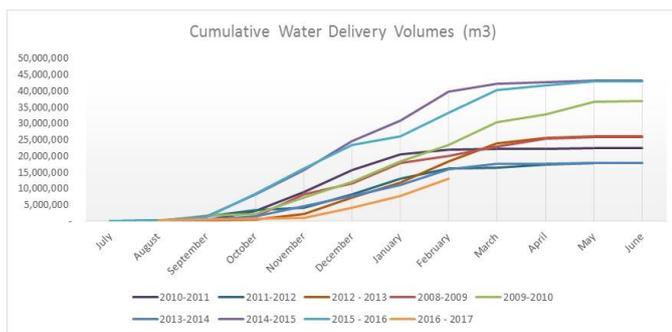




In this month's newsletter we provide water delivery volumes for the scheme; advise of a current Department of Conservation study underway; inform you about steps we are taking with regard to on-farm Health and Safety; update you on expected water delivery dates for the expansion; and offer information on the North Otago Sustainable Land Management Group.

Scheme Volumes for 2016/2017 Season

As is apparent to all, the weather has been unusually kind to North Otago and the frequent rain events and sub-normal temperatures have reduced the need to apply irrigation for most of the season. The graph below gives you some idea of how unusual the season has been compared with the last few years. In total, we have delivered just over 13 million m³ through the end of February, the lowest ever historically, and compared to only one-third of deliveries at the same time in 2014-2015.



The fact that we have been lucky enough to have favourable weather this season of course does nothing to compensate for the frustration and angst caused by the lateness of the expansion for those of you waiting for water. We recognise and appreciate that this is causing stress and ask that you contact us if you need to express that frustration or need more information as we are here to listen to - and work for - you. There is also help available through the Rural Support Trust who can be contacted on 0800 787 254 or via their website www.rural-support.org.nz.

Pest Control in Borton's Pond

NOIC operates an Opportunity for Improvement (OFI) process in our office and occasionally we get an enquiry which we think may be of general interest. One such OFI recently received was a call from a concerned citizen who was camping in the Borton's Pond area. They noticed that there was a high number of stoats and were worried that this would be having a significant impact on native birdlife in the area. After quite a bit of investigative work around finding out who exactly was responsible for pest control in this area, we received information from the Department of Conservation advising it was their responsibility.

DOC advised us that there is currently a large scale trial being undertaken by them in conjunction with Environment Canterbury and Meridian Energy, which involves artificial islands being built in several of the larger braided rivers in the

area. They are expecting that various birds in these areas will use the islands for nesting - which will help build numbers - and they appear to be having outstanding results with regard to black billed gulls and terns. As part of the trial they are monitoring numbers of birds and fledglings, as well as predator numbers.

Unfortunately DOC are currently not using any form of pest eradication in this area, because they do not wish to skew the number of pests found, which will be why they were seen to be roaming so freely.



The trial is a three year trial and is currently in its second year. If anyone would like any further information regarding this trial, please call Brad Edwards of DOC on 027 542 8739.

Health & Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act which was recently enacted places additional duties on those of us that are in control of a workplace, and extends the obligations to downstream users and upstream suppliers of infrastructure. NOIC has in place a significant amount of infrastructure on land it does not own or control. NOIC employees are accessing that infrastructure and to do so have to traverse the farm workplace. Therefore, there are obligations for both NOIC and the Landowner on accessing NOIC infrastructure.

To deal with these obligations, we are in the process of writing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be loaded against every piece of on-farm infrastructure within the scheme. Once we have finalised the format that this will take, we will be sending a draft SOP to all Landowners (the majority of which are shareholders), so that you have the opportunity to include any hazards or H&S issues within the document that we will then finalise and share. We believe this is going to be the best way to show that we are communicating and advising of our respective activities, risks and hazards.

We know some of you are already very active in this area and have developed your own H & S plans for your property. These will be very useful as we finalise our SOPs and invite you to send

them to us so that we can have it on file as well. Thanks to those who have already done so.

Meter Readings

Thanks to everybody who has sent in meter readings, we have had a brilliant response this month, which has not only made the entry of data for invoicing more efficient, it has created greater efficiencies for our Operations Team.

