



Inside this edition:

PAGE 1

- Chairman's Comments

PAGE 2

- Pike Implementation Plan Update

PAGE 3

- Pike Implementation Plan Update - Cont

PAGE 4

- On Farm Soil Salinity Trials
- Contact details & Committee meeting times

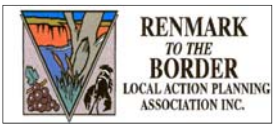
CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Welcome to our second news letter of 2008.

Did you pay too much for your water last year?
 What are you going to pay this year?
 When is the best time to buy?
 Will you buy at the best time?
 Who will you buy from?
 How much should you purchase?
 What influences the price?
 What water will be available?
 Will interstate irrigators be selling water?
 Who will be in the water market competing against you?
 Will annual producers e.g.. rice and cotton growers, be planting a crop this year?
 What effect will high world rice prices have on water availability?
 Should I plan on carrying water over into next year?

If you know the answers to these questions you are likely to buy at the right price. If you don't understand the water market then make sure you keep in touch with your committee as we will be passing on all of the relevant information as it comes to hand. An irrigator trip where we will talk with likely water sellers is an event not to be missed. Stay tuned.

If you are not an irrigator don't shut off! The price that irrigators pay for their water directly affects everyone in our community. If irrigators spend \$500 (per meg) less on their water, they have \$500 more to spend in the community. That helps us all



Bruce Hewett
Chair PRLMG

PIKE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

PUMP & SUCTION INVESTIGATIONS

Thank you to everyone for cooperating with Simon Knowles from Rural Solutions SA who was on site Monday 23/6/08 to Wednesday 25/6/08 to check all pumps and suctions in the Mundic Pike area.

The pump and suction investigation was undertaken to provide accurate information on the effects of lowering the Pike Mundic system on irrigation, domestic and industrial suctions. This will allow us to identify areas that are sensitive to lowering and will require assistance to tolerate a draw down of water level. Over the next 12 months the Sustainable Water Supply Steering Committee we will be using this information to plan for a potential lowering trial in June & July 2009.

Your community representatives on the Sustainable Water Supply Committee are Bruce Hewett, Leroy Simes and Louis Curtis. Alternatively you can contact Frances or Renee on 8595 2223 or 8585 2235 respectively.

MUNDIC PIKE TRIAL LOWERING

As many of you have been made aware, the lowering trial in the Pike and Mundic systems, which was to take place in winter 2008, has been postponed to winter 2009.

The primary reasoning for this was the complexity of managing a trial in the Pike system in addition to the already complex task of managing the River system during such an intensive drought particularly in regard to salinity and flow management risks. The Project Team and Steering Committees will use the extra time available to refine the trial and improve on our plan ready for next year.

In the mean time we will maintain the momentum of the project by progressing investigations as far as possible into the other initiatives agreed to be the Steering Committees such as fish passage, introduction of fast flowing environments, land management and raising water levels.

If you would like more information on the Pike & Mundic trial lowering or anything else regarding the project please contact either

Frances Simes (PIP Coordinator, DWLBC) on 85 952 223
Email : simes.frances@saugov.sa.gov.au

Renee Webster (Senior Policy Officer DWLBC) on 85 952 235
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PIKE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE - CONT

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE?

No. It's an Airborne Salinity Mapping Project for Calprum Station, Murtho, Pike and Bookpurnong between mid July and August 2008.

A survey using an airborne electromagnetic (AEM) mapping system will be conducted across the Pike floodplain as part of a bigger scale project also incorporating Calprum Station, Murtho floodplain and Bookpurnong floodplain.

AEM is an airborne geophysical technology that was developed for use in the mining industry to locate and map conductive ore bodies. It works by measuring variations in the electrical conductivity of the ground. In this project, electrical conductivity will be measured using a **helicopter carrying a torpedo shaped 'bird'** which houses an electromagnetic transmitter and receiver system. The transmitter sends out electromagnetic signals to the ground. The signals returned by the receiver indicate the electrical conductivity of the ground. Variations in the strength of the signal can be interpreted to identify salt stores (in conjunction with knowledge of an area's hydrogeology) and other underground geological features.

AEM is particularly good for mapping variations in groundwater quality. Saline water conducts electricity and its capacity to conduct electricity increases as the proportion of salt in the water increases. The helicopter will be flying at approximately 110km per hour, at about 60 metres above the ground, with the 'bird' about 30 metres above the ground.



When will the survey results be available?

Data collected will go through several stages of processing. It will be some months after collection of the data before products are available for land management planning. Initial products will start to become available by November with public workshops organised as part of the Pike Implementation Plan process to discuss and review the results of the survey.

Is it safe technology?

AEM is used throughout the world in mineral exploration and in the management of natural resources. In Australia, AEM surveys are flown by specialist contractors who have many decades of experience collecting AEM data. Previously AEM surveys have been flown locally over the Chowilla floodplain, Riverland's area and Bookpurnong.

Landowners with livestock and horses

The technology causes no ill effects to livestock or horses, but because a low flying helicopter is involved, there is the slight potential for livestock to be alarmed, including during horse riding activity. Landholders and riders are asked to phone 02 6272 3988 to advise on any special situation or circumstance that may require careful scheduling of data collection.

How does this relate to the Pike Implementation Plan process?

The Pike Implementation Plan (PIP) project was key in persuading the South Australian and Australian Governments, through the Bureau of Rural Sciences, to fund the extension of the Calprum Station survey to include the Pike floodplain. The Pike floodplain AEM survey will inform both the salinity and floodplain management aspects of the PIP project. Representatives from the PIP project will be working with the Bureau of Rural Sciences to deliver the project over the next 10 months, therefore if you have any queries or concerns please contact Frances Simes on 8595 2223 or Renee Webster on 8595 2235



Australian Government



Government
of South Australia

This project is jointly funded by the Australian Government and South Australian Government.

ON FARM TRIAL PIKE / MURTHO 2008-2009

AIMS of the Trial

The on-farm trial will be a joint project between the Renmark to Border LAP and the Irrigated Crop Management Service (ICMS). It will measure irrigated soil salinities across 4 different crop types (almonds, vines, citrus and stonefruit) with 2 different irrigation systems for each crop type.

The project will also link deep drainage derived from soil solution extractors, soil water monitoring devices and IRES, with results interpreted to advance knowledge of on farm drainage at trial sites and help build links between on farm drainage figures and regionally modelled drainage estimates.

Custom Crop Coefficient (Kc) valves will also be developed from soil solution extractors, soil water monitoring devices and IRES linking historical data giving accurate daily Kc values.

Soil solute analysis will also be tested via water samples collected from soil solution extractors.



A Bank of Soil Solution Extractors installed in citrus on a property at Pike River

Soil samples for EC and Nutrient levels will also be taken at trial sites once they have been selected and will continue to be taken at strategic times during the year.

All properties have been selected with Soil Solution Extractors installed, initial soil sampling completed and sent off for testing. Growers have started collecting samples already, with Jayme from the LAP to collect samples fortnightly to send off to ICMS for testing.

OUTCOMES

- Salinity trends within crop rootzones
- Estimated leaching fractions from salinity
- The development of custom Kc valves for calculating crop water requirements
- Quantify drainage via application of custom Kc valves
- Increased knowledge for irrigators of salinity issues
- Nutrient movement and uptake when fertilizing

A website will be assessable to everyone where results will be posted during the length of the trial. More information about the Website will be available once it is set up and sufficient data is gathered.

The Pike Land and Water Management Committee meet the first Tuesday of every month

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