



February 2024

Hawke's Bay Cyclone Gabrielle Rail Recovery

Kia ora

With the rail line from Palmerston North to Napier open and freight trains running since September, we have been focussed on Make Safe work on the 115km line between Napier and Wairoa.

As you know, the rail corridor to Wairoa was hit hard in Cyclone Gabrielle. There are more than a dozen extreme or major embankment washouts below the tracks from the Esk Valley to just north of Tutira, often in difficult terrain; damage to bridges; and sections of track completely washed away around Eskdale. The extensive damage to the line means it is currently non-operational.

Make Safe works are either underway or have been completed

at numerous priority sites between Napier and Wairoa. These are stop-gap works so that the rail corridor doesn't deteriorate further and include a range of activities - from culvert clearing, slope trimming, debris removal, cutting away suspended track and hydroseeding (which helps stabilise embankments and slopes).

We have recently started Make Safe work clearing about 7km of damaged rail in Eskdale, to reduce the risk of further damage to our asset and minimise the potential impact on rail corridor neighbours. We will also be commencing works to underpin Bridge 223A between Waipunga and Waikoau, in the Esk River valley, to mitigate further risk of it collapsing.

We continue to work with Wairoa District Council around flooding

issues, as they relate to our rail corridor, in the Wairoa township area and north of there.

There is a process to go through to determine if funding will be granted to repair and reopen the line between Napier and Wairoa, which includes approval from the Government. In recent months we have been undertaking technical investigations on the line and are working on initial advice, which we expect to give to the Government for its consideration in the coming months.

Daniel Headifen

KiwiRail Programme Director

If you have any questions
please email us at: contactus@kiwirail.co.nz

Make Safe work Napier - Wairoa

Here are before and after pictures of the clean up and hydro-seeding at Bridge 222 in the Esk River valley, north of Eskdale. Hydro-seeding helps to secure



exposed material from further weather damage. Damaged bridge piers and spans have been removed as they were unstable and damaged track was cut away.

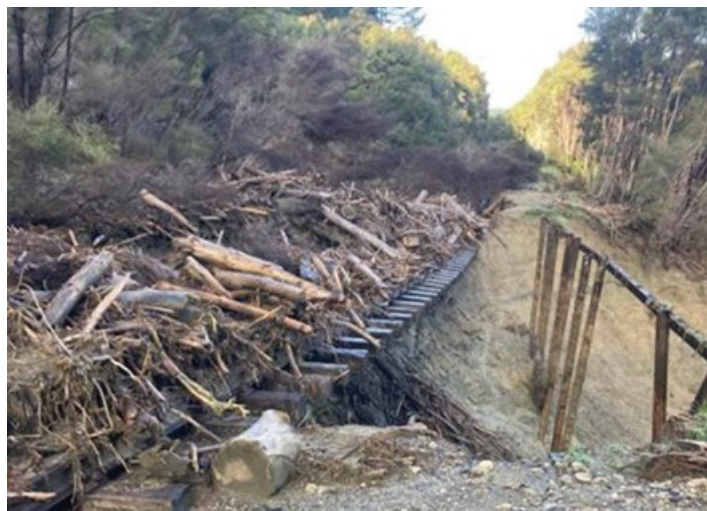


South of Waikou a large body of water built up behind the rail embankment during the cyclone, then broke through it shortly afterwards before we could get any machinery to the site. The pictures below show the scale of the original water build up and the mitigation work that followed.

Work ranged from removing hanging track, trimming back unstable washed out embankments, reopening drainage paths to manage water flows and creating access tracks for plant to get through the site.



Here are before and after pictures of work at another area near Waikoau, where hanging and lengths of other damaged track was removed, unstable embankments trimmed, and drainage paths to manage water flows cleared. Culverts were installed to allow drainage paths through access tracks.



Before and after pictures of a major culvert and embankment washout north of Tutira. This massive, 20-metre-deep washout left around 60 metres of unsupported, hanging track. Works have since been undertaken to remove the track and stabilise the slopes at either end to prevent further deterioration.

