Research First

Results from the
2006 Ellesmere Water Race Survey

A Report Prepared For

Selwyn DISTRICT COUNCIL

July 2006

CONTENTS

Results from the 2006 Ellesmere Water Race Survey

1. Background

The Ellesmere Stock Water Race (ESWR) is a network of open channels which source water from the Rakaia and Hororata Rivers. Distribution is via open channels and culverts to properties across Selwyn District.

Water is sourced from three intakes, namely:

1. **Upper Rakaia River:** Early's Intake located at Steeles Road;
2. **Lower Rakaia River:** Intake located at Headworks Road; and
3. **Haldon Intake:** Intake located on the Hororata River at Haldon Road.

The race network was originally constructed in the 1880s by early settlers in the region. Today the ESWR serves over 400 properties, covering over 38,000 hectares. All properties that have access to a water race are charged a water race rate per hectare (i.e., a targeted rate).

In 2001 the Selwyn District Council (SDC) began to review the ESWR and investigate whether there was sufficient need and justification for the continued existence of the ESWR. This review was motivated by significant land use change in the Selwyn District (with many landowners converting to dairy farming); the efficiency of the ESWR; and the increase in rates needed to obtain a Resource Consent to upgrade the race system. This includes the upgrading of the three water race intakes to keep the scheme operational and well maintained.

In 2004 the SDC decided to close the ESWR system. However, following the considerable opposition to this decision, SDC met with interested parties to discuss alternatives to closure. This resulted in an agreement in 2006 to embark on a process whose outcome will result in a binding decision about the future of the ESWR. One component of that process was for SDC to survey those in the ESWR catchment about their attitudes towards various options.

This survey was carried out in mid 2006 by SDC. The results were analysed by *Research First*, an independent, Christchurch-based, market research company. This report outlines the results of that 2006 survey.

2. Research Objectives

A number of options for the development of the ESWR have been developed by SDC in conjunction with those in the ESWR catchment. These include, but are not limited to:

1. **Status Quo:** Under this option, the ESWR remains fully open with rates charged on the current funding formula.

2. **Modified Funding Formula:** Under this option, the ESWR remains open but with a modified funding formula. This involves allowing a reduced rating charge for those farmers who do not use the water race, with the remaining farmers paying the balance of the costs of operating the ESWR system.

3. **Slim Line:** Under this option, around 40% of the main sections of the ESWR would remain open (servicing some 15,000 hectares) with the other 60% being closed.

4. **Full Closure:** Under this option, the ESWR system would be closed no later than 30 April 2008.

The purpose of the survey reported here is to assist SDC in forming an opinion about the future of the ESWR, recognising that the decision making process for the Council is an exercise of statutory declaration by the Council. That said, SDC would not anticipate receiving a recommendation from the Water Race Committee regarding the closure of the ESWR unless approximately 70% of the survey returns favour closure.

The following results are analysed by both the number of ratepayers who provided a particular response and also the total area of farmland these ratepayers represent. These complementary analyses enable views to be interpreted by the number of people in the ESWR catchment who hold those views and also the area represented by different views.

3. Methodology

3.1 The Mail Survey Method

The 2006 Ellesmere Stock Water Race survey was a mail survey. Selwyn District Council Water Asset Management staff chose a mail survey because it provided the best coverage of those in the ESWR catchment. Coverage was essential as the Selwyn District Council was keen to canvass the views of all ratepayers in the scheme. The mail survey method combines the ability to canvass attitudes from a population that is geographically dispersed cheaply, but historically have been constrained by poor response rates.

To ensure adequate response rates for this survey, the SDC included a return post envelope with the survey questionnaire, and worked hard to publicise the survey (for instance, via its *Ellesmere Water Race Survey Newsletter*s and follow-up phone calls). The survey questionnaire was distributed in May 2006, with responses needing to be returned to SDC by June 16th 2006 (subsequently extended to June 23rd to account for extreme weather conditions).

3.2 The Survey Sample

Survey questionnaires were sent out to all properties in the ESWR catchment, a total of 526 properties. From these 526, 265 valid responses were received by SDC, giving a response rate of 50.4%[1]. These 265 responses represent 263 ratepayers[2].

Among these 263 ratepayers, the most common farming operations included sheep, crop, and beef farming. Dairy grazing and dairy farming were also common[3] (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Respondents and Farming Types (Question 2.1)

Farming Type	Number	Percentage
Sheep	126	22.6%
Cropping	91	16.3%
Beef	76	13.6%
Dairy Grazing	62	11.1%
Dairy	58	10.4%
Lifestyle	44	7.9%
Horticulture	35	6.2%
Horses	25	4.4%
Pigs	14	2.5%
Other	26	4.6%
	557	100

1 Mail surveys typically have poor response rates, often in the 25% to 33% range. The high response rate achieved in this survey is testimony to both the interest in the survey topic by respondents and the work done by SDC to publicise the survey.

