

Lake Cathie Progress Association Inc.

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Accommodation possible for all in Lake Cathie Coastal Study outcome

Lake Cathie Progress Association is preparing a submission to Port Macquarie Hastings Council which it hopes will give the best outcome for all stakeholders when the decision is made as to which of the thirteen options is selected to deal with the current erosion problems.

The Association counts the following interest groups as stakeholders in the exercise:

- Property owners
- The tens of thousands of people from all over the Hastings LGA who use the entrance lagoon for recreational purposes every year
- Beach users including swimmers, board riders walkers and fishermen
- Access for residents and tourists to walking trails
- The best possible environmental outcomes.
- Protection of the Chepana Reserve and Littoral Rainforest

Impacts on the estuary

No matter which option is chosen it will have a direct impact on the lake entrance, Foreshore Reserve Lagoon and the waterway west of Ocean Drive Bridge. More than twelve studies have been conducted since 1983 and all have recognised the connection between the estuary and coastal processes. Unfortunately Council has not included these issues in the current Study as it said would in 2006 when the Study was initiated. A review will now be necessary on any decision made on erosion control to weigh its impact on the entrance lagoon and effects on the entire estuary system.

More than Natural Coastal Processes

Serious erosion was recognised as occurring before 1985. Little or no serious action taken to deal with it and Natural Processes are only a partial reason for the erosion. Other significant causes include:

- Damage to the dunal system by residents and visitors climbing down unmade beach accesses and badly damaging dunes and dunal vegetation.
- Storm water outlets. (Council has undertaken in the study to repair these as a high priority)
- Loss of and failure to maintain vegetation protecting sands from the dunes being blown away.
- The joining of Lake Innes to the estuary system has increased the tidal prism and thus destroyed the estuaries natural protective berm (Creighton & SMEC) resulting in erosion to the beach and dunes.
- Construction of Kenwood Causeway, narrowing of the Ocean Drive Bridge and enforced manual openings of the entrance to avoid flooding problems have all had serious impacts on the Coastal zone.

The Association believes short term remedial work on some of these issues is necessary. This will minimise further erosion and allow time for implementation of more permanent engineered works such as a Groyne, artificial reef, re-building the beach with sand pumped from the entrance lagoon or any other selected options.

To ensure the views of the whole community are taken into account the Association has developed a questionnaire. Copies are available from the Blockbuster store in Lake Cathie or by emailing the Secretary at r3packag@bigpond.com

Jack Jones
Secretary