

Huntly project update

March 2018



At the summit, deep into the cutting, greywacke rock is clearly visible.

Up and over Taupiri Range

Creating a 57-metre deep “V” at the top of the Taupiri Range has been the biggest challenge in building the Huntly section of the Waikato Expressway.

Moving 1.3 million cubic metres of earth and rock to create the cutting requires time, good weather and big gear. Now into their third and final earthworks season, the Fulton Hogan-HEB joint venture and sub-contractors say they are only 10 metres above the final road level.

All material coming out of the cutting is used elsewhere on the 15.2km route - mainly to fill in the deep ravines and gullies. Earth and clay excavated in the 2015 and 2016 earthworks seasons has been followed by soft and hard rock in the 2017/18 summer.

“Each part of the process of cutting through the Taupiri Summit is meticulously planned,” says joint venture project director Tony Dickens.

“At the beginning of construction we knew we would find rock in the summit, which we could quarry and use on the project as subgrade improvement aggregate. So that is now happening with our excavations requiring blasting to loosen material before we can dig it out.”

Red Bull Powder Company oversaw the first blast in March 2017 to loosen

30,000m³ of the partially weathered greywacke allowing earthworks to progress. This was followed with further blasts in April and May 2017.

The first blast of 2018 was carried out in January and loosened 60,000m³ of material which is being used to provide a strong roading base before the next layer of material is added - both to the north and south of the Taupiri Summit.

In February a smaller blast was carried out to construct the angled batters, which shape the final profile of the summit cutting. Another small blast is planned for March.

When finished the cutting base will be 400m long and 40m wide to allow for the four-lane road, safety barriers and roadside drainage.

The cutting is needed to ensure that the maximum grade on the expressway does not exceed 5 per cent as it crosses over the Taupiri Range. That will mean heavy vehicles can maintain speed as they head to the summit.



Keeping you informed

We'll keep you informed through these quarterly updates, information to residents about works in their area, and links on our website and Facebook page.



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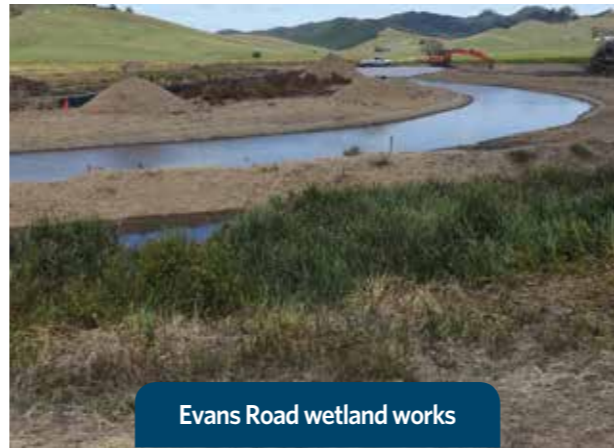


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What's been happening this summer



