

Beach Erosion

Fact sheet

Major erosion on Shoalhaven's beaches

Shoalhaven's beaches can be subjected to major storms and extreme surf conditions that result in severe inundation and erosion. This also occurs in other areas of the Australian coastline.

Following large storms, Council staff will inspect high-risk beaches, in accordance with our approved [Coastal Zone Emergency Action Plan](#) to determine if emergency response actions are required to ensure public safety. Council may determine that immediate works are required to manage the impacts of erosion and help restore the beach to mitigate public safety concerns. This will be determined following an appropriate risk assessment and the enactment of environmental due diligence.



Beach erosion at Shoalhaven Heads, January 2023.

Nature Assisted Beach Enhancement (NABE)

When recovering from storms, Council may assist dunes in their natural recovery by undertaking Nature Assisted Beach Enhancement (NABE) or beach scraping. NABE is a simple, short-term, low-cost method that helps accelerate natural beach recovery. It involves moving sand with machinery from the lower part of the beach onto the higher part of the beach (which slowly occurs naturally in calm weather over months) to help protect dunes and coastal areas from erosion in the short-term and expedite natural recovery processes.

After NABE, longer-term protection works such as revegetation of the dunes can take place to provide complementary natural protection and resilience mechanisms.

NABE has many benefits including:

- It can be undertaken quickly over a matter of days as a rapid response following a storm.
- It is a simple and cost-effective way to accelerate a natural process.
- It helps protect public and private land by rebuilding the natural buffer to coastal erosion processes.

NABE has been completed many times in the Shoalhaven, particularly after large events such as East Coast Lows (ECLs). Beaches that have benefited from NABE include:

- Narrawallee
- Mollymook
- Callala Bay
- Burrill Lake foreshore
- Bendalong Boat Harbour
- Shoalhaven Heads
- Currarong
- Collingwood



Machinery moving sand during NABE activities at Bendalong Beach, March 2022.

What should I do following major beach erosion?

Community members and visitors are urged to utilise caution when visiting beaches following storms, as there may be dangerous erosion scarps. Public safety hazards are amplified due to the unstable nature of erosion scarps in dunes. Please respect access points that have been closed off due to emergency works and safety concerns.

Damage can be reported to Council [online, in person or over the phone](#).



Revegetation of the dune at Shoalhaven Heads after NABE, March 2022.



Find out more

getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/

foreshore-protection-management

Or search “**Foreshore**” on our website.

Contact Us

coastal.management@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/contact | 1300 293 111

The preparation of this material has been supported by funding from the NSW Government's Coastal Management Program (Coastal and Estuary Grant).