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POLITICS (/NEWS/POLITICAL) / TRANSPORT

Govt announces \$12m boost to help with roading repairs at top of South Island

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A section of State Highway 60 between Richmond and Motueka where trees were toppled by a tornado on 10 April, 2023. Photo: RNZ / Samantha Gee

The government is allocating the funds for 10 projects to help the Nelson, Marlborough and Tasman regions recover from recent weather-related damage.

It said the state highways across the regions battered by bad weather needed to be repaired so they would be less affected in the future.

The money will come from the existing \$419 million transport resilience fund, which aims to build weather resilience on the national roading network.

"Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough have experienced repeated extreme weather events in recent years. We need to repair our state highways after these events and build greater resilience so they're less affected in the future," Prime Minister Hipkins said.

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"Investing in resilience creates savings down the road, as well as ensuring communities aren't cut off and isolated after extreme weather."

The roads and projects chosen for the spending are:

SH6, Whangamoia Hill and Rai Saddle

SH6, Kawatiri to Owen River erosion

SH60, Birds Hill overslip

SH1, flooding at Dashwood

SH63, the Wash flooding


Weld Pass long-term detour route improvements study

SH63 Windy Point and Narrows rockfall

SH65 Higgins rockfall

Salt Lake flooding investigation

Tuamarina to Picton flooding


 Hipkins said \$127m had been invested in the top of the south's roads since flooding in 2021 and 2022.

(<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/488807/marlborough-sounds-transport-fixes-to-cost-hundreds-of-millions-mayor>)

Hipkins confirmed the regions would be eligible for funding from the \$6 billion national resilience plan, announced in this year's budget, for projects that mitigated the effects of climate change and extreme weather.

"No region can foot the bill for building transport resilience on their own. That's why the government is coming to the table to support regions with a range of funds to help them recover."

As part of the deal, it was announced recently Nelson homeowners would be able to access government support, including for buyout deals for their damaged homes.

 Transport Minister David Parker said severe weather events would be an ongoing challenge.

"This funding will repair vulnerable points in the road network to help mitigate the risk of them failing in future storms or other natural hazards," he said.

As an additional election promise, the Labour Party said it supported completion of the Hope Bypass and had set aside funding for it under its transport plan.