



LEARNING THROUGH THE STORM

Storm damage to forests in
Nelson Tasman, July 2025

Forest industry response, wider implications and important lessons



Top of the South
WOOD COUNCIL

With funding/support from **Te Uru Rākau**



New Zealand Forest Service

FOREWORD



It is a year since the July 2025 windthrow event. That event, and subsequent associated attrition, has left close to 10,000 hectares of mature and semi-mature plantation forests wind-damaged, primarily in the Moutere area of Tasman District.

Initially, larger plantation forest owners focused on assisting neighbours with the flood damage that preceded the windthrow. Efforts then turned to assessing the damage within estates, developing harvest plans to maximise value recovery, mobilising contractors and contacting our customers to discuss selling the additional volumes in the pipeline.

Forestry staff, contractors and others in the supply chain have worked long hours and put in a great deal of effort since then. What we have accomplished over the past 12 months is a credit to everyone involved. We can be especially proud that we protected the Tasman forest industry's reputation during this time.

As we progress through 2026, the deteriorating quality of windthrown logs will become the main issue to manage. We will have to plan carefully to ensure log value is recovered where economically viable, while some partially affected areas are left to grow on and other areas are not recovered but windrowed for replanting.

The Top of the South Wood Council fosters strong relationships between its 90-odd members, and these relationships have been crucial, both in the initial response to the windthrow and the continuing recovery work.

We thank Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service for funding this report. We trust that some of what we have learnt over the past year will be useful to people involved in managing future windthrow events.

Steve Chandler

Chair, Top of the South Wood Council



With funding support from Te Uru Rākau



New Zealand Forest Service

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 11th 2025, following weeks of heavy rain, an estimated 7,500-8,000 hectares of radiata pine in Tasman District forests were windthrown by strong north-easterly and easterly winds. Standing trees left within wind-damaged blocks were estimated to account for 25% of all trees affected.

Further windthrow occurred over subsequent months as destabilised trees in damaged areas continued to fall over. Damage caused by southerly winds in October was significant, with a further estimated 2,500-3,000 hectares of trees blown down.

At the time of writing – June 2026 – salvage operations are on-going in many wind-damaged areas.

A concerted communications and community relations effort began as soon as the scale of the July windthrow was realised. This was coordinated by the Top of the South Wood and involved forest owners, the New Zealand Forest Owners Association, Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service and others.

This effort, and subsequent community-oriented activities, proved very valuable. Forestry's reputation appeared to remain largely intact, if not strengthened – an impressive outcome when the risk was the opposite. This likely reflects the forest industry's visible contribution to recovery efforts and forestry's importance to the regional economy.

Strong relationships across the forestry supply chain, and between industry and other organisations, were a major asset in both the immediate response and the longer recovery period. These relationships had been built over time through the Wood Council's activities.

The first response of the forest industry to the earlier flooding and subsequent windthrow was to help reopen access routes, and support neighbours and affected communities. Beyond this, salvage operations very quickly ramped up. Harvesting crews and cartage capacity were recruited from Marlborough and further afield. Matching available cartage to log production has remained a constant challenge throughout the recovery.

Local domestic markets were initially taking around half the total log volume, the remainder going for export via Port Nelson, where volumes handled have almost doubled. The proportion of logs going for export has increased as log size and quality decrease. The Eves Valley sawmill closure has had various repercussions at different parts of the supply chain.

Wood quality remained sound for longer than initially expected, but by April–May 2026 bluestain and white rot fungi were beginning to emerge. As log recovery progresses, wood quality will increasingly influence the extent of economic salvage achievable. Decisions about how to manage material that cannot be economically recovered are still being worked through and will vary according to site.

In some areas, the standing trees remaining in wind-damaged areas are proving sufficient to be grown on to maturity. This is a better outcome than initially predicted, when it was thought that most standing trees would have to be felled.

In the short-term, the windthrow has created opportunities for innovation, capability growth and closer collaboration across the supply chain. As salvage activity eventually declines, all parts of the sector are likely to feel the effects of reduced harvest volumes for a number of years.

THE NUMBERS

In Marlborough, the forest industry and Port Marlborough are both suffering from a decrease in harvesting activity, as many harvesting contractors have moved to Tasman District. Log volumes at Port Marlborough have fallen by over 30%; meanwhile, log prices in Marlborough are high. Once the salvage operation draws to a close, it is hoped contractors will return to Marlborough and the balance between the two neighbouring districts will be restored.

The Numbers

July 2025 windthrow area	7,500-8,000 hectares
Additional standing tree volume in windthrown areas	+ 25% of windthrow volume
Attrition plus the October 2025 windthrow area	+ 2,500-3,000 hectares
Present day value of lost crop (July 2025 data)	\$25 million per year for 12 years (14% of forestry GDP in Nelson Tasman)
Proportion of windthrown trees over 20 years old	50%-60%
Youngest age trees can be cost-effectively salvaged	17-18 years
Extra harvesting crews working in Tasman forests	> 20
Total logs harvested per month	300,000-350,000 tonnes
Total logs harvested per day	> 15,000 tonnes
Truck movements/day	400-500
Increase in export volumes leaving Port Nelson	100%
Decrease in export volumes leaving Port Marlborough	30%-40%

Note: all figures are estimates

IMPORTANT LESSONS FROM THE RESPONSE & RECOVERY

COMMUNICATIONS

- Successful communications are underpinned by good relationships. The effort the Top of the South Wood Council puts into building relationships, within the forest industry and with wider groups and organisations, paid huge dividends during the initial response
- Don't try and do everything yourself - call for assistance and use others' expertise
- Learn from the experiences of others. Being part of the NZ Regional Wood Council Group meant we knew we would require support to handle the early response
- Having a central 'hub' that everyone could initially come to and work from together worked well
- Having a group responsible for communications took the pressure off forest managers, allowing them to focus on operations
- Engage early. In the absence of timely information, communities and stakeholders will often fill information gaps themselves. Early communication, even when all the facts are not yet known, helps reassure, build confidence and reduce speculation
- Have existing communication channels - this starts with knowing your neighbours
- Communication needs to be two-way between forest owners and neighbours - having forest signage, 'Business as Usual' contacts, website/0800 numbers, all help with information flow to forest owners following severe weather events
- A database of neighbours and other forest and woodlot owners, with contact details, is a powerful tool for many reasons, including emergency response

- Avoid use of the word 'crisis'
- Front-foot the media response, and ensure information released to media and the community is fact-based
- Keep on top of mis-information and myths in the media/social media and respond as soon as possible with facts
- A woody debris survey should be considered in any post-event analysis where flooding is part of the event.

LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE

- Response and recovery need a measured pace. Take a deep breath at the start and don't rush in
- Seize the opportunities - be proactive in providing assistance to neighbours and wider communities. Highly visible recovery activities can help shape community perceptions
- Social licence can be strengthened during difficult periods. Major events can create opportunities to demonstrate competence, transparency, community commitment and shared values
- Community drop-in sessions gave neighbours and the wider public the opportunity to meet people working on the response, gain reassurance, ask specific questions and learn about response operations that mattered to them
- Fatigue is a real risk in the early stages of a response/recovery operation
- Control the controllables - you can't stand the trees back up
- Be kind on yourself - as long as you're doing your best, you can't do any better.

OPERATIONS

- Have plans in place to deal with emergencies, including business continuity plans
- Look after the supply chain – regular communications are essential and gratefully received
- Obtain satellite and aerial imagery as quickly as possible to assist with identifying damaged areas and planning recovery operations
- Collaboration pays dividends – recognise that salvage harvesting will compete with conventional harvesting for port space, trucks, contractors etc. By collaborating to focus on the salvage, losses to the industry as a whole can be reduced
- A Recovery Objectives and Strategies document produced early on by one company was very helpful in setting an operating framework and removing uncertainty¹
- Take advantage of road closures – for example, while SH 6 was closed for salvage work next to the road, additional roadside trees were tidied up and firebreaks created. This made a good impression with the public when the road was re-opened
- “Shared impacts, shared responsibilities.” Other sectors should be encouraged to share responsibility for clean-up operations, for example in catchments where debris has originated from many different properties
- Look for opportunities to innovate during the recovery phase; give others opportunities to innovate as well
- Return to normal operating standards as soon as possible once out of initial response phase
- Emphasise that health and safety in the recovery phase is not to be compromised
- Be aware that standing trees in windthrow areas and adjacent roads, tracks and landings can fall over at any time
- The nature of the windthrow is important: toppled trees give better value recovery than shattered trees
- Wood quality is a massive driver in determining speed/scale of operations. Prepare for the problems – avoid knee-jerk responses. Share knowledge around timing of wood deterioration
- Main threats affecting market value and acceptance are bluestain; white rot fungi; dry, brittle wood; insect infestations
- Marketing younger wood domestically is tricky. One tactic for smaller players has been to offer older trees to mills as part of overall supply, in the hope markets will be prepared to pay reasonable prices for smaller material
- Future risks related to slash may have increased. Forest owners need to consider the implications of not extracting damaged wood: this wood could be vulnerable to future weather events.



¹See Appendix 1: Recovery Objectives and Strategies – OneFortyOne



... strong north-easterly and easterly winds which,
when combined with saturated soils,



... caused the most severe forest windthrow ever seen in Nelson Tasman.



SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This report focuses on the impacts of the July 2025 windthrow event, and subsequent wind-damage, on forests in Nelson Tasman (Nelson City plus Tasman District). Most damage occurred to forests in Tasman District.

Tasman District, Nelson City and Marlborough District are together known as the 'Top of the South'.

1.1 Forestry in the Top of the South: an overview

Plantation forestry has been an important land use in the Top of the South since the first New Zealand Forest Service plantings in the 1920s. Early plantings were concentrated in Tasman District; many of today's plantations in Tasman are in their third or fourth rotations.

Radiata pine is by far the dominant species, but with small areas of Douglas-fir generally on colder sites. The main forested areas are on rolling to steep country, harvesting using cable-haulers is common, with ground-based machinery restricted to gentler topography.

Total plantation areas²

■ Tasman	85,416 hectares
■ Marlborough	81,568 hectares
■ Nelson City	8,663 hectares

Two large international companies own the majority of the Top of the South plantation area. A small number of owners have substantial holdings between 1,000 and 10,000 hectares, and there are many privately owned small forests and woodlots.

