# Tasman storm by numbers

First there was a storm, then another which compounded problems, and then as we were starting to gain traction, yet another bout of heavy weather threatened – fortunately we dodged a bullet the third time.

Some of the numbers associated with dealing with various aspects of these weather events make sobering reading.

The following numbers are by no means a full and final tally of the work that’s been carried out by our staff, contractors, and out-of-town workers brought in to help during and following the storms.

At one single point at the height of the event, more than 600 kilometres, or more than one third of our council roading network, was closed, with around 175 people working directly on the road cleanup.

More than 3,300 roading-related jobs were logged due to the storms.

In storms one and two, there were 18 different companies working with us to restore the roading network back to a point where vehicles could use it safely. In the first three weeks of the cleanup, it included an estimated 35,000 hours of work.

In emergencies like these, our Council staff step in as part of Civil Defence Emergency Management, working two 12-hour shifts per day, seven days a week.

For the first two storms, 7,000 local staff hours were spent in these roles, supported by up to another 7,000 from our partner agencies and people brought in from out of town to assist.

Then our waters team also clocked up close to 5,000 hours of work dealing with issues during the first two storms.

But the work is by no means over and will continue for many months. A specialist team is based at our office in Richmond, coordinating the recovery from these events.

# Helping unravel the issue of gravel

Gravel and its presence in our rivers has been a perennial talking point for decades, involving landowners, engineers, and scientists, with the conversation playing out while standing on riverbanks, in reports and studies, and in the Council Chamber itself.

The major floods of 27 June and 11 July, and the widespread damage and disruption they’ve caused, has amplified calls to restart major gravel extraction in the rivers to provide capacity for flood flows, an activity which we manage under the Soil Conservation and River Control Act and the Resource Management Act (i.e., the Tasman Resource Management Plan).

It is impossible to do this complex topic justice in a short Newsline story. What we can do is share some key points on the current state of gravel management to help inform the discussion moving forward.

To start, we have always extracted gravel from the rivers, continuing to this day, with the collaboration of contractors who use the aggregate in a variety of ways. The amount and location of extraction varies depending on where the need is identified from year to year.

We extract gravel to address identified river management issues, which depends on the specific river and the type of management work we do in that river. Most rivers are managed to minimise bank erosion, and in these areas, we do not extract gravel to increase flow capacity or reduce flooding, since that almost always makes bank erosion worse.

As well, we would need to extract an enormous amount of gravel from the river to have any noticeable benefit during the kinds of floods we’ve just experienced, which would lead to deep channels with constantly eroding banks, and would contribute to lowering of the groundwater table as has been seen on the Wai-iti River.

We carry out extraction of river gravels under a global resource consent which on the Motupiko, Motueka, and Waimea Rivers requires us to maintain the riverbed within an average elevation range, which was established based on our historical river cross-section surveys. This prevents over-extraction while also enabling any extraction required if too much gravel accumulates.

We have monitored gravel levels in the rivers historically using cross-section surveys, and more recently with LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) surveys which has allowed us to monitor gravel volumes much more accurately.

Through these historical and ongoing surveys, we have seen that our river catchments, on average, do not supply enough gravel to the rivers to keep them stable, and our rivers are generally cutting down rather than building up.

Gravel supply to the rivers is also dependent on floods, landslips, and other major events in the catchment, which are unpredictable and unplanned. This makes it difficult to safely extract a consistent amount of gravel each year, and any extraction needs to be considered against long-term trends.

For example, our ongoing gravel surveys in the Upper Motueka River showed significant loss of riverbed material in recent years. Over the entire managed section of river, from the Wangapeka River confluence to around North Road bridge, there was a loss of 345,000 cubic metres of material from 2022 to 2023, and a further loss of 142,000 cubic metres from 2023 to 2024. The average riverbed elevation was, before the recent floods, at a level that would prevent gravel extraction under our resource consent in many areas.

What we have observed in the floods are areas where gravel has built up along with areas where gravel has scoured and moved downstream, and in both cases, there are extreme examples. The faces of the large gravel rivers have significantly changed, with some gravel beaches growing, some disappearing completely, and entirely new beaches appearing along the river.

While rivers are dynamic, constantly changing systems, the floods have pushed them into a new state, a new balance, that will continue to adjust and settle for some time.

The long-term recovery work on our rivers will have this new dynamic state front of mind, and we will be looking to river management practices, old and new, including gravel extraction, that will prepare us for the next major flood as best as possible.

