

Kevin Donnellan  
LIFE Blanket Bog Restoration project manager  
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Portumna  
Co. Galway

**Subject: Proposed Kingarow restoration site and adjacent freshwater pearl mussel populations**

26<sup>th</sup> October, 2007

Dear Kevin,

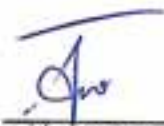
I am writing to express my regret for the delay to initiating work on the proposed blanket bog restoration site at Kingarow, Co. Donegal and to explain the difficulties encountered in relation to freshwater pearl mussel survey during 2007.

As you are aware, there is a population of *Margaritifera margaritifera*, the freshwater pearl mussel, in the River Finn, which is downstream of the proposed Kingarow site. During 2005, I raised concerns in relation to the potential impacts of nutrient release from felling the Kingarow site on the Finn population, as well as any mussels that might be located further upstream and closer to the plantation in the Cummirk or Sruhaunloughmuck Rivers.

It was decided to survey the Cummirk and Sruhaunloughmuck Rivers for mussels. NPWS contracted a *Margaritifera* expert to carry out this survey during 2007, as part of a wider mussel project. *Margaritifera* is typically surveyed during the summer period, when cloud cover is low, light intensities are appropriate and, most importantly, river flows are near minimum. Unfortunately, the heavy rain during summer 2007 made it one of the most difficult *Margaritifera* survey years on record. Our contractor visited the rivers downstream of Kingarow on a number of occasions and was unable to safely enter the water each time. At this late stage of the year, it will not be possible to survey these rivers until March 2008 at the earliest.

I understand from contact with Cairiona Douglas and Dr John Conaghan that the project is due to end on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December, 2007. Please accept my apologies in relation to the continued delays and subsequent loss of the proposed Kingarow site from the LIFE restoration project.

Sincerely,



Dr Aine O Connor

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