



MEDIA RELEASE – 18 May 2016

Central Plains schemes receives government support

Government support for the Central Plains Water (CPW) Scheme was announced today by the Ministry for Primary Industries during a visit to the scheme by Minister Nathan Guy.

Through the Ministry for Primary Industries Irrigation Acceleration Fund (IAF), up to \$6.64 million has been allocated to CPW to support completion of Stage 2 of their scheme's development as well as \$900,000 for the Sheffield Irrigation Scheme (a sub-scheme of CPW).

CPWL CEO, Derek Crombie has welcomed the latest funding announcements for the two projects.

Stage 2 will deliver reliable alpine river water to 25,000 hectares of very productive land.

"The scheme will allow existing ground water wells to be replaced as well as providing water for aquifer recharge, stock water and community supply if needed. These measures will help restore flows in lowland streams, Te Waihora, Lake Ellesmere and overall groundwater levels," says Mr Crombie.

"The Sheffield scheme will integrate with the Selwyn district stock water system to provide both irrigation and stock water to a 4000 hectare area of prime cropping land."

Ministry for Primary Industries Director-General Martyn Dunne believes government support of schemes such as CPW and Sheffield is essential for the livelihoods of regional communities, and in turn the New Zealand economy.

"Through irrigation, land owners have options for the future of their land. For farmers who will benefit from the CPW and Sheffield schemes, they will have the options of used their land for arable, pastoral, dairy support, horticulture or dairy use.

"The IAF is a mechanism we use to support sustainable primary sector growth in the regions, helping to achieve the government's goal of doubling the value of primary industry exports by 2025," says Mr Dunne.

The IAF helps support the development of irrigation infrastructure proposals to the stage where they are investment ready, which means they must be commercially robust and demonstrate a high level of community support.

Government also supports these projects through Crown Irrigation Investments Ltd, which acts as a bridging investor for regional water infrastructure development.

In many cases with irrigation schemes, stored water or dams can improve environmental outcomes because there is a more continuous supply of water throughout the year. This is because in times of high rain and water flows, water can be stored or dammed, to be used when the drier months roll around.

Having consistent water flows results in healthier rivers, offers a wide range of recreation uses and maintains the mauri and cultural value of rivers.

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