

Session: 2

Working Together to develop a Community Plan for the Protection of the Scotstown River: a Blue Dot Waterbody in North Monaghan

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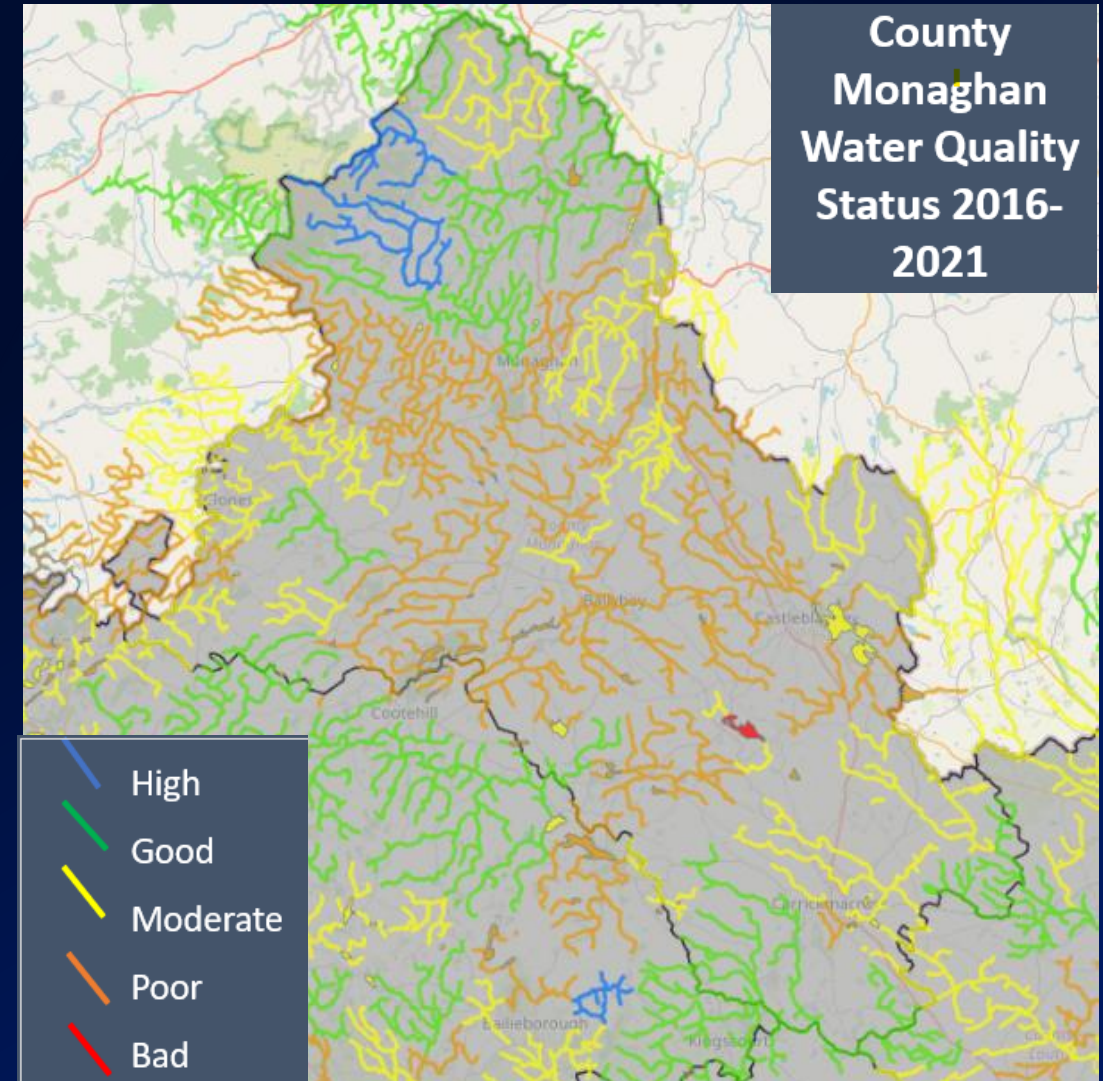


