



Media Statement

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Water New Zealand congratulates Central Plains Water Stage 1

Water New Zealand congratulates Central Plains Water on the satisfactory completion of Stage 1 of the project on time.

“This large regional scale scheme will ensure a strong and vibrant farming community on the inner Canterbury plains and will support many more people in the community than historical dry land farming,” said John Pfahlert, CEO of Water New Zealand.

Water New Zealand sees this water infrastructure as key to New Zealand’s development, but emphasises the need to maintain environmental priorities.

“We note that Central Plains Water is expected to provide environmental benefits through restoration of water levels in lowland streams and Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere - but we also highlight the need for ongoing monitoring to ensure water quality does not degrade.

“Canterbury has important natural water systems. There have previously been water quality issues associated with the intensification of dairy farming which include the potential for increased phosphate and nitrogen leaching into natural water systems, especially groundwater,” says Mr Pfahlert. “It is therefore essential that ECAN, as the regulator, ensures appropriate monitoring and enforcement of resource consents going forward.

An ongoing farmer commitment to efficient irrigation practices would go a long way to achieving good environmental performance.

“The Government’s recent updates on the National Policy Statement on Freshwater and the National Objectives Framework will provide good guidelines for this,” says Mr Pfahlert.

Ends

Contact

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Water New Zealand is an independent not for profit association of approximately 1500 water professionals and organisations, focusing on the sustainable management and development of the water environment. It provides leadership in the water sector, through advocacy, provision of technical advice and professional development. It is the principal voice for the water sector.

Its nationwide network of members represent many disciplines; physical and social sciences, public health, engineering, law and management. Water New Zealand attracts decision makers and technologists from central and local government, industry, the academic and research communities, consultants and service/equipment supply organisations, who exchange information about water and wastes issues.