2 Accounting for the two ratepayers who submitted more than one response for their properties.

3 The number of farming types (557) is greater than the number of responses (265) because some farming operations include more than one kind of farm type.

The great majority of ratepayers (97.3%) were not connected to a piped or reticulated community water scheme (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Ratepayers and Connection Types (Question 2.2)

Piped or Reticulated Connection	Number	Percentage
Yes	4	1.5%
No	251	97.3%
Partially	3	1.2%
	258	100

Of those who were partially connected to a piped or reticulated community water scheme, one sourced 50% from the scheme, one 80%, and one 100%.

69% of ratepayers who responded to this survey relied solely on their water race for one application or another. Of these, the most common application was watering stock. The water race was also commonly used as the sole source of water for fire fighting (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Reliance on Water Races (Question 2.3)

Title	Number	Percentage
Stock	112	31.4%
Domestic	12	3.4%
Aesthetic	28	7.8%
Fire Fighting	81	22.7%
Other	14	3.9%
None of these	110	30.8%
	357	100

The 'none of these' categories covered applications such as 'important in an emergency / during a power cut / when the well runs dry' (7 mentions); as a domestic back-up (3 mentions) and 'for trees' (2 mentions).

4. Key Findings

4.1 Closure

The key result from this survey is that the results do not support a recommendation to close the ESWR. In this survey, only 45.6% of ratepayers supported closure. In contrast, 51% of the ratepayers do not support closure (with the remaining 3.4% having 'no opinion' about closure). When this analysis is repeated by total farm area, a stronger case for closure is made. Here, those holding 61% of the farm area of the survey's respondents were in favour of closure. However, neither analysis provides sufficient support for the Water Race Committee to make a recommendation to the SDC regarding the closure of the ESWR (given the criterion of 70% of responses needing to favour closure).

4.2 Development Options

Among those ratepayers who did not want the ESWR closed, the preferred option was to retain the status quo (with the ESWR fully open and rates charged on the current funding formula). In the analysis by ratepayers, 78.8% of those who did want the ESWR closed preferred this option. When this analysis is repeated by total farm area, the Status Quo remains the most popular choice among those who do not want the ESWR closed but support drops to 64%.

4.3 Costs of Alternative Water Supply

Respondents were asked to estimate the total cost of installing an alternative water supply to meet their needs if the ESWR were to close. There were 255 responses to this question, providing a mean cost of $11,768 per property. This summed to a total stated cost of $3,000,900. This figure is a minimum value, as various responders noted there would be an ongoing cost that is not taken into account in the figures they supplied.

4.4 Overall Satisfaction

175 ratepayers answered the question about overall satisfaction with the water race[4]. Of these, the majority scored the water race as either 'good' or 'adequate' (a total of 64.6% of responses). In contrast, only 25.1% of respondents scored the water race as 'unsatisfactory' (see Table 5.1).

4.5 Sources of Dissatisfaction

The 44 respondents who rated the water race as 'unsatisfactory' gave multiple reasons for this lack of satisfaction. The most common of these was that the water race was an 'unreliable supply' (33%). Also commonly mentioned were 'cost of maintenance'; 'inconvenience to farming operation', and 'variable [water] quality'.

[4] Giving a sampling error for this question of +/- 6%

5. Satisfaction with ESWR

175 ratepayers answered the question about overall satisfaction with the water race[5]. Of these, the majority scored the water race as either 'good' or 'adequate' (a total of 64.6% of responses). In contrast, only 25.1% of respondents scored the water race as 'unsatisfactory' (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Satisfaction with Water Race (Question 2.4)

In Terms Of Meeting Your Needs, Is The Race?	Number	Percentage
Good	74	42.3%
Adequate	39	22.3%
Unsatisfactory	44	25.1%
Other	18	10.3%
	175	100

The 44 respondents who rated the water race as 'unsatisfactory' gave multiple reasons for this lack of satisfaction. The most common of these was that the water race was an 'unreliable supply' (33%). Also commonly mentioned were 'cost of maintenance'; 'inconvenience to farming operation', and 'variable [water] quality' (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Sources of Dissatisfaction (Question 2.5)

Unsatisfactory Because …	Number	Percentage
Unreliable Supply	36	33.0%
Cost of maintenance	21	19.3%
Inconvenient to farming operation	18	16.5%
Variable Quality	15	13.8%
Poses a risk to stock or personal health	11	10.1%
Other	8	7.3%
	109	100

[5] Giving a sampling error for this question of +/- 6%

6. Groundwater

The great majority of ratepayers (92.1%) had groundwater bores on their property (see Table 6.1). The most common size bore was 150mm (38.6%), with 200mm bores and above the second most common (17.7%) (see Table 6.2). These bores tended to be shallow, with 51.6% being less than 40m deep (see Table 6.3)

Table 6.1 Groundwater Bore(s) on Property (Question 2.6)

