



## News release

**March 01, 2010 – for immediate release**

### **Irrigation NZ heads to Otago**

Irrigation NZ is heading to Otago this week to meet with industry stakeholders and representatives in a move to better understand the region's water challenges.

The three day tour will take in meetings and field trips with irrigation companies, user groups, schemes, regional councils and technical and trade industry stakeholders.

INZ chief executive Andrew Curtis said the focus of the tour is to listen.

It is often perceived that the Canterbury-based INZ is focused primarily on Canterbury and its water challenges.

In fact INZ is a national body representing all irrigation interests and promoting irrigation development and efficient water management nationwide.

To do this it is important that INZ understands the challenges of all the regions it represents, including Otago.

"There is misconception that INZ focuses just on Canterbury – that's not the case at all. In August last year INZ conducted a similar, and very successful tour in the Wairarapa and Hawkes Bay," Curtis said.

The tour party includes Curtis, Business manager Chris Coughlan, chairman Graeme Sutton and several board members.

INZ will also be addressing the various groups it meets with a brief on just what INZ is about – the diversity of work it carries out and oversees on behalf of all irrigation stakeholders and interests nationwide, with a particular focus on the leadership work around the standards for the irrigation industry and sustainable development going forward.

"This tour in Otago is about INZ listening to people and better understanding what the challenges are in this region and in a reciprocal education we (INZ) will address the regional and industry understanding of just what the work is that we do and pinpoint areas where we can better interact for a common cause."

On Tuesday (March 2) the INZ tour will meet with the Otago Regional Council in the afternoon before meeting in Ranfurly in the evening with several irrigation companies including Maniototo Irrigation and Hawkdun Idaburn Irrigation.

Wednesday will see a visit to the Maniototo and Mt Ida irrigation schemes in the morning with an afternoon session at the Vulcan Hotel, St Bathans, taking in several schemes and irrigation companies in the region with the tour moving on to visit irrigation points of interest en-route to Alexandra.

A meeting in Earnsclough, Central Otago, on Wednesday evening is open to all irrigation stakeholders including farmers, the tech and trade industry, irrigation companies, schemes and councils.

Business manager Chris Coughlan said INZ is keen to hear about experiences incorporating both the challenges and opportunities with water resources in the region. The meeting at the Earnsclough Hall at 7pm (March 3) will also give INZ the opportunity to highlight the work it does and the opportunities it can offer to all industry stakeholders.

On Thursday (March 4) the tour will move to the Cromwell and Oamaru regions travelling via Tarras to Oamarama to meet with water groups and then Meridian at Benmore before moving on through the Upper Waitaki where there will be catch-ups with water groups and schemes including Upper Waitaki, Marewhenua, Lower Waitaki and the North Otago Irrigation Company.

**Media note – Media is welcome to meet with the tour at any point along the travels for stories and photo opportunities.**

**For full details of the programme and evening meetings, and any further information – please call:**

**Chris Coughlan (INZ business manager) 027 6717705**

**Andrew Curtis (INZ chief executive) 0274 966314**

## **Irrigation NZ**

**Irrigation NZ is a national body representing all irrigation interests in a unified voice to promote excellence in irrigation development and efficient water management based on the principles of responsible and sustainable water management throughout New Zealand.**

