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North West`s road maintenance plan welcomed

North West Premier Bushy Maape announced in his recent State of the Province address that a multibillion-rand routine road maintenance plan was to be rolled out in all four districts of the province.

“We’re taking action to repair, maintain and upgrade most of the roads in the province. Infrastructure South Africa, through the Presidency, has set aside R13 billion for the maintenance and upgrading of 39 roads in the province.

“These projects will be implemented during the 2023/24 financial year. This is in addition to the R1,3 billion for road upgrading and maintenance in the current financial year,” Maape said.

Willem de Chavonnes Vrugt, chairperson of Agri North West, welcomed Maape’s announcement.

“However, I hope that the funds will be spent judiciously, coupled with accountability, and that contracts for the roadworks will be allocated to experienced contactors. The horrendous condition of the province’s roads, especially gravel roads, which have suffered extreme deterioration, has a

direct impact on agriculture. In some areas of the province, farmers struggle to get their produce to the markets,” De Chavonnes Vrugt told *Farmer’s Weekly*.

According to Maape, the bulk of the R13 billion would be earmarked specifically for rural road projects, most of which would be labour-intensive paved roads.

He said that the road between Pelindaba and Pecanwood Estate, a road used by many tourists, was currently being upgraded at a cost of more than R600 million.

Nelson Mandela Drive in Mahikeng would be upgraded at a cost of R50 million, and contractors had been appointed to rehabilitate the road to Sun City and Pilanesberg National Park at a cost of R61 million.

The provincial government had also set aside R149 million to upgrade the road between Hartbeesfontein and Ottosdal.

Maape also announced that the Department of Public Works and Roads would start work on the Lichtenburg-Koster road, as well



Dilapidated infrastructure costs South African farmers millions of rands as they struggle to transport their produce on potholed rural roads. ANNELIE COLEMAN

as a portion of the road connecting Koster and Derby to Magaliesburg.

“We received an amount of over R100 million at the end of 2022 to address flood-damaged roads in the province. Consultants have already been appointed for the upgrading of the D39 between Mooifontein and Lombaardslaagte [a stretch of 12km],” he added. – *Annelie Coleman*

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