

UK Irrigation Association

An independent organisation promoting the wise use of water for irrigation



James Dodds – Exec' Member
Envireau Water

So much to say ... so little time ...



- ✓ Why is irrigation critical to UK agriculture?
- ✓ What are the consequences of irrigation restrictions?
- ✓ How much water does irrigation take?
- ✓ The role of groundwater in sustainable irrigation management?
- ✓ Management strategies?

These are my views and not necessarily those of the UKIA or my employer!

Why irrigate ...



Yield



Quality



Consumer

What if irrigation stops?



In Suffolk

- q 90% of agricultural output is irrigated fruit and veg
- q If irrigation stopped – grow cereals?
- q Fall in annual production value **£51m to £11m**
- q Fall in local employment contribution **£13m to £1.7m**

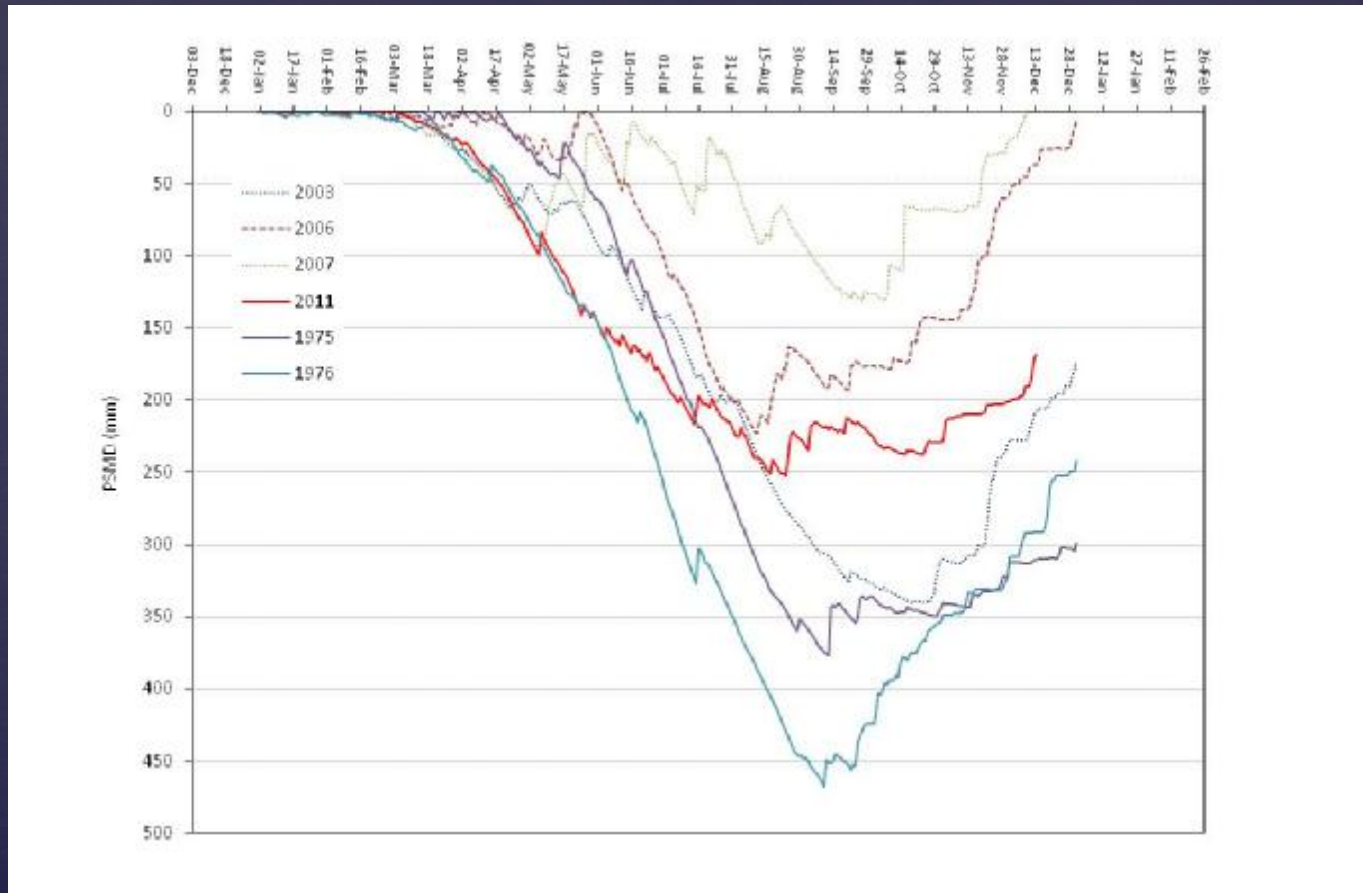


Regulation ...

