

River View

The latest news from the Inishowen Rivers Trust

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Inishowen Rivers Trust

t: 087 647 8183

e. inishowenriverstrust@gmail.com

w. www.inishowenriverstrust.com

a. Ballybrack, Moville, Co. Donegal

CLG 587285 | RCN 20153106 | CHY 22625



Riparian Buffers on the Culdaff River

The Culdaff Riparian Buffer Zone Scheme (CRiBZ) which is managed by the Trust is well on its way. The scheme pays farmers to fence and plant trees and hedging on the riparian zones of the Culdaff River. The project aims to promote farmland biodiversity and improve the water quality of the river but there are many other benefits too. Improving water quality ensures we have good clean drinking water, allows biodiversity to flourish in the habitats and prevents issues such as bank erosion. Understanding how best to plant and manage riverbank vegetation will help to maintain normal river processes and support the wide biodiversity present in our rivers. The Culdaff River supports good populations of salmon and trout and is one of the few rivers open for fishing under licence in Inishowen. However the fish



need good habitats to live in, clean water, shade from the sun and enough food. Trees on a river provide that shade and provide a source of insects.

The scheme also provides beehives produced by Donagh Bees to promote pollinators. Different types of hives are available - hives to allow harvesting of honey or freedom hives (see image) that can simply be set up in a quiet corner of the farm and the bees will set up home there. Promoting bees on the farm increases pollination of many of our native trees and play an important role in pollinating crops such as apples and strawberries.

If you are interested in taking part in the scheme please contact us. Details of the scheme can be found on our website www.inishowenriverstrust.com/cribz/



River Basin Management Plan

The consultation on the draft RBMP 3rd cycle 2022-2027 closed at the end of March. This consultation gave the public a chance to comment on how water will be managed in Ireland for the next 5 years including drinking water, wastewater treatment and the various pressures that impact on our rivers and natural waterbodies. The Board of the IRT submitted observations and comments around several themes. The final plan is due to be published by the EPA at the end of 2022.

- Public Participation
- Policy coherence
- Wastewater treatment
- Forestry
- Physical modifications
- The development of Catchment management plans



Barriers on streams prevent sediment transport and are barrier to fish movement

NFM project completed in Clonmany

Ireland's first community based Natural Flood Management project has been completed in Clonmany. The IRT worked with landowners throughout 2021 to install 69 leaky dams and gully stuffing on the Ballyhallan, Bocharney and Cloontagh Rivers. Leaky dams are created by using large locally sourced tree trunks or timber to create a barrier across the stream, which rests on both banks and is secured in place. In normal flows water passes under the barrier unimpeded but during periods of heavy rainfall water levels will rise and water will be held back momentarily by the wood. Water can still 'leak' through the structure but the overall effect is to slow the flow and prevent a flood peak downstream. When placed in series (e.g., 10 dams along a small tributary) the dams can slow down the flood water by several minutes. We are looking forward to seeing how the dams perform during floods and what more we can do to reduce the impact of floods for the future. More information on the project can be found on our website www.nfminishowen.com and you can also check out a number of videos we created for the project on construction and how leaky dams work (see our YouTube channel). Our recently released video 'The Night of the Big Flood' is a record of interviews from a number of local people recounting their experiences of the devastating flood of August 2017, an event which has inspired the local community to act by increasing the resilience of local rivers.



A log leaky dam on the Bocharney River

ON THE GROUND
NATURAL FLOOD
MANAGEMENT
INISHOWEN



Visitors viewing the dams installed on the Ballyhallan River.

Tree Planting Season

We love to plant trees and to help in any way we can to promote tree planting in Inishowen. Did you know that Inishowen has less than 6% forestry cover? That's half the national average. Trees have a vital role to play in the climate change and biodiversity crises. Trees sequester carbon, produce oxygen, clean our air and water by filtering out harmful pollutants. They provide habitat and food, wood for building and as a fuel. They bind our landscape, protect our riverbanks and are wonderful to sit under.

We're delighted that this year we have again teamed up with All Ireland charity Trees on The Land to help distribute free trees to landowners across Inishowen. This year we delivered trees to 12 different locations in Inishowen including Burt, Tremone, Malin, Carndonagh, Moville, Illies and Clonmany. In addition to that we are also hoping to plant 6,000 trees in the Culdaff area by the end of the season. That will bring the total number of trees planted through this partnership to over 10,000 since 2017. That is an amazing achievement and we would like to thank all the landowners who have committed to nurturing these trees for future generations. Thanks to all the volunteers too who have worked so hard to plant them over the years.

We're looking forward to next year already!



10,000
TREES

A word from the Chair

Hello! It's lovely to be able to share all of our news in these *RiverView* newsletters, and as you can see we're as busy as ever with a diverse range of projects, both large and small! We're very much looking forward to sunnier, warmer times and being able to connect with our volunteers again out on a riverbank. There will be plenty of hands on activities starting with tree planting in the next few weeks along the Culdaff river as part of the CRiBZ project, (mentioned in this newsletter) and bank revetments. We're hoping to run a range of training courses again this year as we continue to skill up our volunteers so that we can advance our work to restore healthy waterbodies to Inishowen. Look out for our 'Introduction to Ecology' course coming soon!

On the 28th April, we have our A.G.M and our current team of 6 Trustees are always on the look out for new board members. Trustees of the Inishowen Rivers Trust are all volunteers too. We meet approximately every 6 weeks and now that the Covid restrictions have been lifted, we are looking forward to meeting in person so we can chat over a cuppa! If you're interested in joining the Board, please get in touch! ~ Claire (the Chair)



iCatch goes from strength to strength

Rivers trusts and catchment organisations are forming across Ireland and the IRT are proud to have been involved in the formation of the iCatch Network last year. The network provides a forum for groups to share our experiences, knowledge and collaborate on training. Over the last 18 months the network has gone from strength to strength and now has 15 member organisations. Recently we met face to face for the first time in Sligo where we learned more about river processes through training provided by Field Studies Ireland. Many thanks to our coordinator Liz at the Maigne Rivers Trust and to the Wheel and LAWPRO for funding. iCatch provides Inishowen volunteers with a chance to get involved too. Contact us if you'd like to learn more.

Thanks to our funders

The IRT is a charity and relies fully on funding and donations from the public. Staff funding is provided through the Resilience Pilot Project funded through the Local Authority Waters Programme by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and managed by The Rivers Trust (UK). If you are interested in supporting the Trust, you can donate via iDonate  or through our website.