The Top of the South has well-established forestry infrastructure, several large sawmills, and two log exporting ports – Port Nelson and Port Marlborough. The industry employs over 2000 people in forestry and wood processing³.

1.2 The June and July storms in Tasman District

Over a two-week period in late June and early July 2025, bouts of very heavy rainfall caused serious flooding in Nelson Tasman. The forest industry initially fared reasonably well and operations continued despite some damage to infrastructure. Meanwhile other primary industries and property owners were dealing with severe flood damage. Then further heavy rain on Thursday 10th and Friday 11th July came with strong north-easterly and easterly winds which, when combined with saturated soils, caused the most severe forest windthrow ever seen in Nelson Tasman.

Plantation forests in the Upper Motueka Valley, Moutere Hills, Dovedale and Pigeon Valley areas of the Tasman District were hard hit, with extensive areas of trees toppling, their roots unable to anchor them in the water-logged, clay-based Moutere gravel soils.

In the north-east of the district, forests and other vegetation types suffered mid-slope failures where whole hillsides, including trees, moved downhill and debris flows occurred. These mid-slope failures were predominantly on Separation Point granite soils – soils which have been identified as having stability risks and which are gradually being retired from plantation forestry.

²Ministry for Primary Industries (2025) National Exotic Forest Description www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/70949-2025-NEFD-Report

³Tasman Floods Key Sectors Impact Assessment (August 2025). Report commissioned by the Nelson Development Agency (NDA).



The differing, significant damage across areas of Tasman District caused by June and July weather events. The June event had fewer causes of damage (mainly flooding) in a more concentrated area, while the July event had additional damage from debris/slips and wind and hence greater area of impact. (Source: Tasman District Council)

1.3 The scale of the windthrow

Initial confirmation that forests had been badly hit came through on the morning of Saturday 12th July 2025, when the first helicopters went up to survey the damage.

Early estimates from the two major plantation forest owners were that around 4,000 hectares of trees were down. Over the next few days, figures were revised upwards to 7,750 hectares.

Mapping showed that most windthrown trees were mature (24 years +), semi-mature (20-23 years) or mid-rotation (15-19 years). Significant areas of standing trees remained amongst windthrown areas. It was estimated that if these trees were harvested with the windthrown trees, it could add as much as a further 25% to total salvage volumes.

Over the following weeks and months, there was further gradual attrition, with trees falling into gaps left by their windthrown neighbours.

To add insult to injury, another wind event on October 23rd 2025, this time with winds from the south, caused more damage, resulting in windthrow across a further estimated 2,000 hectares of plantation forests.

1.4 Early estimates of economic impact

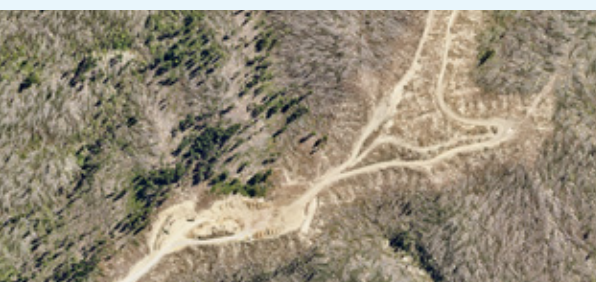
The Nelson Development Agency commissioned a broad-scale study into the economic impact of the floods and windthrow soon after the events⁴. The report assessed losses to Nelson Tasman's primary industries.

Nelson Tasman forest owners and the New Zealand Forest Owners Association contributed data to assist with the report. A figure of 7,750 hectares of windthrow was used for the economic analyses. At the time it was estimated that a similar area of standing trees would have to be harvested, equivalent to around 15% of the 94,100 hectares plantation area in Nelson Tasman⁵.

N.B. The Nelson Development Agency study was completed using data gathered in July 2025. Later attrition, including the October event, are estimated to have added a further 2,500-3,000 hectares to the total area damaged, while estimates of the areas of standing trees needing to be harvested have reduced.

The cumulative economic impact of forestry damage was estimated at \$200 million in present value terms, at an average annual economic cost of \$25 million per annum over 12 years. This is equivalent to 14% of forestry GDP in Nelson Tasman being lost on average each year for over a decade.

The value of forestry crop damage was more than double the estimated losses to horticulture and viticulture, the sectors next-most affected. The forestry losses are on a par with the \$165 million forestry crop losses estimated in the Hawke's Bay after Cyclone Gabrielle⁶.



⁴Tasman Floods Key Sectors Impact Assessment (August 2025). Report commissioned by the Nelson Development Agency (NDA).

⁵MPI 2024 National Exotic Forest Description data were used for the analyses in the NDA study.

⁶Source: Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency, Cyclone Gabrielle 2023, Regional Recovery Plan Summary, available here: www.hawkesbayrecovery.nz/assets/Uploads/FINAL-21-page-RRA-Summary-Plan.pdf

SECTION 2: THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE JULY WINDTHROW

Nelson Tasman forest owners and managers were already on high alert after the recent floods, and the forest industry was able to swing into action quickly in several important ways. These included:

- 1. Developing a cohesive, consistent communications response*
- 2. Clearing important highways and other access routes*
- 3. Helping people where needed, including those cut off by flooding and windthrown trees in isolated rural locations and forest neighbours*
- 4. Beginning the task of making a detailed assessment of damaged areas and then, for many, beginning work on a complete re-set of operations for the foreseeable future.*

2.1 Communications in the immediate aftermath of the windthrow

The Top of the South Wood Council (TOTSWC) is an organisation with around 90 members from across the forestry supply chain in Marlborough, Nelson and Tasman. The Council is the largest of the eight regional wood councils operating in New Zealand. It has an active and engaged membership, with good relationships both within the Council and between the Council and other organisations across the Top of the South Island. The Council is coordinated by part-time Executive Officer, Angela MacKenzie.

The Wood Council is also a member of the New Zealand Regional Wood Council Group (NZRWCG), a joint initiative between the eight regional wood councils.

The industry's experience following Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023 has become an important reference for subsequent responses to major storm events. Forestry operations and the wider industry experienced a period of intense media

scrutiny and public concern regarding forestry practices along the East Coast, resulting in a notable loss of reputation and trust. The experience highlighted the importance of maintaining strong community relationships and clear communication throughout response and recovery efforts and beyond.

Against this backdrop, both the NZRWCG and the TOTSWC discussed how responses to a major storm or similar event could be strengthened. External support during the initial response phase, including targeted communications, was identified as a potential improvement and was subsequently implemented in the July 2025 Nelson Tasman storm events.

The New Zealand Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) has also been strengthening ties with the NZRWCG. A formal Memorandum of Understanding now exists, focused on 'a strong, collaborative relationship that advances the forestry sector in New Zealand, supports sustainable industry growth, and promotes the shared interests of all stakeholders'.

On the morning of Saturday 12th July 2025, as it became apparent that the Tasman windthrow was very significant, a coordinated communications response began to take shape. After discussions with TOTSWC members and Executive, Angela MacKenzie took the decision to bring in outside help, in the form of NZFOA Chief Executive Dr. Elizabeth Heeg.

By Monday morning, 14th July, 2025, a communications group had been established and was working together from OneFortyOne's headquarters in Richmond. The group comprised Angela MacKenzie, Dr. Elizabeth Heeg, Kylie Reeves, Corporate Affairs Manager at OneFortyOne and Belinda Miller, Regional Manager, Forestry Support, Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service. The group liaised closely with other Wood Council members and forest owners and managers.

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It was agreed that getting people to a central location so they could see the scale of the event first-hand was important. The early morning of Tuesday 15th July saw the Minister of Forestry, Hon Todd McClay, in Nelson, to see the damage for himself and meet affected parties. Minister McClay, along with other influential people, flew over affected areas in a helicopter provided by the forest industry.

The Minister and others then met representatives of large and small forest owners and of other primary industry sectors. The meeting was crucial in creating Government awareness of just how much damage there was to forestry, and the scale of the clean-up and salvage operations ahead. The suggestion was raised that a woody debris survey of Tasman District river mouths and beaches would be a good idea. The survey would determine the origin of any debris in coastal receiving environments and provide data to support clean-up efforts and communications.

The Minister then fronted a press conference at Tasman District Council's offices. The facts as they were known to date about the scale of the damage to the primary sector, especially forestry, were presented to media. Later that day, a funding package was announced by Government to support those affected, and included funding for a woody debris survey.

Front-footing the media

The communications response benefitted from being led by experienced communications professionals supported by others with media and stakeholder engagement experience. Front-footing the narrative was deemed a priority from the start. Earlier media coverage of the June floods had rightly focused on damage to rural properties and livelihoods. In this case it was important to highlight that forestry was also

hard hit, and to emphasise that, with shared impacts amongst different sectors, came shared responsibility for the clean-up.

Fronting media without full information on the extent of the damage was difficult at first. The communications group also needed to ensure that forestry companies' shareholders received timely and critical information in advance of the media. The aim was to make sure messaging was consistent across all channels. By acting as a central point of contact and being readily contactable for media queries, the group were able to divert media away from forest managers, reducing pressure on people who were focused on the operational response.

Angela MacKenzie acted as information hub for the forest industry, taking many calls and providing information or directing people to other organisations. Kylie Reeves handled both internal and external communications for OneFortyOne during the early days and weeks, and was heavily involved in community liaison. Dr. Elizabeth Heeg was called on several times to provide pan-industry comment at national and regional levels. Belinda Miller led the Ministry for Primary Industry's communications around forestry in the immediate aftermath of the storms. This included providing forestry input into daily situation reports ('Sit Reps') to Government. These relied on information coming in from forestry representatives, Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) and others.

Countering the spread of misinformation

As the event began to be reported by media, the communications group had to work quickly to ensure that erroneous reporting – some of which seemed designed to stir up anti-forestry sentiment – was quickly corrected.

SECTION 2: THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE JULY WINDTHROW

Bethany Park campground in Kaiteriteri was something of a media focal point. The campground is a popular summer holiday destination, so of high public interest. It was badly flooded so it was flood damage, rather than windthrow, that attracted media attention. The catchment behind Bethany Park is dominated by exotic plantations and native vegetation on Separation Point granite soils. These saturated soils can, and did, give way completely, causing mid-slope failures. Native bush, mid-aged plantation trees, farm materials and other land-use debris were all swept down into the campground and environs. There had been no recent forest harvesting in the immediate catchment, so there was no recent source of forestry slash. However, in one case a photograph was used from a different catchment to 'illustrate' that forestry slash was piling up at Kaiteriteri.