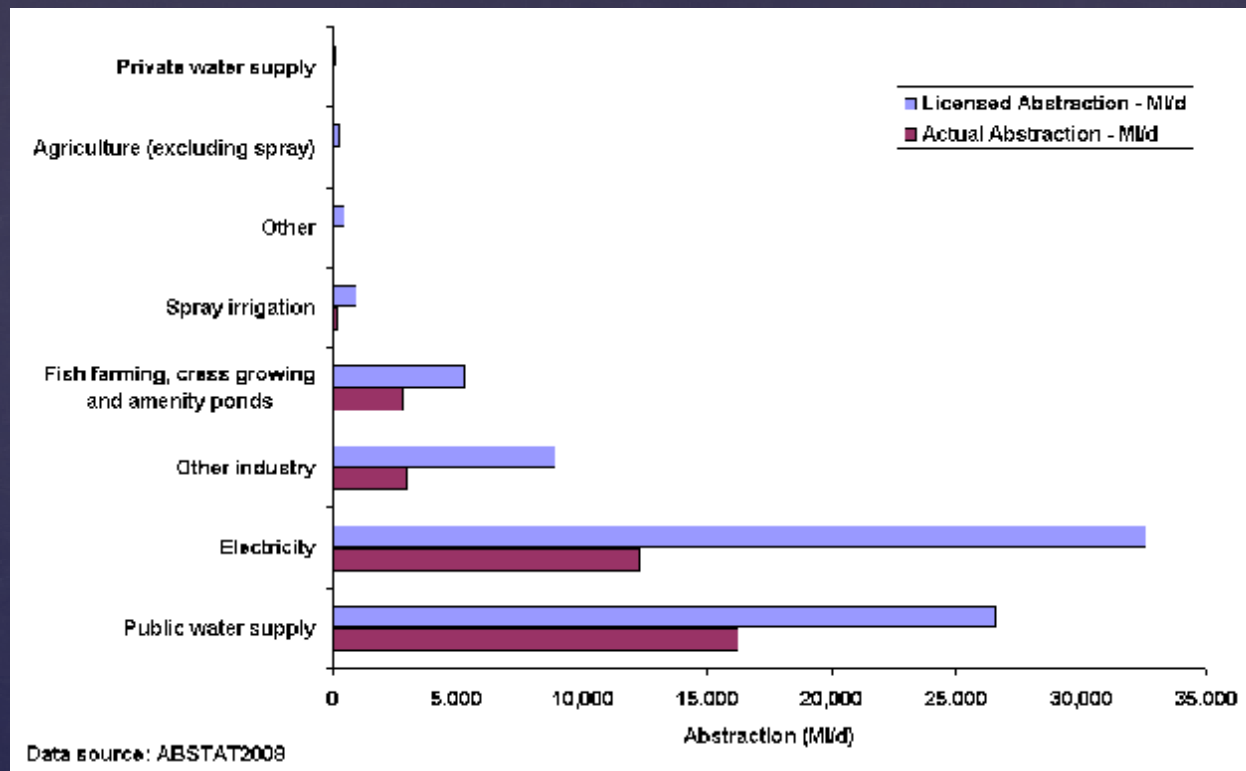


- ✓ **Spray irrigation is licensed**
- ✓ **Trickle irrigation is exempt (for now)**
- ✓ **Water companies have a mechanism to apply to abstract in droughts**
- ✓ **Spray irrigators are the only sector that can be stopped (Sec 57)**

The issue ...



How much water ...



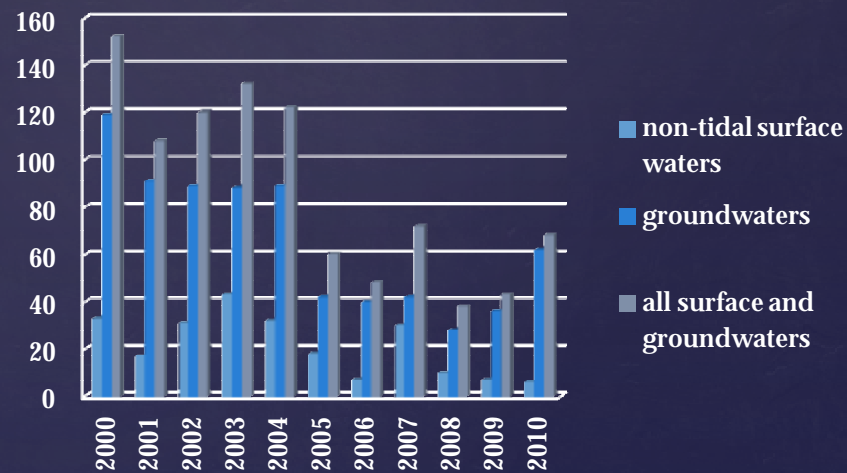
Really ...



