

**Media Release**

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**Hurunui Water Project resource consent application placed on hold**

The Hurunui Water Project has placed its resource consent application for a water take from Lake Sumner and the South Branch of the Hurunui River temporarily on hold.

Subject to the final version of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy, the Project is prepared to put the process on hold for up to a year to give the strategy a chance to address water storage in Hurunui.

Project Manager Amanda Loeffen says the decision follows a series of meetings over the past month, culminating in a meeting at the Hurunui District Council last week, where diverse stakeholders - including Fish and Game, Forest and Bird, Ngai Tahu, Environment Canterbury staff, regional and district councillors and project representatives - met to discuss how the strategy could address the needs of the Hurunui catchment.

“It has become clear to us that a collaborative process is preferred and that compromises need to be offered. To allow the strategy the best shot at addressing where water should be stored in Hurunui and across Canterbury, we have chosen in good faith to temporarily place our application on hold.”

“We now encourage other parties who are pursuing legal processes which affect the strategy to do the same. We need others to show leadership and to come on board to make the strategy work.”

“The landowners behind the project have parked the application as a goodwill gesture. Without buy in from all the competing parties, the strategy won’t get off the ground and the community will face further legal processes, escalating costs and delays to resolve the question of where water can be stored.”

“Since the launch of the strategy, we have talked to most groups involved with the Hurunui and there is considerable support for the breathing space that parking our application will provide.”

For more information contact:

Mike Hodgen, Hurunui Water Project Board Chairperson on Ph 03 314 4063, or  
Amanda Loeffen, Project Manager, Hurunui Water Project,  
Ph 021 359 049 or email [info@hurunuiwater.co.nz](mailto:info@hurunuiwater.co.nz)