MINO-0471 Mangamuka Gorge media site visit

28 September 2022

Provide information about the upcoming media site visit to SH1 in the Mangamuka Gorge, scheduled for Friday 30 September 2022.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's response:

- SH1 through Mangamuka Gorge is still closed after severe weather damaged the highway in July and August this year as conditions remain highly unstable, and the ground is still moving.
- A media site visit is planned for Friday 30 September 2022 to provide an opportunity for media to see the extent of the damage to this section of SH1 first-hand, and to receive an update from Waka Kotahi on potential options for repairs or reconstruction. Regional Transport Systems Manager, Jacqui Hori-Hoult will be fronting media during the site visit.
- Please refer to the attached *Mangamuka Gorge - Key Message Bank* document for the full messaging that will be shared with media on the day.
- The key messages from that document are included below:
    - Heavy rain in July and August 2022 caused several slips under State Highway 1 (SH1) through the Mangamuka Gorge forcing Waka Kotahi to close the road.
    - This is the second time since 2020 the road has closed due to slip damage and photos don't tell the whole story of the severity of the damage.
    - The soil in the area is generally soft and unstable which makes the stability of the land in the gorge particularly susceptible to the effects of severe weather, including heavy rain.
    - Geotechnical assessments have now been completed which will inform next steps and this information is now being compiled.
    - While this will inform our decision making, the Mangamuka Gorge is facing a long-term resilience issue. We need to think strategically about our next steps and how we can ensure a resilient state highway north that serves its communities and those who use it.
    - State Highway 1 is an economic lifeline for Northland and Waka Kotahi is committed to ensuring Northland stays connected to the rest of the country.
    - Following this event, we have an opportunity to take a more strategic approach to readiness, resilience, and recovery, building on the work that has already begun.
    - To act quickly on this opportunity, Waka Kotahi is partnering with mana whenua, stakeholders and key experts to review the roles of SH1, SH10 and local roads in order to provide a resilient network.
    - While Waka Kotahi is accelerating this work, it is also ensuring that State Highway 10 (SH10) is working efficiently to accommodate the additional traffic with SH1 closed.

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