream river walk will also form part of the field trip to discuss how we can enjoy the river environment while lessening our impact by following the seven principles of Leave No Trace.

Last year’s field trips were an over-whelming success with great thanks due to the staff of the various schools, their preparation work and most importantly the fantastic young researchers at both primary and secondary level. It is hoped that this year will be as equally enjoyable.

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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