

WildLaw Conference, 16-18 September 2011,
Griffith University, Brisbane.

**SO MANY LAWS, BUT WHERE'S THE ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION?
BRIBIE ISLAND'S DISAPPEARING SAND DUNES AND SEA
TURTLES**

David Percival
Bribie Island Environmental
Protection Association
(BEIPA)



Presentation Overview

- Background of Bribie Island & its environmental health
- Legislation in place to protect Bribie Island
- Discuss the challenges associated with implementation of legislation
 - examples from community perspective
- How can we work together to support the future of Bribie Islands' environmental health?

Bribie Island

- Sand Island: 25km long & 6km wide
- ~1hr drive north from Brisbane
- 80% National/State Park
- Residential (~18, 000)
- Bridge link to mainland





Bribie is a place of great natural beauty

Like its SE Queensland neighbours North and South Stradbroke, Moreton and Fraser Islands, Bribie Island has a pristine and unique environment that is in severe danger of being irreparably damaged by human activity.



Legislation protecting BI Environmental Health



Bribie is home to a wide range of fauna. Bribie is one of the eight major fly-ways for migratory bird species coming to the southern hemisphere for the summer from the high Arctic

Over 250 native and migratory bird species have been catalogued here at **RAMSAR** listed Buckley's Hole alone.



Bribie is home to a number of rare and endangered species including loggerhead turtles, Wallum sedge frogs, and dugongs



Legislation protecting Bribie

Environment and Biodiversity Conservation Act

Your fish. Your future.

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Queensland Fisheries Strategy
2009-14

Queensland Government



Integrated Planning Act

Fisheries Act





Woorim foreshore
area - **2002**



In **2006**, the beach at Woorim was eroded significantly by a storm



action:
pushing
eroded

Established a community consultation process with marine consultants

SOS: 'SAVE OUR SANDS'

- Community outcry, rallies
- Local Government responded by commissioning report: WBSEMP
- Review of relevant local, state, federal legislation
- Approved Nov 2007



A part of BMT in Energy and Environment

Woorim Beach Shoreline Erosion Management Plan

R.B16200.001.03.doc
September 2007



WBSEMP: Recommendations

- Sand nourishment (pumping)
 - 👍 First year
 - 👎 Subsequent years



The inappropriate placement of sand has resulted in the formation of this “sand island”

This has resulted in this pronounced groyne at Woorim that has caused major erosion to the south



This groyne has been the cause of significant erosion



~40 metres of dunes have been lost from more than a kilometres south the groyne

'EMERGENCY',
'MAINTENANCE',
'SAFETY'





Source: www.nearmap.com (accessed 7/09/2011)

Dune Lowering

- Purpose: public amenity
- Outside scope of WBSEMP
- Local Gov & State response to community concern:
 - Legislation compliance





Rickman Parade – before
May 2011



**Dune in front of surf club after all vegetation
has been removed**



Rickman Parade - after
July 2011

10,000+ trees have been removed from these areas since the WBSEMP has been adopted

Conclusions

- Bribie Island is unique.
- Range of environmental laws and management plans
- Despite legislation: significant erosion and environmental downgrading continues to occur.
- WHY? What can we do?





By JOHN HAMMOND

BELLARA resident Duvel Cunningham is frustrated that the white, sandy beaches of Bribie Island are constantly covered in thick layers of seaweed, driftwood and accumulated tide-borne debris which cannot be cleaned up.

After phone calls to division one councillor Gary Parsons, and an explanation from a council technical officer, Mr Cunningham felt he had been fobbed off and that no one wanted to take responsibility.

"The council have spent millions beautifying the island's CBD areas but who wants to lay their fish and chips to eat at the beach then have to sit among rotting seaweed and other rubbish that has been washed up?" he asked.

"Then in the first issue of Moreton First Community News I got, the council promotes their \$200,000 a-year sifting sand for safety program."

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Cr Parsons said, if he could, he would have all the dead sea grass, drift wood and weeds raked up.

“Unfortunately, Bribie Island is right in the middle of a conversation park, a marine park, and a designated RAMSAR convention wetland of international significance” he said.

Source: *Front Page*, 7 Sept 2011, *Island and Mainland News*

Where to from here?

Is this because the legislation is inadequate?

Is the legislation adequate and is not being followed?

Who is responsible?

For future generations
to enjoy