One or More Groundwater Bore	Number	Percentage
Yes	232	92.1%
No	20	7.9%
	252	100

Table 6.2 Groundwater Bore(s) by Diameter (Question 2.7)

Groundwater Bore Diameter	Number	Percentage
50mm	34	13.4%
75mm	12	4.7%
100mm	15	5.9%
150mm	96	37.8%
200mm	45	17.7%
Other (generally over 200mm)	52	20.5%
	254	100

Table 6.3 Groundwater Bore(s) by Depth (Question 2.7)

Groundwater Bore Depth	Number	Percentage
<20m	60	24.0%
20-40m	69	27.6%
40-60m	59	23.6%
60-80m	25	10.0%
80-100m	19	7.6%
100m +	18	7.2%
	250	100

Of those ratepayers with groundwater bores, nearly half (46.5%) these bores reticulated the whole property (see Table 6.4). For those where the groundwater bore only provided partial coverage, the coverage tended to more rather than less of the property (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.4 Groundwater Bore Reticulation Coverage (Question 2.8)

Reticulates All Your Property?	Number	Percentage
Yes	107	46.5%
No	72	31.3%
Part	51	22.2%
	230	100

Table 6.5 Partial Groundwater Bore Reticulation Coverage (Question 2.8)

Coverage, Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 20%	5	8.8%
20 – 39%	9	15.8%
40 – 59%	19	33.3%
60 – 79%	10	17.5%
80 % or more	14	24.6%
	57	100

When asked if they thought their reticulated stock system was a better alternative than the water race, the majority of ratepayers (74.4%) said yes (see Table 6.6). Those in this group cited the 'water quality' and 'reliability' as key reasons for the superiority of a reticulated system (see Table 6.7). Those ratepayers who thought a reticulated water system was not better than an open race commonly cited the unreliability of groundwater bores (see Table 6.8). Note that nearly three times as many ratepayers argued for the superiority of reticulated water than argued for the superiority of water races here.

Table 6.6 Reticulated vs. Open Race Water Supply (Question 2.9)

Reticulated Better than Race?	Number	Percentage
Yes	116	74.4%
No	40	25.6%
	156	100

Table 6.7 The Appeal of Reticulated Water Supply (Question 2.9)

Reason	Number	Percentage
Water Quality	35	24.5%
Reliability	31	21.7%
Farm Management	23	16.1%
Maintenance	17	11.9%
Stock Erosion / Drowning	16	11.2%
Cost	14	9.8%
Environmental Issues	4	2.8%
Farm coverage	3	2.1%
	143	100

Table 6.8 The Appeal of Open Water Race Supply (Question 2.9)

Reason	Number	Percentage
Wells go dry	12	30.0%
Reliable	9	22.5%
Works when power out	7	17.5%
Water Quality	6	15.0%
Farm Coverage	5	12.5%
Cost	1	2.5%
	40	100

Finally, respondents were asked to rate the reliability of their wells (ignoring equipment failure). Nearly three quarters of ratepayers (73.4%) rated their wells as 'reliable', with another 18.8% rating theirs as 'adequate' (which sums to 92.2% of respondents rating their wells as 'reliable' or 'adequate'. In contrast, just 7.8% of respondents rating their wells as 'unreliable' (see Table 6.9).

Table 6.9 Reliability of Well (Question 2.10)

Reliability of Your Well?	Number	Percentage
Reliable	160	73.4%
Adequate	41	18.8%
Unreliable	17	7.8%
	218	100

7. Closure

7.1 Closure

The key result from this survey is that **the results do not support a recommendation to close the ESWR.** The criterion for the Water Race Committee to make a recommendation to the SDC regarding the closure of the ESWR was for (approximately) 70% of the survey returns favour closure.

The analysis by ratepayers shows that only 45.6% of those ratepayers who responded to this survey support closure of the ESWR (see Table 7.1). In contrast, 51% of ratepayers do not support closure, and the remaining 3.4% have no opinion about closure.

When this analysis is repeated by total farm area, a stronger case for closure is made. Here, those holding 61% of the farm area of the survey's respondents were in favour of closure.

Table 7.1 Support for Closure of the ESWR by Ratepayer (Question 1.1)

Support for Closure	Number	Percentage
Yes	120	45.6%
No	134	51.0%
No Opinion	9	3.4%
	263	100

Table 7.2 Support for Closure of the ESWR by Area (Question 1.1)

Support for Closure by Area	Area (Ha)	Percentage of Total Responses
Yes	18,081	61%
No	10,783	36%
No Opinion	750	3%
	29,614	100%

7.2 Development Options

Among those respondents who did not want the ESWR closed, the preferred option was to retain the status quo (with the ESWR fully open and rates charged on the current funding formula). In the analysis by total respondents, 78.8% of those who did want the ESWR closed preferred this option. The remaining responses were split between the Slim Line option[6] (12.9%) and the Modified Funding Formula[7] (8.3%) (See Table 7.3).