# Disaster builds community strength

Examples of true community spirit are being revealed in the midst of the massive clean-up from the recent devastating weather events.

We have specially appointed navigators to help with guidance and support to get people back on their feet after the floods.

Their role is to support people to access the right services, at the right time, through connection with appropriate wrap-around recovery support agencies.

The navigators have had contact with dozens of people while out and about in the field and have heard many heartwarming stories of community support and willingness to support each other.

One property owner had their staff directly assist elderly neighbours to clean up properties, while in other areas, neighbours that were previously unknown to each other have now developed connections and friendships while sharing the clean-up tasks.

While it’s going to take a long time for parts of the Tasman District to get back to what’s considered normal, the terrible events that caused so much damage and destruction have helped strengthen many of our smaller, more remote communities.

If you would like assistance from one of our navigators, give us a call on 03 543 8400 – they are ready to help!

# Getting a better rain picture

The Tasman Nelson region is getting its own rain radar thanks to government funding.

The radar will provide a more detailed picture of rainfall and thunderstorm activity as it happens in the region.

It will help forecasters monitor the progression of storms, refine short-term forecasts and warnings, and provide more specific guidance to our hydrologists and emergency management about the distribution and intensity of rainfall.

It will also provide enhanced information on significant weather hazards, in particular identifying areas where icing may occur on aircraft flying through clouds.

While the Wellington radar provides some coverage in the region, improved local radar coverage has become a pressing need.

Our Principal Hydrologist Martin Doyle says the new technology will allow us to give two to three hours of warning, and in some cases even more, to residents about to be flooded, allowing time to evacuate before roads are cut off.

He says those few hours are critical because they allow people to make those key decisions.

It’s hoped the new rain radar will be up and running in summer 2026/2027.

# Restoring roads, reconnecting communities

Following the recent storm event in the Tasman District, the Tasman Alliance – a collaborative partnership between Tasman District Council and Downer NZ Ltd – has responded to restore critical transport links across the District.

In the Motueka Valley, the storm left behind significant debris, particularly forestry slash and organic material that blocked key rural roads and disrupted access for residents, emergency services, and freight.

Recognising the importance of quickly re-establishing safe and reliable transport routes, the Alliance has partnered with Taylors Contracting Ltd to clear, process and use the byproduct wood chip.

At the centre of this effort is the Terex CBI Magnum Force 6800CT Horizontal Grinder, a high-capacity machine capable of processing large volumes of storm debris.

This equipment is being utilised to mulch the slash directly on-site, turning a hazard into a valuable resource.

The resulting mulch is being used to stabilise exposed roadside surfaces, reducing erosion and runoff risks.

This approach not only accelerates the cleanup process but also ensures that rural communities are reconnected quickly.

By transforming storm debris into a tool for recovery, the Tasman Alliance is demonstrating how innovation and collaboration can strengthen infrastructure and community resilience in the face of extreme weather.

# Antenno is where to go for weather info

A lot has happened in Tasman over the past six weeks, and one question you may find yourself asking is where can I find the latest information?

While Newsline is a great channel in regular times, when there’s a weather event or other disaster, we need to use channels that can reach you immediately.

We have three key channels that we keep up to date with information in a situation like this:

* Our website – tasman.govt.nz
* Our Facebook page – facebook.com/TasmanDistrictCouncil
* And Antenno – a free mobile app

Antenno is an easy way to get notifications straight to your phone about things affecting areas you are concerned about. You can choose the places you want to be alerted about, so you’re not being notified about things that don’t affect you.

You can save multiple areas such as your home, work and school – you just need to add in the specific locations you want to know about. For example, add in 189 Queen Street Richmond, rather than just Richmond.

Nelson City and Marlborough District Councils also use Antenno, so you can get notified about different areas across Te Tauihu.

And even when we’re not in an emergency event, you’ll find reminders about recycling, and updates about road closures and water shutdowns on Antenno.

You can also use Antenno to send us a quick and easy report of issues you spot around the District. It conveniently adds the location to a photo so we can log the problem, including a description and your contact details. It’s an easy way to get in touch with us.

Antenno is simple and easy to use, and no personal information or log-on details are required.

Download Antenno for free from the app store on your mobile phone.

# Waimea Inlet Jobs for Nature projects wind up

After five years of collaboration, opportunity, and hard work to enhance the Waimea Inlet, Waimea River Delta, and watercourses feeding into the estuary, we have now reached the end point of two important projects.

