

# Community awaits ramp decision

East Gippsland Newspapers announces the return of the Far East Express, which brings news from far East Gippsland.

To get up to speed with what is happening in and around Mallacoota, the Far East Express spoke to Steve Waxiel, chairman of the Mallacoota and District Business and Tourism Association.

Mallacoota, Victoria's easternmost town, has been the centre of much activity recently, with Bastion Point Boat Ramp planning, construction of new walking tracks and land rezoning hot topics.

Mr Waxiel said the organisation was disappointed the State Government had been unable to make a decision on the location of a boat ramp, as was promised to happen this month.

"We were promised a decision this month," Mr Waxiel said.

He explained Deputy Premier Peter Ryan promised a meeting would be held this month to decide where the boat ramp would be built. The meeting will instead be held next month.

"In other words the decision will not be handed down this month and we are extremely disappointed," he said.

"It is disappointing for the town that the Government can't make a decision on this process."

He said Government was deciding on



The Mallacoota and District Business and Tourism Association is disappointed the State Government has broken a promise to meet this month to discuss the location of a new boat ramp for Mallacoota. The current Bastion Point boat ramp is pictured here. KL80-37

where the boat ramp would be built, not whether or not it would be built.

Mr Waxiel said the group had also been working with East Gippsland Shire Council, the State Government and Parks Victoria on the construction of a walking track from the Mallacoota Health and Support Service down along a creek and along the cliff tops to Pebbly Beach.

"It's taken a little longer than expected, but construction has commenced," he said.

"We congratulate the previous State Government on its initiative to do this."

Weather is delaying construction at the moment, and Mr Waxiel estimated the five-kilometre track could be completed in June or July next year.

Mr Waxiel said the

Government, at the moment, is looking into it to see whether it will be valid for that legislation to be changed.

"It's holding back investment in the industrial area. Since it

***"The decision will not be handed down this month and we are extremely disappointed. It is disappointing for the town that the Government can't make a decision on this process."***

State Government was looking into the town's industrial estate, as industrial-zoned land cannot be touched because of a conflicting overlay.

"The State Govern-

ment was zoned industrial a few trees have grown on it, and for every tree removed you have to plant two more.

"We have tried acting on it, and are cur-

rently in discussions with the State Government about this."

Another issue flagged by Mr Waxiel was that Parks Victoria had stopped supplying park notes to information centres that were not level one classified.

"The notes are copyright, and we are disappointed that Parks Victoria will not provide park notes to our areas.

"The nearest level-one classified visitor information centre is in Lakes Entrance, which has the notes."

"Our visitor information centre here is now hamstrung as to what they can get out on national parks in

the area because we haven't got level one classification."

To be eligible for the level one classification, a centre has to be able to have two people on duty from 9am to 5pm and has to be able to take bookings. Mr Waxiel said the Mallacoota information centre finds it hard enough to have one person on deck between 10am and 3pm, and would never be able to meet level one requirements.

"And yet we are expected to support Parks Victoria in advertising this area, and yet parks are withdrawing their help."