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For immediate release



Central Plains Water Trust surprised at reported City Council comments

Today Doug Marsh, chair of Central Plains Water Trust, said he was concerned at reports that Christchurch City Councillors had raised concerns about poor "information flow" from the Trust. He was also surprised at the comment that Councillors would only support the scheme if water "would be available to the city if needed."

Mr Marsh says that the concept of water from the scheme being available to supply the Christchurch city was never part of the Trust Deed. "The option of making water available to the city in a crisis situation could be discussed when we meet," Mr Marsh says.

In February 2006 Councillors were among a group of more than 500 people who were each sent a 28 page briefing paper that outlined the scheme in detail and highlighted its community, recreational and economic benefits.

"In addition, part of our Trust Deed involves the Christchurch City Councillors receiving and approving our Annual Report, a six monthly report and our yearly Statement of Intent. We also provide the Christchurch City Council with a quarterly report on the progress of the scheme. To date the Council has not sought clarification on any of the information provided," says Mr Marsh.

"Since Council met last week the Trust has requested a meeting but, due to other Council commitments, the meeting date cannot yet be confirmed.

"The proposed scheme will provide significant economic benefits to Christchurch. The scheme's contribution to GDP will be the equivalent of a Rugby World Cup every year. Canterbury farmers spend around \$750 million annually on goods and services provided by Christchurch businesses. Export income from Canterbury's rural sector accounts directly and indirectly for 60-70% of Christchurch's economic activity.

"We look forward to meeting Councillors and working with them to ensure the success of the scheme for the benefit of the Canterbury region," says Mr Marsh.

-Ends-

For further information:

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