

Two years on

A more resilient and ready **Hawke's Bay**

"As we approach two years since Cyclone Gabrielle hit Hawke's Bay/Te Matau a Māui – it is still felt across our region. But as a region we're moving to a place where we are looking forward.

It is with this in mind we can look at what has been achieved since the cyclone and what is yet to come as we work to make Hawke's Bay/Te Matau a Māui better prepared for future severe weather.

Here we sum up the progress to date and look forward to what is to come because making Hawke's Bay more resilient is not just about infrastructure, it's about

looking after the land, how we embrace natural solutions and how we plan for what is to come.

I hope you, as I do, see the incredible progress we've made toward a stronger and more resilient Hawke's Bay/Te Matau a Māui. This is not just about recovery – it's about building something better for all of us".

Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui,
Hinewai Ormsby, Chair of Hawke's Bay Regional Council



32 km

of the 248 km stop bank network were damaged by the cyclone and then repaired within six months – setting a new national standard for this work

105 km

of the 1,500 km drain network restored with tonnes of mud and silt removed

19

pump stations returned to full operation complete with capacity for back-up power supplies

43

telemetry reporting stations (rainfall and river level) – some repaired and restored, some added – with back-up power supplies and multiple redundancies built in

27

camera sites that we are looking to install across the region by the end of 2025 monitoring river flows and river mouths – up from four sites pre-cyclone

46 of the 52

recommendations from three post-cyclone reviews specific to HBRC have been progressed - with 41 underway and five completed - while the remaining six needing further work before being started

63,750 hectares

of land protected by the Heretaunga Plains Flood Control and Upper Tukituki Flood Control schemes

175,000

native trees planted in the past year to protect at-risk land areas

26,000

exotic trees have been planted in the past year to increase erosion resilience

980 hectares

of erosion-prone land protected in the past year

600 km

of Hawke's Bay coastline surveyed to understand the impacts of the cyclone

50 km

of waterways fenced and protected in the past year

44

priority biodiversity sites managed to improve resilience and enhance indigenous biodiversity

20 km

of fencing added in the past year to protect at risk sites from pests

542

catchment community events in the past year supported and engaged with across the region

Other work underway or completed:

- We have improved forecasting with many additional data collection stations and new computers to increase the accuracy of flood forecasting.
- Flood forecasting strengthened by bringing key people together with improved technology.
- We continue to refine the trigger points at which we alert territorial authorities and Civil Defence so they can make decisions on evacuations.
- Extreme Weather Hub is launching soon on our website allowing the public to see what is happening in their area and make decisions for themselves.

Refining the lessons of Cyclone Gabrielle ...

- We are re-examining the two major flood schemes – Heretaunga and Upper Tukituki. These two schemes directly cover 63,750 hectares and mitigate flood risk for 143,000 people and the cities of Napier and Hastings, and many towns and villages.
- These reviews will lead to re-imagining future flood mitigation – consultations starting with affected communities later this year.
- After mapping the flood extents of the cyclone, we are now looking at other possible outcomes when an enormous event sends water beyond the stopbanks.
- We have greatly expanded our work on erosion science to give us a better understanding of what makes soil move and end up in our waterways.
- Land-for-Life received a \$1 million funding boost from central government late last year. This programme helps farmers reduce erosion on their farms and adopt more regenerative, resilient and profitable farming systems.
- We increased our efforts to deploy nature-based solutions that include such things as restoring wetlands and coastal ecosystems, restoring and planting native forests in upper catchments and riverside planting.