Dr Elizabeth Heeg was able to proactively seek an interview with a television crew who were trying to enter the campground but were turned away by the campground manager. Elizabeth was able to clarify that 'forestry slash' – a term used ubiquitously by media – was not responsible for the storm-related impacts, steering the conversation to focus on how all land uses and all corners of the community had been affected by the deluge. Elizabeth was also interviewed on RNZ's Morning Report, and again was able to effectively counter assertions that forestry slash was the key contributor to the damage around Bethany Park.

Correcting misinformation in the media was a relentless task. The NZFOA was proactive, allocating staff to check channels and social media platforms regularly. Any erroneous reporting was called out as quickly as possible, and this proved effective in dampening down speculation and myths. One thing learnt was that, if there are any gaps in the information provided, people will fill in the blanks.



Clear communications with the media were an essential part of the response to help stop the spread of misinformation.

2.2 The woody debris survey

The need for a woody debris survey was identified very soon after the windthrow event. This was not least because on some beaches and river mouths, such as at Kaiteriteri, there was very little debris. Funding for a survey was quickly secured from the Forest Growers Levy Trust and Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service.

The stated objective of the survey was:

'to establish a robust data set for accurately categorising large woody debris (LWD) volume and proportion by species, in areas where it has had community impact with a focus on the Tasman Bay coastline.'

Interpine Innovation Ltd was selected to undertake the work. High-resolution satellite imagery identified approximately 18 km of the 50 km coastline of Tasman Bay between Tāhunanui and Mārahau affected by woody debris accumulation across multiple land uses. A total of 59 coastal beach and rivermouth sites were sampled between July 17th and 21st 2025. Debris was categorised according to species, its likely origin, its length and freshness.

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The report was published on August 28th 2025⁷. Some key results included:

- 11% of the debris volume was classified as conifer either from harvest residue or likely plantation origin
- 21% was classified as conifer of non-plantation origin
- 11% was classified as native species
- 6% was classified as willow or poplar, 5% eucalypt, 5% posts/timber/firewood
- 40% was classified as 'other' and could not be identified due to heavy weathering, so most likely had spent some time in transit from its source to the beaches.

The survey's finding – that no more than 11% of the large woody debris was conifer of plantation origin – gave the forest industry definitive evidence that debris on beaches and around river mouths was from many sources, not just plantation forests. The data reinforced the message that there were shared impacts from the storms, and there should be shared responsibility for the clean-up.

Surveys were undertaken on Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay beaches following Cyclone Gabrielle, so this survey will build on the data set about the movement of large woody debris in different types of events and from varying catchment land-types and land-uses. The NZFOA recommends that a large woody debris survey should be a key consideration of any future post-event analysis where flooding is involved.

2.3 Contacting and helping affected people

Large forest owners have hundreds of neighbours and near-neighbours around their boundaries. Having databases of neighbours proved very valuable, as people could be

contacted by phone to check on their well-being and offer assistance. Maintaining up-to-date databases requires effort, as people come and go, but in an emergency response the effort proves worthwhile. Not all neighbours could be contacted directly, so as roads were cleared, forestry staff drove round and knocked on doors.

Members of the Nelson Branch of the Farm Forestry Association did their best to contact small forest owners in the worst-affected areas. Here efforts were hampered by the lack of any sort of small-owner database. Branch President Philip Alloway also resorted to driving round, and put a notice in rural newspapers, offering assistance to small forest owners if they wanted to contact him.

Response to the notice was poor.

"I think everyone would benefit from a small forest owners database – a resource where you can actually contact the owner. On many levels, that's a very powerful tool."

Philip Alloway, Nelson Branch, Farm Forestry Association

2.4 Community drop-in sessions

In the days after the storms it became clear that people in affected areas were understandably very nervous about what was happening around them, and what could happen especially if there was yet more heavy rain. People needed information and reassurance, including about how risks from fallen trees and forest debris were being mitigated.

The forest industry organised three community 'drop-in' sessions in Wakefield, Motueka and Tapawera within two weeks of the July storm. Wood Council members were involved, as well as other organisations, and in total an estimated 60 people turned up. The drop-ins meant forest

⁷www.nzfoa.org.nz/resources/file-libraries-resources/environment/environmental-reports/936-tasman-bay-storm-event-july-2025-interpine-woody-debris-assessment/file

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"The idea was that you turn up, you get to talk to people face-to-face. Sometimes people just need to vent. Sometimes people are really hurting. They might have specific questions and they can talk to the GM or forest manager who can help them."

Kylie Reeves, Corporate Affairs Manager, OneFortyOne

managers became visible and available, and people had an opportunity to voice their concerns, be listened to, ask specific questions, and gain a better understanding of what was happening in the forests. All those involved in fronting up at the sessions felt that they were a successful initiative.

2.5 Communications beyond the initial response period

The core communications group continued to be busy beyond the first few days after the windthrow. The contribution the group made highlights the value of having readily available, consistent sources of information, using people who are well-informed but not directly involved in operations. The group relied on receiving information up the line from others so they could deal with queries and requests.

Acting early and bringing in outside help were major factors in protecting the industry's reputation in what could have otherwise become a more challenging public narrative for forestry. Over time, local media reporting became less focused on attributing blame and more centred on response and recovery activities. This positive trend has continued, with more balanced coverage evident.

Engagement with forest neighbours and the wider community has continued. The industry wants people to know that the salvage operation is finite and disruptions will gradually lessen.







SECTION 3: RESPONSE AND IMPACTS ALONG THE FORESTRY SUPPLY CHAIN: A SUMMARY

This section briefly summarises how different parts of the supply chain responded to, and have been affected by, the windthrow. More detailed perspectives from different industry sectors are presented in Section 5.

3.1 Working together in the first days after the windthrow

While the June floods did cause some infrastructure damage to forest estates, the forestry supply chain was able to get back up and running quickly. But on July 10th-11th, winds started to pick up, and by the late afternoon on July 11th reports of windthrow began to come in from people driving home through forested areas. Messages and images continued to arrive through the night. People with experience knew that, because Moutere gravels hold a lot of water in the top horizons, windthrow is a distinct risk when the soils are saturated.

The earliest helicopter flights on the morning of Saturday 12th confirmed that, while forests in the east of the district around Nelson were not badly affected, western forests had suffered extensive damage. This included the Upper Motueka Valley, Moutere Hills, Dovedale and Pigeon Valley areas. There was no doubt that a major salvage operation lay ahead.

The overwhelming response by the forest industry and others involved in the immediate aftermath of the windthrow was to work together to provide help and resources where needed. Staff and contractors had participated in the recent emergency responses to flooding, so they were primed and morale was high. Many people who work in Nelson Tasman forests live locally, so know their communities and were able to act quickly where they knew problems were likely.

Forest managers and crews worked closely with Tasman District Council, Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) and Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) staff during this early period.

3.2 Large forest owners

Nelson-Tasman's largest forest owners had teams in place that could immediately begin planning for a major re-set of operations.

Minimising financial losses would involve salvaging as many of the oldest, most valuable trees as possible before wood quality began to deteriorate, then moving into mid-rotation stands. Assumptions on how long windthrown trees would stay merchantable formed the basis of planning – a window of 12-18 months was believed to be available. Managers needed to assess what was feasible in terms of expanding harvest operations, and implications in terms of bottlenecks in the supply chain and impacts on markets.

Specialist planning and GIS staff, and powerful IT systems, were an essential part of the immediate large grower response. Resources were organised quickly, and high-quality aerial and satellite imagery made available as soon as possible, enabling staff to map the damage and begin planning salvage operations.

First iterations of calculations included volumes of logs to be salvaged from priority locations and numbers and types of harvesting crews needed. Analyses were complicated by the standing trees amongst the windthrow, which were predicted to add 25% to harvest volumes.

SECTION 3: RESPONSE AND IMPACTS ALONG THE FORESTRY SUPPLY CHAIN: A SUMMARY

Forests in the affected areas are mainly third or fourth rotation, so infrastructure was already in place, albeit potentially blocked or damaged by fallen trees. Once priority areas for salvage were identified and access made safe, harvest operations began. In some cases this was as soon as Monday 14th July. Forest managers wanted to minimise interruptions to the supply chain and to try and recreate a sense of normality.

Safety was a guiding objective - no matter how much windthrow was salvaged, if someone was seriously hurt or killed then this would represent failure at the highest level.

"All the good things we try and do all the time really shone through – we have high operating standards and can trust our contractors to work safely and do things right"

Craig Brown, Forest Protection Manager, OneFortyOne

Existing crews mobilised quickly; new contractors were recruited from across Nelson Tasman and further afield. Suitable crews were offered attractive contracts, with potential for high-volume output over many months.

Once crews were up and running, salvaging the fallen trees did not prove too difficult. Trees were often all aligned in one direction and intact, with their rootballs partially in the ground so still alive. Moving rootballs, once cut off, to stable places, quickly became part of the routine.

The re-organisation and scaling-up of cartage to meet harvesting output proved more of a challenge, one which has continued throughout the salvage to date.

Maintaining the supply chain was seen as crucial, with high volumes of wood flowing into both domestic mills and to Port Nelson. The Eves Valley sawmill closure, soon after the

windthrow, could not have come at a worse time as far as harvesting managers were concerned.

Wood quality remained much better than anticipated for the first 8-9 months of the salvage, with only small amounts of bluestain. By April 2026, a white rot fungi, *Phlebiopsis*, had begun to appear, potentially jeopardising exports. This issue is being addressed by a pan-industry group.

3.3 Forest management companies

Forest management companies, some of whom also own forests, had the challenge of responding to the windthrow but with fewer resources than the big corporate owners. These companies deal with multiple clients and multiple sizes and types of forests and woodlots.

The strain on staff resources was immediate and proved to last for many months. The costs of the response – whether this was in staff time or contractor costs – has been acutely felt by smaller companies without immediate access to funding.

