



## NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2007

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EDUCATION CENTRE OPENS

SIGNS & G.I.S IN PLACE

OPEN DAYS

TIMBER SALES

THANK YOU

## MANCH PROJECT UPDATE INFF OPENS SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY EDUCATION CENTRE

The past 10 months have been extremely busy at Manch and have seen the project make a gigantic leap forward with the opening of the Sustainable Forestry Education Centre. During the autumn of 2006 a wooden classroom and office building was purchased, constructed and outfitted and in November INFF employed Lynn Daley as the Centre's full time educational manager. Lynn worked tirelessly through the winter in very basic conditions whilst Project Manager Ian Wright struggled to provide basics such as heating and running water! The Centre opened in March and initial activity has surpassed all expectations. During the spring and summer terms the Centre was visited by 29 school groups totaling more than 800 children. The educational programmes on offer seek to cater for all ranges and abilities. Primary school children can be taken on inspiring, adventure filled walks whilst secondary schools can fulfil Leaving Cert biology and geography field trip requirements. The Centre is equipped to allow students to conduct scientific experiments in woodland and river ecology environments.



Party of School children outside the newly erected classroom

The Centre gained its first official recognition with the awarding of the prestigious Discovery Centre Status by the DOE Discover Primary Science Programme.



INFF has been joined by a third level research student from The Centre for Rural, Water and Forestry Engineering in Nancy, France. Camille will spend six months collecting data from the ongoing demonstration plots.

In February a group of forty farmers visited Manch to learn about hedgerow establishment and management

### Teacher's Comment

"The children had a brilliant day out. I am delighted with the amount of school curriculum covered and the quality of teaching. We will be coming back"! - Comment from one teacher in May 2007

## IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SITE

There have been plenty of improvements around the woodland and demonstration sites. All of the large information signs are now in place and are mounted in beautiful wooden frames locally crafted from sustainably harvested Manch Estate oak. Local consultant Noreen Dalton has established a Geographical Information System (GIS) using software generously donated by ESRI Ltd. In the near future students will be able to use hand held Global Positioning System (GPS) devices to upload information onto a growing GIS data base that will detail the richness of biodiversity on the Estate. INFF believes it will be able to offer courses in GIS management that are unique in Ireland and expects there to be significant interest.



Information signs, part of the GIS

## OPEN DAYS

The INFF demonstration site at Manch is now open to the public on the first Sunday of every month from March to November. Opening hours are 11am to 6pm.

Open days offer the opportunity to walk the 15 Km of clearly sign posted paths through this stunning site. Information boards at key points inform visitors about the demonstration plots and other aspects of INFF's work at Manch. Maps are avail-

able from the Education Centre if you would like to plan a route.

A guided walk leaves the Education Centre at 2 pm and takes in a different part of this 300 acre estate each month.

Activities for children are available at the Education Centre throughout the day.

Please note there is a strict no dogs policy



*Enjoying a walk in the woods with friends*

## SUSTAINABLE TIMBER AT MANCH



*Shire horses extracting timber*

INFF sees the processing of sustainably managed timber as fundamental to the investigation of the potential to manage a woodland for amenity, biodiversity and commercial gain. The woodland at Manch has not been managed for over 60 years. The initial phase of sustainable management has therefore focused on the extraction of fallen, diseased and dangerous trees coupled with the thinning of a small number of trees to open the canopy. The work of extracting

the timber was not covered by forestry grants and despite the belief that the timber will eventually yield a profit INFF was unable to dedicate sufficient funds to such a long term investment. Project Manager Ian Wright has therefore taken on this side of the project as a private venture but financial and other data relating to all aspects of the timber process is being recorded and will be fully available to INFF. Current demand includes bent oak for boatbuilding, small diameter oak for gates and garden furniture, ash for kitchens and window sills, beech for flooring and counter tops, oak for beams and lintels, Douglas fir for beams and cladding, larch for cladding and coppiced sycamore and hazel for rustic furniture making.

### PLEASE GET IN CONTACT!

For more information on the work of INFF, to offer financial donations or to get involved as a volunteer please contact us:

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INFF is a registered Educational Charity.  
(CHY 15746)

## THE MANCH PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

The INFF project at Manch aims to demonstrate that it is possible to establish and manage woodlands in such a way that the functions of amenity, biodiversity and commercial gain can be present in a mutually supportive and truly sustainable fashion and that in particular there is a significant role for broadleaves in Irish Forestry. This is in response to the overwhelming evidence that in Ireland, large mono-culture plantations have a detrimental effect on biodiversity, soil condition and water quality. In many cases they also have little amenity value, are not popular with the general public and produce a poor quality product with low commercial value.

INFF would like to acknowledge the support that it has received from private donations and charitable trusts including the Harold Barry Trust and the tremendous support from Green Belt, Ireland's largest private forestry company. In particular INFF welcomes the support of the Forest Service whilst recognising that INFF seeks to challenge current forestry practice and policy.



THE DEPARTMENT OF  
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Forest Service

