

Bellingen Coastal Management Program Stage 3

Project update

Stage 3 of the development of the Bellingen Coastal Management Program (CMP) commenced in March 2022 and finished in early July 2022.

In consultation with the community and other stakeholders, we have been working to identify and evaluate management actions for the estuaries and catchment of the Bellinger and Kalang Rivers and the open coastline.

Community consultation included two face-to-face workshops held at Bellingen and Urunga on 4 and 5 July 2022.

The purpose of the workshops was to provide input into the development of management actions.

Twenty-two people participated in group discussions about how to manage 39 high and extreme risks - see pages 2-4 of this update.

They also provided individual input on management actions for 77 low and medium risks.

For more about development of the CMP, scan the QR code or head to Council's website.



Some community-suggested management actions



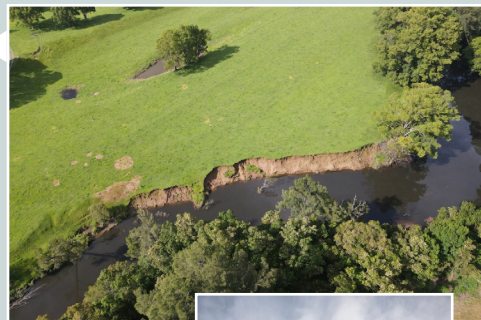
Encourage use of more non-motorised water craft
Dedicated kayak launch areas



Permit system for vehicles on beaches
Improved signage



Partners with farmers to manage weeds
Explore alternate methods
Better education



Revegetation of riverbanks
Bank stabilisation works at high impact erosion points
Buy-back of incompatible land uses



Greater monitoring and enforcement of off-leash dogs
Improved signage
Community education



Natural processes over dredging
Extend seawalls
Repair training walls



Review boating speed limits
Improved signage
Greater policing and enforcement



Location	Issue	Event	Risk rating	Suggested management actions
Mylestom Spit North Beach Hungry Head	Uncontrolled vehicle access	Vehicles driving on the foreshore and dunes	Extreme	Establish permit system for all vehicles on beach Improve signage Place large physical barriers on dunes access Education/awareness/enforcement
Shire wide	Small rates base in Bellinger Shire Council	Small budget to complete management actions in the coastal zone or match funds for government grants	Extreme	Lobby State and Federal ministers to tax AirBnBs Collect revenue from holidaymakers e.g., through lamington drives to raise awareness of local species support programs Forestry and other Gov't departments to pay levies Carbon credits from forestry/National Parks to come to Council Cost recovery from outside users
Numerous Sites on the Bellinger and Kalang Rivers (private rural riparian land) where bank erosion is currently occurring	Lack of foreshore and bank vegetation	High Flows during catchment flood and livestock access down riverbanks	Extreme	Education for fencing riverbanks and preventing stock access Revegetation Bank stabilisation works at high impact erosion points Proper investigation Conflicting land uses Consultation with long term residents Buy back of incompatible land uses
Bellinger River - Mylestom Foreshore	Natural northward/eastward migration of the foreshore and ongoing failure of seawall - failure of some structural elements causing sink holes to rear and temporary fencing of areas from public access	Damaged concrete steps to foreshore, failing seawall	Extreme	Protect current infrastructure Plant trees alongside bank Replace whole sea wall Artificial reef along entire seawall Enforceable speed limits for all craft using webcams to monitor Bellinger River foreshore from Raleigh Bridge to Mylestom needs erosion control: rock gabions More ranger presence everywhere for compliance Mitigate impacts from new developments with strict development controls
Habitats of high ecological and conservation value on the floodplain	Agriculture	Clearing of native vegetation (past and present)	High	No more clearing of native vegetation Compensation for loss of agricultural production if replanting undertaken
Mylestom Spit foreshore on the river side	Wash from high-speed boats and jet skis	Shoreline recession	High	Signage Education/awareness/enforcement Review high speed vessels access and promote non-motorised vessel water recreation Policing of boats and jetskis Review speed limits for motorised vessels
Coastal wetland north-east of Burrawong Parade	Coastal Inundation in 100yrs	Normal tides raised by 1.4m	High	Buyback wetlands and move from private to public ownership Restrict development
North Beach, Valla Beach through to Hungry Head	Coastal Recession in 100yrs	1.4m of sea level rise and rare erosion event	High	Retreat - move infrastructure Amphibious craft for surf club Council to embrace all climate change mitigation strategies Incentives for landholders to establish/or protect ecological communities at risk

