



Media Release

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TASMANIAN BEACHES BEING MONITORED FOR EROSION

Tasmanian beachgoers may have noticed some unusual markers appearing on their local shores.

The two meter high treated pine posts with an explanatory plaque are being erected at selected beaches throughout the state as part of the Tasmanian Shoreline Monitoring and Archiving (TASMARC) project.

NRM North's Chief Executive Officer, James McKee, said the project aimed to identify the rate at which Tasmanian beaches are eroding as a result of global warming.

"The monthly monitoring will serve firstly as an indication of the month-to-month and seasonal shoreline movement and secondly as a basis for long term observation of the movement of our beaches." Mr McKee said.

The project is supported by NRM North in the northern region and in the south by the Department of Primary Industries and Water and the Clarence and Sorell councils.

Some of the northern beaches involved in the project are Dolphin Sands at Swansea, Adams Beach at Bridport and Godfreys Beach at Stanley.

Some of the southern sites are Clifton Beach south east of Hobart, Primrose Sands at Sorell and Eaglehawk Neck on the Tasman Peninsula.

John Hunter, an oceanographer from the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre at the University of Tasmania, said up until now, there had been no continued monitoring in Tasmania of present shoreline movement.

"Scientists believe the world is warming, primarily as a result of human activities. Global sea level is also rising, partly due to this warming.

"Global average sea level rose at a rate of about 1.7 mm/year during the last century and it is probable the rate of sea level rise around Tasmania was also within this range.

"As a crude rule of thumb, for every centimetre of sea level rise, sandy shorelines retreat one meter." Dr Hunter said.

Volunteers involved in the TASMARC project will make two observations: A simple measurement of the distance of the high water mark from a fixed survey mark and the measurement of the actual beach profile using a surveyor's level.

On Tasmania's east coast, students at the St Helens High School and Friends of Four Mile Creek have recently undertaken training to begin gathering data for the project.

The students will undertake monthly monitoring of the Georges Bay foreshore and three sights along Binalong Bay Beach while the Friends of Four Mile Creek will monitor three sights along the Four Mile Creek Beach.



NRM North's Community Support Officer for Break O'Day, Alison Hugo, said official markers would be installed in these areas.

"The markers are easily identifiable as they are made from treated pine and stand around two metres high.

"All the proper permits have been obtained for the installation of these markers and we urge the public not to interfere with them."

Information from these surveys will be analysed and stored on a digital database and will eventually be distributed to bodies such as government departments, libraries and educational institutions.

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