Spay Irrigation



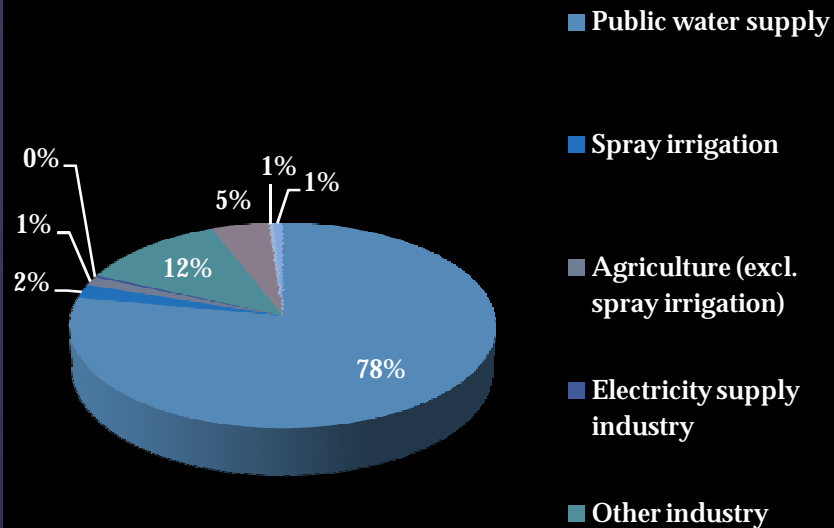
Other Agriculture



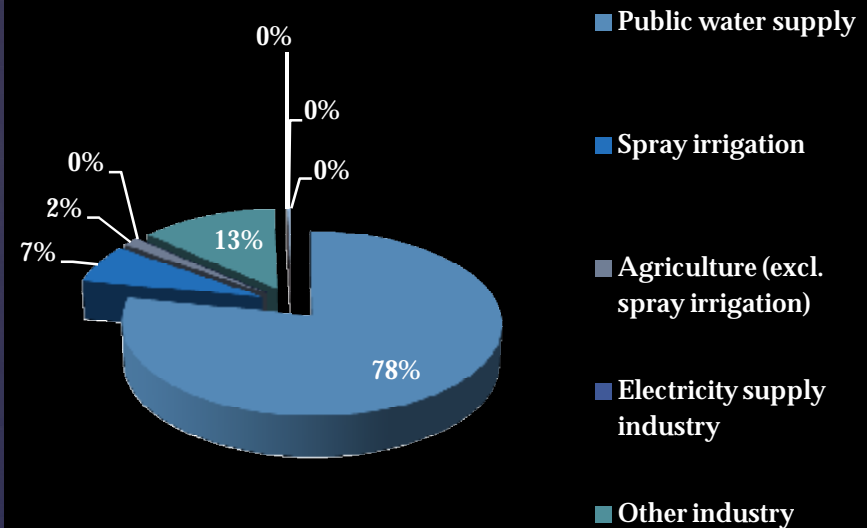
What about locally ...