When this analysis is repeated by total farm area, the Status Quo remains the most popular choice among those who do not want the ESWR closed but support drops to 64%. In this analysis by farm area, the modified funding formula emerges as the most popular second choice (see Table 7.4).

Table 7.3 Development Options for ESWR (Question 1.2)

Option	Number	Percentage
Status Quo	104	78.8%
Slim Line	17	12.9%
Modified Funding Formula	11	8.3%
	132	100

Table 7.4 Development Options for ESWR by Area (Question 1.2)

Support for Closure by Area	Area (Ha)	Percentage
Status Quo	6,861	64%
Modified Funding Formula	2,207	21%
Slim Line	1,616	15%
	10,684	100%

7.3 Cost of Alternative Water Supply

Respondents were asked to estimate the total cost of installing an alternative water supply to meet their needs if the ESWR were to close. There were 255 responses to this question, with the responses providing a mean cost of $11,768 per property. This summed to a total stated cost of $3,000,900.

6 Under this option, around 40% of the main sections of the ESWR would remain open (servicing some 15,000 hectares) with the other 60% being closed

7 Under this option, the ESWR remains open but with a modified funding formula. This involves allowing a reduced rating charge for those farmers who do not use the water race, with the remaining farmers paying the balance of the costs of operating the ESWR system

Appendix One: Verbatim Open Ended Comments

- 216 hectares has no supply from water race. 48 hectares has water race running across bottom corner so is of no use either. Preservation Society diatribe was emotive.
- A general rate similar to our library rate, should be charged to the whole community to cover the extra cost of upgrading and resource consents. Why? Because the whole community benefits to some degree from the stock water race system, whether it be for fire fighting or the ecological habitats created for wild life, drainage and recharging aquifers. The Selwyn district will be very much poorer without the stock water race system.
- After being informed the water race system was to be closed in 2005, I installed my own system at a cost of approximately $7,000 and now I am having to pay twice through rates and installing my own scheme. I hope this situation can be corrected as soon as possible.
- All those opting for closure have irrigation wells, therefore troughing their properties is a given. Those without irrigation are now unable to get water consents thus making it non feasible to trough and pipe their properties.
- All those opting for closure have irrigation wells, therefore troughing their properties is a given. Those without irrigation are now unable to get water consents thus making it non feasible to trough and pipe their properties.
- Any further decisions on this matter should take into account in the first instance the unit and owner before area and stock units are considered. How much did the glossy stats and information sheet cost to produce? To supply six paddocks not available to race water already adds $150 per month approx (depending on time of year) to my power bill.
- As a small property owner we are less affected by the cost than some others, but have found the water race to be valuable back up when we had a switchboard failure and no pump for 3 days. The water race was the only way we could easily keep up stock water.
- As we do not run any or intend to run any livestock we have no need for water races - nor are there any races on our block.
- As we would only use the main Ellesmere race in emergencies, if the bore goes dry or pump failure, we don't need the race but as it is the main head race out of Earlys Intake it will still flow through our property. Over the years the silt build up is a major problem, in places over 1.5 m above water level, stock fell in and can't get out as it one of the slowest parts of the main race that silt is drop easier. My feelings are Council should take the silt away.
- Block of bare land, the water race is currently the most practical way of getting stock water to the property. There is a well on the property but no electricity. Huge capital cost to find an alternative to the water race. I realise that there is a large capital cost in updating the scheme but surely the rates for the scheme providing they have been used effectively/wisely over the 130 years should cover the majority.
- Closing this water race would save me money and we would be able to use all my land for my lifestyle.
- Closure of all or part of the stock water race, which has served this community well for 120 years, is short sighted and irresponsible. Such action is merely pandering to the interests of a vociferous minority primarily concerned with short term profitability, when Council's focus should be directed to the long term benefits of the water race system to the whole community.

