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## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

There was a great roll up of local people at the recent meeting with the consultants from Australian Water Environments.

For some of you not previously involved I was glad to meet with you and to share your concerns for our river and area surrounding it.

It was difficult to gauge what everyone learnt but those not previously involved I am sure you found that by attending you showed that we as a group support the rehabilitation of the floodplain and recognise the value of the Pike River not only in supplying water to irrigators but for its unique recreational value.

I have reported that the wheels of change move slowly but I suppose that is fair when you consider the enormity of this Pike River project.

What started as simply a quest for a Salt Interception Scheme has now grown to encompass the total rehabilitation of the floodplain which includes ways of providing the best means of water deliver to irrigators and at the same time ensuring that water (from environmental flows) is delivered where needed to the floodplain.

On top of all of this is the communities demand that the recreational use of the Pike be preserved.

All up the project could cost between \$70 and \$90 million. (So you must understand why all of these investigations must go on. It would be poor governance to contemplate spending that sum without a full and proper investigation.)

The consultants from AWE have written to all water licence holders seeking their input in regards to water delivery - even if you have not been contacted you can still express your views. Please contact the Project Implementation Officer Frances Simes on 8595 2223

Where to now?

The consultants are to provide their draft report early this year.

Your committee will consider the draft. At this stage we have a good feel for what everyone wants but if any further community meeting is needed we will certainly organise one.

The project investigation must wrap up by the end of June.

Then I suppose it become a question of money.

Hopefully with continuing community support we can convince the powers to be that money spent here will be for the grater benefit of all users of the Murray especially downstream.

Thank you all for your support in 2007. Don't give up as there is light in the tunnel. Lets hope that 2008 will bring great results.

**Bruce Hewett**  
**Chairman PRLMG**



# IRRIGATION INFORMATION TOUR

The Renmark to the Border Local Action Planning conducted an irrigation information tour on the 25th and 26th of October for 20 irrigators from the Murtho and Pike regions.



THE CREW

- The tour was conducted over 2 days in which the group traveled some 620km throughout Victoria and NSW and took in 7 farm visits.
- First stop was Aus Citrus in Dareton NSW which is a non profit organisation who supplies budwood and rootstock seed production for distribution
- Next we met with a Board member from Western Murray Irrigation Limited in Dareton who are an irrigation trust that has three pumping stations (Buronga, Coomealla and Curlwaa) supplying water to 400 irrigators across 4000 hectares.
- Then we traveled to a salt interception scheme disposal basin at Mourquong where we met with the owner of Sun Salt Duncan Thomson. Sun Salt have been operating at the basin since 1979 and has received over a million of tones of salts which it has produced into high quality salt for a range of uses.
- Last stop for the day was John Hendricks property in Mildura where we saw a state of the art fertigation system on citrus and vegetables.
- Friday the 26th saw us travel to Boundary Bend olives a 2800 hectare property who are Australia's largest manager of olives groves with 2.5million trees (6,636 hectares) under management and Australia's largest supplier of olive oil to the domestic market and export markets.



Sun Salt Mourquong



Pump Shed and 500 megalitre dam at Boundary Bend Olives



# IRRIGATION INFORMATION TOUR

- Heading back to Robinvale we stopped at Lake Powell Almonds a 4000 hectare property who are undertaking some trial work with Netafim in the use of low flow drip (.6 Lt/Hr) using trunk Phytech Dendrometer sensor with TDR (Time domain reflectometer) for scheduling, and replacing daily ETO's from a nearby weather station.

Phytech Dendrometer sensor at Lake Powell almonds



One of the 300 megalitre dam's and at Lake Powell Almond  
Farm & Irrigation manager's talking to the group



- Last stop for the tour took in Chambers Nurseries a 648 hectare property who are seen as the leader in best vineyard management practices in NSW. Last year 3.18 megs of water per hectare plus 1.5 megs of rainfall for production figures of approximately 24 tones per hectare across the property through a variety of practices including;
- Pre-planning amelioration with the addition of nutrient and organic composted cow manure
- Good irrigation design, control and monitoring
- Weed control
- Reduced soil compaction
- Nutrition
- Commitment to build organic carbon the soil
- No tillage policy