Companies managing small-to-medium forests have done their best to get salvage jobs done for clients. Finding additional harvesting and cartage contractors often proved difficult. Most small owners understood the situation and were resigned to the wait, but the situation was far from ideal for both managers and their clients.

Securing markets in times of both over- and under-supply of different log types has not always been easy for smaller players, and has required some 'work-around' solutions. If a supply of good quality sawlogs is available, mills may be persuaded to take some smaller logs alongside these. As average log sizes get smaller and quality declines, more will go for export, mainly to India.

Two forest management companies assisted larger owners by enabling one or two of their own harvesting contractors to move into corporate forests and benefit from the attractive contracts being offered.

One advantage for forest management companies is that most salvage and clean-up operations, if not already complete, will be completed by late 2026, so reducing the problem of deteriorating wood quality faced by the large forest owners.

3.4 Small forest owners

Small forest owners in Nelson Tasman are likely to have had the greatest proportional losses amongst all forest owners.

"A small woodlot owner with 10 hectares and 2-3 hectares blown down in the middle really has only one choice: they have to harvest the lot"

Philip Alloway, Nelson Branch, New Zealand Farm Forestry Association

Philip Alloway, Nelson Branch of the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association (NZFFA), reports that large forest owners and forest management companies could not have done more to help small owners affected by the windthrow. Philip is one of two Farm Forestry Association members active on the Top of the South Wood Council, so the NZFFA has good relations and contacts with the larger owners and others such as Te Uru Rākau. Philip was invited to join the early meeting with the Minister in Richmond, which he was grateful for.

The NZFFA represents all small forest owners; however many are not members. Out of the 50 or so members of the Nelson Branch of the NZFFA, it was thought that perhaps 10-11 lived in areas likely to be affected. There is no database of small forest owners, so no way of knowing how

many properties were affected, nor the area of trees damaged. An advert placed by the Nelson Branch in rural newspapers offering assistance to all small owners elicited very little response.

The Nelson Branch, with support from Te Uru Rākau, organised a workshop for small forest owners which provided practical information on harvesting wind-damaged woodlots. Thirty-six people attended, some of whom had experienced windthrow before, and were able to share experiences.

While local authorities oversee the National Environmental Standard – Commercial Forestry (NES-CF), Te Uru Rākau advisers can offer free advice to small forest owners, including helping them access information on government regulations (for example understanding responsibilities in the Emissions Trading Scheme following damage to forests).

Small forest owners generally rely on contractors for mechanised operations, and often use forest management companies to manage harvesting and marketing. Many small owners apparently accepted the damage incurred, and the wait for trees to be salvaged, without undue fuss. Some had perhaps suffered flood damage to their properties and livelihoods, so worrying about windthrown trees might have been a low priority.

By the middle of 2026 a good majority of small owners appear to have had their trees cleared, either thanks to neighbouring owners sending contractors 'over the fence', or by independently organising operations. Some may have at least covered their harvesting costs or generated a small profit; some will have lost a large chunk of their super-annuation fund or similar. As time goes on and wood quality deteriorates, the chances of marketing windthrow in small forests and woodlots at a profit will diminish. The total losses to this sector will never be known.

SECTION 3: RESPONSE AND IMPACTS ALONG THE FORESTRY SUPPLY CHAIN: A SUMMARY

3.5 Contractors

Before July 2025, a sizeable number of well-established harvesting and log cartage contractors were operating steadily in Nelson Tasman forests. The majority were employed by large forest owners. A more flexible contingent serviced forest management companies and smaller owners.

"The fact that many Tasman forests are fourth rotation means that there are some multi-generational, highly experienced contractors. These guys have dealt with windthrow before and know what they're doing. This helps a lot."

Mike Fahey, Taylors Contracting Co.

After the windthrow, demand for both harvesting and cartage contractors sky-rocketed. This has been good news on the whole for these contractors, who have been able to secure high-volume contracts with the large forest owners. Harvesting contractors and management companies who have come to Tasman District to support the windthrow salvage have been able to 'bank' existing work programmes (many in Marlborough), giving them improved longer-term certainty and opportunities they might not have had otherwise. Cartage contractors have sourced extra trucks and drivers from out of the area, and shifted to round-the-clock operations.

Harvesting and cartage contractors operate at the sharp end of the fickle and fluctuating demands of an industry that has seen many boom and bust cycles. They often carry high levels of debt, and are left largely unprotected when cycles turn downwards. Experienced business operators will know they must plan to still be in business when harvest levels fall below where they were before the July 2025 windthrow event.

"We have tried to be really responsible with our contractors, advising them - don't go out and buy more gear just because you've got a good amount of work now. Use this time to pay down debt and improve your equity position."

Sam Nuske, Operations and Marketing Manager, OneFortyOne

3.6 Domestic markets and Port Nelson

From the start of the salvage operations in July 2025 until April 2026, pruned logs continued to be acceptable in domestic markets for appearance grade products, and sawlogs met quality requirements without issue. Lower value logs found markets either at Nelson Pine Industries or in export markets.

Domestic sawlog markets were initially faced with an oversupply of logs but not necessarily any extra processing capacity or demand for products. By April 2026, salvage operations had moved into younger blocks, and supply of sawlogs that meet the size, age and stiffness criteria needed for structural markets was becoming tight. More logs are now going for export, with lower volumes per hectare and lower value.

The Eves Valley sawmill closure has had various repercussions, but with sawlog supply now under pressure, remaining sawmills are relieved to have one less competitor.

Port logistics company C3 has brought in extra staff at Port Nelson and ramped up log handling and stevedoring operations. Moving to twenty-four hours-a-day operations for 5-6 days a week has meant a big improvement in efficiencies from the port to the forest. Interim log storage in some forests is still happening due to limited wharf capacity. This adds extra handling costs for forest owners.



Log exporters and agents operating at Port Nelson have found markets for the huge extra volumes of logs going to China and India, and procured extra ships. The pressure is on to keep logs moving over the wharf as quickly as possible.

By April-May 2026, wood quality issues predictably began to emerge. While some bluestain is generally not a problem for industrial products as structural integrity is not affected, prices are discounted.

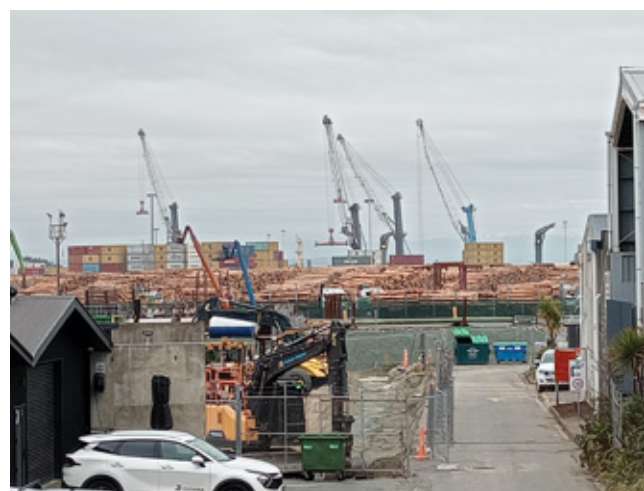
The appearance of white rot fungi was no surprise to those familiar with wood quality issues. In the past, the industry has self-regulated, banning exports of affected logs even though some export markets would accept them. In May 2026, Tasman forest industry representatives began

negotiating with New Zealand Forest Owners Association and MPI to lift restrictions so export could go ahead in the discounted grades.

Recent wood quality issues at the wharf have resulted in logs having to be pulled out of stacks before loading. This slows loading significantly, and is a costly operation for exporters.

The hope is that winter 2026 conditions will slow the spread of bluestain and white rot fungi, and forest owners will continue to be able to market at least some logs until the end of 2026, perhaps longer, if insect damage does not emerge.

SECTION 3: RESPONSE AND IMPACTS ALONG THE FORESTRY SUPPLY CHAIN: A SUMMARY



SECTION 4: WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE WINDTHROW

4.1 Benefits and costs to the Nelson Tasman economy

In the short-term, the extra people and jobs generated by the salvage operations are likely to be having a positive impact on local Nelson Tasman economy. Over 2,000 people are normally employed in forestry and wood processing in Nelson Tasman⁸; extra contractors and port logistics staff will have added to this number.

In the medium term the economic losses facing the forestry sector are significant. The Nelson Development Agency report initially estimated the value of the lost tree crop alone at \$200 million over 12 years⁹; this figure was based 7,750 hectares of windthrow damage; the total estimated area by the end of 2025 was around 10,000 hectares. Additional losses will be incurred throughout the supply chain with repercussions likely in the Nelson Tasman economy.

4.2 The post-salvage contraction

Although there is a long lead-in time before salvage operations come to a close, significant readjustments are in the pipeline. Contractors, port logistics staff and others who have been employed or re-deployed specifically to handle extra log volumes will, in theory, no longer be needed. Some people will go back to Marlborough or elsewhere; others will want to stay in Nelson Tasman. Losing skilled people from any industry is undesirable; it is anticipated that industry leaders will work hard to minimise losses.

Forest owners and managers also face the challenge of maintaining supply chains with reduced mature stock. Growers will need to communicate plans and work closely with sawmills, exporters and other markets throughout the Top of the South to ensure they are sustainable. Markets need medium and long-term supply information to help them plan, as well as regular short-term updates.

"It's going to be a different world in Nelson six months from now. It's a relatively short-term situation, but with long-term implications for the Top of the South industry."

Jon Wisniewski, Aowhanui Shipping

4.3 Repercussions for the Marlborough forest industry

Forestry activity in Marlborough is being hard-hit by the shift of resources across to Nelson Tasman. The shortage of harvesting contractors is constraining activity. Processors and Port Marlborough are having to adjust their operations. Inevitably there will be negative repercussions for others such as planting crews and silvicultural contractors over the next few seasons – although these people may well be in demand in Tasman District as salvaged areas are replanted.

On the upside, log prices in Marlborough have risen due to the lack of supply. This is good news in theory for forest owners, but brings its own problems. Harvesting contractors are scarce, and for those who would normally buy the logs, prices are daunting.

If and when harvesting contractors return to Marlborough, there will be a backlog of work. Whether or not this materialises into activity in forests and woodlots will depend mainly on a combination of harvesting costs and log prices. Continued high fuel prices could easily act as a significant brake on harvesting and indeed the whole supply chain, so the bounce-back may be subdued.

