



Media Release  
Monday 11 November 2013

## **Central Plains Water Scheme to boost Canterbury Economy**

Selwyn Mayor Kelvin Coe says that the news that Central Plains Water has received support from shareholders enabling the irrigation scheme to proceed is good news for Selwyn District and the wider Canterbury Region.

Central Plains Water confirmed last week that the offer to shareholders in the scheme area has received enough support to proceed, with 90% of Stage One shareholders and over 72% of Stage Two and Three landowners committed to the scheme.

“The Central Plains scheme will boost the economy of Selwyn and the wider Canterbury region. The scheme will have benefits both for rural communities in Selwyn who the scheme will service and for the businesses and households who will benefit from additional business and jobs as a result of the scheme,” says Mayor Coe.

He says that in addition to the economic benefits associated with the scheme, it will also help to relieve pressure on the demand for groundwater for irrigation in Selwyn.

The Central Plains Water scheme concept was first developed in a joint study commissioned by Selwyn District Council and Christchurch City Council in 2000. Since that time, Selwyn District Council has been a supporter of the scheme. The Council has a \$2.3 million investment in the project, and also approved a \$5 million loan to the scheme last year.

Mayor Coe says the investment of shareholders for the scheme means that the \$5 million Council loan will be repaid next year.

Once fully developed, the Central Plains water scheme will draw water from the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers for irrigation. The scheme covers around 60,000 hectares of Selwyn District, and will be constructed in three stages. The first stage of construction, covering 20,000 hectares between the Rakaia and Hororata rivers, is planned to start this year and be completed by September 2015.

Once the scheme is fully operational it is expected to boost annual direct and indirect regional agricultural output by \$264 million. The wider economic contribution of the scheme to the New Zealand economy is estimated at \$1 billion - \$1.4 billion per year.

Stage One of the Central Plains Water scheme will bring 120 million cubic metres of new alpine water into the Selwyn Waihora Zone. The introduction of the scheme is expected to reduce reliance on deep groundwater and increase flows in the lowland streams feeding into Lake Ellesmere/Te Waihora.

Consent conditions imposed by the Environment Court on the scheme requires landowners to prepare farm management plans covering nutrient discharge limits, water management

and soil requirements, which will be independently audited. A range of other conditions have also been imposed including the establishment of an Environmental Management Fund and the development of a ground and surface water monitoring plan. Central Plains Water will be leading the environmental compliance programme within the scheme area.

Ends

For media enquiries please contact:

Allanah Jarman  
Selwyn District Council  
Phone 03 347 2807  
[Allanah.jarman@selwyn.govt.nz](mailto:Allanah.jarman@selwyn.govt.nz)