Chalmers Nurseries Vineyard and Dam



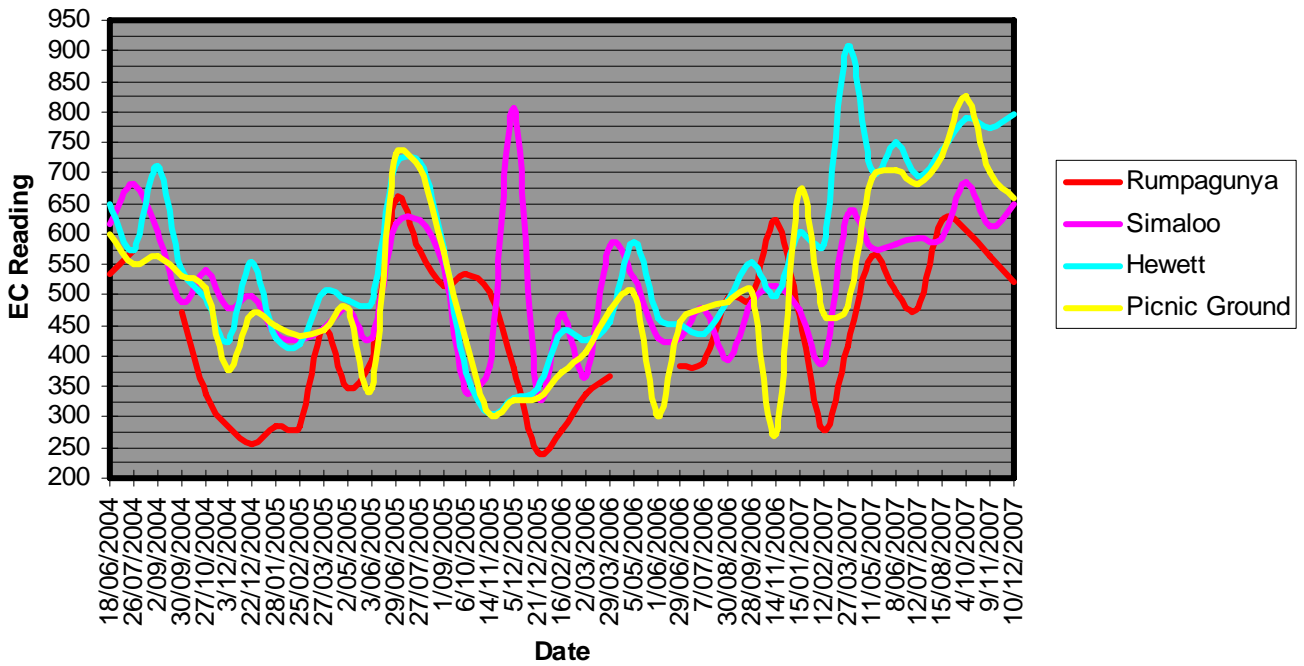
Overall the tour was very well received with all that participated gaining some helpful knowledge that they could take home.