- Closure of the race system should not be considered until the capabilities of aquifer supply are fully understood. A sustainable management system cannot possibly be considered until such time. In addition, we must be aware of repercussions of closing the race system, as discussed in the attached material. To abandon a proven and reliable but costly system without evidence to support a viable alternative is irresponsible of both landowners and Council. The considerable cost of having to deepen existing wells for reliable supply, as well as significant increase in demand on an already struggling electricity network are further reasons to avoid closure of the race system. The potential for the races to provide habitats for biodiversity is an issue that needs to be discussed further, before making a decision on financial criteria.
- Comments have been parasummarised - Who is responding to the ECAN survey, the leasse or ECAN? 3 blocks served by a water race. 2 have bores available. Home block 90% served by the well, Block 2 20% bore and 80% water race and Block 3 100% water race. Safety and available for fire fighting purposes. 3 different options on 3 different blocks. Block 1: minimal cost to transfer to well supply, shallow well, reliability is a concern, concerns about more intensive farming particularly in the future, wishes to remain the water race. Cannot understand agenda to close the WR system. Concerns with dairy farms and water race right to remove them. Is dairy farming in the best interest of Canterbury? Is that current small take only to be made available to those intensive dairy farms at the expense of other stock varieties? Block 2 - asparagus, grazing and garden. Not expensive to change to reticulation but also serves a garden use purpose. Modified funding formula would be okay in this instance. Good for fire fighting, trees and land. Wish to retain race. Block 3 - fully reliant, expensive to reticulate, retain water race. Obtain consent from ECAN for resource consent a right and cost. Paparua review interesting - Why are we ignoring these substantive issues? Why would you consider closing on the grounds that the consent needs reviewing, without having done any in-depth review. Is or has your whole process been democratic, across the whole Council, in that you have withheld valuable information to race users in the Ellesmere race boundary, and you are not at the same time considering closing the others. Very shallow decisions have been made here, that are not reflective of the resources available to you and of what is expected of you by the ratepayers who in actual fact are the owners. The council is in fact the administrators paid to manage races, on the owners behalf, the need to upgrade intakes and consent renewal process are not grounds to even consider closing.
- Currently the only stock I graze are dairy heifers and all waterways are fenced to keep these out.
- Do not take out what we can't put back. As we have seen the power supply is unreliable and stock need water everyday. Our ground water is precious and needs to be there for generations to come. Dairy will come and go and we need to think of all the farmers!
- Due to flow fluctuations this race often floods on our property.
- Each year that we have been at this property (8 years) the race dries up about mid January for several months, we contact the race inspector at Leeston and we usually get a rebate or the water race rate for this period. We have had no response to this or any of the following issues this season. This is not really my complaint however, the fact is that this is the essential period when water is needed, when the water is flowing it is so badly contaminated often there

are "bubbles" that look like dish washing water, the volume is so low that stock end up walking up and down the raceway chasing the deeper puddles to drink from. For the last two years 2005 and Jan 2006, I have contacted Leeston and reported that I believe the race may be dammed at some point. Please see the series of photos that were taken on Sunday 4 June. Note the overflowing water into an adjacent paddock at point 1 and the deep supply available at point 2 and a reduced but detectable flow at point 3. However it is quite obvious that the points 4 and 4 (our place) have not seen any water for months! We recently installed troughs in the grazing paddocks and feed these from our domestic house well because the level in the irrigation well is now too low to pump - we will need to redrill and install a submersible to get water from this. I hope this may be of help to you.

- Enforcement of use/non use would be almost impossible under any formula. The option to take advantage or not is always available. We all pay for schools/libraries etc but most do not use them. The area needs the recharge from the race system, without it most wells will be dry in 5 years. The eco system will start to fail as the trees die and dry land blows away on the north westers.
- For the purpose of providing water to stock this race is fine. Not much use for anything else, though I would hate to see it closed as it attracts a lot of birds. I think it is ridiculous to close a scheme like this that has infrastructure already in place and in the next breath talk about wanting to build huge earth dams and canals because the cost would only be available to the elite few (who probably already have more money than the proverbial bull!). Please leave it open!!
- Get on with it.
- Happy to maintain water race but object to paying rates for a service I don't use. Those who use the water race should be rated on them not everybody else. With more area in dairying less need for water races especially for fire fighting water troughs are far more economical and there is no wasted ground.
- Have bore water and trough in only paddock with water race also have put electric fence to stop access to stock.
- Have no real concerns of water race through our property e.g. main race from Headworks Road intake
- I am support of the closure, but would prefer to wait until such time as there exists a greater degree of certainty regarding Central Plains Water, such as the granting of resource consents.
- I believe that the water race system contributes to the groundwater aquifers from which we obtain our bore water for household and irrigation needs. I would be concerned that the closure of the scheme would adversely affect the level of our wells in drought years.
- I believe water races are significant ecologically (biodiversity), historically, aesthetically, culturally (collection of watercress), for fire fighting, for drainage, for bees, for dogs, for overheating radiators, for me (heatstroke once) and are a NZ icon. I would be outraged to see them closed. The uses I have outlined are additional to the obvious use of providing stock water.
- I do not like the way that SDC has handled this matter. But what would they care as they are only answerable to themselves! SDC's solicitors will be doing very well out of it.
- I do not think that a modified funding formula or slim line option would work. Too expensive for a few to run and others who opt out of rates will be hard to

police they could still make use of the race system and pay no rates. As far as I am concerned I want the water races to remain but if they are closed down I will accept the decision and move on.

