

**Friends of Mallacoota
Far East Gippsland Boardriders
Mallacoota Surf Life Saving Club
Mallacoota Coast Action/ Coastcare
Melbourne Save Bastion Point Group**
supported by ~
**Surfrider Foundation Australia
Australian Conservation Foundation**

Save Bastion Point

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Save Bastion Point Campaign Update No. 5

15 December 2006

'07 SUMMER HOLIDAY NEWS ON BREAKWATER PROPOSAL FOR BASTION POINT

WHERE IS THE BOAT RAMP/ BREAKWATER PROPOSAL UP TO?

We believe there are still a number of months before we can expect the EES to be on public exhibition.

As mentioned in previous Updates, the East Gippsland Shire Council is required by the Victorian Minister for Planning to prepare an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for its proposed boat ramp/ breakwater development at Bastion Point.

In 2004 the Shire Council commenced a series of technical studies in preparation of their EES. In late 2005 it submitted a Draft EES to the Technical Reference Group (TRG) established by Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). The TRG rejected the Draft EES on the grounds that various studies were incomplete, the document did not meet the EES Assessment Guidelines and was not of a sufficient standard for public exhibition.

The Shire Council was required to carry out further work on the EES and re-submitted it in Aug and again in Nov '06. On each occasion the TRG rejected the Draft EES and *we understand the Shire Council is now making final changes to it.*

It should be noted that the TRG does not review the Draft EES on quality or merit of arguments. The role of the TRG is to ensure that the EES Assessment Guidelines be met. It does not make any decision as to whether the boat ramp/ breakwater proposal should be approved. *The Minister for Planning makes this decision following the public exhibition stage.*

PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF EES

We expect the EES will be advertised to the public for a period of up to 8 weeks. During that time the public will be invited to make written submissions on the EES. Anyone who makes a written submission will be eligible to also make an oral presentation to the Panel Inquiry, which we expect will be established to make recommendations to the Minister for Planning as to whether the proposed boat ramp/ breakwater should be approved or not.

The public exhibition stage is critical to our campaign. *It is essential that we have as many people as possible make written submissions. We plan to assist the community and*

wider general public with information to do this. *Please join our email list or keep checking our website for details on when the EES will be on exhibition.*

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

- *It will degrade a significant wilderness coastal environment & habitat*
- *It will be inequitable and discriminate against all other users*
- *It will create safety hazards*
- *It will destroy Indigenous cultural heritage*
- *It will threaten sustainable tourism*
- *It will not be economically sustainable*
- *It will be contradictory to Government strategies*

LATEST CAMPAIGN ACTIONS

BLUES VS BREAKWATER - CAMPAIGN BENEFIT GIG

The Melbourne Save Bastion Point Group organized a gig at the Rainbow Hotel, Fitzroy in October. Brilliant musicians showed support for the campaign by playing at the gig, including The Little Stevies, The Hornets, The Wolfe Gang, O'Ziriguidum Samba School and other guests. Congratulations to everyone for getting along to this great event and showing support for the campaign.

POST CARD PETITION

Our successful Postcard petition to the Victorian Minister for Planning resulted in 1,500 postcards being presented to the Minister's office in October. Thanks to everyone who showed their support by signing the postcards! We're really making our concerns known to the final decision makers.

BASTION POINT - BEST WAVE

Tracks magazine, Dec 2006, has made up a list of 101 best waves in Australia. Bastion Point took out 60th in the People's Choice Award! This is certainly a surf break that cannot afford to be lost to a breakwater development.

FAR EAST GIPPSLAND BOARDRIDERS RAFFLE ANOTHER BOARD

Following the huge success of two surfboard raffles last year, the Far East Gippsland Boardriders have a raffle across the '07 summer holidays. 1st prize is a 6'4" Fish with original design sponsored by Neil Oke Surfboards. Some of the funds raised will go to support the Bastion Point campaign. Call 0407580341 for tickets.

