



August 2023

Northland Rail Programme

Kia ora

KiwiRail's teams continue working hard to repair around 200 damage sites on the North Auckland Line (NAL) from the late January weather event and Cyclone Gabrielle.

We are working to reopen the 180km line between Swanson and Whangārei as quickly as we can but have been battling the ongoing rain, which has seen some damage sites get worse over winter, and Northland's geology.

The geology in Northland is complex, with fragile soils that are very prone to slips. Unlike Hawke's Bay, where track and other structures were washed away by floods during Cyclone Gabrielle, damage to many sites on the North Auckland Line (NAL) is not immediately obvious. It's not until geotechnical assessments have been done and the below-ground conditions understood that the true extent of the damage has been revealed.

As mentioned last month, we have completed repairs to minor damage sites and have continued making excellent progress remediating the 35,000m³ slip at Tahekeroa, north of Auckland. We are expecting to have completed rebuilding the rail formation at the slip around the same time as the road reopens in mid-September.

One of the great benefits of the Tahekeroa work is that the team have been able to reuse 95 per cent of the slip material at the site, avoiding the need for thousands of truck trips to a landfill and reducing transport emissions and local transport issues.

We continue to make progress on other damage sites on the NAL but at this stage we still expect the line to remain closed until at least the end of this year. We will have a more exact idea of timeframes once all the geo-tech and design work is completed, around late October.

Thank you for your continued understanding and support.

If you have any questions about the work we're doing, please contact us at northlandrail@kiwirail.co.nz

Eric Hennephof

Northland Rail Upgrade Programme Director

Progress repairing the North Auckland Line

We've completed repairing more than 50 kilometres of line north of Swanson (to near Makarau), including repairs to significant washouts in north Auckland.

At Tahekeroa (86km mark), good progress has been made through a wet August:

- Construction of the road embankment, with a finished level of nearly four metres over the culverts, is now complete and final surfacing and water table trimming is underway.
- Laying new rail formation is complete and track installation is underway.



Tahekeroa - the 4m-high raised road just before surfacing began

- Work to replace an existing culvert close to the landslide area is complete.
- Hydroseeding, to help make slopes more stable, is underway.

Along the length of the NAL more than 100 minor sites have been repaired, and inspections to approve those repairs are 50 per cent complete.

KiwiRail has appointed civil contractors for packages of work to remediate 60 moderate damage sites, with work now getting underway.

For the further 35 more significant damage sites, which require detailed engineering responses to remediate, civil contractors have been appointed, geotechnical assessments are underway and engineering design options are being developed for each site.



Takekeroa - rail formation being re-laid



Examples of damage sites getting worse over winter: an overwhelmed culvert and a washout beneath the tracks, both south of the Kaipara Flats

NZ Upgrade Programme work – Whangārei to Kauri

We are making excellent progress renewing and upgrading the line between Whangārei and Kauri, with the project now more than 90 per cent complete. This is part of the Northland rail upgrade work funded through the Government's NZ Upgrade Programme.

So far we have laid 18,000 new concrete sleepers – some of which were supplied by Busck in Whangārei, to replace life expired timber sleepers and have laid 11.7km of new rail.

This work will raise the standard of the track, allowing it to handle heavier trains (18-tonne axle loads). The renewal work remains on target for completion by the end of September, allowing a shunt service to resume between Whangārei and Kauri.



A turnout being built to connect to Fonterra's siding at Kauri



Preparing the formation bed between Manse Street and Vinery Lane in Whangārei