

Rural Recovery Update

6 JUNE 2017

Visit to Kevin Clark's Farm



Approximately 40,000m³ of silt was deposited, at an average depth of 10cm.

Whakatāne District Recovery Project team members recently visited Kevin and Felicity Clark's Raroa Road farm in Waimana, which suffered significant damage as a result of the recent cyclone events. Forty hectares of their low-lying paddocks were inundated and left with a thick layer of silt during the flood and have now had to be re-contoured and re-grassed. The river also scoured away bank erosion defences, getting in behind the river groynes and shifting its course. The loss of land is estimated at 1ha and about 24,000m³ of soil. A positive – the soil fertility has been tested and to Kevin's surprise was higher than expected.



Kevin Clark explains the flood's effects to Simon Stokes from the Whakatāne District Recovery Project team. Note the extent of erosion behind the defence groynes.

River Recovery update

- Bay of Plenty Regional Council has assessed the damage to river schemes and is in the process of prioritising and costing how much it will cost to fix them.
- There are about 500 additional erosion repair works across the region.
- The very urgent jobs are being undertaken, as weather permits.
- The additional costs to river schemes are substantial – an estimated \$10 million-plus, over and above routine maintenance work. A report estimating the full cost of the works and priority plan will be going to Regional Council for approval.
- These works are likely to take two to three years to complete.
- In the upper reaches of the major rivers, the Regional Council is cutting river channels to redirect flows as an interim measure to reduce further erosion and allow the banks to recover. This work has been hampered by further rain and soft surfaces-reducing access.

District-wide erosion



Soil slip erosion in the Whirinaki Valley.

Photos courtesy of Mieke Kapa.



Two large slips destroyed a hill slope in the Whirinaki Valley.

Biosecurity



Be aware of the biosecurity risks that may arise when buying in feed, bringing in contractor machinery and when stock return to your property. Make sure they are all 'clean'. Monitor affected land for new weeds and grasses in the coming spring/summer. The Bay of Plenty Regional Council biosecurity team can provide an advisory service; if anything of concern is detected give them a call on 0800 884 880.

Archaeology – wāhi tapu and kōiwi

Please be aware that current repair and maintenance work, and shifting of earth, may uncover or come across archaeological sites. If you come across any item that you think may be an item of archaeological interest, or the site of repair work is a known wāhi tapu, please get in contact with your local Iwi or Rachel Darmody, Heritage NZ Regional Archaeologist.

Task Force Green

Task Force Green crews in the Whakatāne District are making great progress cleaning up flood and storm damage on rural properties. There has been great feedback about the quality and volume of work the crews are getting through, and anyone in the rural sector who has flood or storm damage that needs to be put right, is encouraged to access the project. The Rural Support Trust is getting a chain-saw crew up and running to create more jobs for Task Force Green crews.

The Enhanced Task Force Green Project has been jointly established by the Ministry of Social Development and Whakatāne District Council to help the rural community get back on its feet with clean-up work on farms and rural properties. To register for Task Force Green assistance, call 0800 327 646 (select 4).



Many hands to the pump

The mammoth effort to pump floodwater from Edgecumbe and surrounding farmland has attracted praise and thanks from people now beginning to realise what was going on beyond the town centre.



It took 14 days and a massive, co-ordinated approach by Regional Council, Federated Farmers, Young Farmers, Fonterra, Phillips Contracting and numerous other businesses and organisations, farm owners, managers and staff, plus locals wanting to lend a hand.

About 40 pumps ran around the clock; not only were they continually manned, they also required re-fuelling 24/7. Truly a case of many hands to the pump.

EQC update

EQC's claim handling team and assessors are continuing to progress claims for residents who have been affected by silt and debris damage. To date, 230 claims have been received, with 65% assessed and scheduled for work, including 13 red stickered properties. Customers have only three months after an event to lodge a claim with EQC, so the claim deadline for our district's event is 5 July.

Go the Chiefs!

30 adults and 7 children from farming families affected by the April storms were amongst the crowd cheering on the Chiefs last weekend in Hamilton. The Rural Support Trust facilitated the outing, sponsored by Gallagher and AON.



Rural Support Trust



It's hard to miss Rural Recovery Coordinator Igor Gerritsen on his travels around the district, thanks to Ocean Ford's Stephen Hermansen, who heard about the Rural Support Trust's recovery work and has provided a vehicle to help get the job done. In times of need, the Rural Support Trust connects affected families with a range of expert advice on financial, farming and wellness issues. If you, or someone you know, would benefit from an independent and confidential ear to talk to, contact RST on 0800 787 254. www.rural-support.org.nz/Regions/North-Island/Bay-of-Plenty

Upcoming events:

DAIRY NZ WORKSHOP

10.30am – 2.30pm, Friday 9 June, Awakeri Events Centre

Lots of new grass to manage this season as a result of the April cyclones? Lost some area from your farm? Wondering how your farm's pasture growth will shape up? Or, how to make sure you get the best out of the new pastures?

All this and more will be covered at a workshop for flood and cyclone-affected farmers. **For further details and to RSVP (so we know how many delicious lunches to prepare) please call 027 492 2907 or 07 3496825.**

Another workshop will be held in Galatea later in the month – date to be advised.

COMMUNITY RECOVERY EXPO

10am – 6pm, Saturday 10 June, Edgecumbe War Memorial Hall

The Expo will provide the opportunity for people to:

- access advice
- connect up with services and each other
- get information about the recovery project.

Information and services provided will include social, financial, government, Council, legal and housing.