

Kirra Beach's glory on way back

Greg Martin | 13th April 2011

GOLD Coast councillor Chris Robbins yesterday quipped that before recent work began on Kirra Beach you needed to take a cut lunch to get to the water's edge.

Cr Robbins was referring to the \$1.5 million Kirra Beach Restoration Project, a Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) undertaking with the aim of restoring the magnificent beach to its former glory.

A huge build-up in sand from the south expanded Kirra Beach to close to 300m from the beachfront, which in turn covered the rocky outcrop on Kirra Point that had previously provided surfboard riders with fantastic waves.

"Historically, Kirra Beach had been rated one of the premier surfing beaches in the world," Cr Robbins said.

"While the beach always had a tendency to high levels of sand build-up, this had worsened in the last decade due to the pumping of sand out of the mouth of the Tweed River.

"It is wonderful to see the beach returning to the way we love it."

DERM engaged Gold Coast City Council in July 2009 to undertake the works which have so far involved the shifting of a massive 235,000 cubic metres of sand back from the water's succession of new edges to the back of the beach to build sand dunes.

These sand dunes, which in some places along the 1.7km stretch of restoration work are 60 metres wide, are currently being planted with a variety of native seaside-loving species such as beach spinifex, beach bean and goat's foot.

The planting process has been undertaken by local company Gecko Regen, which has half-a-dozen employees hard at it every day planting 18,000 seedlings along the dunes.

The group will water the multitude of plants using tertiary-treated recycled water, although the current spate of wet weather has already helped enormously in giving the seedlings a kick-start to survival.



Gecko Regen staff planting at Kirra Beach as part of the restoration project are Lee Piper (left) and Mark McGouan with Cr Chris Robbins (centre). John Gass