NEW SAFETY LAW IN PLACE AT BASTION POINT

Gippsland Ports has put in place a new safety law at Bastion Point. The 'Special Purpose Zone' allows swimming, surfing and boating to all legally continue to take place at Bastion Point under new safety rules. The zone is at the site of the existing boat ramp at Bastion Point and extends 300 metres north and 22.6 metres wide of the ramp. Swimmers/ surfers and vessel operators should all be aware of their responsibilities when using the area to ensure everyone's safety. Let's get behind these rules as a demonstration that our wilderness coastline is a public place available for all users. For more information please read the signs at Bastion Point to ensure you know the safety rules.

MALLACOOTA INLET AND SURROUNDS AND THE CROAJINGOLONG COAST CLASSIFIED AS BEING OF STATE SIGNIFICANCE

The Department of Sustainability and Environment recently released its *Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study, September 2006* (www.dse.vic.gov.au). The study provides an assessment of landscape characteristics and identification of visually significant landscape from State border to border. It also provides a framework to assist local government and other agencies to manage future development impacts within the coastal landscape. We expect that this important Victorian State policy should have a major influence over the protection of Bastion Point!

STATE ELECTION

The Bracks Government has appointed Mr. Justin Madden as the new Minister for Planning. This means that Mr. Madden will now have the final decision making responsibility over whether the East Gippsland Shire Council gets the green light or not for its proposed development at Bastion Point. Continue to let the Government know of your concern for Bastion Point by writing to – The Hon. Justin Madden, Minister for Planning, Level 7, 1 Spring St, Melbourne VIC 3000, justin.madden@parliament.vic.gov.au .

Mr. Craig Ingram, abalone license holder and member of the Mallacoota Abalone Co-operative, was re-elected as Member for Gippsland East but with a swing against him in Mallacoota. Mr. Ingram supports the Shire Council's proposal, despite so many of his constituents being opposed to a large scale, high impact development. Write to Mr. Ingram outlining your concerns and question his support for the breakwater. Ask him to fairly represent his constituents in Mallacoota and other parts of his electorate

when it comes to Bastion Point. PO Box 443, Bairnsdale VIC 3875. craig.ingram@parliament.vic.gov.au

LOBBYING

We've continued our lobbying efforts with Victorian State Ministers to ensure they are aware of our concerns about the proposal. We've also made them aware that the Shire Council's conduct of the EES process has been substandard. We've been asking for genuine, transparent and inclusive engagement of the Mallacoota community. We've also been lobbying around appropriate safe and sustainable solutions that respect the natural, cultural and recreational values of the area.

MEDIA

Save Bastion Point Campaigners have been all over the media these last few months – congratulations! We've been on Gippsland regional ABC radio a few times and the SE NSW coast ABC radio, had letters in the regional newspapers and been interviewed by WIN TV. Please help to raise public awareness by spreading the word about the possibility of our iconic wilderness coast being taken over by development.

CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS

The Save Bastion Point Campaign is supported by two national non-government organizations, the Australia Conservation Foundation (www.acfonline.org.au) and Surfrider Foundation Australia (www.surfrider.org.au). It is supported by a State based group, the Melbourne Save Bastion Point Group. Four local Mallacoota groups support the campaign, including Friends of Mallacoota, Far East Gippsland Boardriders, Mallacoota Coast Action/ Coastcare and the Mallacoota Surf Lifesaving Club.

Our campaign email list has over 500 supporters – and expanding! *Please be in touch if you wish to join our email list so that you can be informed when the EES is made available and be provided with information about writing a submission.*

Of course our reach is far greater across the state and country via the above groups and other groups that also support our work, including the Victorian Coastal Alliance and the Victoria National Parks Association. We are currently expanding the range of groups that support our campaign to oppose inappropriate development at Bastion Point. *Please get in touch if you belong to a group that could support this campaign.*

Thank you for your continued support. Have a fun, safe summer holiday season.

Go to www.savebastionpoint.org