Thanks to valuable funding and the much-appreciated efforts of our community and local environmental organisations, the Waimea Inlet Enhancement and Waimea Inlet One Billion Trees (Phase 2) projects concluded on 30 June 2025.

These projects’ objectives aligned with the Waimea Inlet Management Strategy 2050 and Action Plan 2023 to 2026 to improve the health of the Inlet and people’s enjoyment of this special place.

These two projects planted a combined total of over 144,000 native plants across the Waimea estuary, covering over 22 hectares in area.

Pest plant control has been done on a wide scale, targeting species that are particularly troublesome in the estuarine environment.

There has been 1.4km of fencing installed to protect estuarine areas and watercourses, plus 3.5ha of wetland enhancement done at the Waimea Delta.

Over the full term of these projects, more than 16 full-time equivalents were employed.

With the goals of the Inlet projects complete, we are now handing the oversight of these to our Reserves team and Catchment Enhancement Officers.

However, we hope to further the established relationships with landowners, volunteer groups like Keep Richmond Beautiful, and organisations such as Tasman Environmental Trust and DOC.

And even though we’ve reached the end stage of these specific projects, we’re still committed to keeping the Waimea Inlet wonderful through the wider aims and goals of the Strategy and Action Plan.

# Rates 2025/2026 – Getting it figured out

Your council rates and charges in Tasman help deliver more than 100 services across our community. These services, though varying in visibility, are accessible to you, your whānau, friends, and all community members at every phase of life.

These include essential infrastructure like roads, footpaths, water and wastewater, and also amenities like parks, libraries, and community facilities. Additionally, rates support social housing, safety, and regulatory and compliance services.

To make sure we can keep providing the necessary services and infrastructure, we rely on rates payments coming in on time – unfortunately this means we cannot delay or stop collecting them altogether, even following significant weather events.

After community consultation, hearings and deliberations, we adopted our Annual Plan for the coming year, with an average rates revenue increase of 8.9%.

Your property’s actual rates increase may be higher or lower depending on location and services, e.g. water and wastewater. It also depends on your location and whether it is residential, commercial or rural.

We appreciate that there are times and circumstances when paying your instalments may be challenging. The aftermath of recent weather events is one of those situations.

There are a number of ways we can help you ease the burden and spread the payments – please get in touch with us to discuss your options.

Go to tasman.govt.nz/rates for more information.

## My property is flooded or damaged, am I eligible for a rates remission?

We have a list of yellow and red-stickered properties and will be working with these property owners directly.

There is a policy to allow us, at our discretion, to remit rates charged on any rating unit used for residential purposes if the land has been detrimentally affected by natural disaster (erosion, falling debris, subsidence, slippage, inundation, or earthquake) rendering dwellings or buildings uninhabitable for more than 30 days and requiring activities carried out on the land to cease.

The aim of the Policy is to allow us to consider remitting rates for those ratepayers most adversely affected. The conditions and criteria are in the Rates Remission Policy on our website.

Some specific conditions and criteria include:

* The rating unit was used for residential purposes immediately before the disaster and is the principal place of residence. If it is a rental property, it does not qualify.
* It shall be no less than 30 days after the event affecting the land that the dwellings are deemed by us to be able to become habitable.

You can apply on our website – visit tasman.govt.nz/rates-remissions-policy.

## I have land damage and want a revaluation

We understand that properties impacted by the recent weather events may have some subsequent permanent effect on their valuations.

We will assess properties in the affected zones and are working with QV to reassess valuations for identified properties. We will be in touch with those property owners directly.

You may wish to take independent valuation advice, but that would be at your own expense.

In principle, if there is a permanent decrease in value, we will reassess your current year rates based on the revised value and adjust your rates accordingly.

This process will take some time, and in the meantime, we’ll still need you to pay your existing rates on time. Any readjustment will be retrospectively applied if approved.

## Can I get a rates rebate?

We offer this service in conjunction with the Department of Internal Affairs.

Rates rebate applications can be accepted from 25 July 2025, once the first rates instalment is issued and up to 30 June 2026. No applications for prior years can be accepted.

Please note that with the weather event and staff being reassigned to assist with the event recovery, processing times may be longer than usual. Please be patient with us as we do our best to process applications as quickly as possible.

Rates still remain payable regardless of the status of the rates rebate application.

To be eligible for a rates rebate:

* You must be shown as the legal ratepayer for the property that was your home on 1 July, although there are some exceptions if you live in a retirement village or company share apartment.
* You must pay the rates for the home in which you live.
* It must not be principally used for commercial, industrial, business or farming purposes.

