

Tararua Land Stability & Roding Resilience Project

Focusing on erosion control opportunities next to the road to build resilience into our roading network

The Project

- Cyclone Gabrielle and other recent weather events highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by our roading network during periods of high intensity rainfall, with a significant number of slips and dropouts occurring - caused by erosion of land adjacent to the road.
- A collaborative project is underway between Tararua District Council, Tararua Alliance, Horizons Regional Council, Ministry of Social Development and Rural Support Trust to identify at-risk areas and work with landowners to stabilise the land.
- The project aims to utilise available funding so there is little or no additional cost to landowners and will be completed over several years to avoid disruption to existing work programmes.
- Each landowner has the option of whether to use this paid workforce, or to undertake the planting themselves.
- The project aims to undertake stabilisation work for higher priority sites in Year 1 (2025), medium priority sites in Year 2 (2026) and lower priority sites in Year 3 (2027) - subject to annual funding approval.

How does it work

- The project works alongside the Horizons [Sustainable Land Use Initiative](#) (SLUI) which has been running successfully for several years and aims to protect our hill country by working with farmers to reduce erosion on their land.
- This project builds on this initiative, targeting erosion-prone areas next to the road which are likely to cause damage or interruption to the roading network if not addressed.
- Stabilisation planting will be up to each landowner but will likely include planting of tree species suitable for erosion control (such as poplars and willows). Site specific roading and drainage improvements may also be undertaken, depending on the requirements at each site, and funding / resourcing availability.
- With funding support from MSD for planting labour, a procurement process is being undertaken from March 2025 to identify a suitable provider to recruit individuals not in employment, education or training and undertake planting during the winter months.

Examples



Site on Weber Road where land is moving above the road, drainage and stabilisation planting required



Site on Route 52 where soil is eroding below the road, retaining structure and stabilisation planting required

See FAQs overleaf for more information.

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FAQs

How did the project come about?

Cyclone Gabrielle and other weather events over the past few years have highlighted how vulnerable our roading network is to slips and dropouts during high intensity rainfall events. A significant proportion of land within the Tararua district is used for primary production and is made up of unique variances in topography, soil types and land use. Much of this land is hill country which can face slope movement at varying depths due to soil type, land use, moisture content and other factors. It is also difficult to plan for and maintain our rural roading network and associated drainage assets to a standard that can cope with high intensity rainfall events. There was an opportunity identified by the roading team to reduce the potential impacts from future weather events by addressing unstable land areas next to the road, through collaboration with landowners, the Cyclone Gabrielle Recovery Team and funding partners.

How is it funded?

The work being undertaken during 2025 utilises existing SLUI and Environmental Grant funding through Horizons (which includes partnership funding from government through the Hill Country Environment Fund), Cyclone Recovery funding from Ministry of Social Development, recovery project support funding through Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and also roading funding from NZTA. Funding availability will change after 2025 (particularly for Cyclone Gabrielle funding) and we will be working with our partners to continue the project in a more 'business as usual' capacity.

How do I get a site on my property included in the Project?

If you have an existing SLUI plan with Horizons, get in touch with your Land Management Advisor at Horizons and provide details of the site, including any relevant photos / map details. If not, please provide information via the Project Page on TDC's website and we'll be in touch. There is a limited amount of funding available for this project so we may not be able to address each site, but we'll aim to prioritise and address the highest risk sites.

What will be done to fix the issue?

Each site will be different, and we'll assess options alongside the landowner, but a typical site will include planting of poplar or willow poles. In some cases, drainage work may also be necessary to prevent land movement onto or below the road. We'll work with landowners to find and agree on the most suitable option.

What will it cost me?

The aim of the project is to work alongside existing work programmes and utilise available funding to result in little or no additional cost to landowners. For some sites, depending on erosion susceptibility and funding criteria there may be a contribution needed towards plants, but we will work through this detail with each landowner, and it will ultimately be the landowner's decision whether to proceed or not.