

18 May 2010

Narrawallee beach vandalism

Shoalhaven City Council and the NSW Police are seeking information on the vandalism of trees and shrubs in the Narrawallee foreshore.

Vandals have chopped down more than 50 trees and shrubs from an endangered ecological community in a 100 metre area on Narrawallee Foreshore and reserve.

Shoalhaven City Mayor Councillor Paul Green said the vandalism is calculated and deliberate.

“The vandals cut down more than 50 native shrubs and trees over a large area in the foreshore reserve,” Cllr Green said. “Council has been working with the Narrawallee Foreshore and Reserve Bushcare Group for several years to weed, plant and manage this wonderful natural area. Council is seeking the help of the community and police to help find out who would have destroyed this area and also the hard work of many citizens in the area.”

Last week Council officers and the Narrawallee Foreshore & Reserve Bushcare group inspected a large area of the coastal dune vegetation that had been destroyed by vandals. The vandals have cut down, using an axe or saw 50 native shrubs and trees over a 100 metre area in an east-west direction from the reserve car park to the beach.

Many of the trees and shrubs had been cut at around the one metre mark leaving a sharp stump sticking out of the ground that is extremely dangerous to users of the park. “This does not make any sense at all as the vegetation does not improve any ones view and just seems to be a senseless form of vandalism aimed at the Australian bush, which is what makes Narrawallee so attractive,” said Brett Carter, Council Parks Operations Manager.

Many volunteers have spent thousands of hours in this area removing environmental and noxious weeds to regenerate the native dune vegetation. Two funded grants, totalling more then \$40,000, have been invested in regenerating the rare Bangalay Sand Forest Complex on the dunes.

The type of vegetation that has been cut down is classified as an Endangered Ecological Community by the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and carries fines in excess of \$100,000 on top of fines that Council can enforce under the Local Government Act 1993.

Council is keen to pursue legal prosecution of the person or person’s who are responsible for this damage to the reserve. If anyone knows of any information that would assist Council in identifying who is responsible please contact Council Ranger services on (02) 4429 3428, or Council Parks Operation on 4429 3339.

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