The amount of any rates rebate is based on three factors:

* The amount of your annual rates.
* The total income received by you and your partner.
* The number of dependents residing on the property.

The maximum rebate for the 2025/2026 year is $805.

Visit tasman.govt.nz/rates-rebates to find out more, including if you’re eligible, calculate your entitlement, and apply for a rates rebate.

# Time to meet the candidates!

The nominations are in, and campaigning is underway.

Now it’s time to meet the candidates so you can make an informed decision about who you want to represent you.

Over the next couple of weeks, we will produce videos of candidates answering a couple of simple questions, so you can see and hear their thoughts about the Tasman District.

These videos will be posted on our website alongside their written candidate statement.

Meanwhile there are numerous events planned around Tasman organised by community groups and organisations where you can find out more about the people on the ballot paper.

We don’t run or organise these events, but a comprehensive list will be updated regularly.

All election information, including a list of candidates, can be found on our website – tasman.govt.nz/elections.

# Let’s celebrate our unsung heroes!

Every community has those quiet champions – the neighbours, friends, and whānau who step up time and again, asking for nothing in return.

They’re the ones coaching the local sports team, planting trees in our reserves, or keeping our community groups ticking along behind the scenes.

They don’t do it for the spotlight – but we think they deserve one.

Our Outstanding Community Service Awards are all about recognising those special people who’ve been making a difference in Tasman for 20 years or more.

If you know someone who’s been quietly giving their time and energy to help others, we’d love to hear about them.

Let’s show our appreciation and give a heartfelt thank you to the people who help make Tasman such a wonderful place to live.

Nominees must live in the Tasman District and have a long history of voluntary service in one or more areas of community life.

But time is running out – nominations close Sunday 31 August.

Pick up a nomination form at any of our service centres or fill one out online at tasman.govt.nz/community-awards.

Let’s shine a light on the people who give so much and ask so little.

# Hike, bike, scoot or skate – make it safe

Whether your family’s young people walk, bike, scoot or skate, it’s vital that everyone remains safe on their journey to and from school.

We’ve received recent reports of accidents and near misses at busy times before and after school.

Whether it’s walking, biking, scooting, taking the bus, or going by car, there are plenty of great ways for tamariki to get around. Some simple tips will help keep their journeys safe and stress-free, and most of them are common sense.

In the car, children should always wait for the car to stop completely before getting in or out on the footpath side if possible. They should sit in the back seat and avoid distracting the driver, and make sure car seats are fitted properly.

Young people who travel by bus should stand back from the road while waiting, and only board or exit once the bus has stopped. They should stay seated, keep their bags on their lap, and wait for the bus to leave before crossing the road.

Walking and cycling have their own challenges. It’s best that you walk facing traffic, use crossings and signals, and remember the kerb drill: stop, look, listen, think. Ideally, cyclists under the age of 10 should ride with an adult, keep left, signal clearly, and always wear a helmet.

... And don’t forget, whether biking, scooting, or skating – helmets must be worn. They should be in good condition, fit well, and have working straps and buckles.

Let’s work together to keep our tamariki safe on their daily adventures.

# Motueka Community Board

Due to the Civil Defence emergency, the Board’s July meeting was cancelled with the agenda being shifted to August.

Our sincere thoughts go out to all those affected by the extreme weather events, and our genuine appreciation goes to the Motueka community for stepping up to support in various ways, especially those leading initiatives.

With entire neighbourhoods impacted, there are concerns with drinking water contamination and the risk of further flooding. Our District is going through a surreal experience, with most of us going about daily life as “normal” whilst pockets of devastation and isolation are just around the corner.

The magnitude of dealing with such events can be extremely overwhelming and numbing – our thoughts go out to all those displaced and distressed.

We already have a high housing need in the area requiring careful consideration against land use, potential environmental impacts, infrastructure capacity, and sea level rise modelling predictions, which should be reviewed thoroughly after recent data, whilst considering a realistic and cost-effective masterplan for Motueka.

# What’s On In Tasman

### Mayors for Peace children’s art workshops

* Monday 11 August, 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm, Motueka Library.
* Thursday 14 and Friday 15 August, 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm, Tasman District Council, Richmond.

