

Manuherikia Catchment Group (MCG)

Newsletter no 1

Welcome all to our first newsletter update.

Deemed Permit renewal applications

The MCG consultant team is working hard at present on finalising all applications for each sub catchment, individuals and Irrigation Companies, and completing the Catchment Overview with the aim of lodging by the end of November.

The Catchment Overview is an essential, pulling all applications into one document which includes a River Management Plan for the whole catchment. The aim of the Overview section is to reduce duplication through various groups and clearly demonstrate we are working as a whole catchment.

For those that have already replaced their water permits you will still be fully involved in the setting of residual flows on tributaries and the minimum flow on the mainstem. While you do not need to redo your application, you do need to be a part of the Overview pulling the whole catchment together in the River Management Plan.

The MCG committee and consultant team are working hard to minimise costs where applicable however there is still a large sum of money that will need to be spent to see this process through to completion, and our permits replaced. The budget for 1st July to 30th June 2021 has been widely circulated. This budget did include some broader estimates in terms of ORC processing costs.

ORC Plan change 7 – water permits to the regional plan, is continuing to move through the process towards the environment court. OWRUG is managing the broader irrigator interests in the plan change and will assist with the coordination of the case. The Gallaway Cook Allan legal team are representing OWRUG.

Timeline from here for PC7

16th Nov – Filing date of notice to become a party to PC7 proceeding

27th Nov – pre-hearing conference PC7

29th Jan 2021 – parties evidence in chief – meaning all our evidence for OWRUG, MCG and submitters evidence must be submitted to the court.

1st Mar 2021 – Hearing proceedings begin

Water Quality

Water quality in the catchment is coming under increased scrutiny partly due to the influence and interest of Minister Parker. In September Minister Parker announced the Manuherikia Catchment Exemplar Project. This is part of the Essential Freshwater work programme and has funding attached over four years. The initial project which was identified within our catchment is the creation of a wetland at the lower end of the Thomsons Creek sludge channel/creek system. Preliminary work on this project is being instigated by Ministry for the Environment staff.

MCG Membership

It is hugely important that all irrigators, irrigation companies, sub catchment groups, interested parties and businesses are members of the Manuherikia Catchment Group firstly to achieve a solution for the whole catchment and our communities, and secondly to be represented by the group in permit replacement hearings. The MCG welcome members who are not necessarily irrigators but who see the value in the whole of catchment approach.

Please fill in the membership form attached asap.