



KIMBERLEY FLOOD UPDATE



24 February 2023

Tropical Cyclone Ellie, which made landfall in December 2022, caused significant damage to the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge and sections of Great Northern Highway along the Willare Floodway.

Recovery efforts for our roads and infrastructure is well underway.

Preferred Proponent for new Fitzroy Crossing Bridge announced

On Friday 24 February, The Premier, Minister for Transport and Minister for Emergency Services announced that a consortium comprising Georgiou Group Pty Ltd and BMD Constructions Pty Ltd has been named as the Preferred Proponent to deliver a new Fitzroy River Bridge in the Kimberley region.

The consortium will form an alliance with Main Roads and design consultant BG&E to undertake this critical project with site work expected to begin in May 2023, subject to weather conditions and resolution of relevant approvals.

Read more in the [Joint Media Statement](#), and on our dedicated [Fitzroy River Bridge](#) page where you can also subscribe for Bridge updates.

Below: Damage sustained to the Fitzroy River Bridge.



Low Level Floodway Crossing

We're continuing to investigate the installation of low-level crossings in the Fitzroy River, to help restore connectivity (when river conditions permit). It is expected the crossings will be capable of taking all vehicles across the river, reinstating access to the East Kimberley while operational, especially through the dry season when traffic numbers are at their highest.

Work on reinstating access at the original low level concrete crossing 4km upstream of the bridge, has commenced. Repairs are underway to Yurabi Road, which provides access to the crossing from the east, as well as to the ramps down to the river. Work on a rock floodway in the river will commence as soon as the river conditions permit. It is hoped that this crossing could be operational to 4-wheel-drive vehicles, including adventure tour buses, by late March 2023.

Further improvements to this low-level crossing are planned over the dry season to accommodate more vehicle types, and to make it more resilient for the 2023/24 wet season.

We're also investigating installation of a second temporary crossing, approximately 150 metres upstream of the bridge, which would be more suitable for higher traffic volumes, including freight vehicles, during the dry season. It is hoped that this crossing will be operational by May 2023, however timing of construction is dependent on future rainfall events and river conditions.

Punt Crossings

Four punt type barges are now on site, capable of ferrying a light vehicle or up to 14 people at one time across the river.

An access track and ramp has been constructed to the river on the eastern side where the punts can now be launched. Access and ramp construction on the western side has commenced, with work expected to take approximately two weeks to complete.

Once operational, the punt service will remain in place while the low-level crossings are installed, as well as throughout the 2023/2024 wet season.

Below: A punt barge crossing the river.



Great Northern Highway, Willare

Temporary repairs to the Willare section of Great Northern Highway (between Kimberley Meat Company and the Willare Roadhouse) are complete and the road was reopened on Friday 24 February, during daylight hours (7am to 6pm).

A two-lane, temporary gravel road has been constructed, providing access for all vehicles. Roadworks are still in progress with speed reductions and traffic management in place. Minor delays may be experienced. We encourage all road users to please be patient and drive to the conditions.

As it is still wet season, we will be monitoring the condition of the temporary gravel road and river levels and, if necessary, short-term closures may be implemented if the unsealed road conditions deteriorate.

Below: Temporary access has been restored through the Willare section of Great Northern Highway.



Gibb River Road

The Gibb River Road is closed from Lennard River to Great Northern Highway as the rivers are impassable and rising.

If you're planning to travel this route, please plan ahead using our [Travel Map](#) before you set off.

Below: The Gibb River Road at King River remains flooded and impassable.



How do I find out more information?

The [Kimberley Flood Response](#) webpage is the hub for all of Main Roads related flood response activities. You can also subscribe for updates delivered directly to your inbox.

