

MANIOTOTO IRRIGATION SCHEME UPDATE



Welcome to the ninth edition of the collaborative update from the companies of the Maniototo Irrigation Scheme.

The season is fast approaching, as I write there are only 8 days until the gates will be opened to start the fill of the scheme. Due to our consent conditions the earliest time we can open the gates is midnight on the 15th of September, it will take approximately 4 days for the scheme to be fully commissioned. We have been pleasantly surprised with the dam recharge this winter and are ahead of where we started last season.



Off SEASON WORK

Brent has ticked off an impressive amount of work across the scheme since the last email. 5x 12 head gates have been refurbished with bolt & seal replacements completed. Eweburn Station culvert replaced, irrigation gate replaced on Waipiata, cleaning of race from Linnburn Syphon to Puketiri Pond, new grate install at Linnburn Gates to meet the H&S obligations at this site, weir repair at Blakely's to support their install of a rubicon gate, harvest units installed in 9 further locations, automation of Gimmerburn & Eweburn by-wash sites, race spraying on all schemes as well as many small repairs and improvements identified.



PRE-SEASON PREP

We have spent many hours over the last year preparing an operation manual for the running of the scheme including step by step instructions. Brent and Robert are preparing for the season ahead, with Brent familiarizing himself with the manual and learning the operations of the control systems. The races will start to fill on the 15th of September (in line with consent conditions) with water available to take from approximately the 19th, the first 20 period starts on the 25th of September, to view these please visit our website, rosters will be developed once demand is notified. Please ensure that you keep in regular contact with Brent and Robert to ensure that they are aware of your water needs. Brent will be open to hearing your advice and learning from you so please don't hesitate to pick up the phone or stop him for a chat. We ask that you are considerate and supportive to Brent as he navigates his way through his first season, we feel confident he will quickly learn the delivery steps.



Infrastructure Upgrades

We have been made aware of several projects that shareholders are carrying out on their properties. Many are pre-empting the direction of the Land and Water Plan and climate change and making the transition to spray irrigation for more efficient water application options. We have heard of 7 pivots being installed this season along with some dam storage projects. We will use this information to complete our efficiency report to ORC as part of our consent conditions. If you have plans for the next season or for this season, please let us know so we can capture this too. To the left is an image of the Blakely's Rubicon blade meter being installed. These Rubicon gates allow the irrigator to preset the opening and closing from their phone or computer. It meters and keeps record of the water passing through and will automatically close based on the settings that are entered (time or volume). This is a great solution for others who are looking into upgrades to their gates or want to have a full night's sleep or a day off farm.

Changes to Stock Exclusion Rules – Exemption for the Upper Taieri Scroll Plain

Congratulations to those in our community that have worked towards an exemption from the Stock Exclusion Regulations for wetlands. Today we have heard that this has been achieved. Special thanks to the Tiaki Maniototo Group (especially Dawn, Pete, Janine, Morgan & Kate) as well as Emma for the work and field trips they have hosted to ensure that stakeholders have been well informed and understand the complexities and the unintended consequences of stock exclusion. The next steps are to work with ORC within stakeholder groups to help develop the management plan for the scroll plain as part of the Land & Water Plan.

"An exception for the Upper Taieri Scroll Plain from requirements to exclude:

1. **non-intensively grazed beef cattle and deer from lakes and wide rivers on low slope land (regulations 14 and 15); and**
2. **all stock from natural wetlands (regulations 16, 17 and 18).**

The above exception has been provided on the basis that Otago Regional Council will implement suitable provisions in its regional plan for managing grazing within the wetlands, as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 1 July 2025."

Operations Team

Brent and Robert will be working on the scheme together, Robert will be continuing with the management of the East Side and covering Brent for his days off. We will better communicate this season the days that Robert is covering for Brent and vis versa; this will help you with knowing who to call to order your water or to notify of intentions for turning off. Please attempt to order or cancel your water no later than 48hrs before you intend to irrigator or turn off.

Land & Water Plan Consultation Meeting Ranfurly

The draft plan for the Otago Regional Land & Water Plan will be uploaded in the next few days to the ORC website orc.govt.nz/landwater

Please take the time to read this and review prior to attending their drop-in sessions. We will provide more details to you once we have read and understand this document, in the meantime please save the date.

9th October, 11am – 2pm, Maniototo Golf Club

Current Dam Level

93,732,500m³

91.6% (of spill height)

Current Dam Release

Closed