



Preliminary Seed Mussel Survey of Cahore Point (shore) and the Rusk Channel – 12/05/15 to 21/05/15

Vessel: MV T'Burke (BIM), Skipper John Murphy, Survey Officer Nicolas Chopin

Equipment: 400 kHz side scan sonar, 1 meter dredge.

Area surveyed: Along the shore in the front of Morris Castle and in the Rusk Channel from Buoy N.2 to the North Blackwater buoy.

Survey summary:

Seed mussels regularly settle in the area between the shore and the Rusk Bank; a small bed was found last year in the location. Few tows were done in the area during the survey but no seed was found, only old bivalve shells and stones with few urchins and starfish appeared in the dredges. No side scan sonar data was collected following those results.

Following last year's last survey in the Rusk Channel at the end of September, it was decided to look at the evolution of the seabed after the winter. No seed from last year was found and the ground doesn't seem to have changed (similar features that the early 2014 survey).

The survey was extended further south in the channel, good amount of starfish was found in 4 tows (TC 14, 15, 17 and 18). Young seed was found on stones and on bryozoan (1 to 3 mm, TC 13 and 24), but only in small quantities.

The Rusk Channel is always challenging for survey between strong current and static fishing gear; a large area had to be left due to large amount of pots.

Bottom type:

Gravel/ small stones and sand in the channel. Shells and sand along the shore.

Recommendations:

Again, it is very early to have a good idea of the available seed mussels in Cahore. Same signs were found last year at the same period but this doesn't mean that it will produce a bed. As for the Long Bank and Wexford approaches, D-larvae were still in the water up to mid-May. Again starfish are already well established in the area. More survey will take place later in the season.

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Notes for the map:

TC stands for Tow Cahore

Dgd stand for dredge

Seed Mussel Survey Map of Castlemaine Harbour/ Cromane - BIM - 23 and 24/08/2016

