

## **Qld: Surfers map protest over lost waves**

GOLD COAST, Jan 19 AAP - Surfers on Queensland's Gold Coast plan to use Australia Day to protest the loss of one of Australia's iconic surfing spots.

Boardriders, surf lifesavers and environmentalists will unite for the Australia Day Paddle Out, creating a large map of Australia offshore from Kirra.

Organisers say hundreds of paddlers will focus on the loss of the famous Kirra Point break.

The break was considered to be one of the best in the world until an agreement to replenish Gold Coast beaches by pumping sand around the mouth of the Tweed River dumped millions of cubic metres of sand along Queensland's southernmost beaches from 2002.

Protest organisers say that apart from the loss of the iconic surf break, the adjoining marine reefs have been covered over and Kirra has been left with a beach resembling a deserted oasis.

Kirra Surfriders' Club president Stuart Ball, said the sand impact has destroyed their home surf break.

"We badly miss Kirra and would like to see something done to restore the famous Kirra Kegs and 20 second tube rides," Mr Ball said.

"We have lost our training beach and would like it back."

The sand-pumping has affected more than the famous Kirra Point break, with local businesses also suffering, said Kirra Surf Club manager Sheldon Steele.

The sand-pumping involves a 25-year contract between Queensland and New South Wales governments to replenish Gold Coast beaches.

The paddle out will start at 10am (AEST) on January 26.

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