



Mulkear EIP

Innovation, Technology & Knowledge Transfer for Farmer Led Enhancement of Water Quality, Instream Habitat and Riparian Management in the Mulkear Catchment

Geographical Location	IE 053 South-West Region
Keywords	Catchment Sensitive Farming, Partnership Approach, Water Quality, Biodiversity, Farm Viability, Innovation, Sustainable Water Management
Project Leader	David Thompson, Mulkear Catchment Ltd (email: info@mulkeareip.com)
Project Type	Operational Group
Starting Date	2019
End Date	2023
Project Status	Ongoing
Main Funding Source	Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020
Total Budget	€1,172,830



Project Rationale

Agriculture is the single most significant pressure impacting water quality in Ireland. In the past 15 years, a major transformation has occurred in the agriculture sector with output dramatically increasing in response to strategic targets set by the Irish government. In 2016 the Gross Agricultural Output was valued at almost €7 billion, with the beef and dairy sectors dominating (70%). Milk production has increased by 4% annually since 2012. This unprecedented level of growth is placing significant pressure on Ireland's natural water bodies.



Project Aims & Objectives

This project aims to deliver a catchment sensitive approach to farming in a catchment 'At Risk', by working with farmers to bring about improvements in water quality, riparian management and instream habitat.

To achieve these goals, the project will pursue the following specific objectives:

- (i) Build capacity of farmers to identify and mitigate agricultural impacts on water quality through practical on-farm measures and shared learning;
- (ii) Deliver a locally-led, collaborative, partnership model to enable partners collectively identify key water quality concerns, with farmers central in the co-design, development and implementation of measures &
- (iii) Celebrate the Mulkear via community outreach work based on improving local water quality, biodiversity and riparian management.

Project Activities

- Develop a model of collaborative working to identify key water quality concerns.
- Develop and deliver a tailored Catchment Sensitive Farming training programme.
- Achieve a real collaborative partnership through the co-design of a suite of farm measures.
- Complete detailed local catchment assessments and develop baseline data for monitoring.
- Undertake detailed farm risk assessments to ensure the right measure in the right place.
- Share best practice and communicate widely via Digital Story Telling, local volunteers, and an award system to recognise farmers and local river champions.
- Develop a community outreach programme to improve water quality, biodiversity and riparian management.

