



## NEWSLETTER

# MANUHERIKIA CATCHMENT WATER STRATEGY GROUP



**CONTACTS**  
Allan Kane  
Chairman  
03 443 1543

Gary Kelliher  
Deputy Chairman  
03 448 7869



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With the Feasibility Study completed, attention is now focused on finding a more viable option. The suggested capital cost of \$146m for a med- high concrete dam and up to \$100m for a distribution system to irrigate 25,000 ha in the Manuherikia Valley means that we need to substantially reduce the cost per ha before going to farmers with a proposal for their consideration.

Efforts are now focused on two work streams;

- A. Ian Walsh of Opus has been asked to update and progress previous work on raising Falls Dam. Again, this will look at three different heights, a low, medium, and high raise all of rock filled construction utilising the existing dam.

He will also look at costing a new med-high rock dam between the existing dam and the power house.

- B. The second stream of work is being carried out by a Group we are calling the Options Validation and Refinement Group made up of individuals who have all been involved with the project and are up to speed with it. They are;

Peter Lilley – Facilitator  
[Engineering, irrigation, strategic background]

Peter Brown – Aqualinc [Hydrology, supply side knowledge]

Ian Lloyd – Golders [Distribution, on farm demand experience]

Guy Blundell – Compass Agribusiness [Farm economics]

Kate Scott – Landpro [Consenting, environmental issues]

Allan Kane – [Chairman MCWSG, community]

Their task is to take the existing information and check that the current options being looked at are still the most relevant ones that all the various facets making up a proposal are appropriately aligned, and see if there are ways of refining the option to reduce the capital cost per hectare. Many of the assumptions used in the Feasibility Study are conservative [generous] in the hope a viable option could be found that did not involve water restrictions. This has proved not to be the case, as in all other irrigation schemes in NZ, and we now need to look for that “sweet spot” between capital cost and water supply to achieve optimum production. Once the Group has a better idea of these costs, farmer feedback will be sought.

Another task is to look at the possibility of staging the development to reduce the upfront cost of any scheme.

It is expected that it will take the rest of this year to complete these tasks.

We will keep you informed as things progress.

Allan Kane  
Chairman  
MCWSG