



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Please keep out of our fragile dunes

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) is asking the public to take special care of our precious coastal dunes by steering clear of them.

GORCC's Conservation and Project Management Supervisor Evan Francis said the team had seen a huge increase in damage to dunes in recent months.

"Direct trampling on dunes causes serious damage to the dune system and the vegetation that holds the dunes together. It leads to reduced species diversity and increases the risk of erosion along our coastline".

"Stable dunes are critical to the health of our beaches and form a crucial defence against erosion. Native vegetation plays an important role in stabilising our dune systems, aiding in combating coastal hazards and storms and providing valuable habitat for our native wildlife".

"It takes time and a huge community effort to regenerate coastal dunes. We want to ensure that all the hard work and effort by our team and local volunteers is not undone by beach users trampling on the dunes and introducing invasive weeds".

"Our advice is simple – please respect the dune environment by keeping out of the dunes and sticking to the formal beach access paths".

GORCC's Conservation, Education and Coastal Reserves teams spend hundreds of hours each year working to protect our dunes and promote healthy native vegetation by:

- controlling weeds and exotic plants
- planting indigenous species
- installing dune fencing and maintaining public access
- supporting local volunteer groups to care for the coast
- beach cleaning and litter patrols.

Beach users can help ensure our dunes are resilient and healthy by:

- using designated beach access paths and keeping off the dune vegetation
- disposing of rubbish in the bins provided
- joining local volunteer groups
- reporting illegal dune access and vandalism.