



Media Release

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Hurunui Water Project supports moratorium

Hurunui Water Project Limited (HWP) is supporting today's announcement by the Government of a moratorium on consent applications to take water from the Hurunui River, including the project's own resource consent application.

The moratorium will run for fourteen months to allow the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS) to address the future of the Hurunui River in a community-focused manner, and to allow the Environment Canterbury Commissioners time to advance the WCO and the NRRP in a sensible time frame.

Hurunui Water Project chairman Mike Hodgen says while the fourteen month moratorium would delay the project, the Government's intention to provide clarity around the future of the Hurunui River was admirable.

"Last year we called for the legal process to be put on hold while the consultative process of the CWMS was worked through and we are pleased that the Minister has now endorsed that approach."

"We now have one collaborative process to work with, rather than three legal processes, and the moratorium gives everyone interested in the Hurunui River breathing space to start talking. The highly charged legal environment we were operating in was divisive, and it is our hope that the moratorium will bring the community together again."

HWP intends to shortly make an offer of partly paid ordinary shares to raise further funds to support its progress, but Mr Hodgen says the moratorium itself should not put off investors.

"Landholders in the district want certainty. The stakeholders have been working on this project for eight years now so another year will not detract from the momentum we have generated. The farmers of the district need a mechanism to consolidate their interest in productive uses of the Hurunui waters and the HWP intends to offer this. However, the HWP is not taking subscriptions at this time."

"In many respects, the moratorium gives greater certainty for those investing in our project, as the Minister has signalled strongly that he wants more collaboration over the river's management and this fits with the project's vision. If the zonal committee comes back with significant changes to our proposal, then we will work with those suggestions. We look forward to working constructively with other parties who have an interest in the river and we will embrace whatever outcomes the process delivers."

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