

Media Release

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Water Strategy Programme Publishes Report

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy programme has released its first report, providing a summary of current and future uses of Canterbury's water and the benefits these may deliver to the region.

The report is a record of the contributions of stakeholders with special interest in water who attended a series of workshops during July and August.

The report is now available for public comment and review and contributions will be received up till 30 October.

The Steering Group Chairman for the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, Bede O'Malley, says the views expressed at the workshops around the region were an important first step towards the development of a long term, community-led water management strategy.

"The strategy programme is making good progress, and I congratulate everyone involved so far on a productive series of workshops," he says. "As a result we have built up a wide base of stakeholders who represent the varied opinions on Canterbury's water both locally and regionally."

"It has certainly highlighted the fact that water is valued in different ways by different people, and it's given us the basis for discussion and interaction that will stand us in good stead as we approach discussion on the really difficult issues."

He says the Steering Group is particularly interested in the public's views on two key points.

"We want to know if people feel we have a complete and accurate summary of all of the uses and benefits of Canterbury's water – as the basis for a proper discussion about management strategies."

"It may be that some people feel there are some things that have been overlooked. Alternatively, they may feel some should be left out."

"We also want to know what issues the public consider to be the true bottom lines for water management in Canterbury. We are calling these Fundamental Principles and we would like comment on these"

Bede O'Malley says while the programme had already generated some robust debate, there were strong indications of support for what it is trying to achieve. "We are all very aware that water is a finite resource, and there are competing demands for it. This is an ambitious programme that will require real transparency, openness and foresight to ensure our water resources are used for the widest possible benefit."

Summary information has been circulated to all stakeholders and more detailed information is available on the web site. Comment and contribution can be made by:

- Email to info@canterburywater.org.nz
- Mail to: Canterbury Water Management Strategy, P O Box 345, Christchurch
- Using the automated form on the programme's website at <http://www.canterburywater.org.nz/getting-involved/>

About the Canterbury Water Management Strategy

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy is an 15 month programme of stakeholder and public discussion to develop a community-led plan for managing the region's water. The programme builds on previous water studies to deliver a strategy at regional and locality level with broad public support. It is led by the Canterbury Mayoral Forum, which is comprised of the mayors, chairs and chief executives of all Canterbury's local councils and Environment Canterbury, which also provides a secretariat to the programme. For more information go to www.canterburywater.org.nz

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For further information:

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