

**Proposed  
Hurunui and Waiau River Regional Plan  
And Proposed Plan Change 3 to the Canterbury  
Natural Resources Regional Plan**

**Section 42A Report  
September 2012**

**Development and Significance of the Canterbury  
Water Management Strategy**

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Prepared by

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## Introduction

1. My full name is Christina Anne Robb. I am currently employed as the Programme Director - Water and Land with the Canterbury Regional Council ("CRC").
2. I hold a Bachelor of Engineering from University of Canterbury and a Masters in Natural Resource Management from Simon Fraser University British Columbia, Canada. I have over 18 years' experience in water management covering groundwater modelling, irrigation demand assessment, water resource development, environmental flows, water allocation policy at national and regional scales, and the management of land-use and water quality. The majority of my work has been in the Canterbury region. I was first employed by CRC in 2008, and have been in my current position since January 2011.
3. The scope of my report relates to the development and implementation of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy ("CWMS"). In 1998-9, I was employed by Lincoln Environmental and was involved Stage 1 on the Canterbury Strategy Water Study, the precursor to the CWMS. Since early 2009 I been heavily involved in the development of the CWMS, and have led its implementation. My role involves fronting the CWMS to the CRC Commissioners and the Chief Executive. Everything referred to in my evidence is in the public arena.
4. I have been asked to prepare this section 42A report for CRC on the development and significance of the CWMS.

## Development of the CWMS

### *History of the CWMS*

5. The CWMS is the culmination of a process that started in 1999 as the Canterbury Strategic Water Study. In 1990, CRC, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture funded Stage 1. Stage 1 provided an initial assessment of water availability and water demands for the Canterbury Region. This stage highlighted the high demand being placed on small rivers and streams in the region, and the potential usefulness of water storage. In 2005, the Ministry of

Economic Development funded a second stage. Stage 2 used an engineering approach to identify potential storage sites. Stage 3 broadened the scope of the work and looked at potential storage sites with multi-stakeholder teams. Concerns were raised at Stage 3 about water quality issues and wider public involvement.

6. In 2008, the Canterbury Mayoral Forum took ownership of the Strategic Water Study and rebranded it as the Canterbury Water Management Strategy. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum is constituted by the 10 Mayors in the region, the chair of the CRC, and all the Chief Executives.
7. The Canterbury Mayoral Forum broadened the scope of the CWMS to include water quality/land-use and biodiversity, and requested an extensive public consultation process. They also appointed a project manager and endorsed Canterbury Regional Council raising funding for the process through a targeted rate. Importantly they established a Steering Group with a broad range of interests represented.
8. The CWMS Steering Group membership was:
  - a. Bede O'Malley, Mayor of Ashburton, Chair of Steering Group;
  - b. Cr Angus McKay (CRC);
  - c. Cr Eugenie Sage (CRC);
  - d. Brian Lester and Bryan Jenkins (Chief executive representatives);
  - e. David O'Connell (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu);
  - f. Hugh Cannard (Recreational use of rivers);
  - g. Martin Clements (Fish and Game);
  - h. John Greer/Murray Doak, Ministry of Agriculture, (Central Government);
  - i. Alister James (Canterbury District Health Board);
  - j. Grant McFadden (Individual with historic knowledge of water);
  - k. Murray Rodgers (Water Rights Trust);
  - l. Peter Scott (Ophi Water Company and South Canterbury);

- m. Edith Smith (Forest and Bird);
  - n. Graeme Sutton (Irrigation NZ); and
  - o. Peter Townsend (Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce).
9. The CWMS Steering group commissioned technical reports, and had oversight of the public engagement process. From July to August 2008, the CWMS steering group held a series of stakeholder meetings on the uses and benefits of water. That process established a set of issues and opportunities for water in Canterbury, and led to the initial draft of a vision and set of principles.
10. In April 2009, a brochure was sent to all households in Canterbury seeking their views on water management. The document contained the draft vision and principles, and four possible strategic options for advancing water management in Canterbury. It was followed up with 10 public meetings which involved two sessions a week apart. Everyone was asked to provide feedback either at the meetings or in writing. Over 1100 responses were received, and the CWMS Steering group heard from all submitters who wanted to present in person.
11. The four options as set out in the brochure were:
- a. Option A - Business-as-Usual (the base case). This option would make use of the current Local Government Act and Resource Management Act methods, processes and approaches. This would be an applicant-driven approach, based on trying to prevent adverse effects. It would involve a mixture of statutory, industry and community initiatives, all of which would seek to protect the environment and manage infrastructure.
  - b. Option B - Advance environmental protection then infrastructure development. This option would address degraded environments, waterways under pressure from abstraction and decline in threatened species, before consideration was given to future major infrastructure development. In this option infrastructure development would only happen once agreed environmental values were secure

and compliance with environmental limits could be demonstrated.