4.4 Competition for wharf space at Port Nelson

Competition for wharf space at Port Nelson is high. Smaller exporters are at a disadvantage here, handling smaller volumes of logs compared to the volumes currently coming out of the corporate forests. Smaller exporters tend to buy

⁸ ⁹ Tasman Floods Key Sectors Impact Assessment (August 2025). Report commissioned by the Nelson Development Agency.

SECTION 4: WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF THE WINDTHROW



logs from smaller suppliers, including forest management companies and small and medium forest owners, so play an important role in the supply chain. The risk ultimately is that they could find it uneconomic to bring ships into the port because they don't have enough logs on the wharf to load, *thereby reducing competition for supply of export logs. This could potentially result in lower returns to forest growers.*

Port Nelson also reports that finding wharf space for any new customers is a challenge at the moment. This must create an unanticipated problem for businesses that had planned to export cargo through the port.

4.5 Planning for future forests

In the short-term, forest growers in Nelson Tasman will be reviewing options for species choice and management regimes on sites that are prone to wind damage, and assessing whether some land is too high-risk to re-plant in commercial species.

In the longer term, the industry is surely beginning to ask about levels of risk and return times of serious climate-related events, and whether the future involves some bigger changes to forest management and associated wood processing practices. One outcome suggested is that forest growers may simply become very good at recovery rather than trying to radically change regimes.

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

5.1 Large forest owners

Large corporate growers dominate plantation forest ownership in the windthrow-affected areas of the Tasman District. These companies were able ‘pull out all the stops’ during the initial response to the windthrow, having already been proactive in helping local communities with the very recent flood clean-up operations. Their response included contributing to industry-level communications via the Top of the South Wood Council-led communications group.

Community outreach

Some staff had clearly allocated roles of dealing with the response outside the forest while their colleagues focused on forestry operations. Over the first few days, priorities were to respond to any threats to life, clear fallen or dangerous trees near public roads, deal with incoming calls about problem situations, and identify and respond to neighbours who needed assistance. Forest staff worked closely with communications staff in liaising with neighbours and others.

Initially the challenge was to get people settled and working in a common direction. Databases of jobs to be done were established, prioritised and regularly updated. As the days went by, staff fatigue became a risk that had to be managed and people were encouraged to only work normal hours.

Mapping and analysing the scale of the windthrow

The first helicopters went up as soon as possible on the morning of Saturday 12th July, but were only able to fly over the northern half of the main forested areas because of low cloud. Even the partial picture was like nothing anyone had ever seen before – ridgeline after ridgeline of horizontal trees in the middle of Golden Downs forests. Trees had blown over rather than snapped. Even though helicopters could only cover part of the damaged area, it was enough to

indicate that this was the largest windthrow event ever experienced in the region.

Waiting for the full picture to become available, forest planning and GIS teams spent time preparing IT systems to receive massive amounts of imagery. Those with experience of windthrow damage on a smaller scale knew it was important to prepare for what lay ahead – analysing vast datasets acquired from both aeroplane and satellite.

A plane was on stand-by and several forest owners collaborated to capture aerial imagery when it was finally able to fly on Wednesday 16th July, as the skies cleared.

The imagery was promptly pre-processed and geo-referenced by an external provider. New Sentinel-2 satellite imagery also became available around that time.

“I was in the hot seat because the big question was ‘how bad is it?’ Then when the first glimpse of the whole region came through on satellite imagery, I just couldn’t believe how far south the damage went.”
Alex Tolan, Forest Resources Manager, OneFortyOne

GIS teams then got to work mapping the damage over several days, producing initial reports with details of the following:

- Damage locations and areas
- Ages of windthrown trees
- Estimated volumes of wood on the ground
- Initial calculations of what log product volumes were on the ground
- Recommended harvesting systems for different terrain types in damaged areas.

This initial work was pivotal to clearly communicate the details of the damage to internal stakeholders, including management and investors, and crucial to securing backing for the massive salvage task ahead. In one case, a new

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

planning tool had to be built to support preparing the first salvage operational plan. Staff worked for many days without a break and the risk of fatigue had to be countered with people being given days off as soon as possible.

Analyses confirmed that damage was spread amongst trees at or close to harvest age (24 years+), semi-mature plantations (20-23 years) and mid-rotation plantations (15-19 years). The first key challenge was to estimate the required harvesting capacity needed to salvage the windthrow before the estimated date when wood degradation and value loss from fungal and insect incursion would begin.

Standing trees in windthrown areas were included in harvest volume estimates. It appeared that many of these trees would have to come down during the salvage operations. This added approximately 25% to the total volume figures, but helped manage expectations about the harvesting task ahead.

As salvage operations got underway, the challenge became one of accurately mapping progress, and updating predictions of harvesting capacity needed. Regular feedback mechanisms between the harvesting contractors and planning teams were initiated and continue to be very important in monitoring and mapping progress against targets.

"High quality plane imagery was important for planning and for a clear understanding of progress, with the imagery from July, October and again in March 2026 proving to be essential for planning and information capture"

Alex Tolan, Forest Resources Manager, OneFortyOne

The October windthrow

Progress with salvage operations took a major blow when a second significant windthrow occurred in late October 2025.

The winds came at the tail-end of gales in Southland and Canterbury, this time from the south-west, and trees on south-facing aspects which had survived the July storms were hit hard.

Aerial imagery was again gathered by plane as soon as possible, and the mapping and volume estimates process repeated. This event was disheartening for everyone, as it added well over 2,000 hectares to the large growers' salvage operation.

Looking ahead

More recent analyses of standing trees amongst the windthrown areas is indicating that, in some cases, stocking is sufficient to enable significant areas to be grown on to maturity. This is good news - initially it was thought most of these trees would have to be felled, so the 25% additional volume these trees were anticipated to contribute could be an overestimate.

Some big planting years lie ahead for large growers, providing a short-term boost for nurseries and planting contractors, but with future repercussions in terms of silvicultural requirements and eventually harvest schedules.

One large grower has initiated an industry levy-funded project which is using sophisticated mapping techniques to identify high windthrow areas. Research will look at options for more site-specific adaptations to management regimes. Site preparation, stocking rates and rotation length are all under consideration. Other species such as Douglas-fir and redwoods will also be considered, especially for the steepest slopes. Moutere gravel soils are known to cause radiata pine to be relatively shallow rooting, which was highlighted in papers on a 2004 wind event and the 1968 Wahine storm. Given the scale of the 2025 events, analysis of the damage will be used to inform options for regime change.

Operations and marketing

For large growers' operations teams, the initial challenge was to mobilise existing crews quickly and protect the domestic supply chain. The longer-term task lay in salvaging as much wood, with as much value, as possible before serious quality issues arose. Much of the windthrow was in cable-hauler country, requiring specialised crews that are not necessarily readily available. All salvage operations are fully mechanised

Existing harvesting crews with experience and knowledge of safety cultures mobilised quickly into new and uncertain situations. Things would have taken longer, with more planning and control of operations, had these foundations not existed.

Crews from large growers' own forests in Marlborough were brought across to Tasman District as soon as possible. After that, the race was on to find more harvesting crews that fitted with existing culture and standards. New crews have mainly come from the Top of the South, attracted by the guarantee of steady work with substantial volumes of output for months to come. New managers have also been contracted in to oversee harvesting operations.

In general oldest trees were salvaged first to maximise value recovery. Some crews have had to adapt their machinery configurations and haulers have had to work from newly constructed landings within forests to match windthrown tree alignment. Some logging crews have proved they can operate highly productively in windthrow.

"I liken the work to 'pick-up-sticks'. I would say our crews are at least 10% more efficient now, through improved efficiencies and innovation. There's been so many opportunities for learning and growth for everyone."

Sam Nuske, Operations and Marketing Manager, OneFortyOne

A proportion of logs are destined for domestic markets – pruned logs and higher quality sawlogs go to South Pine in Nelson and Kaituna Sawmill in Marlborough, while pulp logs go to Nelson Pine Industries in Richmond. Export logs go through Port Nelson to China and India: export percentages have increased with the closure of the Eves Valley sawmill.

Initially, it was feared that the supply chain bottleneck might be shipping, but instead log cartage has been the major constraint on output, with the return journey to the port in particular taking more time than expected. Existing cartage contractors have expanded their operations and new cartage contractors have been taken on. Drivers from out of the area have been offered accommodation supplements.

At least one grower has set up an interim log storage facility in the forest and, although double-handling is avoided wherever possible, the facility continues to be used at times.

Wood quality remained much better than anticipated for the first 8-9 months of the salvage but there are challenges ahead. At some point, as log quality deteriorates and salvage crews reach younger blocks of trees, operations will become 'cash neutral' at best. Decisions will then have to be made about what to do with the fallen trees, and how to leave sites so that they comply with environmental regulations and are ready for replanting.

Harvesting crew numbers will be reduced as salvage operations decrease, and annual cut will be below the pre-windthrow levels once the salvage has drawn to a close. The losses of mid-rotation trees will affect future harvest volumes, with repercussions continuing over many years to come. For some but not all crews it will simply be a case of picking up where they left off in Marlborough forests, where harvesting has largely been on hold since July 2025.

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

5.2 Forest management companies

5.2.1 PF Olsen

PF Olsen (now amalgamated with Forest360) is a New Zealand-wide forest management company with a regional office in Nelson. Their largest client in Nelson Tasman is Tasman District Council, which owns around 3,000 hectares of forests. The company also manages Nelson City Council's forests and provides management services for private forest owners across the Top of the South.

Operations manager Josh Tansey was amongst those receiving reports of trees being blown down on the evening of Friday 11th July. He was able to get up in a helicopter early on Saturday 12th, and flew across multiple Tasman forests, seeing first-hand the extensive damage. The area worst affected from his perspective was Tasman District Council's Borlase Forest, where it looked like as much as 250 hectares of trees were down. Meanwhile, forests on the Nelson side were not seriously affected.

"As we were flying over Borlase Forest, everyone just had their heads in their hands. We knew we had a lot of work ahead of us."

Josh Tansey, PF Olsen

Josh's first move was to contact the three or four harvesting contractors working for PF Olsen in the region, and get their commitment going forward. By the Sunday a rough plan, which represented a complete change of harvesting schedule, was in place, and work on both clean-up and salvage began in Tasman District Council forests the following day. An earthworks crew that was already on-site was also put to work upgrading infrastructure. Priority was given to salvaging 22-26 year-old trees with higher market value.

