



Media release

Mayor: Jim Simmons
A/General Manager: Ashley Lindsay

LOCKED BAG 23 GRAFTON NSW 2460
Telephone: (02) 6643 0200
Fax: (02) 6642 7647

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Clarence Valley chases natural disaster relief funding

WILD weather at the end of March has left Clarence Valley Council with a damages bill of more than \$2 million, but unlike its neighbours the council has received no offer of financial help from the State and Federal governments.

Councils to the north of the Clarence received funding through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to help their communities recover from flooding, but no such recovery funding has been offered to help pay for damage to public infrastructure in the Clarence.

Councillors last night unanimously decided to lobby the Member for Page, Kevin Hogan, and the Member for Clarence, Chris Gulaptis, for the Clarence Valley to be added to the list of declared natural disaster areas and to give the mayor, Jim Simmons, full authority to chase funding.

Cr Richie Williamson told the meeting Clarence Valley ratepayers had been “shafted” once when the NSW Government refused to provide natural disaster assistance when the Waterview levee suffered flood damage.

That cost ratepayers about \$1 million.

“Now they owe us another \$2 million,” he said.

“I know council will be a strong advocate for these funds. We have met the threshold and we should be declared a natural disaster so we can get on with the work.”

Council’s works and civil director, Troy Anderson, said the wild weather had caused substantial damage to riverbanks, roads and bridges, including a collapse of the riverbank at Woodford Island that had reduced the busy Lawrence Road to one lane indefinitely.

He said if no assistance was provided, council would have to fund the works and that would mean its capital works program, which includes a reduction in council’s infrastructure backlog would be “significantly affected”.

“This will in turn affect council’s Fit For the Future ratios for upcoming years,” he said.

Release ends.



Caption: Traffic control in place at Woodford Island immediately after the March floods.

For media inquiries contact Clarence Valley Council communications coordinator, David Bancroft, on 6643 0230 or 0429 104 118.