- c. Option C - Reconfigure consents and infrastructure to provide further water for irrigation and to improve reliability of supply while looking to protect and enhance the environment. Unlike strategies A, B and D this strategy would take the opportunity to reconsider existing consents and operation of infrastructure, and redistribute water across the region for both surface and groundwater.
  - d. Option D - Advance infrastructure development alongside environmental repair and protection. This option would create an infrastructure platform involving storage of water of sufficient scope to meet the water needs to achieve production, agriculture, recreation and environmental values. It would aim to design the best "plumbing" arrangement for parts of the region by increasing the supply of usable water to alleviate short-term supply concerns while addressing drinking water, biodiversity, recreational and ecological concerns as part of any development proposals.
12. Of the 1100 submissions received by the CWMS Steering Group, the majority supported either Option B or D. The CWMS Steering Group reached the conclusion that environmental protection and infrastructure needed to be advanced together or in parallel.
  13. In August 2009, the CWMS Steering group released a draft Canterbury Water Management Strategy. It contained a further draft of the vision and principles. It also contained a full sustainability appraisal of the four strategic options to provide a robust assessment of their conclusions relating to parallel development. The August 2009 draft also introduced the zone committee concept. At the public meetings one of the most common requests was for local involvement in decisions. The zone committee concept is a response to that request. The August draft also introduced the targets and contained an initial draft of targets in 9 target areas.
  14. The CWMS Steering group sought written submission on its draft and finalised the strategy in November 2009. The only part that was not finalised was the targets. Stakeholder groups had requested further

collaborative input to the targets. The CWMS Steering group agreed to that request and committed to finalise the targets in 2010. The targets were finalised and a new version of the document was released in July 2010.

15. The Canterbury Water Management Strategy - Framework Document was endorsed by all Councils in Canterbury between November 2009 and February 2010. All endorsements noted in particular the vision of the CWMS - To enable present and future generations to gain the greatest social, economic, recreational and cultural benefits from our water resources within an environmentally sustainable framework.

### **Elements of the CWMS**

16. There are two slides attached to my evidence that contain rings and are headed "the value the community places on water". These slides form part of a presentation CRC Commissioners give to community and interest groups. The slides present the principles of the CWMS graphically. All the values listed are important and all are values that the CWMS seeks to protect or provide for. The principles were written through a community process, and it is my understanding that the priority simply reflects a community desire to ensure the second order priorities are not obtained at the cost of the first order priorities.
17. As well as the principles, the CWMS framework document describes the concept of parallel development. Parallel development requires action on three fronts:
  - a. Environmental restoration;
  - b. More reliable water supply through storage; and
  - c. Improved land management - nutrient and water efficiency.
18. The CWMS framework document contains targets in 10 target areas - ecosystem health/biodiversity, natural character of braided rivers, kaitiakitanga, drinking water, recreational and amenity opportunities, water-use efficiency, irrigated land area, energy security and efficiency, regional and national economies and environmental limits. These targets embody the concept of parallel development. CRC Commissioners always stress the need to make progress on all target

areas; addressing all target areas is critical to the success of the CWMS. We are currently co-ordinating a report measuring progress against the targets.

19. The zone and regional committees are the key delivery mechanism for the CWMS. The CWMS divides Canterbury into 10 zones each of which has a committee established. The first committee was established in July 2010, and the last committees were established in October 2011. The committees are joint committees of CRC and the local territorial authorities in the zone. The committee membership and terms of reference are approved by the relevant Councils. Each zone committee has a CRC Commissioner, a local Councillor from each territorial authority in the zone, a local Ngāi Tahu runanga representative from each runanga with an interest in the zone and 6-8 community members.
20. The Regional CWMS committee consists of a member from each zone committee, two CRC Commissioners, three runanga representatives, three local government representatives, and 7 community members. It also has a central government observer. It addresses regional water issues, in particular regionally significant biodiversity, and large infrastructure.
21. The Committees are charged with preparing an implementation programme for their zone or region.

### **Implementation of the CWMS**

22. The committees have terms of reference which are approved by the Councils for each committee when the committee is established. The terms of reference state that the purpose and function of the Committee is to:
  - a. Facilitate community engagement in the development and periodic review of a Water Management Implementation Programme that gives effect to the Canterbury Water Management Strategy and takes into account the Implementation Programmes of other Committees where there is a common area of interest or interface; and
  - b. Monitor progress in the implementation of the programme.

23. The terms of reference state that no Committee shall have the authority to commit any Council to any path or expenditure and shall operate in such a way as it does not compromise a Council's freedom to deliberate and make such decisions as it deems appropriate. It further states that no Committee shall have the authority to submit on resource consent matters in its own right.
24. As of June 2012, seven Zone Implementation Programmes had been presented to Councils (CRC and the relevant territorial authority(ies)). The Regional Implementation Programme has been received by CRC. The final three Zone Implementation Programmes are due later in 2012.
25. CRC and the local Councils receive the Implementation Programmes once they are finalised by the Committees. CRC resolves to use the Implementation Programmes as the basis for policy and work programmes, As an example, the following resolutions were passed by CRC at its meeting on 24 November 2011:
  - a. That the CRC:
    - i. Receives the Ashburton Zone Implementation Programme;
    - ii. Notes the content and that this is the second of eleven implementation programmes and is a substantial contribution to implementing the Canterbury Water Management Strategy; and
    - iii. Endorses the Ashburton Zone Implementation Programme as the basis for the design and realignment of work programmes, for drafting regional plan provisions and for preparation of a draft Long Term Plan
26. The implementation of the CWMS forms part of the Terms of Reference for the Environment Canterbury (Temporary Commissioners and Improved Water Management) Act 2010 (the "Ecan Act"). The ECan Act requires that the notice appointing the Commissioners includes a terms of reference. The Terms of Reference were gazetted on 29 April 2010 and contain the following specific expectations:



