Apollo Bay and Marengo Foreshore Spring 2018

October 2018

Coastal erosion at Apollo Bay and Marengo in 2018 has impacted on the coastline, resulting in community risk and increasing vulnerability of our coast and the Great Ocean Road to future storms.

Government agencies are identifying potential options to address the storm damage, and to protect assets behind the foreshores from future erosion events. On October 5 and 6 the community will be presented with a range of short-term and long-term measures to consider.

Winter 2018

Coastal erosion has significantly impacted the foreshores at Apollo Bay and Marengo, with damage from storms beginning in May and continuing through to August 2018. During one storm on 14-18 June 750m of foreshore at Apollo Bay was impacted resulting in the erosion of 5000m^3 of sand and increased vulnerably of township infrastructure and the environment to future erosion.

Works to date

Emergency works involving sand renourishment and dune reshaping with sand sourced from the Apollo Bay Harbour, courtesy of the Colac Otway Shire, has occurred on beaches at Apollo Bay, Marengo and Skenes Creek. The works are being supervised by the Otway Coast Committee (OCC) with funding from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Sand renourishment is the only viable engineering option during the winter months. The erosion problem could be made worse if the response (i.e. hard or soft structural options) applied is inappropriate, improperly designed, built or maintained and the effects on adjacent foreshores are not carefully evaluated.

Priority sites for renourishment have been identified by drone work undertaken by the Deakin University Marine Mapping Unit where regular flights have taken place pre and post storms. A local community group has taken over this work and will continue to be supervised by the Unit and provide their data to the OCC.

To date, over 25,000m^3 of sand has been relocated to the three beaches. The success of the renourishment and dune reconstruction works has been varied but it is building the resilience in the coast from storm events.

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Expert answers to how beaches respond to sand renourishment can be found at coastadapt.com.au

Long-term options

There is not one permanent solution to the erosion being seen at Apollo Bay and Marengo. Coastal engineers at GHD have been engaged to explore the long-term options and are considering field studies, numerical modelling and analytical studies. They are also working with independent coastal geomorphologists Tony Miner and Neville Rosengren.

Mr Richard Riordan MP, Member for Corangamite, held a community meeting on 1 August 2018 and provided a summary of suggestions to DELWP for long-term options. These options include deploying tetra pods, geotechnical bags (onshore and offshore), relocating the Great Ocean Road, continued sand replenishment works, groynes, rock walls, sand fencing and coastal revegetation.

All options have been provided to GHD as part of their work.

Whatever option - or combination of options - is decided for both the short and long term, we need to ensure that it does not increase risk to existing infrastructure or public safety.

Part of the solution will involve the ongoing renourishment of beaches and rebuilding of sand dunes with sand sourced from the Apollo Bay Harbour area.

Next steps

Options for both short and long-term response to erosion at Apollo Bay will be presented to the community at interactive open house sessions.

These sessions will be held at the Apollo Bay RSL on:

- Friday 5 October, 2-5pm.
- Saturday 6 October, 10am-1pm.

Registrations are not required to attend – please turn up on the day.

Feedback on the options will be sought to help understand the community's preferences and opinions of the potential implications of each option.

The opportunity to provide online feedback will also be available for community members that are unable to attend the open house sessions.

Community members with an interest in citizen science are encouraged to attend, with the open-house sessions providing an opportunity to register interest in working with the Deakin University Marine Mapping Unit on beach monitoring using drones.

Monitoring will help provide a better understanding of sand fluctuations and coastal processes that influence how sand moves at Apollo Bay and will be highly valuable for longer-term coastal planning.

DELWP is committed to working with the community to ensure any decisions regarding the Apollo Bay beach, or nearby beaches at Marengo and Skenes Creek, consider local knowledge, input and the best information available.

Safety and wellbeing

As the project works continue, it's important that people respect the safety barriers we have put in place, closing off dangerous sections of the beach.

The stretch of Apollo Bay foreshore that has been closed is approximately 1km in length and runs from Cawood Street (Tuxion Road) to Mariners Lookout Road.

Other closures are in place at Marengo Beach and Skenes Creek Beach.

Signs are in place, in addition to barriers which have closed the area off to the public.

DELWP held a community beach monitoring workshop in Apollo Bay on 7 May 2018. The community group is now working with the Deakin University Marine Mapping Unit and regularly collecting data to help make land management decisions. To get involved in community monitoring, contact the OCC www.otwaycoast.org.au.