England & Wales : 2003



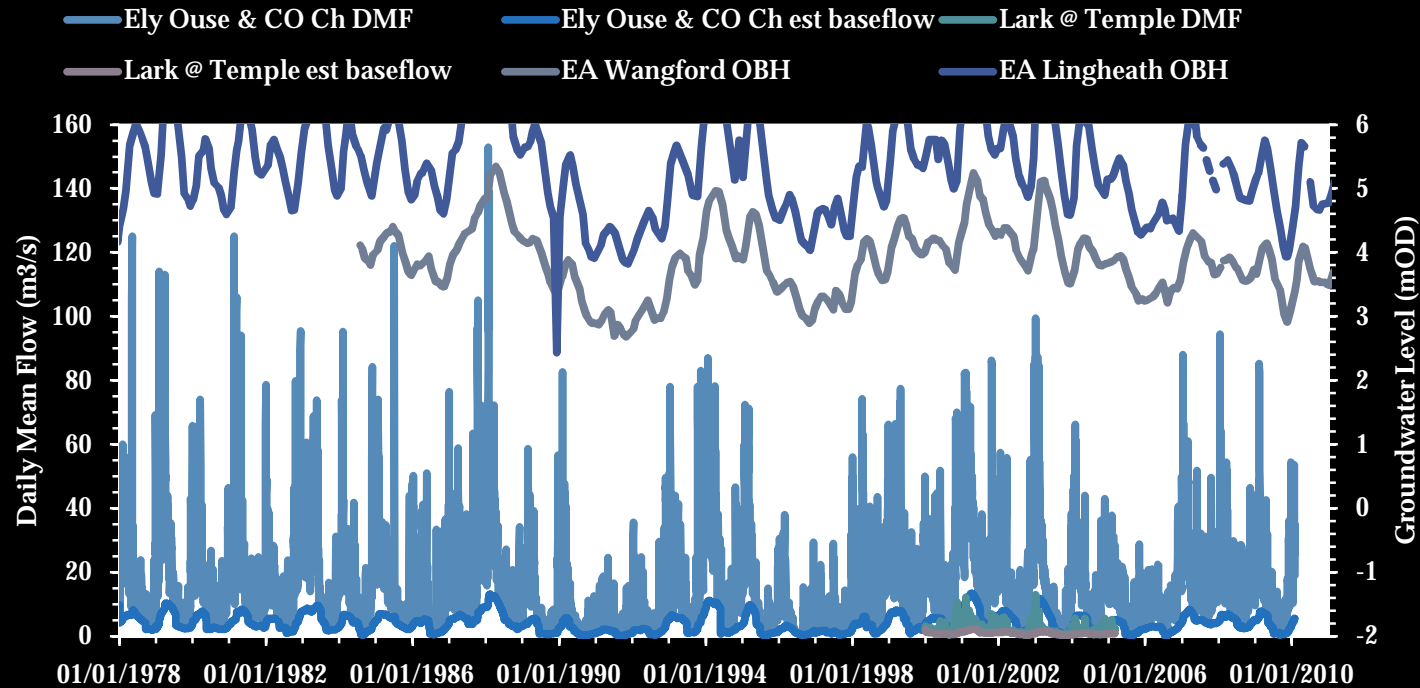
Anglian : 2003



Groundwater / Surface Water ...



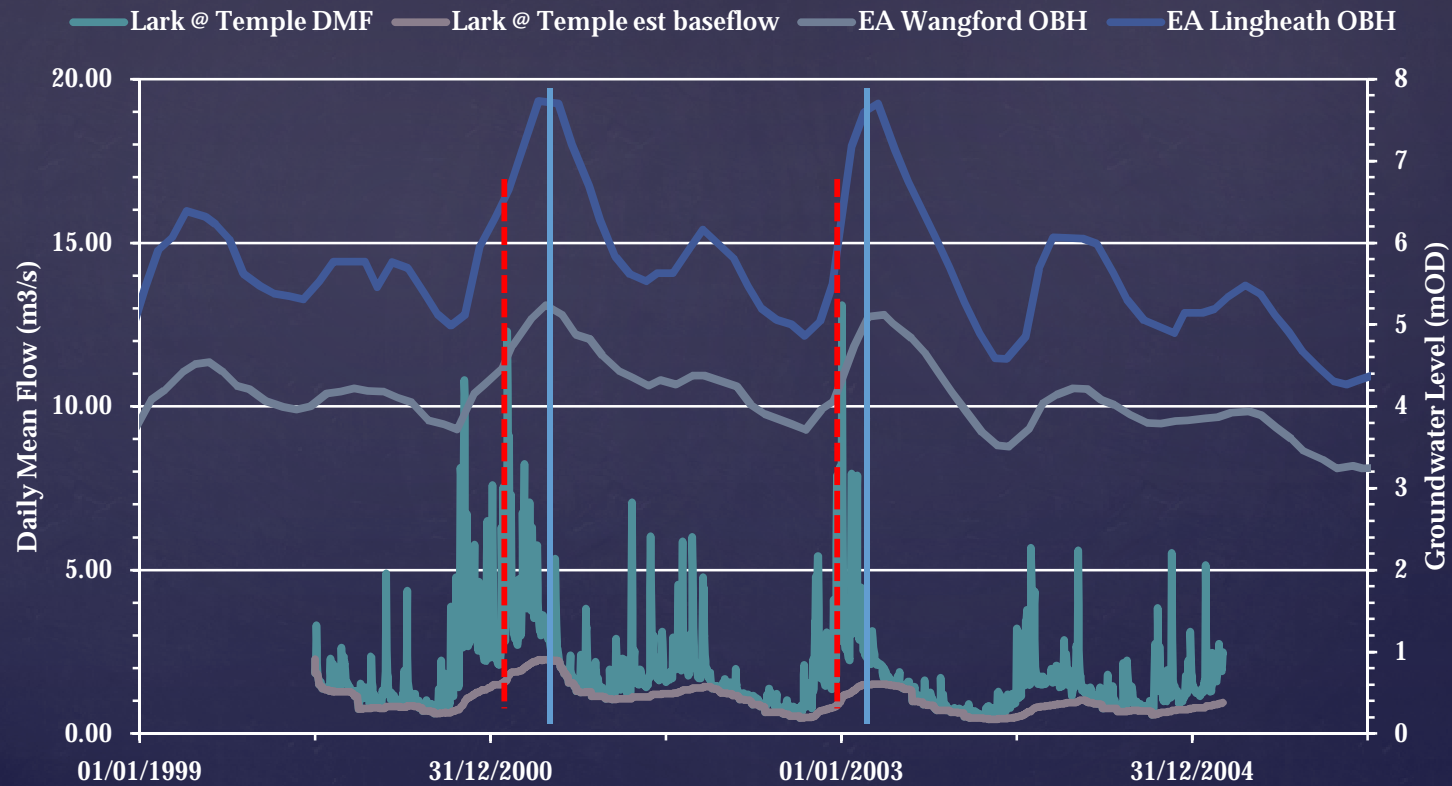
Ely Ouse & Cut Off Channel and Lark at Temple