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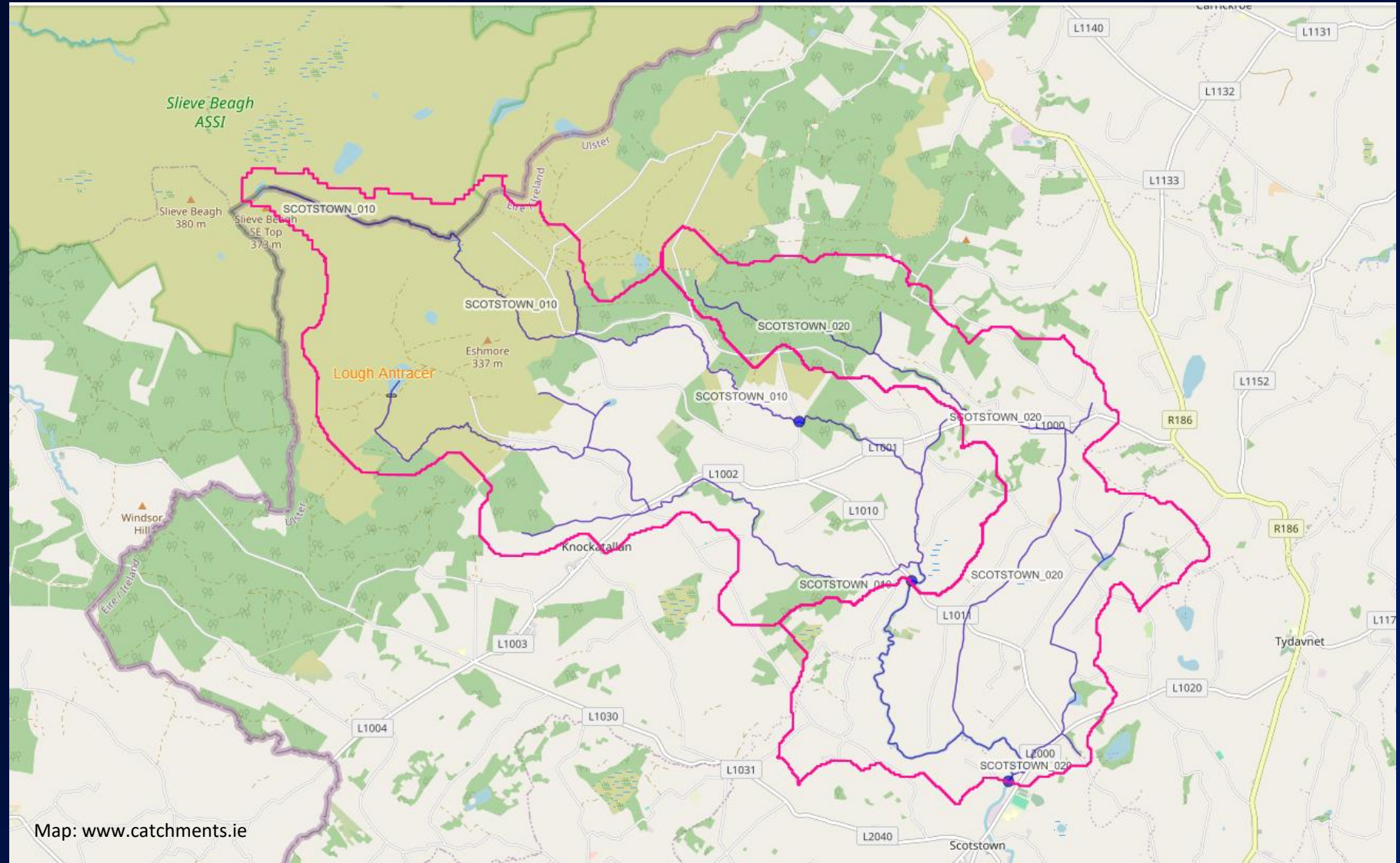
Why the Scotstown River ?