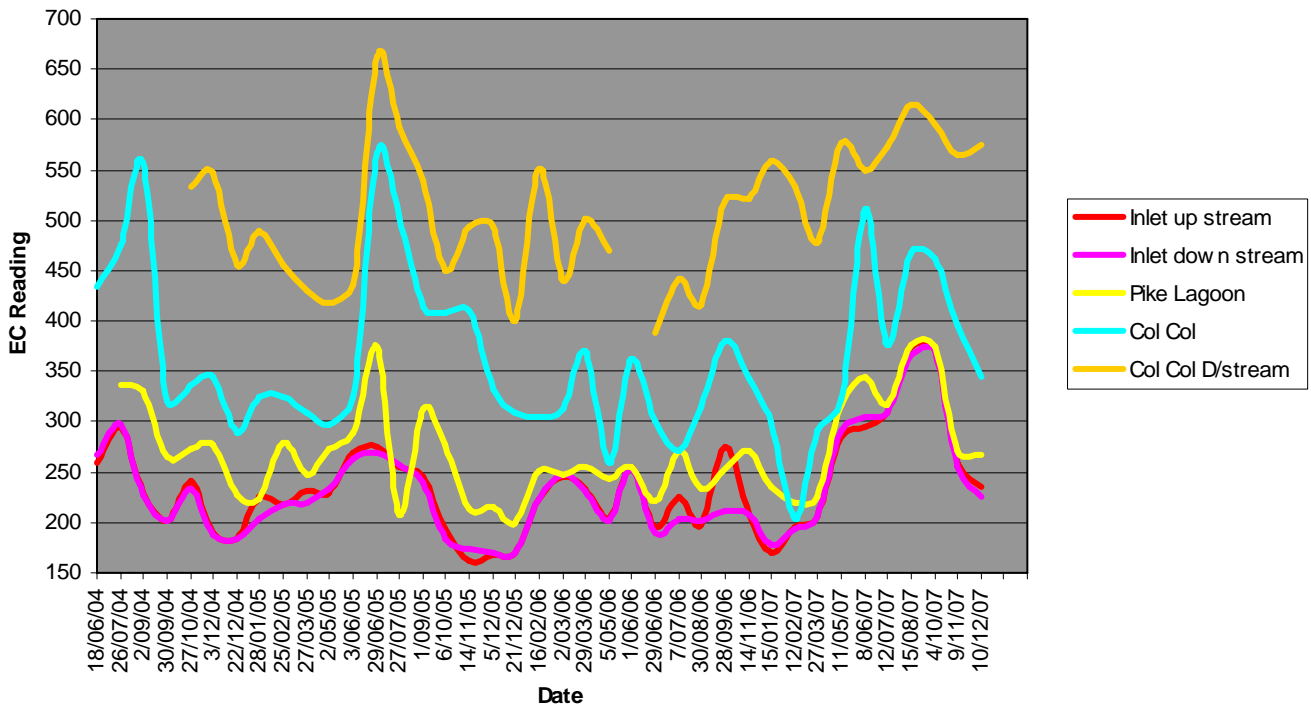
# PIKE SALINITY RUN

Every month the Renmark to the Border LAP undertakes salinity monitoring in the Pike Creek System. The results of these monitoring events are handed to the Department of Water Land and Biodiversity Conservation Salinity team to add with there run of river data, it also provides irrigators salinity levels in the pike giving them an idea on what salt loads they are pumping onto there crops

**Pike River Salinity Run (Lower System) 2004-2007**



**Pike River Salinity Run (Upper System) 2004-2007**



# PIKE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

## JOINT PROJECT BRIEF

### Stage 1

- Successful Water Budget Meeting held on 13/11/07
- Successful Site Visit held 13/11/07
- Successful Community meeting held 13/11/07 with 40 attendees  
Liaison by PIP Coordinator & AWE on the Communication Engagement Strategy Document.

Stage 1 is complete

Community meeting held at the Lyrup Club



## Commenced Stage 2 – Assessing the current situation and predicting the future

### A. Sustainable Water Supply - Current and future irrigation, stock and domestic and industrial water use in the Pike River

1. An audit and calculation of existing irrigation, domestic and industry water use from the Pike River. This information is to be collected using existing reports, ground truthing and utilising crop survey methodology currently held by the SAMRIC. In addition the consultants are encouraged to speak directly with individual irrigators.
2. A calculation of future irrigation, domestic and industry water use. This information is to be collected using existing reports, utilising temporal crop information (taken from successive years of crop surveys), having one on one discussion with local irrigators. In addition the 2007 Crop Survey process will assist to collect information relevant to the Pike Implementation Plan process. Such questions will include changes to pumping infrastructure and involvement in floodplain planning.

### B. Floodplain Planning – Scoping the Pike Floodplain Management Plan

1. Research, gather and collate all available data and information relevant to the Pike Floodplain area.
2. Develop initial objectives as per Section 3.4 'Initial Objectives' of the Floodplain Planning Guidelines. These objectives should reflect the long-term vision for the floodplain, and will be revisited and revised during the development of the plan.
3. Undertake an assessment consistent with Section 4 'Assessing your Floodplain' of the Floodplain Planning Guidelines. This step involves identifying assets and threats and linking these two elements to value and prioritise the assets. This step will require ground-truthing and verification through field assessments

