



# Relentless winter weather won't stop the mahi

Recovery efforts are being tested by a wild winter across the East Coast, but crews are working tirelessly to get the roads back open following the latest downpours.

SH2 and SH35 are critical connections for communities, businesses, and freight on the East Coast, and we acknowledge that closures have a major impact on those living, working, and travelling along these routes. Restoring and maintaining safe access is our top priority and we really appreciate the patience and support shown as the emergency repairs continue.

In this issue, you will find an update on the status of key locations affected by the recent July rainfall and earlier March weather event.

Our teams are currently working through assessments, designs, consents and construction planning for the numerous sites around the coast. Our next update will provide useful information on what the summer construction period will look like.

## Emergency works update

### SH35 Motu River Bridge

Access to all traffic has been restored near the Motu River Bridge, where the eastbound lane of SH35 collapsed into the Motu River in the Bay of Plenty following the heavy winter rain experienced in late July. The road is currently down to one lane with stop/go traffic management and a 30km/h speed restriction in place.

Rock protection is being installed along the river edge to prevent further damage. Once we are confident the embankment is stable, our focus will shift to planning the full reinstatement of the road.

### SH35 Makorori

Contractors are making good progress on the site of the slip at Makorori. A retaining wall to protect against further slips and erosion is currently being built.

### SH35 Kopuaroa Hill (north of Te Puia Springs)



Above: A truck and trailer unit moves through Kopuaroa Hill (permitted 7am to 7pm only).

All traffic, including heavy vehicles with trailers, are on the move through Kopuaroa again. Heavy vehicles with trailers are permitted from 7:00am to 7:00pm only.

During this time, the site will be monitored to ensure that quick action can be taken if issues arise. The site will remain under stop/go via traffic lights. We know the restriction on heavy vehicles with trailers was significant for transport operators and it was not something we took lightly. However, safety is our top priority at all times.

Despite the rain, contractors are focused on getting things done well and done fast, to limit the impact on transport operators as much as possible.

A longer-term solution for the Kopuaroa Hill site is currently going through the design phase as a high priority. It has funding attributed under the Provincial Growth Fund and construction is planned to start in early spring.

### SH35 Huia Hill and north of Hicks Bay

Repairs to an earlier slip at Huia Hill are complete and work has started on a second larger drop-out just north of Hicks Bay. Work is progressing well with completion expected by spring.



Above: Work underway on retaining wall north of Hicks Bay.

Improvements are also being made to drainage north of Tokomaru Bay and scour (erosion of soil) protection from Busby's Hill down to Tokomaru Bay over the next month.

### SH2 Waioeka Gorge through to Matawai



Above: A slip through SH2 Waioeka Gorge as a result of recent rain.

State Highway 2, from the northern entry to the Waioeka Gorge through to Matawai, was closed on Wednesday 3 August to complete remedial work at two slip sites.

It was also closed between Waioeka Pa Road at the northern end and immediately west of Matawai at the southern end. This allowed the sluicing of a recent slip site above the Waioeka Gorge (pictured) to take place at the same time as a planned replacement of a culvert located on SH2 between Ōpōtiki and Gisborne approximately 7km from Matawai (on the southern approach to the Motu Bridge), where recent heavy rain caused an underslip that has reduced the width of SH2 to a single lane.

Sluicing the slip site allowed for loose material to be removed in a controlled manner, preventing the likelihood of further slips in the future.

## More information

Between now and October, Waka Kotahi will be working on construction planning and physical works like those outlined here. We'll share these details with our communities as we have them, so stay tuned to the Connecting Tairāwhiti website [nzta.govt.nz/projects/connecting-tairawhiti](https://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/connecting-tairawhiti) and sign up to the e-newsletter for updates at [connectingtairawhiti@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:connectingtairawhiti@nzta.govt.nz)