- I don't know why you sent us a letter addressed clear Ellesmere wide race user as we haven't had water since Oct 04. It suddenly disappeared never to return.
- I feel that the current race system provides a valuable source of water for fire fighting, contract sprayers and dipping contractors as well as for droving stock and there has been no alternative provided for this. In fact any piped sources have been placed under lock and key in recent years. The current system provides flowing water, which stock prefer, as well as providing wildlife habitat and in many situations, provides storm water drainage for roading and property. Closure does not address any of these issues.
- I feel the main races should remain open as these are more likely to be used successfully for stock water etc where as the lateral/locals are smaller, less consistent and with less run.
- I have approximately 1 km of my water race piped with 12" pipe since 1975. In that time the Fire Brigade have used it 3 times, over and above the ordinary flow when it rans the pipes can carry another run off of 4 inches of rain. If the races are filled in how are the flood waters going to be drained away? Remember over the years a lot of natural waterways have been filled in.
- I have no other water, no wells, and in the red zone not allowed to drill.
- I have one water race running through the bottom end of the farm that goes across the main road through bout two forestry blocks and other farms just to supply a duck pond!
- I think we are now living in the year 2006 not 1880 when the race system was established, and it is time we moved from a gravity fed system that we have if we want it or not to a system more applicable to 2006 technology.
- I would keep the main races open if other farms require water they would have to work through Council. The cost should be to form and clean drains or races on those water users.
- I've paid for water that I have never received since 1993.
- If existing water race system is left in place, it could be modified for further irrigation development - this would reduce resource consents and planning costs. The land value is maintained by the water race system and without reduce value for rating. Also with recent snow affecting power supply the gravity fed water supply is very useful alternative in emergency for households and stock.
- If my well dries up again I will be without water. We must keep it going until we know all the effects of the Central Plains Water System.
- If the Council decides to close the water race, we strongly advise the need for the Council to ensure the races are maintained as drains in low lying areas eg. Lakeside and Southbridge area. If some people were to fill in the empty races in on some properties then this will cause major drainage issues. The Council should also claim some responsibility for maintaining any drains that remain if the water race system is closed. As we received very very little Council service for the considerable cost to our rates, when compared to township rates, the least the Council could do is maintain any remaining drains if the water race system is to be closed.
- If the status quo was rejected we would accept the slim line as long as the water races remain open servicing our farm in Southbridge. Why should Te

Pirita dairy farmers have any influence over the closure of water races in Southbridge, when the water flow is independent of them.

- If the water did not end up polluting Lake Ellesmere I would it being retained.
- If there are certain areas of the water race distribution area which wish to keep water races open, we have no objection as long as it is at no cost to us, and that the water races are removed from within our property and put road margins. Intensive cropping land is now worth more than $25000/ha. The combined cost of water race charges, maintenance and lost production on the area of the water race occupies is at least $4000 to us PA. We receive no benefit from this as we are primarily intensive cropping. For the short period we have sheep grazing crop residues in late summer/early autumn corresponds to the time the water race supply is unreliable and we have had to install alternative scheme to meet our needs. We are effectively paying twice. If a modified formula is proposed, those property owners who will be adversely financially affected should be informed and given the opportunity to reconsider their support of the scheme.
- If there is no water in wells and no consents being given at least the stock get water. That is if there is water coming down the race. It is good for fires.
- If we were reliant on this race for stock water this summer we would have been in trouble as it was dry when it would have been needed.
- Keep main races open, Put power tubers and feed power into main grid. Income for Council. Those who water other than main races user pays.
- Lack of fire fighting water. Races valuable to bees/clover production. At Southbridge plentiful supply of alternative water, could be a problem higher up country. Our farm is in one block, could be different for farms with many blocks.
- No water race goes through our property. However, we have used the water from the main race. We could just go there and fill a tank without having to ask a neighbour. It is always there even if the power is unavailable. It is very reliable and can't be stolen. The water level in our well has dropped significantly during the last 12 years. The water race is an asset for the whole community and should not be closed. In a dry year the water race may be the only source of water for fire fighting for the whole area.
- Not sure which option is best. Main concern is we are in ECAN red zone and groundwater via bores may not be easily accessed.
- On 21 Dec 04 we had a fire in buildings on our farm. Had there not been and water race on our boundary, complete destruction. Our shed would have been a certainty. This year our well ran dry for the first time ever 50 years.
- Please keep the water race open. We have been here 2 years. Fire Brigade have already used water race for neighbours property. Papers saying how wells for first time have run dry and at least people have access to emergency water from race until they can get another system in place (it also looks great as part of Canterbury). See what happens in another 10 years eg. all the dairy farms use of water, should not have so many organisms.
- Prefer not to have a water race. Some properties may need for necessity. Main feeder races to keep to feed required properties.
- Present water race only seems to run well when it is winter - also serves to take runoff from paddocks. All our stockwater is fed from a well to paddock troughs. Also water race does contribute to stock losses at lambing time.
- Race is dry for majority of year. We don't rely on it for any water. Locality means it is almost impossible to clean and if kept open would necessitate

locating the race outside our roadside fence. Immediate neighbours (to my knowledge) do not want this section of race open.