It is important to note that you will still occasionally see our Ops staff reading meters. This is because they undertake hydrometer checks on all offtakes three times per year as well as reading the stock water meters. There is no charge for this service.

Scheme Expansion

Commissioning of Pump Stations 1 and 2 commenced this week, while borflex coupling and remedial works are still in progress. As advised in a recent email update, early supply of water to some sections that was indicated in December has now had to be reshuffled with resources moved to repairs and to maintain momentum on remedial works. Delivery of water at offtakes has therefore bunched towards the end of March, early April – refer to updated schedule of dates below.

Pipeline	Description	Water Availability		Variance
		Dec-16	Feb-17	(days)
Section 1	Main Spine to Queens Flat	16/01/2017	10/03/2017	-53
Section 2.1	Peaks - Gravity	23/02/2017	17/03/2017	-22
Section 2.2	Peaks - Pumped	14/03/2017	30/03/2017	-16
Section 3	Main Spine to Five Forks	20/02/2017	21/03/2017	-29
Section 4.1	Dunrobin - Gravity	22/02/2017	30/03/2017	-36
Section 4.2	Dunrobin - Pumped	15/03/2017	06/04/2017	-22
Section 5	Round Hill	06/03/2017	03/04/2017	-28
Section 6	Raupo Ck/Serpentine	13/03/2017	30/03/2017	-17
Section 7	Herbert	27/03/2017	12/04/2017	-16
Section 8	Maheno - All Day Bay	27/03/2017	10/04/2017	-14

Know Your Company Evening

The “Know your Company” evening was held last week at the Opera House with a good turnout and robust discussion around shareholder views for the update of the NOIC environmental strategy. This occurs as NOIC seeks to improve our Environmental Strategy in order to make it more user friendly

and effective. We remain committed to our purpose of delivering a strong, affordable scheme, exhibiting social and environmental responsibility in a facilitative and open manner.

Views and opinions have also been captured through a series of workshops and will be formulated into a draft document for circulation and comment before being adopted by the Board. Consultation with shareholders has thus far been about listening. We want everybody to have had the opportunity to voice their thoughts before the draft is circulated.

If you could not make it to the evening, we are still interested in your views. Feel free to call the office to talk, or to arrange a time to drop in to discuss these issues at another time, either alone or with your neighbours.

North Otago Sustainable Land Management

The North Otago Sustainable Land Management Group ‘NOSLaM’ announces a fresh new vision to ensure that farmers are well supported in the role that they play in managing land and water resources.

There is a lot of confusion and anxiety around the perceived complexity of obligations and legislation. This can result in a defensive ‘licence to farm’ stance. Farmer to Farmer learning has been proven to be the most effective way of engaging people, addressing issues and harnessing opportunities with local solutions built by local people.

NOSLaM have secured partnership with NOIC, ORC and WDC and is currently looking for an administrator to help push these initiatives forward. They will be setting up local farmer networks throughout the district, formed on a similar basis to what NOIC have done with our ‘Pod’ group model. These groups will be a relaxed way to focus on what is relevant to your situation, and the role that you can play on your farm in order to look at water quality in your local area, which in turn leads to better outcomes for everyone. Please be supportive when you are approached by a neighbouring farmer in the coming months to get involved in NOSLaM.

Thoughts? Ideas? Queries? Please contact Peter Mitchell (027) 4317500, Lyndon Strang (027) 4324006 or Jane Smith (027) 3841424.

Shares Available to Lease

Neil and Jo Gilbert currently have 30 shares which they would like to lease for a long term period. If an agreement to lease shares is to be undertaken, please contact our office to arrange for a technical review. This will identify whether the shares are able to be used as required. Once technical viability has been confirmed, we will then provide an Agreement for Direct Payment of Shareholder Water Charges by Lessee document which will need to be completed by both parties and approved by the Directors of the NOIC Board.

If you would like to talk with Neil and Jo about their available shares please contact them directly on 03 439 5225 or via email at gilberts249@gmail.com.

With kind regards from the NOIC team