



## NEWSLETTER

# MANUHERIKIA CATCHMENT WATER STRATEGY GROUP

December 2014

### Update from the chairperson:

Work is continuing to amend the design of the proposed Falls Dam upgrade to ensure it is affordable for those landowners who wish to be a part of the new scheme.

The engineers employed by the Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group are comparing the information on which they based their differing cost estimates. They will hold a workshop in the new year to reach agreement on a revised dam design criteria and budget. All parties involved are convinced smart thinking will result in a viable solution and the strategy group is confident its consultants have the expertise and experience to achieve this.

Meanwhile, there was a good turnout of more than 60 people at a public meeting in Omakau on December 4<sup>th</sup> to update interested parties on the project. Ian Lloyd from ground engineering and environmental services specialists, Golder Associates, explained the process followed to estimate the cost of upgrading Falls Dam, and the work the strategy group is now doing to amend the design to achieve an effective irrigation system at an affordable cost. I felt the attitude of the meeting mirrored that of the strategy group – disappointment that the unexpectedly high dam upgrade cost estimate has held the project up by a few months, but agree the right action is being taken to ensure a workable solution.

A workshop on the distribution network, along with a visit to Hopes Creek, is planned for Jan 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> and the environmental reports and the nutrient management reports are being finalised to be presented to the full strategy group on February 13<sup>th</sup>. The final on-farm economics report and the off-farm (or district-wide) economic impact reports are on hold until the revised dam cost and distribution network are known.

The strategy group has also been considering any impact climate change may have on the proposed scheme. Our hydrology model enables us to ask “what if” questions to understand the impact of different scenarios. Work done during the pre-feasibility study indicated the average annual rainfall in the catchment was unlikely to change, however, more adverse weather events were likely, making the ability to store water even more beneficial.

Greg Bodeker from Bodeker Scientific agrees climate change is unlikely to greatly affect the catchment’s average annual rainfall. He has kindly researched climate change projection in the catchment for the group, on a pro-bono basis.

Bodeker Scientific is an Alexandra-based atmospheric research company specialising in the science of stratospheric ozone depletion, stratospheric composition and climate change. The company works with both national and international research organisations, including the German Weather Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the United States, and Greg is a former NIWA scientist and university lecturer on dynamic meteorology, among many other distinctions.

Greg’s report, entitled *Projections of changes in rainfall in the Falls Dam catchment*, is on the strategy group’s website (<http://www.mcwater.co.nz/project-information>) and his recommendation is “...based on current climate model projections, climate change effects on annual total precipitation need not be taken into account when making decisions regarding the extent to which the Falls Dam needs to be raised.”

Finally, best wishes for a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Allan Kane  
Chairperson  
Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group

See page 2 for profiles of members of the Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group...



**CONTACTS**  
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Gary Kelliher  
Deputy Chairman  
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### Profiles of Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group members:

**Jacob Dexter** represents the Department of Conservation on the Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group.



Jacob is DoC's partnership ranger is Alexandra, meaning he works with trusts, community groups and other DoC partners on environmental projects, and represents the department on organisations like the MCWSG to help ensure their work involves good environmental outcomes.

"I think the group's endeavouring to involve the wider community's views, which is commendable, and they're endeavouring to include environmental concerns in the development of a feasibility study."

Jacob lives at Queensberry with his wife, Esther. He enjoys fishing, tramping, water activities, skiing, amateur botanising and working on his property.

**Ben Hore** farms at Becks and is a member of the Manuherikia Catchment Water Strategy Group.



He is a shareholder in the Blackstone Hill Irrigation Company, which supplies water for part of his sheep and beef farm. The remainder of the property is not irrigated.

While Ben does not play rugby anymore, he is still involved in the Matakanui Combined Rugby Football Club. He is married to Vanessa and they have a young son, Reuben.

