

MEDIA RELEASE

Surfrider Foundation Gold Coast Tweed Branch is taking a strong stance on recent emergency beach protection works by Gold Coast City Council (GCCC) following a series of storms which caused severe erosion on many of the Gold Coast beaches.

GCCC contractors bulldozed and excavated sand and vegetation from the dunal system, before transporting it kilometres along the beach in an attempt to restore Surfers Paradise beach.

Surfrider would like to draw attention to the fact that the Surfers Paradise foreshore redevelopment by council was in breach of its own coastal planning policy of no development seaward of the A-line. In developing the Surfers Paradise foreshore seaward of the A-line GCCC has increased the vulnerability of Surfers Paradise beach to erosion events which will necessitate ongoing beach nourishment works similar to these emergency protection works. Effectively the Surfers Paradise foreshore project by council has created a sand drain for the rest of the coast which has led to the emergency beach protection works destroying dunes and damaging vegetation. If the destruction of dunes this year was bad next year will be much worse, this is just the beginning.

The attached photographs sent to Council. Local Councillor and Chair of GCCC Engineering Services, Daphne McDonald, has publicly stated that "*Workers had only removed wind-blown sand.*" Other Council representatives also claimed that "*There was no disturbance or damage to vegetation*", demonstrating their lack of awareness and knowledge of the coastal ecosystem, and blatant disregard to the concerns raised by community members despite clear evidence having been presented.

Surfrider Foundation contacted the Minister for Department and Heritage Protection (DEHP), demanding an immediate assessment of environmental and social impacts of the works under the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 (Coastal Act). An assessment was carried out by DEHP, who ensured that they would continue to monitor the progress of the emergency beach works program, and work closely with GCCC in future. Thanks were given to Surfrider for our community involvement, and we have been encouraged to continue dialogue with the Department on any future concerns.

Regards
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