

# STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Community Services Committee  
**FROM:** Stephen Richards, Reserves Officer  
**DATE:** 19 February 2009  
**SUBJECT:** McKee Recreation Reserve Coastal Erosion

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of coastal erosion which is occurring along the foreshore at McKee Recreation Reserve.

## BACKGROUND

From early in 2007 high tide storm events have been eroding away the foreshore towards the western end of the Reserve. Initially erosion events were minor, removing small amounts of gravels and steeping the profile of the beach, but more recently (during 2008) the erosion has been occurring with increasing frequency and severity.

Built up beach gravel banks have been completely eroded away and now steep clay banks and coastal gravel soils are fully exposed to high tide storm events. High tides during December 2008, January 2009 and February 2009 have removed large amounts of these clays and gravels with up to 4 metres of encroachment in places along a 400 metre stretch of the reserve.

Since August 2007 we have been working with Ken Todd the caretaker installing post and rope barriers along the foreshore, and beach accessways to direct campers away from the erosion prone areas. But over the last six months much of this fencing has been eroded away and fallen into the sea along with large established Ngaio trees and other smaller trees.

Ken Todd has been the caretaker for the last 13 years and during the first 11 years he reports the foreshore as being relatively stable, but since 2007 erosion has been increasing in frequency and severity.

## DISCUSSION

The McKee Domain foreshore has now eroded up to 4 metres in places, with unstable gravel and clay banks exposed to high tide storm surges. A low clay bund which exists in many places along the foreshore has also been eroded away leaving many areas very low lying and at risk to inundation by a high tide storm surge event.

## RECOMMENDATION

I would like to recommend that the Community Services Committee visit McKee Recreation Reserve with Eric Verstappen to see firsthand the extent of the erosion and to discuss options available for protection.

Stephen Richards  
Reserves Officer

## Recent Photos



October 2008 clay and gravel banks exposed, trees falling into the sea



December 2008 Posts and rope falling into the sea



December 2008 beach accessways washed away



January 2009 Ken Todd standing where the foreshore was 2 years ago



The eroded foreshore is now starting to encroach into the reserve