Over the next few weeks, calls were coming in from private forest owners whose forests or woodlots had been

damaged. These calls were difficult to deal with – proportionally the losses incurred by some smaller owners were substantial, representing a savings fund or super annuation investment. Almost all Top of the South harvesting crews were employed on the larger estates within 4-6 weeks of the windthrow; the cost of bringing in a crew from further away was too expensive for smaller forest owners, so the only option for many was to wait.

Smaller owners whose forests neighboured Tasman District Council forests benefitted from good neighbourly relations, with crews 'jumping the fence' and harvesting their trees while passing.

It took a lot of hard work up to the end of 2025 before the harvesting team began to feel they were on top of the extra workload, and operating at a more normal pace. Around 70% of the team's salvage operations had been completed by May 2026. Work in Tasman District Council forests will continue until October 2026, and remaining jobs are being ticked off the 'to do' list. PF Olsen's Nelson harvesting team comprises only three staff; some help was available from colleagues who normally have other roles in the Nelson office. Bringing in staff from other PF Olsen offices was ruled out because training people would have taken too much time, when they would only likely have been able to stay for a short time anyway.

Planning ahead proved very difficult, although good mapping has proved invaluable, especially because walking blocks to see the lie of the land is impossible due to all the fallen trees. Some compromises have had to be made, but there is satisfaction at what has been achieved – a significant clean-up with sites left looking good. Having a mature workforce that could be trusted and good relationships amongst the team, contractors and the wider industry, have been all-important.

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

While there has been no shortage of earthworks capacity, finding extra harvesting capacity has been the biggest challenge.

5.2.2 M&R Forestland Management Ltd

M&R Forestland Management (previously Merrill and Ring) is a privately owned forest management company based in Blenheim. The company manages a combination of its own forests and those of private clients. In Nelson Tasman, M&R Forestland Management have a Crown Forest Lease for Kaiteriteri Forest, as well as managing other forests on Separation Point granite soils to the north-east of Motūeka.

Whereas forests on the Moutere gravels suffered predominantly from windthrow, the main issue on the Separation Point soils was mid-slope failures caused by soil saturation. Whole hillsides fractured mid-slope and slid downhill, taking all associated vegetation with them. All types of debris ended up at the bottom of slopes and in watercourses: plantation trees, old forest debris, native vegetation, farm and horticultural debris, and amenity trees.

The immediate challenge was that Kaiteriteri Forest is above the Kaiteriteri settlement. The Bethany Park campground in Kaiteriteri was badly flooded. Company director Siobhan Allen was part of the communications group who responded when media arrived in Kaiteriteri. Forestry contractors helped with the campground clean-up and were highly praised by the campground owner.

The next issue faced by the M&R team was that neighbours in the catchment were suggesting that all the accumulated damage and debris was from M&R forests. By implication, M&R were expected to take responsibility for all clean-up operations. To counter this, M&R carried out a catchment analysis to show that the debris would have come from many other properties. The company also took legal advice

on what their clean-up responsibilities should be, and were able to make the case that others needed to contribute.

Contractors then had to be organised to begin clean-up operations in Kaiteriteri Forest and elsewhere. Some trees were salvaged and marketed. Debris has been cleared and some of it burned, and land re-contoured, especially around Bethany Park. Fences have been re-instated.

The days and weeks after the windthrow were very stressful for the company's small number of staff. Normally only one staff member is based in Nelson Tasman, but others had to spend time over there and worked without a break for several weeks.

In other, older forests on Separation Point granites, finding hauler crews to take on salvage and harvesting jobs where there have been mid-slope failures has proved very difficult.

M&R are also experiencing trying times in their Marlborough forests, due to the migration of harvesting crews across to Nelson Tasman. This has included two of their own crews, which the company agreed to move to OneFortyOne forests to help out.

Harvesting in Marlborough has been at very low levels since July 2025. Problems are being compounded by high fuel and hence harvesting costs, meaning private forest owners are holding off harvesting anyway. This is despite the strong demand and improving prices for logs in the district.

5.3 Contractors

5.3.1. Taylors Contracting Co

Earthworks contractors already operating in Tasman forests responded quickly when the July floods and windthrow occurred. Skilled operators with heavy machinery helped clear all the main public highways in affected areas before returning to forests to clear strategic access routes and

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL



keep logging trucks moving. Some contractors who had been working in affected forests had to walk in to their machines, and clear their way out, one tree at a time.

Taylor's Contracting are earthworks contractors with significant operations in Tasman forests. Forest Roding Manager Mike Fahey reports that their team of around 30-35 staff has been flat out since July. Extra staff were brought in early on in the response, and the team is just returning to something like normal operations eleven months later. Demand for road maintenance and upgrades has been on-going; also new spur roads and hauler pads are needed because haulers have had to be relocated to deal with windthrown trees aligned in a certain direction.

Keeping things simple while maintaining high safety standards has been the order of the day – the fact that

there are good teams of both harvesting and earthworks contractors in Tasman forests, many of whom have experienced windthrow before, has made life much easier according to Mike.

5.3.2 Mechanised Cable Harvesting

Nathan Taylor is owner of Mechanised Cable Harvesting and has been in the industry for many years. He has dealt with windthrow harvesting several times before.

Nathan's high-productivity crew was located in one of the affected forests when the July windthrow happened. Road and culvert repairs were done on the Sunday, and the crew was back operating after the weekend.

"The main difference in dealing with windthrown areas is that a bit more planning is needed, including getting the right men into the right machines. Each site is different, so has to be taken as it comes, assessing which way the trees are lying and setting up well.

Dealing with tree butts and rootballs hasn't been too bad. They have to be left in a stable position, especially when working beside highways. 'Best practicable attempts' is what I put in my plans - to ensure they are left where there is no danger of them moving downhill. Sometimes we leave them on old tracks within the cutover. The work does involve a bit more machine time, but not much.

We haven't experienced any problems with the trucking – we've been able to maintain high productivity and work through any glitches with trucks.

My guys are happy – they have been enjoying working really efficiently, fully utilising our machines. I've been able to spread my wings and try some different things, which has been great. We are producing above our normal output because management have let us work unconstrained.

I think the forest owners have managed things remarkably well. They have been fair and upfront with what they're doing. They've let us come up with plans for each site, we've been able to innovate and operate without any production constraints.

Wood quality is slowly deteriorating now, becoming more of an export product. Once it becomes a cost exercise to harvest, I've no idea what will happen – some of it could perhaps go for chip or biofuel, or be harvested and stored in the forest somewhere.

I know that the future is uncertain, because harvesting levels will drop off and will stay low for quite a few years to come. I just hope that there will be some recognition from management for crews that have worked efficiently and that there will still be some opportunities for us."

Nathan Taylor, Mechanised Cable Harvesting

5.3.3 Borlase Transport

Borlase Transport is a log cartage contractor operating throughout the Top of the South. In partnership with Stuart Drummond Transport, they are the main contractors for OneFortyOne. Borlase Transport also provides cartage services for PF Olsen, and other private woodlot harvesting operations.

Following the windthrow, demand from OneFortyOne soon doubled from 40-45 trucks per day averaging three loads per day to around 80-90 trucks per day. Smaller forest management companies also needed extra trucks.

Without the Eves Valley sawmill, pressure at other customer destinations increased. Windthrown trees were predominantly concentrated in the Golden Downs region. Lead distances to other destinations are shorter, which led to congestion at delivery sites, which in turn increased truck turn-around times. The situation is exacerbated by the extra trucks operating in the region.

Manager Steve Borlase is well aware that this boom period will be relatively short. Drummond Borlase Partnership contacted other operators to see whether they could supply trucks and drivers. There was little spare capacity in the South Island because forests in Canterbury, Otago and Southland had also all had recent wind damage and were in salvage mode. A lower North Island company, McCarthy's, was able to provide over 20 trucks plus drivers but only until early 2026, when yet another windthrow event meant they were needed back in the lower North Island. A further six trucks were obtained from elsewhere when harvest output ramped up again following the October windthrow.

Log uplift increased when the McCarthy's trucks came on-board, but then Port Nelson became a bottleneck, struggling to handle the extra log volumes. The game-changer came when the port began to operate round

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

the clock from 4am on Monday to midnight on Friday, with hours occasionally extended to include Saturday. This meant loading out, cartage and delivery into the port could continue through the night. When the McCarthy's trucks went back to the North Island, the new balancing act involved maximising the use of the partnership's own trucks, making sure these are operating 24 hours-a-day, drivers literally 'hot-seating'.

New drivers and two new loader operators were needed to work night shifts. Offering drivers a night shift which didn't include the need to load their own trucks opened up a new market of drivers, so capacity was filled.

The induction and on-boarding process put big demands on the partnership's core staff. The new regime has created a lot of extra back-office work, including organising flights home every three weeks for drivers from out of the area. Administrative staff have helped with inductions including drug and alcohol testing.

There is a big focus on safety - if staff get bored or careless, there is a risk of accidents, so increasing emphasis is being put on safe operating.

Once the salvage begins to wind down and harvest volumes decrease to below pre-July 2025 levels, trucking capacity will be need to reduce or new work found – nothing unusual for most cartage contractors.

Steve says that one plus side has been the amount of support received from customers, recognising that they all have the same goal of getting as much wood salvaged as possible.

5.4 Domestic markets and ports

5.4.1 Nelson Pine Industries

Nelson Pine Industries is a major market for lower value logs from Top of the South forests. The mill produces a

number of composite products, so logs are broken down before being utilised.

Inevitably the mill has limited capacity to take extra log volumes overall, but Kai Kruse, Chief Executive Officer, says they have been doing what they can to accommodate extra volume from salvage operations. This includes taking small and broken logs that would normally be rejected, and mixed loads which are harder to deal with. Logs with bluestain can also be processed to a certain degree; logs with fungal rot are not acceptable. Eventually the time will come when wood quality deteriorates to a point where it is no longer acceptable.

Kai Kruse sees the mill's preparedness to accept poorer quality wood than normal as an important gesture of goodwill to forest owners at a difficult time. Nelson Pine Industries is the only significant local domestic market for low-quality logs but on the other hand, suppliers do have the option of export markets if quality standards can be met. Kai's main message to others in the supply chain is that they collaborate constructively and take positive lessons from the windthrow event.