Join us for a workshop to help your children aged 6 – 15 create their entry for the Mayors for Peace Art Competition. In this hands-on session, you’ll explore a range of techniques, develop your artistic skills, and gain inspiration in a relaxed and encouraging environment. All materials will be provided, just bring your ideas and imagination. Spaces are limited, so please register at forms.office.com/r/aNe8qZZtrK.

### Wellby Talking Cafés

* Tuesday 12 August, 10.00 am – 11.30 am, Tapawera Community Library.
* Tuesday 12 August, 1.30 pm – 3.00 pm, Richmond Library.
* Wednesday 20 August, 10.00 am – 11.30 am, Motueka Library.

Come along for a relaxed cuppa to start your journey connecting with others who enjoy the same things. You can pop in for a quick chat or stay for a longer conversation with friendly people.

### Motueka Repair Café

Saturday 16 August, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm, Motueka Library.

Offering free repairs to reduce waste and help the environment. Bring your broken items to be assessed and hopefully repaired by a friendly team of volunteers.

### Community planting day

Sunday 17 August, 9.00 am – 1.00 pm, Cardno Way, Bronte Peninsula North.

Join us and the Battle for the Banded Rail at a community planting day – everyone is invited! Please bring gloves, a spade and drinking water. Wear solid footwear and clothes suitable for the weather conditions. Morning tea is provided. For more information, email Kathryn at bandedrail@gmail.com.

### Second Hand Sunday

Sunday 17 August, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm.

Second Hand Sunday is a fun way for Nelson and Tasman residents to declutter and re-home unwanted household goods for free. If you have items you want to give away, simply register online before 10.00 am Friday 15 August to be included on the list of participating addresses. Print off a poster to put on your mailbox and put your items on your driveway at 9.00 am on the day.

A list and map of participating addresses will be available to download from 12.00 pm Friday 15 August. Check out the map to plan your fossicking route and pick up some free second-hand items!

For more information and to sign up, go to tasman.govt.nz/shs.

### Digitise slides

Monday 18 August – Friday 29 August, by appointment, Motueka Library.

Preserve your memories by digitising your cherished slides and photos at the Motueka Library. In your first session, our friendly staff will guide you through the process step by step. Once you’re confident, you can book the space to complete your project at your own pace. It’s an easy and rewarding way to save, share, and enjoy your photos and slides in a digital format. Don’t let your memories fade – bring them into the digital age. Please pop in to the Motueka Library or phone 03 528 1047 to book your session.

### Celebrate World Photography Day

Tuesday 19 August, 12.00 pm – 1.00 pm, Tākaka Library.

Murray Hedwig (well-known local photographer, gallery owner and tertiary lecturer) and a group of local photographers, discuss the epoch-making works that have inspired them. This event promises to be an exciting and creative discussion. An excellent opportunity to witness local artists discuss their art form and photographers who have influenced their practice.

# Newsline Notices

### Looking for grants?

Whether you need funding support for an event, equipment, or a new initiative, GrantGuru simplifies the process by matching you with funders who align with your goals.

GrantGuru is a free online tool that connects community groups and businesses with hundreds of funding opportunities offered by local and overseas funders.

To see what’s available, register at grantguru.com/nz/tasman.

You can filter the grants by location or activity, or simply use keywords. And don’t forget to turn on your alerts to never miss a suitable funding opportunity.

### Want to be the first to see Newsline?

Did you know you can read Newsline online? We put a digital version on our website and email it to those who have signed up to our mailing list. This means you should get it in your inbox before it reaches your letterbox!

Visit tasman.govt.nz/newsline and follow the link to join the mailing list.

### Alcohol applications

Visit tasman.govt.nz/alcohol-notices to see the latest alcohol licence applications.

### Council hui

Meetings will take place in person and via Zoom. For details, the Zoom link and recordings of previous meetings visit tasman.govt.nz/meetings-calendar. Unless otherwise stated, all meetings will be held at the Council Chamber, 189 Queen Street, Richmond.

Enterprise Committee  
Tuesday 12 August, 1.30 pm.

Tasman District Council  
Thursday 14 August, 9.30 am.

Joint Nelson Tasman Regional Transport Committee  
Thursday 14 August, 1.00 pm.

Motueka Community Board  
Tuesday 19 August, 4.00 pm. Motueka Library, Wallace Street.

Joint Shareholders Committee  
Wednesday 20 August, 9.30 am.

Operations Committee  
Thursday 21 August, 9.30 am.

Submissions Hearing (Waimea River Park Management Plan Deliberations)  
Thursday 21 August, 1.00 pm.