Tengawai Water User Group

Sub-Catchment Plan –
Recommendations to Zone Committee

History

- TWUG formalised in 2000
- Five existing AA consents, held by 4 shareholders
- Shares held in Opuha Water, therefore augmenting Opihi River catchment.
- Takes total 252l/s, approx 614ha irrigated
- Consents called in and reviewed in 2002
- Outcome new minimum flow regime with higher minimum flows and 50% restrictions
- Three now have off-stream storage ponds to improve reliability

History

- Current flow regime for AA permits:

- 600L/s May to Aug
- 500L/s Sept
- 400L/s Oct to Apr
- Oct to Apr, between 400 and 500 allocation cannot exceed 50%

Key Concerns

- TWUG has been actively involved with the sub-catchment group over the past 3 years
- A year ago TWUG decided with the lack of robust information, the group needed to engage expert support.
- Key to understand potential plan implications, including NPS and proposed NES for the TWUG.
- TWUG has been reviewing the potential effect on reliability of supply

Key Concerns

- Increases in minimum flows will affect reliability of supply and reductions in allocation, farmers business viability
- Concerns with Ecan hydrology report, including lag times and naturalizing of the flows at the minimum flow site at Cave.
- Report prepared by Richard de Joux has not been accepted by Ecan, hindering progress
- The catchment allocation must be correct
- Must ensure the we agree on all flow stats, to then determine any new flow regime

Key Concerns

- Lack of information, expert reports and direction from Ecan
- Reliability of supply analysis is key for irrigators and cannot be determined until flow stats are agreed and suitable flow regimes then modelled.
- Unsure of catchment nutrient allocation. Whether GMP is appropriate considering water quality is ‘good’

General Outcomes Sought

- To recognize the TWUG hold Opuha Water shares, and the contribution of augmentation to the Opihi catchment
- Any changes in the minimum flow regime and allocation, must be based on robust evidence including economic impacts associated with change in reliability of supply, working with TWUG
- The cost of investment must be considered
- To understand the Tengawai River goes dry regularly, when irrigators are on restriction

General Outcomes Sought

- Water alternatives must be available and time to make any changes
- Harsh restrictions to apply to those not part of the TWUG who actively share water.
- For high flow ‘B’ takes, investigate removing the 15 cumecs at SH1 and replace with an increased Tengawai River flow
- Winters flows may be able to increase
- TWUG generally accept GMP but must ensure the proxies as per Irrigation NZ concerns are addressed first.

Proposed Solutions

- TWUG wish to be actively part of determining the catchments solutions.
- Expert technical meetings with ECan and stakeholders to agree on the catchment hydrology and stats
- ECan to provide the reviewed catchment allocation and methodology
- ECan to provide all required expert reports, to base solutions on robust facts

Proposed Solutions

- TWUG review this information, and then work through with ECan and stakeholders suitable solutions, prior to the plan being drafted
- This will provide the best opportunity to determine solutions for the environment and irrigators reliability of supply.
- Unless changes are made now to this process, all parties will be fighting it out at a hearing, which goes against collaborative processes and ensuring the best outcome.

Questions?

- We welcome questions ☺