- a. Build on the collaborative work of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy including reviewing and addressing matters as necessary for sound policy development and continue the engagement with key stakeholders and the public on improving the management of water in Canterbury.
  - b. The Government intends to set specific outcomes and goals, with measurable milestones, for the Commissioners to achieve by 1 June 2010.
  - c. In a letter dated 27 May 2010, the Minister for Environment confirmed a set of outcomes and goals. The Minister required that the CRC Commissioners provide a plan by 31 July 2010 including timelines and processes for working with the Canterbury territorial authorities to develop and implement the CWMS. The resulting work programme prepared by the Commissioners contains explicit reference to CWMS in the following items.
27. CRC's commitment to achieving the CWMS vision, principles and targets is, by September 2013, to have:
- a. Facilitated solutions, through the CWMS regional and zone committees, for environmental improvements, efficiency improvements, land management practices and infrastructure for reliable water supply;
  - b. Enabled these solutions by providing an innovative/robust statutory framework that also prevents undermining of solutions, and supports the approach of the CWMS; and
  - c. Partnered on actions to achieve the solutions by establishing the means/pathway (funding, actions and responsibilities) by which solutions will be achieved.
28. The CRC Commissioners finalised the 2012-22 Long Term Plan on 28 June 2012. It contains the following references to the CWMS:
- a. The CWMS is an integrated approach to water management in which solutions are developed by communities of interest, balancing diverse environmental, economic, social and cultural perspectives in a collaborative process; and

- b. The CWMS is a partnership between CRC, Canterbury's district and city councils, and Ngāi Tahu as well as key water stakeholders.
29. CRC work programmes which are aligned to the CWMS are:
- a. CWMS Facilitation;
  - b. Protection of Recreational and Drinking Water Quality;
  - c. RMA Water Framework;
  - d. Land Use and Water Quality;
  - e. Water Quality - Urban Waterways;
  - f. Regional Water Infrastructure);
  - g. Water Use Efficiency;
  - h. Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring;
  - i. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health; and
  - j. Whakaora Te Waihora.
30. In the 2010-11 Annual Plan (approved in June 2010), a new \$4.2 million targeted rate was introduced, with the agreement of the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, to fund the implementation of the CWMS. That targeted rate funded a \$1.4 million Immediate Steps Biodiversity restoration fund, \$0.5 million for infrastructure investigations and the remainder for the operation of the committees. The cost of the committees is shared with the territorial authorities, who also provide secretarial support for all zone committees. In the 2012-22 Long Term Plan, the CWMS targeted rate is \$5.7 million, with the majority of new funding going to increase the biodiversity restoration components of the CWMS. A further \$20 million goes towards implementing the Zone/Regional Implementation Programmes through existing CRC work programmes.

### **The Hurunui and Waiau River Regional Plan and the CWMS**

31. The Hurunui Waiau Zone was the first Canterbury Water Management Zone to have a zone committee established for it. It is a joint committee of Hurunui District Council (HDC”) and CRC. The

committee comprises representatives of the CRC, HDC and the Runanga with interests in the Zone, together with seven community members.

32. The community members were selected from 33 people who submitted Expressions of Interest for the Zone Committee. The selection process included a workshop of all short-listed applicants and a Selection Working Group of two HDC elected members, CRC Councillor, an CRC director and a representative of Tuahuriri Runanga. The Selection Working Group assessed applicants at the workshop of short-listed applicants and after robust discussion on the committee's composition recommended to the HDC and CRC seven people who they believe in combination cover the range of interests required to address water management issues in the zone and who would be likely to be able to work in a collaborative (consensus) process. The Councils' approved the appointment of the committee based on the Selection Working Group's recommendation.
33. The Committee held its orientation workshop in July 2010. The process that the Zone Committee followed to develop the HWZIP is discussed in the evidence of Mr John Falkner.

### **Summary**

34. The Canterbury Water Management Strategy:
  - a. Has been led by Canterbury local government and developed collaboratively;
  - b. Is a partnership between CRC, Canterbury's district and city councils, and Ngāi Tahu as well as key water stakeholders and communities;
  - c. Is widely supported, including by Ministers, and many agencies are contributing to its implementation; and
  - d. Drives all water and land work programmes and water policy direction for CRC

**C A Robb**

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September 2012