Groundwater / Surface Water ...



Lark at Temple



Short Term Actions ...



Agriculture	Defra/Environment Agency
<p>Promote efficient irrigation including effective equipment use, science based soil and water management, and best irrigation practice (see www.ukia.org resources for UKIA advice)</p>	<p>EA: Extend the additional flexibility to water abstractions through the summer and autumn to ensure early refill of irrigation reservoirs when flow conditions permit</p>
<p>Consult on 'flexibility' arrangements with intention of retaining those aspects that offer long term application benefits to water licensing regime (for inclusion in Water Bill 2013)</p>	<p>Defra: Consult on 'flexibility' arrangements with intention of retaining those aspects that offer long term application to water licensing regime (for inclusion in Water Bill 2013) - move from the concept of "winter flow abstraction licences" to "high-flow abstraction licences"</p>
<p>Utilise the additional flexibility offered by EA abstraction regime to extend period of winter water abstraction and to take advantage of 'high flows' to fill reservoirs when they are available</p>	<p>If Section 57 restrictions are needed, explain how these will be introduced and managed to minimize impact on agriculture</p>
<p>Livestock farms with reliant on private sources to notify water companies early to arrange alternative supplies and contingency plans have been made.</p>	

Strategy options...



Use existing supplies wisely

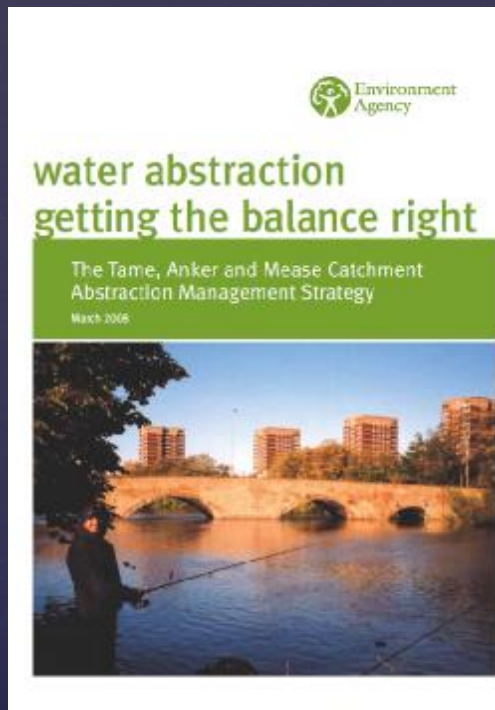


Build reservoirs



Form abstractor groups

Strategy options...



Hands-Off Flow (HoF)= 503,700,000m³/a

1% reduction in HoF represents £7,000,000
for Agriculture

1% reduction in HoF represents £42,000,000 for
Industry

GWF 2009 : Independent Private Groundwater Supplies are Important Too!

Strategy options...



Transparent decision making



Repeal Sec 57



Wise use of HoF & HoL

Strategy options...



Wait 3 weeks !



Thanks to ...



✓ Dr Melvyn Kay

Exec' Sec' UK Irrigation Association

✓ Dr Diane Mitchell

Chief Environment Adviser, National Farmers Union

✓ Dr Keith Weatherhead

Cranfield Water Science Institute

Thank you



www.ukia.org



www.envireauwater.co.uk