

FAQs – Hutt River Gibbons Street Erosion Project

Background:

Recent rainfall events on 13 June and 8 July 2018 in the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River have resulted in erosion at some places of the bank edge in the Hutt River. This resulted in a washout of the Hutt River Trail, which also acts as a truck bypass route for State Highway 2 (SH2) opposite Gibbons Street. The truck bypass is already unusable. If the erosion is not managed, SH2 and the stopbank will be at risk.

Erosion protection work near Gibbons Street in Upper Hutt on the Hutt River is being carried out to preserve the river channel alignment and to provide protection for SH2. The work is being done by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and is jointly funded by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA).

What we are doing?

GWRC is constructing a new 125-metre rockline, which is placing large boulders against the river bank to prevent erosion and an existing 80-metre rockline is being re-built. These rocklines will protect SH2, stopbanks, and the Hutt River Trail from erosion. The work involves using bulldozers and heavy machinery for construction and rebuilding. We will be monitoring river flows over the entire duration of the construction and re-building work.

What happens to the river?

Construction and rebuilding works will cause temporary sedimentation and the river may appear muddy at times. Users of the river trail need to be mindful of heavy machinery movement along the trail and at the construction site. We have put up signs at the construction site with details of the work being done and about movement of heavy machinery at the site. Please follow signage and do not enter the fenced off areas.

Is there any adverse effect on the ecology of the river?

We have carried out ecological monitoring before starting work at the site. Monitoring covers studying physical habitat, water quality, suspended sediment, habitat mapping and fish communities. We will continue to monitor during the duration of the construction and rebuilding works and also after completion of the project to gather information about the effects of flood protection activities.

Is the work going to impact the fish?

We are mindful of the impact our work in the river can have on fish. Conscious about the native fish migration and spawning periods, we have timed our work outside that period. We have also done our work to avoid the riffle – which is shallow part of the stream with fast, turbulent water running over rocks -- and any fish stranded will be relocated.

Any impact on nesting birds?

The work will have no impact on nesting birds as the site has been surveyed prior to starting the project. No nesting birds were found.

What about lizard population?

Our work to mitigate erosion risks will have no impact on lizard populations as there is no impact on lizard habitat such as river terrace manuka, kanuka scrub, native grassland, scree or border fields.

When is the project expected to finish?

The project is expected to be completed by early May 2019.

We will avoid works outside 7am – 7pm Monday to Saturday and we aim to complete work during dry weather when ground conditions are dry.

For feedback and suggestions, please email: jacky.cox@gw.govt.nz