

Frequently Asked Questions

Inverloch Coastal Protection – Wreck Creek

Q. Where is Wreck Creek?

- A.** Wreck Creek is a small intermittently closing and opening coastal lagoon located on the western edge of Inverloch. The lagoon is separated from the ocean by a sandy beach berm that forms and breaks down depending on the redistribution of sand and sediments by waves, tides, flood flows and winds.

The coastal lagoon opens and closes to the ocean naturally in a constant but irregular cycle - based on catchment flows which work to scour out the entrance, and coastal processes (tides, waves and winds) which work to close the entrance.

Q. What happens when Wreck Creek floods?

- A.** When water levels rise in Wreck Creek following rainfall, this can lead to flooding of adjacent private and public properties and infrastructure adjacent to the lagoon foreshore. The land around the western end of Surf Parade is subject to an existing flood risk which is identified by the inundation overlay under the Bass Coast Planning Scheme

To minimise this possible flooding, Bass Coast Shire Council (BCSC), West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), and Parks Victoria (PV) work together to ensure that any manual (i.e. artificial) opening of the eastern branch of the creek that flows under Surf Parade is performed safely. The procedure for this involves monitoring the creek for water level, sand berm height and water quality.

Since the new entrance mouth has opened further west along the beach, these openings have not been required for the last 15 months. This is because the creek has been able to open naturally following any significant rainfall event.

However, if a manual opening is required, WGCMA is the authority that will inform when this can occur safely (e.g. prevent a fish kill) and PV will perform the opening. Manual openings are performed to reduce the risk of flooding to nearby houses, however opening the entrance does not eliminate the risk of flooding and adjoining private land may be flooded even if the entrance is open due to rainfall and coastal influences.

In the event of potential flooding, Bass Coast Shire Council will enact its emergency management procedures as documented in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

Q. Who manages Wreck Creek?

- A.** Several agencies have responsibility over Wreck Creek and the surrounding land, including the BCSC, WGCMA, Parks Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning (DELWP). These agencies work in partnership to manage the area including the risk associated with flooding. WGCMA and Parks Victoria regularly monitor Wreck Creek and undertake investigative work relating to the creek mouth and catchment.

Q. Is Cape Paterson-Inverloch Road (Bunurong Road) at risk of flooding at Wreck Creek?

- A.** Yes, Bunurong Road is at risk of flooding from rainfall within the catchment and from storm surges especially as sea levels rise.



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These risks have not been fully analysed yet. The technical work being done as part of the local coastal hazard assessment for Inverloch will look at these risks and provide the community and agencies with a much better understanding of the risks and what can be done to minimise these risks.

Q. How long will the Inverloch Region Coastal Hazard Assessment take?

A. The Inverloch Regional Coastal Hazard Assessment will be completed by the end of 2021. The collection of digital and field data and processing for detailed computer modelling is complex and time consuming, and many climate change scenarios will be modelled based on stakeholder and community consultation and feedback

Q. I live on Surf Parade and I'm worried about flooding are there plans to artificially open Wreck Creek?

A. Partner agencies monitor water levels at Wreck Creek and the prevailing weather conditions. If conditions reach a point where an artificial opening is likely to reduce the risk of flooding, the agreed procedures will be enacted, and the entrance opened. However, the opening of the entrance artificially will not eliminate the risk entirely, and flooding to adjoining private property could still occur.

Q. If you artificially open Wreck Creek, will you expose more remains of the Amazon Shipwreck?

A. There is potential to expose more remains of Amazon shipwreck if the mouth is artificially opened. Heritage Victoria is aware of this and Parks Victoria has notification arrangements and a permit to undertake necessary management work.

Q. When will we see more erosion protection works at Inverloch?

A. In May 2020, DELWP completed works on a 70-metre long revetment constructed with specialised sand-filled geotextile containers along the Surf Live Saving Club (SLSC) area of the Inverloch foreshore to help protect this section from further impacts of wave erosion.

In July 2020, Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) completed construction of an engineered rock revetment to provide medium-term protection to Bunurong Road. This consolidated the emergency works undertaken in May 2020.

No further protection works are planned until the coastal hazard assessment is completed and adaption options are assessed and modelled.

If monitoring of conditions indicates that further interim protection is necessary, the Inverloch multi-agency working group will jointly make that decision and seek funding for implementation.

Q. How can I assist?

A. If you would like to assist with monitoring water levels at the creek, there is a Fluker post located near the Eastern branch where you can send your photos directly to these agencies. A second Fluker post may be installed on the Western branch to allow members of the public to send photos of this section of Wreck Creek, we will keep you informed.

Q. What's next?

A. WGCMA and Parks Victoria continue to monitor Wreck Creek and if the need arises, plans to artificially open Wreck Creek will be enacted.



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For more information on the emergency management procedures related to Wreck Creek, contact Bass Coast Shire Council on 1300 226 278.

For information on the local coastal hazard assessment and the Cape to Cape Resilience Project for Inverloch, refer to the following website; <https://www.marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/coastal-programs/cape-to-cape-resilience-project>