5.4.2 South Pine

South Pine is a Nelson sawmill producing framing and other structural products for domestic and export markets.

Normal intake is around 20 loads or 600+ tonnes per day, on average 40% of which comes from each of OneFortyOne and Tasman Pine Forests, and the remainder from other forests.

Log requirements are quite specific – the mill only accepts S30 sawlogs (minimum small end diameter of 30 cm) over around 25 years old. Supply has been tight at times since July, and while log quality from the bigger forest owners was acceptable for the first 8-9 months of the salvage operations, by May 2026 it was becoming more variable.

Bluestain has been the main problem, along with less problematic instances of dry wood which can become distorted.

New sources of supply – i.e. fresh wood – will have to be tapped into soon by at least one of the big forest owners if they are to meet the log quantity and quality needed by South Pine in years to come. The mill represents an important market for the industry, so it is anticipated that forest owners will do their best to support it.

Communications between the sawmill management and major suppliers has been good throughout, with plenty of warning about changes in supply.

South Pine is one of the unwitting beneficiaries of the Eves Valley sawmill closure, given the now tight sawlog supply.

5.4.3 Kaituna Sawmill

Kaituna Sawmill, in Marlborough's Wairau Valley, processes a majority of pruned logs, but also takes some unpruned material. Normal intake is around 90-100 loads per week. The mill has maintained production at this level since the windthrow.

The main difference the mill is finding is that the windthrown timber has slightly higher distortion levels than trees normally harvested, so overall conversion rates have dropped. Also, and increasingly, logs arriving at the mill are below usual harvest age, with small end diameters below the preferred minimum of 38 cm. Both structural quality and appearance have remained good to date. Kaituna mill staff have been visiting skid sites to give guidance to crews, helping ensure they know what quality the mill can accept.

The mill's biggest challenge is maintaining supply levels given the on-going strain on cartage capacity. The mill's 'buffer' inventory has become more stressed: for example, if bad weather causes log supply to drop off for a few days and the buffer is used, it now takes longer to replenish with

constrained supply of logging trucks to bring in the extra loads needed.

Kaituna's supply chain team are keeping in touch with suppliers continually, and emphasise the importance of good relationships and being nimble and flexible within the supply chain.

5.4.4 Aowhanui Shipping

Logs from Port Nelson go to China and India. Chinese markets generally have higher quality requirements than Indian ones; bluestain seems less of a problem to Indian markets. Logs are fumigated in the vessel holds at anchorage in Indian ports.

Aowhanui Shipping is one of two exporters sending logs to India from Port Nelson. The company exports logs from Tasman Pine Forests, PF Olsen (including Tasman District Council) and others. Typically one ship every four weeks generally leaves for India; pressure to get more logs away is growing as quality has begun deteriorating, so shipping frequency is increasing. Aowhanui Shipping Manager Jon Wisniewski reports that, to date, finding markets in India has not been a problem. There has been no kick-back over quality issues, nor any price response to any increased supply from Port Nelson.

5.4.5 C3 – Forest Logistics

Multi-national forest logistics company C3 undertakes all log-handling operations at both Port Marlborough and Port Nelson. The company has been managing contrasting circumstances at the two ports since the July 2025 windthrow.

Since the windthrow event there has been a significant reduction in export volumes from Port Marlborough as harvesting and transport resources have been redeployed to Nelson Tasman.

C3's investment in a debarker at Port Marlborough is a

SECTION 5: SUPPLY CHAIN PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS: MORE DETAIL

critical element in the Top of the South supply chain. Although Marlborough logs are in short supply, some windthrow logs are being trucked across from Tasman forests for debarking, to generate deck cargoes for ships leaving (draft-constrained) Port Nelson.

Meanwhile at Port Nelson, annual log volumes have almost doubled. Some of C3's Port Marlborough staff have been redeployed to Port Nelson which, whilst disruptive, has meant that valuable skills have been retained. Staff from other C3 sites have also been transferred to Port Nelson, and more staff have been taken on to handle the now 24-hours-a-day, five and sometimes six days a week log-handling operations there. Extending the port's opening hours has meant big increases in efficiency for C3 as well as others in the supply chain. A lot of effort has gone into speeding up scaling and other processes to minimise queues and ensure that the port is not a bottleneck.

Despite the significant increase in volume through Port Nelson and the relatively small piece size, C3 has managed to achieve good throughput times at the checkpoint using C3's log scaling technology. A fleet of loaders and stackers are used to offload the trucks and ensure log terminal storage density is optimised. Truck turnaround times – critical to transport efficiency – have been maintained at under an hour.

Coordinating inbound and outbound volumes is essential to ensure the log terminal operates efficiently. Forest owners and exporters are reported to have done an extraordinary job in this respect. Outbound stevedore operations have kept pace with ships, routinely loading out at 12,000–14,000 JAS m³/day. Given the cost of chartering a ship is approximately USD \$15,000 /day, this stevedoring capability is making a valuable contribution.

Supply chain manager for C3, Kevin Rock, is very conscious that any delays in the supply chain will ultimately represent

a lost opportunity and mean more wood left in the forest. Kevin says that co-operation between all stakeholders is critical and communication is key: in addition to daily conversations, a weekly stakeholders' meeting is held. These meetings focus on how the past week went, and objectives for the week ahead. Each stakeholder has a role, the activities are integrated and everyone shares the same objective of getting as many ships loaded and departing as possible.

5.4.6 Port Nelson

Log storage and shipping activity at Port Nelson has increased markedly – in the six months September 2024–March 2025, 573,000 JAS m³ were exported on a total of 36 ships. In the six months September 2025–March 2026, the respective figures were 1,112,000 JAS m³ and 53 ships – around 7–8 ships a month.

Storage capacity at the port has been stretched from 77,000 to 80,000 JAS m³, with some overflow areas being made available. Maximum capacity has been reached several times, typically due to delays in vessels arriving. The port has invested in several infrastructure improvements to help with log handling and safe working. Matching cargo to vessels and tides is all-important.

OneFortyOne is by far the largest port customer, and port staff report that communications by OneFortyOne have been excellent. Some logs destined for China are debarked before delivery: this means vessels can be fully loaded both above and below deck, therefore avoiding multiple port calls, and reducing costs.

The port has focused on trying to help the forest industry get as much cargo over the wharf as possible, but this has meant that finding space for other customers has been challenging. Pressure on the port was added to further when Eves Valley sawmill closed, as much of their volume has been redirected to the port.

5.4.7 Port Marlborough

Before the windthrow, the annual total JAS volume at Port Marlborough was around 810,000 JAS m³ (July 2024 to June 2025). A total of 64 log vessels visited over that time.

Figures for the year 2025-26 year are not yet available; however, a 30%-40% reduction in exported volumes is expected.

5.5 Others involved with the windthrow response

5.5.1 Tasman District Council

Tasman District Council is a medium-scale forest owner, with a portfolio of around 3,000 hectares, managed by PF Olsen. Tasman District Council suffered around 250 hectares of windthrow in Borlase Forest, near Tapawera, where trees aged 22-26 years blew down.

Salvage operations have been going extremely well according to Stephen Batt, Tasman District Council Team Leader – Enterprise Portfolio. In the short-term, the Council's revenues will be up; in the medium term costs will increase as the damaged forests are replanted.

The Council's overall investment in forestry has been under review for some time, with opinions erring towards investments with higher liquidity.

Warren Galbraith is another Tasman District Council employee involved with the forest industry. Warren's role includes compliance monitoring in commercial forests, ensuring operations meet National Environmental Standards for Commercial Forests (NES-CF).

Overall, Warren is impressed with the efforts of harvesting contractors and managers who are salvaging windthrow. Crews have developed techniques to stabilise rootballs, and have been complying with maximum permissible volumes of slash left on slopes.

One problem is dead trees from earlier windthrow events – if left on the cut-over, they are at risk of moving downhill into water courses. Burning is a permitted activity, but not often possible in the forest.

Beyond the economic salvage period, Warren anticipates that a lot of material will be wind-rowed and inter-planted. How best to mitigate the risks associated with all this material will be something for forest managers to address carefully, in conjunction with Tasman District Council.

5.5.2 Nelson City Council

Nelson City Council has a forestry portfolio of around 600 hectares spread between several separate blocks, managed by PF Olsen. The forests were not badly affected by the windthrow, but some planned harvesting has been delayed because of the shortage of harvesting crews.

The Council has already begun the process of converting some of its commercial forests around Nelson City to other species to increase their amenity values. The expectation is that more native and other alternative species will reduce vulnerability to large-scale windthrow.

5.5.3 Civil Defence and Emergency Management

Nelson Tasman's Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) team was very active during the State of Emergency declared during the June and July floods. During emergencies, CDEM manage the multi-agency emergency response room. Liaison with the forestry sector was mostly via Te Uru Rākau - New Zealand Forest Service, who have a presence in the emergency response room and who CDEM work closely with.

During non-emergency times, CDEM staff work with the community to educate people about the 'four Rs': Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery. Having plans in place to deal with emergencies, including business continuity plans, is their key message for the primary sector.

RECOVERY OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES APPENDIX 1

Recovery Objectives and Strategies – OneFortyOne’s operating framework produced July 15th 2025

RECOVERY OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIES TO MEET OBJECTIVES

1. Safety First:

Get everyone **Home Safe and Well**,
every day

Be Safe to Start: Nothing is worth doing if it cannot be done safely.

- Have courage to intervene: Look out for each other and speak up if you are concerned
- Manage upset conditions: Stop and reset plans if they are not working or you are adapting
- Reopen the forest to recreation as safety allows

2. Enhance forest industry

reputation throughout the recovery

Proactively engage with neighbours, community and councils.

- Support their recovery when impacted from the forest. Maintain register of damage, actions and agreements.
- Communication through PR Teams (FOA, TOTSWC, Wendy/Kylie) to OFO stakeholders
- Collect and share good news stories with Kylie
- Maintain environmental compliances: Identify and assess high risk sites, self-report to councils.