### Stage 2 Consultation:

Potential one on one discussion with irrigators being arranged by AWE  
PIP Coordinator sent out Irrigation surveys to 42 irrigators in the Pike area on 26/11/07 and as these are being returned they are being forwarded to the consultant team (AWE)  
Meeting with floodplain stakeholders and other interested parties to identify initial objectives, assets and threats for development of floodplain plan was held 27/11/07 with 5 community representatives present as well as representatives from DWLBC, DEH, RBLAP and SA MDB NRMB. The workshop was facilitated by the consultant team (AWE)

### Stage 2 Outcomes:

- Current and estimated future irrigation, stock and domestic and industrial water use in the Pike River
- Concise report summarising background information and floodplain assessment for the Pike Floodplain. This report will form the introductory section of the floodplain management plan

### INDIGENOUS CONTACT

PIP Coordinator met with Aboriginal Riverland NRM Group 28/11/07, gave a presentation on the PIP process and discussed how this group could be involved in the PIP process. Outcome of meeting is a recommendation to December 2007 PIP Reference Group Meeting to have this group set up as a Steering Committee under the Governance area of the PIP

# PIKE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE - CONT

## RIVER MURRAY FOREST

DWLBC Project Coordinator River Murray Forest Project attended PIP Reference Group meeting 14/11/07 and provided information – River Murray Forest work will take place on highland in the Pike area at an appropriate time

### COMMUNITY CONTACT

- 19/11/07 PIP Coordinator contacted Darren Letton, John Letton, Wayne Castel, Ian Coombs, Denis Frahn, Terry Bediavas, Bronny Caire, Dave Reilly, Bruce Hewett, Marilyn Castel & Ivan Marschall re the floodplain workshop meeting being held 27/11/07
  - 19/11/07 and 28/11/07 PIP Coordinator spoke to community member Terry Bediavis re floodplain issues
- 30/11/07 PIP Coordinator spoke to community member Denis Frahn re floodplain issues

### PIP PROJECT FUNDING

Ongoing liaison with SA MDB NRM and DWLBC re current funding for PIP project (Program 1)

### MONITORING ISSUES AT COL COL

PIP Coordinator followed up with DWLBC Operations Staff on an OHS&W issue re undertaking gaugings at Col Col and also an issue regarding maintenance required at the stilling well.  
Onground work at Col Col took place 10/12/07 covering off on the OHS&W issue

### REFERENCE GROUP MEETING

Agenda and minutes distributed for Dec 2007 meeting  
Follow up from previous meeting undertaken

### JOINT PROJECT BRIEF

Ongoing development of Communication Engagement Strategy

#### Stage 2 – Assessing the current situation & predicting the future

- Brief report on the current & future irrigation, stock & domestic, & industrial water use in the Pike River.
- Concise report summarising background information, initial objectives & the floodplain assessment for the Pike Floodplain. This report will form the introductory section of the floodplain management plan.
- One on one discussions by consultant with irrigators by consultants

#### Stage 3 – Developing options for water supply & delivery & developing options for floodplain management

Water supply & delivery options for irrigators in the Pike River Area identified  
Floodplain Management Options database produced, and preliminary evaluation and prioritisation of management options undertaken  
Economic analysis of management options undertaken  
Present options for floodplain management and irrigation water supply to each of the Steering committees for discussion and feedback including Salt Interception Scheme Steering Committee

### LIVESTOCK GRAZING ON THE PIKE RIVER FLOODPLAIN

Meeting expected to be held in January 2008 to discuss consultancy prior to information being provided to the community

### 3 STEERING COMMITTEES

Expect the 3 steering committees to set dates for their 2008 meetings

### REFERENCE GROUP MEETING

Agenda and minutes to be prepared for January meeting & follow up actions from previous meetings to be undertaken

**IRRIGATOR SURVEY FORMS:** Can you please return the Irrigator survey forms back to Geoff Fisher, Australian Water Environments if you haven't done so already. If you have any questions, he can be contacted on 8378 8000 or 0400 595 010.

**ORAL HISTORY STUDY OF THE PIKE:** If you, or someone you know is interested in being interviewed about your recollections of the Pike River area, please contact Francis Simes on 8595 2223 or Mardi at the LAP. We are looking to talk to people from all areas in order to gain a better understanding of the region

The Pike River Committee meets the first Tuesday of every month for any details about the meetings contact the LAP

**LAP CONTACT DETAILS**

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