

MEDIA RELEASE

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Protests over coastal destruction at Bastion Point escalates

Angry protesters slammed the East Gippsland Shire Council today at a rally held in Mallacoota disrupting a Council run meeting with cries of Shame, Shire, Shame. Community members expressed their outrage at Council's destruction of their beach and its refusal to work with them to build a less damaging ocean access boat ramp.

The protest escalated as it moved to blockade the gate to the construction site. Police arrived at the scene to break up the rally. Community members stood their ground in front of a truck to delay works and deliver the message to the East Gippsland Shire Council and the Naphthine Government that the oversized development at Bastion Point on Victoria's Wilderness Coast must stop. The protesters negotiated with police enabling them to leave the site peacefully without any arrests.

"The desecration that is occurring has caused deep grief in our community. To watch a place you love being ripped apart is heart wrenching. What is happening is senseless vandalism of the highest degree. Shame on Council, and shame on the Naphthine Government for approving and funding it" said spokesperson for Save Bastion Point Campaign Ms Macvean.

Last week GPM Constructions began work on the ocean access boat-ramp development at Bastion Point. What was once a sandy beach is now truckloads of rubble in preparation for a road and breakwater construction.

"It's only a matter of weeks until the damage will be Irreversible" said Ms Macvean.

Simon Branigan, Marine & Coastal Project Coordinator from the Victorian National Parks Association stated "The decision to allow beautiful Bastion Point to be trashed sets a dangerous precedent for future coastal planning and development in Victoria. No beach in Victoria is now safe from this type of unnecessary and destructive development."

Dr Rex Campbell, Chairman of Surfrider Foundation Australia also commented: "Surfrider is running an international campaign to draw attention of surfers world-wide to the tragic loss we are facing."

"We have no confidence in the East Gippsland Shire Council and its ongoing management of this outrageous development" concluded Ms Macvean. "We call on the State Government to step in now and stop the damage before it is too late".

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Footage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6nuVQVKhvc&feature=youtu.be>
Photos: attached and available on application
Further photos of destruction on www.savebastionpoint.org