

NEMA RESILIENCE FUND

West Coast Emergency Management

Enhanced Evacuation Planning
2025-2025

Final Report October 2025

BACKGROUND

In 2021 and 2022 several large flooding events seriously impacted the Buller District including many homes, businesses and properties in Westport. As a result, a large programme of work has been underway to improve infrastructure and future planning for Westport. This programme is called 'Resilient Westport'. One aspect of "Resilient Westport" is enhanced evacuation planning for Westport.

West Coast Emergency Management was successful in applying for National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) through the Resilience Fund, to utilise elements of the Westport evacuation planning to replicate for Greymouth, Hokitika and Franz Josef townships across the region.

THE APPROACH

The intention for this project was to 'borrow' from the work on the Westport Evacuation Plan. The Westport Evacuation Plan was recently submitted to the Resilient Westport Steering Group. The Westport plan is expected to go before the West Coast Emergency Management Joint Committee to endorse in November 2025.

Draft Greymouth, Hokitika and Franz Josef evacuation plans have been produced. These follow a similar design and content as the Westport plan but differ where expected, such as flood activation triggers and each township having developed different evacuation and flood action plan arrangements over several decades. For example, the 1986 and 1988 Grey river Floods provided the catalyst for a range of planning templates, some of which remain in use today. Hokitika and Franz Josef have a very different river dynamics and community profiles to consider, which affects when, how and who to evacuate.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

The involvement of stakeholders, partners and subject matter experts in this work continues to be critical. Flood Evacuation planning can be complex and challenging. The more engagement and contribution, understanding of roles and responsibilities creates a more robust and effective plan. Progress has been made across Greymouth, Hokitika and Franz Josef to more clearly set out roles and responsibilities.

NATIONAL WORK PROGRAMMES AND TEMPLATES

Through this project we have fed from and contributed to the 'National Flood Warning Steering Group'. We have maintained strong linkages with the group to ensure we are aligned with national thinking on evacuation planning. We have had some positive feedback on the work we have done so far.

CONTENTS

The contents page gives a good understanding of the sections within the plans. Figure 1 on the following page is an extract from the current draft Franz Josef Evacuation Plan, which is currently being consulted on.

NEXT STEPS UNDERWAY

Working evaluation arrangements exist for all three townships. Enhancing each of these three plans requires resourcing and engagement from a number of agencies.

The Franz Josef plan is currently being consulted on. An initial meeting with the community took place in September. We will be working with Westland District Council and other stakeholders over October and November before finalising in early 2026.

The Hokitika Plan will be revisited once the Franz Josef plan is complete.

Greymouth has an existing Flood Action Plan that is managed by Grey District Council. This has been incorporated into an enhanced Greymouth Evaluation plan that still requires further input from agencies.

All three plans are included in the West Coast Emergency Management work programme.

Figure One Below: Current example of Contents page

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