Location	Issue	Event	Risk rating	Suggested management actions
Coastal zone	Unmanaged Council and Government owned reserves	Less restoration and protection when compared to managed reserves	High	Wildlife corridors: widen and extend The Manager of Crown Lands needs to take responsibility Longer term project funding - 5-6 funding cycles
Atherton Drive precinct	Lack of consultation with Gumbaynggir people	Plan of management developed without First Nations input or review	High	Consult Elders firstly Engage with traditional owners and knowledge holders Joint planning Cultural centre in fisherman's hut
Urunga sandmass Hungry Head to Oyster Creek	Weed infestation (bitou and Morning Glory)	Outcompetes native species	High	Exclude people and animals Partner with Landcare/Dunecare to encourage community awareness School group involvement Explore alternate techniques e.g., spraying, biological control Volunteers to grow replacement plants
Myelstom	Boat ramp is too close to the road	Dangerous traffic conditions	High	Move road towards sports field No action Add speed bumps Close boat ramp Introduce 40km speed zone in area Signs to warn oncoming traffic of traffic turning Repair approved ramp pontoon and foreshore Formalise parking Dedicated kayak launch area Use funding from Fisheries Licences to resource grants for boat ramps
Bongil Bongil National Park coast	Foxes, cats, corvid species	Preying on Little Terns and their eggs	High	Education (August/September - December) during breeding season Dogs on leash in important beach nesting bird sites Education for dog walkers during breeding season Increased ranger presence during peak holiday periods 1080 wild dogs Scrub turkey numbers increased last 10 years – may be impacting
Endangered ecological communities on the floodplain	Weeds - Broadleaf paspalum, lantana, giant parramatta grass, molasses grass, bitou, morning glory, rhodes grass, mistflower, privet, madeira vine, balloon vine, tradescantia, castor oil	Outcompetes native species	High	Invest in long term project funding i.e., 5 years plus for revegetation/bush regeneration projects Controlled burning regime to reduce grasses Partner with farmers to look at alternate methods Alternate management of riparian zones Biodiversity offset schemes that protect floodplains (partnering with other groups e.g., indigenous land management groups)
Estuary Entrance	Shoals	Reduced safety for boat users	High	Dredge channels (1 of 4 agree) Behaviour management is the key, not management of the environment Extend South entrance training wall 200 metres Extend North entrance training wall 100 metres Repair training walls and include flow for Lido and Urunga Lagoon Discharge sewerage outside river flows

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North Beach	Coastal erosion and recession (immediate)	Formation of an erosion scarp and narrowing of the beach berm	High	Maintain access regularly Signage Education program with 4WD access permit Seasonal restrictions on beach access for vehicles Sand dredging – use to replenish beach Raise funds for repair/conservation from 4WD permit access system
Urunga	Off leash dogs	Chasing endangered shorebirds	High	Dog trapping at night Owner compliance Fencing of dog exercise areas More compliance of regulations Beach patrols, more signs educating about the issue - not just regulatory Community campaigns and advertising messaging through vet Run 'dogs breakfast' education during the spring breeding season Key issue on Urunga is at confluence of Bellinger and Kalang rivers, area of crown land where fisherman beach and allow dogs to roam and impact Pied Oystercatcher and Beachstone Curlew nests. ACTION: Signage on island, enforcement, education. Council rangers' responsibility.
Urban residential properties all clustered around Newry Island	Naturally variable state of channel, particularly in meanders around Newry Island	Erosion of residential property, followed by ad-hoc and uncoordinated foreshore protection works which are subsequently undermined	High	Council provided design protocols for bank stabilisation Onsite support, inspections and design concepts by council No more development Decrease speed of vessels to prevent wash eroding banks
Coastal Sewerage	Sewer discharging into waterways from unmaintained and damaged infrastructure	Reduced water quality and impact on oyster industry	High	Investigate condition of sewer assets Repair where required Ongoing monitoring program

What happens next?

The suggested management actions will be reviewed and consideration given to who would deliver them, the resources and funding required and any pathways for approvals.

In Stage 4, the draft CMP, including the draft management actions, will be placed on public exhibition for community and agency feedback.

Any input received during public exhibition will be considered by Council as part of finalising the CMP document.

The Department of Planning and Environment will also review the draft CMP and, if accepted, will be finalised for implementation in Stage 5.

