



KIMBERLEY FLOOD UPDATE



21 March 2023

Flooding generated by Ex-Tropical Cyclone Ellie in December 2022 and January 2023 caused significant damage to sections of Great Northern Highway at Willare Crossing, and at Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley.

The Fitzroy River Bridge was significantly damaged along with 500 metres of road east of the townsite, cutting access to Aboriginal communities east of Fitzroy River as well as the East Kimberley and Northern Territory.

Recovery efforts for our roads and infrastructure is well underway.

Passenger and 4WD Ferry Service

A free ferry service for passengers commenced on Tuesday 14 March and is currently running daily in conjunction with a free bus service around Fitzroy Crossing, Bayulu, Joy Springs and Muludja.

We encourage passengers to make use of the free bus service to the ferry site as there is limited car parking available near the landing areas.

A copy of the current ferry and bus timetable is available on our [Kimberley Flood Response](#) page.

A ferry service for essential vehicles is also operating however, is limited to six vehicle crossings per day. The following restrictions also apply:

- Only roadworthy 4WD vehicles, with operational brakes, will be accepted for transportation;
- Vehicles must not be more than two metres wide, or 2.4 tonne (fully loaded);
- Vehicles will be measured and weighed prior to boarding and if over-width or weight, will not be permitted;
- Low clearance vehicles are not capable of crossing the ramps on to the barge.

Bookings for the 4WD service are essential and can be made by calling the Shire of Derby West Kimberley, Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm on 08 9191 0999. You can press 5 at any time to skip through the menu.

Below: 4WD ferry service now in operation.



Low Level Floodway Crossings

We're continuing work on two low-level crossings in the Fitzroy River, to help restore connectivity (when river conditions permit).

Repairs to Yurabi Road, which provides access to the crossing on the eastern side, have been completed.

Work has recommenced on site adjacent to the old Fitzroy River Crossing. The ramps on both sides of the river have now been cleared and construction of the single lane rock crossing is underway. Pending river conditions, this service could be operational in early April.

We're continuing to investigate a second, two-lane low-level 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.

Below: Construction of the low-level crossing adjacent to the old Fitzroy Crossing site.



New Fitzroy River Bridge

Design work on the new bridge is progressing in consultation with key stakeholders including Traditional Owners.

Site works remain on track to begin in May 2023 subject to weather conditions and resolution of outstanding environmental and heritage issues.

It is envisaged that the new bridge will be completed by the end of 2024 in time for the 2024/25 wet season.

For the latest information, visit our dedicated [Fitzroy River Bridge page](#).

Below: A ferry crosses the Fitzroy River.



Gibb River Road

Typical wet season repair work and grading is underway.

Subject to weather and river conditions, we anticipate that the Gibb River Road will be open prior to Easter for High Clearance Vehicles.

Access for all other vehicles is expected by the end of April.

For information on which tourist attractions will be open along the Gibb River Road over this time, contact the [Kimberley Visitors Centre](#).

Aboriginal Engagement

We are committed to employing as many local Aboriginal people, and businesses, during the recovery work as possible.

A local office will soon be established where people and businesses can lodge their interest for suitable opportunities.

Further information

The [Kimberley Flood Response](#) webpage provides the latest news on Main Roads' related flood response activities.

You can also subscribe for updates delivered directly to your inbox.

For the latest road closure information visit our [Travel Map](#).