



### Visitors to the Irrigation Scheme

Over the last month we have welcomed two groups of visitors to the scheme. The first visit was from 35 people who all have a vested interest in the Taieri River. These visitors included Iwi, Aukaha, F&G, DoC, Forest & Bird, Contact Energy, Dunedin International Airport, ORC, Wenita Forestry, locals from Taieri Mouth, Middlemarch, Sutton and the Maniototo. This day was hosted by Upper Taieri Wai as part of the whole of catchment action plan that is being developed through ORC. Visitors were amazed by the irrigation and hydro system and seeing how it integrates with the movements of the Taieri.

Secondly we had the ORC Planning and Policy team visit for a full day. We started with a presentation in the office where we were able to advocate for the benefit of irrigation to the Maniototo and wider Otago region. In the afternoon we toured the scheme pointing out the movements of water and benefits that different application types of irrigation have. We demonstrated the issues for different land parcels if blanket rules are applied and discussed the unintended consequences of rules.



### Current Dam Level

67,135,500m<sup>3</sup>

68.6%

## Change of Contact Details

MIC Ops Team

**027 4486499**

We have set up an on-duty phone number so that you can easily reach who is able to help you with your water requirements.

Please use this phone number to contact both Brent & Jim from now on. It is best to save this in your phone as MIC Ops Team.

Brent is on leave from this Thursday afternoon so Jim will be handling your water needs. If you contact Brent directly he will not be available to return your call or text.

### Reminder...

The ops team work 7am to 4pm, all water needs to be ordered within these hours.

We value our staff and we ask that you help us by showing curious to their home life by following this time frame.

### Efficiency Reporting

We will be sending in our annual efficiency report to ORC over the coming month. Within this we like to update them with the good work happening on farms from our shareholders. If you have carried out irrigation development over the last year, please let us know so we can share this within the report (no farm or property is identified).

## MIC GM REPORT

As another irrigation season is coming to an end, it is interesting to reflect on how different each season is. When the Loganburn dam was first opened in November it was 1.2 metres below the spillway level. At the time of writing, it is currently 400mm above the level at the same time last season and currently sits at 69% of available capacity.

There are several factors attributing to the current dam level. Irrigation demand has been lower than we would expect due to a cooler summer. Furthermore, the rainfall event in late January saw the Taieri river peak at 109 cumecs at Canadian Flat. Consequently, the dam was shut for 10 days due to the sustained high river level.

The final 20-day period starts on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. It is anticipated that water demand for this period will be limited meaning the dam is likely to close at a higher level than it did last year.

MIC participated in the RMA reform process, supporting Irrigation NZ's submission on the Natural Environment Bill (NEB) and the Planning Bill (PB). Irrigation NZ have had the opportunity to give verbal submissions, however due to the high volume of submissions, individual irrigation companies won't necessarily get the chance to present to the Environment Committee.

We had the opportunity to host the ORC Policy and Planning team recently, including Anita Dawe, the GM Policy and Planning. It was a very good chance to showcase the scheme and highlight the hugely positive benefits irrigation has on the local community and regional economy. It was also a chance to build further on our strengthening relationship with the ORC.

As always at this time of the year, we change our focus to the winter maintenance programme. Weed control is a perennial problem and Brent is doing a lot of work in understanding the best method of dealing with this. There will be continued upgrade to the scheme again this year as we identify the release gates most in need of improvement.

Jeremy

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UTW Catchment Group

