

DRIP FEED

Irrigation NZ Inc

Edition No. 65

9th March 2010

INZ recognises that regular work activity updates with its members are essential. The goal is to do this on a monthly basis, covering a few initiatives and updating the more pertinent ones each time. Feedback is much appreciated, as it helps us to ensure we are representing all our members' interests.

Advocacy & Leadership

Water Metering

I've been asked the question 'what has happened to the National Environmental Standard: Water Measuring Devices?' by a number of members lately so I thought I'd give an update as to where things are at. The current hold-up has been due to MfE undertaking a further cost benefit analysis for smaller takes (under 10l/s) which will then go back to Cabinet for a decision, hopefully at some point in March. It is fairly common knowledge, that the NES will be implemented through Section 360 of the RMA (deeming process) so it will no longer be a National Environmental Standard. This is preferable as it avoids costs to irrigators associated with consents having to be called in and having new conditions attached.

As a result INZ is actively working with MAF and MfE to gain support for the development of an industry led water metering standard (particularly for installation and verification). This will ensure consistency for irrigators and the trade around the country and fits well with self management philosophies of the primary sectors. During an open channel flow measurement workshop in Ashburton last month, with attendees from south island Regional Councils and industry there was unanimous agreement that this was the logical way forward. Now it's just a case of finding funding to do it, which will hopefully come through the government's implementation fund.

Seasonal Allocation Volumes - Irricalc Update

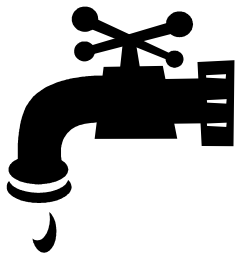
INZ has been working closely with ECan to sort through the WQN9 - Irricalc conundrum, and we now almost have resolution for Irricalc's use with consents. The proposed plan allows for the use of a model such as Irricalc provided it has been tested for application in Canterbury, and we are working to get Irricalc accepted on that basis. So we are looking forward to announcing that Irricalc is all go in the very near future. We will then widely circulate the Irricalc outputs throughout Canterbury for use. Irricalc's acceptance under the NRRP should then be a formality.

There is also realisation that a water balance model based methodology, such as Irricalc, is the only easy way forward for the adjustment of seasonal volumes through measuring and monitoring, as required in the Rakaia-Selwyn consent review decisions. The monitoring data has to be converted to volumes consistent with current proposed policy - reliability (1 in 5 year drought) and efficiency (80%). There's no easy way of doing this without the use of a model. The data collection effectively helps ground truth the model for each farm.

INZ is also working with ECan to develop a set of practical guidelines (minimum requirements) for the monitoring and measuring (data collection) requirement of the Rakaia-Selwyn consent review decisions. These guidelines will cover soil, climate and irrigation efficiency aspects. This will ensure that at the end of the five year period, providing the guidelines have been followed, changes will become a low-cost formality.

Workshops & Conference

Conference – The updated final program is now available on the website, you will note there has been a couple of changes to keynote speakers due to ministers unavailability. The trade exhibition is looking stunning with over 50 sites sold and only a few spaces left. So if you're looking to upgrade your system this winter remember the INZ trade exhibition is the only one stop irrigation shop in the country for 2010, and for those trade exhibitors not registered I suggest you get in quick!



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Finally, please remember this conference is *FOR YOU* our INZ members. We have a great venue and a great programme lined up with lots of good practical information for you so please note now INZ conference, 26th to the 28th April 2010 in your diaries as this will be a conference not to miss. You can now register on line at www.irrigationnz.co.nz

Website

The website has been updated and we have received a number of complimentary comments about it - particularly in relation to ease of access to press releases and the conference. However, it's still a work in progress (which it always will be!) with an ever growing list of information pages that need to be added. The next development being worked on is linking the Dripfeed e-mail to the website.

We've mentioned this before but had no response so here goes again - an added feature of the new website is that we can create secure web pages that can be managed remotely. This opens up opportunities for schemes or irrigator user groups without a website to have their own pages within the INZ website for their members..... and control the content and who has access to it themselves! If any scheme/user group wants to pilot this concept with us contact Chris ccoughlan@irrigationnz.co.nz.

Projects

Roto-Rainer

INZ has recently helped Rainer Irrigation gain TechNZ funding to scope a project for the further development of 'Rotorainer' technology -

- Understand which aspects of the design and operation of the "Rotorainer" type of travelling irrigator limit current performance under NZ conditions
- Develop a range of design changes for overcoming these limitations
- Test the new designs against industry-accepted Key Performance Indicators
- Prepare new designs for the irrigator to meet the requirements of the above markets, based on the research results

INZ are happy to help facilitate technological advancements that advantage irrigation in NZ. We also have a good understanding of the range of grant funding options available to help things move along that much quicker. For more information contact Andrew acurtis@irrigationnz.co.nz

INZ have completed four SFF Phase II project funding applications - a fairly major challenge with the current surge of activity around water; Decision Support System for Fish Screen Installations; Irrigator Operator Training; A 'How to' Guide for Irrigator User Group Establishment; Collaborative Water Management for the Rakaia-Selwyn. We have also submitted a small under \$20k project to define irrigation reliability and then scope a more detailed project on better understanding irrigation reliability and its flow-on effects from an irrigator's perspective.

Andrew Curtis, Chief Executive
Chris Coughlan, Business Manager
Pat Brown, Administrator
OR call us on 03 379 3820

acurtis@irrigationnz.co.nz
ccoughlan@irrigationnz.co.nz
admin@irrigationnz.co.nz