- One of 2 blue dot rivers in County Monaghan
- Main aim of RBMP is to protect high status water quality where it exists
- Nationally there has been a decline in the number of Blue Dots
- These sites are extremely sensitive to water quality changes and very vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as low flow conditions, invasive species and increases in sediment loads
- Monaghan County Council proposed this catchment as an Area for Action for Ireland's 3rd Cycle River Basin Management Plan
- Monaghan County Council tasked with preparing a plan to protect from deterioration



The Scotstown River Catchment Area

- Scotstown 10 & Scotstown 20 RWB
- Catchment Area 33km²
- High Status Objective River Waterbodies
- 3 monitoring sites
- Drinking Water Supply Sources Lough Antracér & Borewells
- Slieve Beagh SPA
- Landuse
- Peat Bogs in the upper catchment
- Improved grassland lower catchment



Monaghan County Council's Protection Plan

Desk Study

- Commenced in 2023 – looked at all available data
- Q values 3 EPA sites
- Hydrochemistry from MCC monitoring
- Review of data indicated that nutrients not a significant issue although periodic spikes noted
- 1 additional location added to programme for hydrochemistry
- Looked at soil types and how water moves in the catchment
- Identified the pathways through which pollutants may move in the catchment as surface pathways -via overland flows , drains and ditches

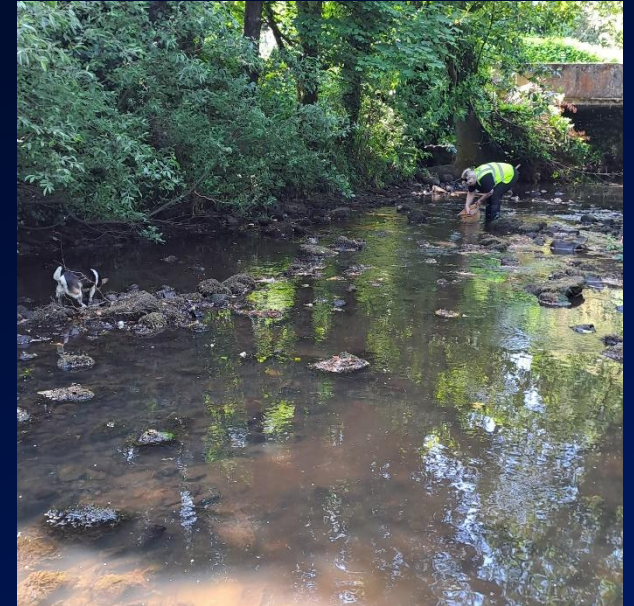
Waterbody Name		Scotstown_10		Scotstown_20
Waterbody Code		UKGBNI1NB030308255		IE_NB_03S020500
Monitoring Station	Station Name	Br S of Knockballyroney	Br at Mill S of Drumscur	Br u/s Scotstown Br
	Station Code	RS03S020200	RS03S020400	RS03S020500
	Station Type	Operational	Operational	Operational
Risk Category		Not At Risk		Not At Risk
WFD Objective		High		High
Biological Status	2010	4.5	4	4
	2013	4.5	4.5	4.5
	2017	4	4.5	4.5
	2019	4.5	4.5	4.5
	2022	4.5	4.5	4.5
Notes		All 3 sites (0200, 0400 and 0500) on the Scotstown River remained in high ecological condition (Q4-S) in 2022.		
Hydrochemistry		Hydrochemistry data for 2021 -2023 is from Monaghan County Council Investigative monitoring programme		
Ortho P mg/l AA EQS 0.025mg/l P	2013	0.009	0.012	0.015
	2021	0.005	nm	0.006
	2022	0.006	nm	0.018
	2023			
Ammonia AA EQS 0.040mg/l N	2013	0.045	0.029	0.039
	2021	0.013	nm	0.032
	2022	0.007	nm	0.031
	2023			
BOD AA EQS 1.3mg/l	2013	1.6	1.5	1.89
	2021	1	nm	1.25
	2022	1	nm	1.83
	2023			



Monaghan County Councils Protection Plan

Investigative Assessment

- Invertebrate assessments , SSIS
June 2023
- Significant issues identified during the assessments - extremely low flows & sedimentation
- Next step to further characterise the catchment and identify areas where protection measures could be installed to prevent from deterioration.
- Meetings held with Monaghan Co Co Biodiversity officer – measures have potential to have benefits for water, biodiversity and climate change



Engagement with Tydavnet GWS

- November 2023 Environment staff & Biodiversity officer met with some reps from the Tydavnet GWS.
- Highlighted the findings from our assessments and concerns that MCC could not do this alone – we needed community input !
- MCC presentation to the Tydavnet GWS AGM - we all need to work together to protect the Scotstown River's excellent water quality



LAWPRO Community Water Development Fund

- MCC assisted Tydavnet GWS in preparing an application for the LAWPRO Community Water Development Fund
- The project was successful in its bid and received €25,000 in funding from LAWPRO

Project title : A Community Plan for the Protection of the Scotstown River: a Blue Dot Waterbody in North Monaghan

2 Elements of the Project

1. A Community engagement initiative to raise awareness of the special Blue Dot area, fostering pride and promoting stewardship of the river.