- Sick of paying rates for a water source that gives no benefit to our farming operation.
- Support comments on Point 38 "full review after 10 years…open until then"
- This land was purchased over the last 7 years and has never used the stock water races. If stock water is still required on some farms above SH 1 community piped schemes from rivers or wells should be considered. A number of such schemes operate in Ashburton County.
- The closing of the water races would remove ecosystems and wildlife corridors that have developed over the years.
- The Ellesmere water race is a scheme of historical value which is difficult to put a dollar amount on. Once gone it can never be recovered. The water race provides a reliable water source which is easily accessible by fire fighting equipment. Supports its own eco system which other wildlife will have become dependent upon since 1880.
- The existing water race system provides for drainage, fire fighting and environmental enhancement and as well as stock water. I would suggest "energy wise" that it will prove to be economically sensible as electricity prices arise. Once it is disestablished it will never be economic to open again. It has multiple benefits for the whole community.
- The findings of Lincoln Ventures ($14M) and ECAN water plan should become known before decisions are made on stockwater races, which would be simply premature at this stage.
- The presentation by the Ellesmere stockwater race preservation committee must be seriously considered. To proceed otherwise is an abuse of my ratepayer and citizen status. If dairying failed through disease strategically what has been planned re water availability? What discussion has been had with central plains water? Paparua had an extensive survey to decide on race closure. Why has Ellesmere not had this intensive survey?
- The property is a dairy support block with as yet no alternative water supply. The plan is to irrigate the block IF a consent is issued and at the same time put in a stockwater system. Without the irrigation consent it would be difficult to justify a stock water system on it's own. Ticked "status quo and modified funding formula".
- The questionnaires have been completed under protest in that the Council never fulfilled its procedural obligations after the previous survey. We do not agree to the method the Council proposes to use to analyse the results. Because the water race rates are stuck on a hectare basis the Council's proposal is probably not legal. In the literature sent with this form there was no user pay option costed. Both the modified funding formula (the majority) subsidising the actual users (the minority). The maintenance of the system must be costed to provide a true user pay charge. That is those not using the system should not be required to undertake on farm work or expense and any such items were costed into a true user pays option. This includes the cost of removing spoil produced when races are cleaned. Without the user pay option a true cost comparison between a well/groundwater system cannot be achieved. As the water rates are assessed on a per Ha basis then if the results are to be analysed on other than this basis any other method would be able to be challenged.
- The rebate system is unfair. I had two water races one of which was off for six months or more, for which I could not get a rebate for. I wrote 3 letters

complaining about this to Mayor McEvedy, Kelvin Coe and Hugh Blake-Manson. K Coe rang me on this matter and was to look into it. No correspondence has taken place since. I believe this to be unacceptable. I have tried to be helpful with the water races but this experience has left me frustrated.

- The water race is already closed.
- The water race is our only supply of water for our sheep and horses.
- The water race is the only source of water for this property. In a community some people will always pay for services they don't need. Same with this water race system. It's presence was an important factor in purchasing this property.
- The water race system in my opinion, works very well "livestock do very well". It is a very valuable aid to rural fire-fighters, as experienced by neighbours (G Gilbert) in their large stubble fire early this year. There is no reason why dairy farmers can't fence off parts of their raceways and only allow access in portioned parts of the raceway to save cows trampling out water race banks etc. The scheme is already in place, why alter it, just make sure people keep cleaning ditches. It will cost people like myself a lot of money to set up my own schemes when ECAN don't want any more underground water abstraction. 3 different blocks of land (block on Nth Rakaia Road).
- The water race system is an asset too valuable to lose because of current users lack of acceptance. Reliability and efficiency make the system worth maintaining against an uncertain future.
- The water race system is unsatisfactory as it only feeds about a quarter of the paddocks on the farm and is unreliable in the summer. One block on our farm does not have a water race on it, yet we pay water race rates for a service we do not receive.
- The water race system needs to remain in place. It should not be closed or modified. Action should be taken against the farmers, who have taken it upon themselves to modify and fill in the current races on their farms. It is a system as a whole and it is not up to individuals to change the water race system as it impacts on everyone else. The system was put in place due to the need to provide water to all farms and animals. It should not be the influence of dairy farms needs being satisfied. There are other farming types not just theirs. Perhaps they should have to pay for their large water wastage and be strictly monitored.
- The water race system serves many and varied needs. People have purchased land in reliance of it's ongoing existence and it is an asset for those who have it running through their land.
- The water race system would have to be one of the greatest feats of engineering Canterbury has ever seen and with the latest snow no power to run the pumps, no stockwater! It would be madness if the water races were taken out.
- This is a valuable resource which should be retained especially if the area continues to get drier due to climatic conditions.
- Time to move into the 2000's
- Under the present situation with wells running dry it is my only safeguard for drinking water for animals. I only keep a few animals to keep grass down and reduce fire risk.
- We are a deer slaughter and processing plant and do not have any need for the water race. We have a huge water storage tank for fire fighting needs.
- We are getting rated for a water race we do not use.

