

KYOGLE COUNCIL

Media Release



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One year on from one of the worst floods in 70 years and Kyogle Council has replaced three bridges that were washed away in the deluge, isolating the rural communities they served.

Access to more than 50 homes in the Collins Creek, Sawpit Creek and Barkers Vale areas was cut off when the 31 March 2017 flood destroyed timber bridges on Collins Creek, Sawpit Creek and McClellands Roads.

For several weeks after the rain event Council staff worked around the clock to install two temporary bridges and a vehicle access through a national park to give residents in the three areas access to their properties while permanent new bridges were built.

Less than 12 months on and all three bridges have been rebuilt and are now open to traffic. The new Wagayn Bridge on Collins Creek Road was opened in November, while Jackson Bridge on McClelland Road opened to traffic in February.

Hogan Bridge on Sawpit Creek Road, the last of the three bridges to be built, was opened to traffic last week (15 March 2018).

Construction of a fourth bridge -- Robotham Bridge on Williams Road -- destroyed in the 2017 flood but which did not isolate residents is expected to be completed in June.

Kyogle Council Mayor Cr Danielle Mulholland attributed the speed and success of the flood recovery in the Kyogle LGA to community spirit, a high degree of cooperation between council, government agencies and contractors, and the hard work and commitment of council staff.

"In those first days and weeks after the flood, the community and staff worked together to return things to as near normal as possible," she said.

"Staff worked incredibly hard to get those temporary bridges and detour in place and once access had been restored they turned their efforts to getting the new bridges built.

"Getting it all done within a year was a truly impressive feat."

Geotechnical investigations had to be undertaken, the bridges designed, tenders called and assessed, contractors appointed and funding approved through the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements before the first sod could be turned.

"I am immensely proud of how Kyogle Council in collaboration with the wider community has recovered from the floods while still getting on with business as usual," Cr Mulholland said.

"Ratepayers and residents have also been very understanding and patient while the work has been completed."

Kyogle Council's final repair bill for the March 2017 flood is expected to top \$9 million.

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Captions: The flood damaged bridges and the bridges after they were rebuilt.