2. A baseline riparian survey of the Scotstown River was commissioned to assess the catchment's strengths and identify areas for improvement

Project : A Community Plan for the Protection of the Scotstown River: a Blue Dot Waterbody in North Monaghan

- The Scotstown Blue Dot Steering Group was established.
- January 2024, Flynn Furney were appointed to carry out the project with the input from the steering group
- Blue Dot Project Lauch Tydavnet Community Centre
- Tydavnet GWS received the

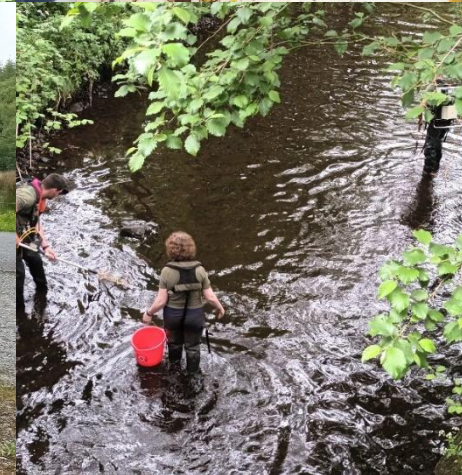


LAWPRO Blue Dot Award 2024

Community Engagement

Schools Engagement

- Consultants visit to 2 schools in the catchment prior to the Blue Dot Day
- Poster Competition
- Bankside Blue Dot Awareness Day, macroinvertebrates & electrofishing



Community Engagement

Farmer Engagement

Farmer streamside event

Discussions on buffer zones
& fencing

Why the blue dot is worth
protecting

Intro to the Flynn Furney

Team



Community Engagement

- Community Water Day @ local GAA grounds
- Leaflet developed as part of the project
- Findings from the riparian survey presented to the community in Tydavnet Community Centre



Baseline Riparian Survey – Summer 2024

- The Flynn Furney Report identified issues & potential locations where pathways can be broken i.e. where measures can be maintained/installed to slow the flow and provide further protection to the river.



Baseline Riparian Survey

- Examples of the issues identified during the baseline riparian survey



Fencing Issues

- Lack of fencing
- Inadequate fencing
- Fencing too close to banks



Silt & Sediment build-up

- Particularly at Druminane - Channelisation
- Livestock access
- Farm runoff points (pipes & open drains)

Recommendations for Agriculture

Fencing

Smart
Buffers

Exclusion of
livestock from
watercourses

Ponds

Hedgerows

Wetlands

Trees in
Riparian Areas

Swales

Nutrient
Management
At Source

Farm rain
management
plans

Silt Traps

Farmyard
Maintenance

Rainwater
harvesting

Water
Conservation
Measures

Avoid
Pesticide
/Herbicide

Recommendations for Householders



Householders

- Desludging of septic tanks
- Potentially eligible for a septic tank grant in HSO catchment area!
- Avoid using bleach, chemicals, pesticides/herbicides in & around the home
- Avoid dumping grass cuttings along drains/streams/rivers
- Install a water butt – conserve water in the garden!

Source: Flynn Furney Report 2024

Funding the recommended measures

- In 2025 , Tydavnet Group Water Scheme (TGWS) secured approx. €500,000 in PEACEPLUS funding through the CALM Project for the Scotstown Blue Dot River.
- The project lead by ABC aims to fulfil the recommendations of the Flynn Furney Report and look for other opportunities as they arise.
- An initial farmer info meeting held in Sliabh Beagh Hotel, Sep 2025.
- The steering group continue to meet in coming months as the CALM project develops.



Tydavnet Group Water Scheme
Co-Op Ltd.



PEACEPLUS
Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the
 European Union

 UK Government

 Northern Ireland Executive
 Northern Ireland Executive

Continued Community Engagement

- LAWPRO funded Blue Dot signage for the catchment area.
- QR codes will link to a dedicated webpage where people can find out more about the Blue Dot River
- Information evening for householders in Q4



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THANK YOU



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