- We are getting rated for something we do not use.
- We are intensive cropping, land loss and flooding are a direct cost to our operation. Road side needs cleaning twice year because it floods back into our farm). This cost is approx. $12,000/year average in lost income. Please note we have one lateral, and one pivot irrigators running and the water race bank cannot be widened as the lateral runs on buried wire guidance.
- We are on the end of the line and do not actually require the water races. That being said, I acknowledge that it plays an important role for many farmers and would not like to see them lose it.
- We are paying for the maintenance of a system which is of no use to us. Recently we purchased a block of land and had to fence and provide a 8mx5 culverts to a 600m stretch of water race for our irrigator to cross. It became known to us during our research that the only use of the system below us was to feed a duckpond. Pretty expensive duckpond! I am strongly opposed to having to meet any costs of a water race system that exists solely to fill a duckpond.
- We are the last on the line. We need the water race system. If power fails, for winter surface water drainage, if this block of land is sold and had no water race system it would cost us, or new owner at least $100K to put in power supply and pump etc to the well to supply stock water.
- We do not have a water race through our property.
- We do not use the water race. Find it a nuisance to the operation of our farm and feel that those who use the race should pay the costs.
- We do not use the water race. The water was very dirty at times and not really acceptable. Fresh reticulated water is better for stock health. If the race was not to close then the landowner who use it should pay for the maintenance.
- We don't mind it running through our property but we don't use it and feel we should not have to pay for it.
- We don't use it but support it's continuation for those who still do use it.
- We feel that collating rates from individual rate payers as well as an area basis in unfair. It would be better to weigh the voting on the length race accessed by each property as this better reflects the cost/benefit of the race system. We have 8km of races costing $2,500 to clean each year. I would support keeping main races open for public good if the rating basis was changed.
- We find the supply unreliable due to people putting blockages in for own garden use. Annual cost of cleaning is increasing each year. Stock can be lost during adverse weather.
- We have a water race running through our property. In the winter the water runs in the race, in the summer (when we actually need it) it does not run most of the time. We have therefore set up troughs in our paddocks for stockwater. You also have to rely on the farms further up the line to not block the race for their own use (happens reasonably often).
- We have had two fires. In both instances the fire brigade were able to access water immediately from the water races. My biggest concern is that Canterbury is a very arid place when we can't get water out of the ground. The Waimak and the Rakaia are a long way apart and there is not much water in between. Whilst there is a cost to us all in keeping it open, I hope that short term finances don't cloud the long term picture.
- We have not used this system for over 20 years. The maintenance cost of our own water supply is very low. We have payed for a service we haven't received for over 20 years plus maintained races that never entered our

property. If the users of this system had not had a subsidy from non users this system would have been broken down years ago. No where else in NZ economy are some so openly subsidised by others.

- We live in the ECAN red zone as no certainty about getting additional consents for more water if we needed it. Currently there is much concern and debate over water resource In Canterbury and the reserves in the aquifer. Whilst research is being conducted and evaluated we think the water race should continue until more is known. Rural locations rely on water race for back up water supply in times of emergency (eg recent snowfalls) and if fire fighting.
- We purchased this 10ha block in October 2001 to graze stock so required the water race from the out set. Found water supply very reliable in first 2 years but since has been erratic in irrigation season. Also use water race at our home property cnr Old Sth Rd and Hororata Rd for stock.
- We purchased this 32ha block in 1994. We use it as a grazing block for cattle and horses and making hay. It supports our Burnham property, were we live. It's currently leased out to a local dairy farmer. It would make it impossible to run stock on it. Drilling a well just for stock water is unviable at a cost of approximately $60,000 and unlikely to obtain an irrigation consent, as the area is in the red zone for new consents. When we purchased the property there were no dairy farms in the area. The water races have been there for 125 years. If these people new to the area are pushing for it to close, because it doesn't suit them to have water races on the property. The water races should remain open, if they close them or section of the races, they can never be reopened. If they get filled in and easements removed from titles, and intakes closed. They are a community asset for everyone to use e.g. fire fighting, road contractor, spray contractors all use to fill tanks etc. If the water race closes how are the Council going to help farmers without water. It should remain open, at least until the plains water scheme gets the go ahead, as races could then be used for irrigation water. I am sure many people who want them closed would change their vote to keep it open.
- We put our own system in because the water supplied was poor quality and erratic, in the summer it would not be there when you needed it. Why should we pay for a system that has never delivered the service promised. User pay has been around for over 20 years.
- We rely on the water race system for all stock and household requirements. It is a simple gravity fed system and has worked well for many years. To replace the system on our farm with bore and troughs would cost around $100,000. I strongly support the continued operation of the water race system.
- We support Point 38 in the information sheet from the Preservation Committee ie. Continue for 10 years and then a full review. By this stage Central Plains water scheme should be functioning and will influence the final decision.
- Why change a very satisfactory system?
- Why cost time even thinking about closing them!!
- With power failure it is our only source of water.
- With water levels in wells going up and down how are we meant to get a steady amount of water when needed. When the power goes down how are we meant to get water for stock or the fire department when needed.
- Worried about fire and need for water.