



PRESS RELEASE – 11 NOVEMBER 2011

MINISTERS HELP LAUNCH €3M CROSS-BORDER RURAL TOURISM INITIATIVE

Mr Shane McEntee, T.D. Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Minister Michelle O’Neill MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development joined invited guests, local elected representatives including the Chairmen of Cavan and Leitrim County Councils at the Slieve Russell Hotel, Ballyconnell on Wednesday 9th November 2011 to celebrate the launch of a €3m innovative cross border initiative.

Supported under the INTERREG IVA programme, Harnessing Natural Resources (HNR) comprises of 26 rural tourism and enterprise initiatives spanning the three counties of Cavan, Fermanagh and Leitrim. Among the projects being funded are three flagship projects:- The development of a Rural Development Centre in Dowra, County Cavan, the upgrading of the Marble Arch Caves Visitor Centre in County Fermanagh and the redevelopment of the Sliabh an Iarainn Visitor Centre at Drumshanbo in County Leitrim.

Delivery of the project is being managed by a consortium led by Cavan County Enterprise Board in collaboration with Cavan County Council, Fermanagh District Council, Leitrim County Council, Coillte, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Swanlinbar Development Association and Cavan County Enterprise Fund.

The funding is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) in association with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development NI (DARD) and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG).

Minister Shane McEntee stated that he was “delighted to see the types of well-judged proposals that are being supported by the Project. These are good, sensible ideas; ideas that will take advantage of the potential of the natural resources and the stunning beauty of the countryside in these areas.”

Expressing her congratulations to all the project partners involved, Minister Michelle O’Neill said she is proud that her Department is supporting the HNR project and other strategic cross-border rural projects. Minister O’Neill added: “I know that rural communities will face many challenges and difficulties in years to come but they have significant potential to contribute to sustainable development not only at a local level but also regionally and nationally. The scale and breadth of the



Harnessing Natural Resources project certainly puts this region at an advantage to be able to tackle future challenges head on.”

Speaking at the launch event, Pat Colgan, Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), said of the project: “I am very glad that the SEUPB has been able to support this project through European funding. This initiative brings together a number of local councils and key agents committed to the development of the region. It represents an excellent example of the strategic projects that the INTERREG IVA Programme wishes to encourage, involving cross border cooperation and genuine partnership in the planning, implementation, staffing and financing of projects capable of making a real contribution to the region. It follows in the tradition of a long line of projects financed in the Cavan, Leitrim and Fermanagh region by both the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes. Since the year 2000 over €97 million has been contributed to the economy of the region.”

Vincent Reynolds, CEO of Cavan County Enterprise Board welcomed the project and said it would contribute significantly to tourism and enterprise development, increase visitor numbers and create valuable new employment throughout the area. He also paid tribute to the involvement and support of the community groups in the project area whose input was invaluable.

- ENDS.

Notes to Editor:

The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Finance in Ireland. It is responsible for managing two EU structural funds Programmes PEACE III and INTERREG IV designed to enhance cross-border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society. The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

The INTERREG IVA 2007-2013 Programme, funded through the European Regional Development Fund, is worth €256 million and aims to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders. It has two distinct priority measures to create co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable cross-border region.

For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu



List of Projects.

- **Harnessing Natural Resources (HNR) Project**
- **Twenty Six Projects Approved under Six Programmes of Development**

- **Walking and Cycling Trails Programme**
- Glenfarne Forest Amenity (Leitrim)
- Killykeen Cycle Trail (Cavan)
- Blacklion Village Trail (Cavan)
- The Gowlan Loops (Cavan)
- Cottage Lawn, Belcoo (Fermanagh)
- Cladagh Glen (Fermanagh)
- Rusheen, Garrison (Fermanagh)
- Cross Border Walks Network (Leitrim)

- **Attractions Development Programme**
- Magho Cliffs (Fermanagh)
- Lough Achork Accessible Trail (Fermanagh)
- Lough Navar Lakes (Fermanagh)
- Lough Navar Forest
- (Refurbishment of Toilets) (Fermanagh)
- Sliabh an Iarainn Visitor Centre (Leitrim)
- Rural Development Centre Dowra (Cavan)
- Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark (Fermanagh)

- **Touring Trails Development Programme**
- Car and Motorcycle touring routes (Leitrim)
- Open Country Tours (Fermanagh)

- **Angling Development Programme**
- Glencar Lake (Leitrim)
- Lough Doon (Leitrim)
- Corrigecor Lake (Leitrim)
- Derrycassan Lake Ballyconnell (Cavan)
- Lough Allen Amenities (Leitrim)

- **Recreational Facilities Programme**



- Lough Allen Multipurpose
 - Recreational Facility (Leitrim)
 - Swanlinbar Multipurpose
 - Recreational Facility (Cavan)

 - **Enterprise Programme**

 - Cross Border Rural Business Park (Cavan)
 - The Market House Artists Studio (Leitrim)
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