Northern Interchange



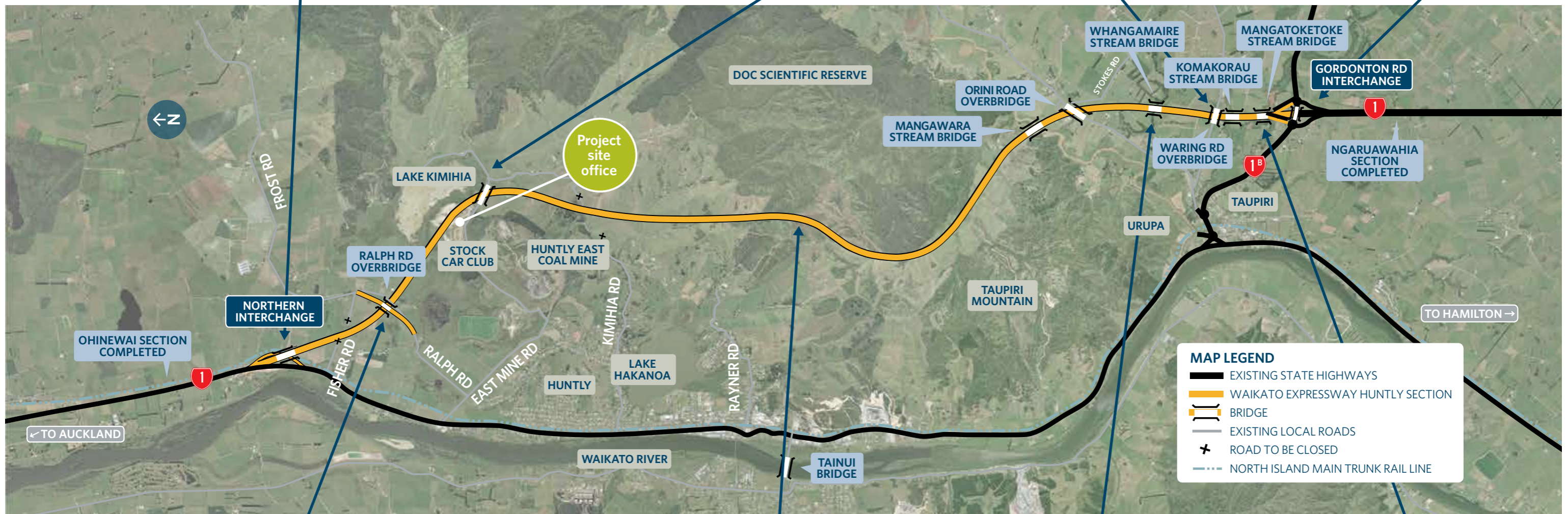
Evans Road wetland works



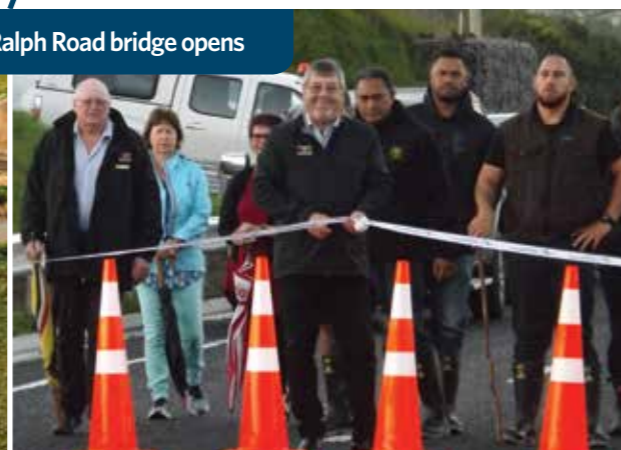
Waring Road-Komakorau Stream bridges



Gordonton Road interchange



Ralph Road bridge / Ralph Road bridge opens



Taupiri Summit



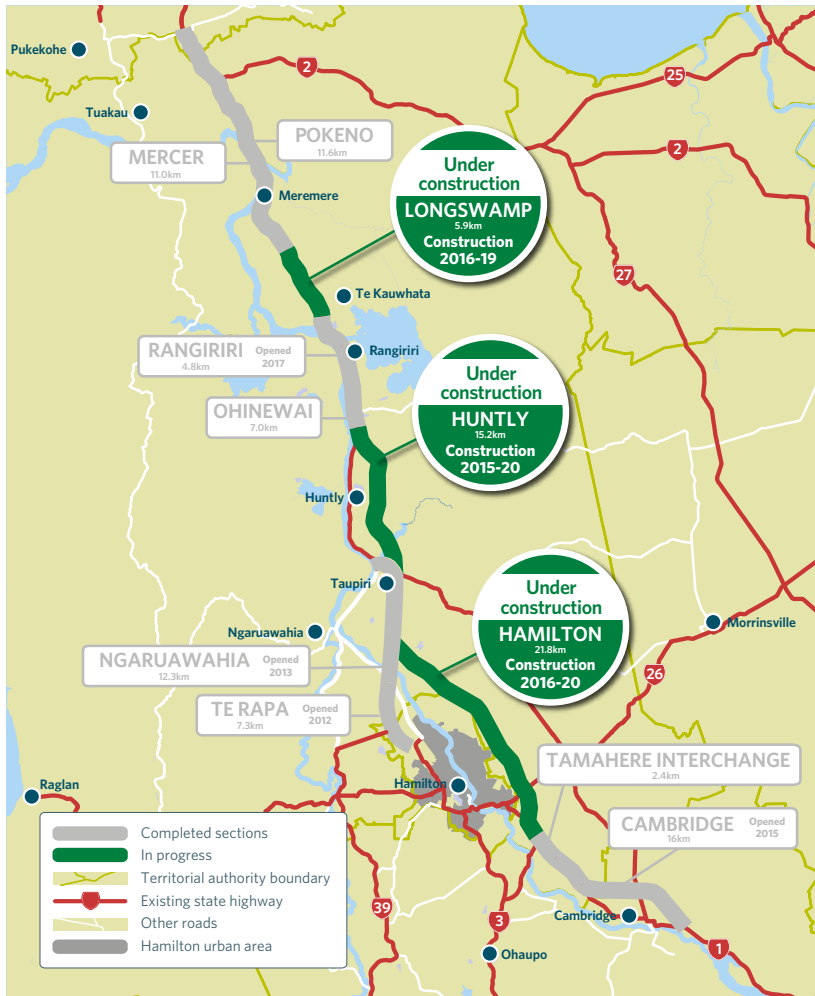
Whangamaire Stream bridge



Mangatoketoke Stream bridge

Expressway overview

The Waikato Expressway will improve safety and reliability, and reduce travel times and congestion on State Highway 1 by delivering a four-lane highway from the Bombay Hills to south of Cambridge. The Expressway is being built in seven sections.



Traffic switch a project milestone

Northern interchange works reach a milestone in May 2018 when traffic will be switched on to the future north-bound on-ramp.

Currently north and south-bound traffic is sharing what will be the Huntly off-ramp. The traffic switch will create room for the project team to build the bridge over the Main Trunk Railway Line.

The Mechanically Stabilised Earth (MSE) walls are already in place and the concrete abutments and steel beams spanning up to 50 metres will follow after the traffic switch.

This is the biggest bridge on the project as it will span the Huntly off-ramp as well as the rail corridor. It is planned to be completed around April 2019.



An aerial view showing progress on the Northern interchange

October open day for public