3. Recover shareholder value

Assess damage

- Capture aerial imagery and map of windthrow.
- Define damage and impacted area by age, volume, regime and harvest configuration
- Assess damaged area by predominant fall direction, proportion breakage

Develop salvage plan

- Mobilise quickly acting upon agreed plans
- Maintain domestic supply
- Minimise the hole in post salvage cut level

4. Enhance OFO management processes

Structure OFO response:

- Enable people with clear roles and responsibilities for the recovery
- Everyone conscious of their behaviours and communication. Keep calm, be kind, have fun and keep communication concise.
- Collect damage information in the correct location: June 2025 Flood Event Fieldmap and keep status of work up to date.
- Work within salary hours with manager approval for any required, additional work hours.

Prepared by: NZF Lead Team 15/7/25

USING AI TOOLS TO DESCRIBE THE WINDTHROW DAMAGE & EARLY SALVAGE OPERATIONS

APPENDIX 2

Using AI tools to describe the windthrow damage and early salvage operations

David Robinson, GM Operations Nelson, Taylors Contracting Co Ltd

The rain event of June 2025 exceeded the previous record flood of 1897 with the Motueka River flowing at 2700 cumecs and equating to a 1:100 year event. However, what brought the windthrow was a subsequent storm on July 11th.

Because the soils were saturated, most of the trees toppled over rather than snapped. Two local fire weather stations at Dovedale and Western Boundary showed maximum gusts of 42km/hr and 63km/hr respectively which seemed low considering the extent of the damage. Orographic windspeed modelling using WindNinja (which factors in topography) showed that a prevailing windspeed in the order of 100km/hr was necessary to generate the windspeeds measured at the two weather stations providing an explanation for the scale of the damage.

Characterising the windthrow by aspect showed that over 80% of the area blown over was across the north-east quadrant which aligned with the wind direction of the event.

To characterise the scale of the event across multiple forest owners, a combination of Sentinel 2A multi-band spectral imagery and Luca Congedos' semi-automatic classification tool was used to assess the area of impact using an AI module.

An area of 52,000 hectares of exotic forest was ring-fenced as the study area, and this covered probably 90% overall of the worst-hit areas (see Fig 1). Stands over the age of 15 years were studied as these were most likely to be worth recovering. The estimated area of these trees was 26,500 hectares and they carried a narrow spectral signature prior to being blown down.

Periodically, as imagery allowed, the extent of the windthrow within the study area was appraised to study the changing scale of the event and its recovery programme.

Within the study area the initial event generated 6,350 hectares of windthrow or 24% of the maturing forest. By November after salvage operations and further loss from another storm event in October, the loss area had grown to 9,350 ha or 35% of the maturing forest.

The National Exotic Forest Description 2025 (NEFD) indicates that Tasman District has a net stocked area of 80,960 ha radiata pine, with 45,450 ha between the ages of 15-35 years. The loss of 9,350 ha from wind and salvage operations amounts to a loss of over 20% of the maturing forest across the Tasman District. (Note that NEFD data excludes woodlots under 40 ha, the area of these in the study area above is unknown but likely to be small.)

The November cutover area of 2,421 hectares represents an estimated 1.21 million tonnes of wood that was cleared in slightly less than four months since the July 11th windthrow event, which is impressive by any standard.

	July	August (hectares)	November
Forest	19,531	19,415	16,530
Windthrow	6,349	5,745	7,517
Cutover	589	1,300	2,421
Total	26,469	26,460	26,468

Table 1: Changes in areas of standing forest, windthrow (trees still on the ground) and cutover (salvage operations completed) over four months following the July 2025 windthrow. Note: The July cutover area was deducted from the total area damaged to allow for logging crews completing harvest areas prior to moving into windthrow.

Taylors Contracting used various GIS tools combining gravel sources, road networks and estimated salvage volumes from different forests, to determine optimal logistics of road gravel distribution for road building, upgrades and maintenance. An additional 100,000m³ of gravel will likely be needed as a result of the windthrow events between July and November 2025.

APPENDIX 2

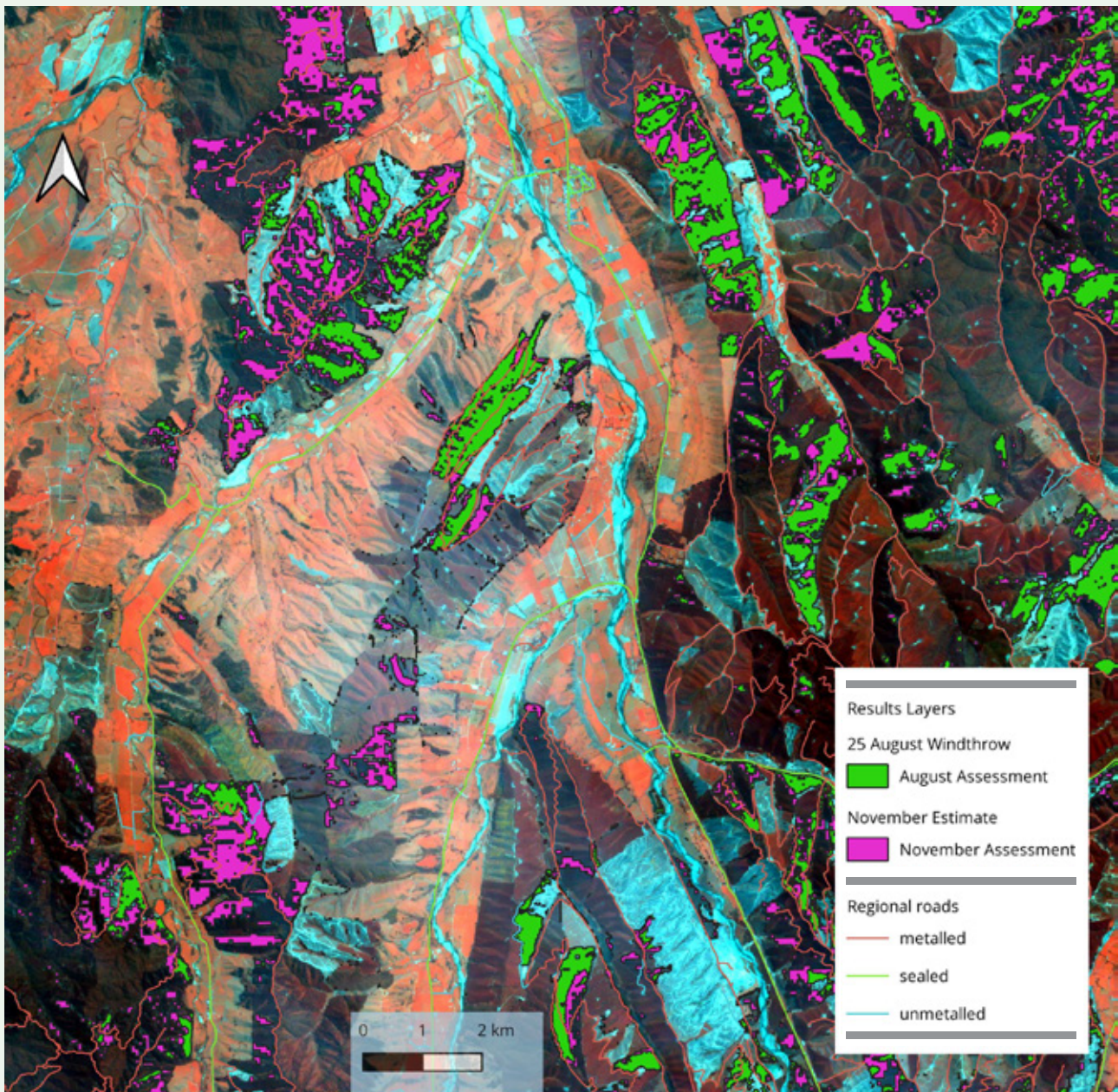


Fig. 1: Windthrow areas in early August (July event) and early November (includes attrition and the October event). The damaging winds came predominantly from the northeast in July and south in October, hence the different aspects of the damage. The image is centred on Tapawera and covers 52,000 hectares of the worst-hit areas.

Appendix 3: Acknowledgements

We thank all those of who have contributed to this report, and to the many others who have contributed to windthrow response and recovery operations in the Top of the South since July 2025.

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Images supplied by: Steve Chandler, Dan Lane, Angela MacKenzie, Belinda Miller, Kylie Reeves, David Robinson, Nathan Taylor and Alex Tolan.

FINAL WORD: A QUICK GUIDE

TO PREPARING FOR, AND RESPONDING TO, A MAJOR DAMAGING EVENT

Normal times

Build and maintain good relationships

- ▶ within the forest industry and throughout the supply chain, regionally and nationally
- ▶ related people and groups – Te Uru Rākau - New Zealand Forest Service, New Zealand Forest Owners Association, New Zealand Farm Forestry Association, Federated Farmers
- ▶ agencies – local authorities, Civil Defence and Emergency Management, Fire and Emergency NZ
- ▶ local media
- ▶ local iwi

Have two-way communications in place

- ▶ maintain database of locations/contact details of neighbours/near-by forest owners (large and small)
- ▶ make sure people know how contact you – e.g. 0800 number operating at all times

Have a plan

- ▶ who does what during the initial response phase
- ▶ where to base a communications hub
- ▶ who to call for outside assistance

Immediate response

Allow operations people to focus on operations

- ▶ have people dedicated to communications/community liaison
- ▶ work with other agencies to remove threats to life, restore public lifeline services and access

Activate the communications hub immediately

- ▶ be readily available – many different people will need or want forestry-related information
- ▶ bring in extra expertise – e.g. people with media training

Share information effectively

- ▶ ensure information going out is fact-based
- ▶ ensure people who need information most receive it first
- ▶ keep on top of mis-information or myths in the media/social media. Respond as soon as possible with facts

Look for opportunities

- ▶ offer help to neighbours/the public – having heavy machinery and skilled operators available can be a big asset in the first instance

Recovery phase

Continue to engage with the community

- ▶ community drop-ins enable people to ask questions, be listened to, and meet people involved in response operations face-to-face
- ▶ engage with local media: relay facts about how response operations are progressing
- ▶ continue to assist neighbours/the public where needed but make sure responsibilities are shared if appropriate





LEARNING THROUGH THE STORM



Top of the South
WOOD COUNCIL

With funding support from

Te Uru Rākau



New Zealand Forest Service