There is great interest in the Huntly project, with much of it being built away from view. So we are excited to announce plans for a public information day on site in October this year.

We would love to do this earlier but the earthworks across this rugged site will not be safe for public access until nearly complete.

We plan to welcome the public on site at the southern end of the project, with access off Orini Road, on a Sunday in October.

Buses will be running over a section of the alignment, from north of the

Mangawara Stream bridge to the Taupiri Summit cutting. The walkway from the Mangawara bridge to the historic Rua's Hut at the Te Ininga Lagoon will also be open.

We will have information on environmental and ecological aspects of the project, also bridge building, and information on the summit cut and blasting undertaken. Staff will be on-site to talk through the construction process and to answer any queries.

More information about this day will be available nearer the time, so keep an eye on the Facebook page, the Huntly section website www.nzta.govt.nz/huntly and the next Project Update.



Information

Project site office
199 McVie Road



Freephone
0800 HUN INFO (486 463)

Lorraine Dunmall

Fulton Hogan HEB Joint Venture,
Stakeholder liaison manager

Phone 07 828 0137

Mobile 027 503 6749

Email lorraine.dunmall@huntlyproject.co.nz

Simon Brandon

NZ Transport Agency, Communication and
stakeholder liaison manager

Phone 07 958 7888

Mobile 021 615 461

Email simon.brandon@nzta.govt.nz