



HOW it used to break – Ray Manicarus tubed at Kirra in 1990.

Let's put Kirra on the map

KIRRA Surfriders Club, Kirra Surf Life Saving Club and the Surfrider Foundation are expecting a big Australia Day crowd to support the "Kirra Paddle Out" on January 26, to focus attention on the need to restore Kirra's world famous surf.

Hundreds of surfboard paddlers will attempt to create a map of Australia in the water to focus on the loss of the Kirra Point break, wiped out by a massive sand build-up from the Tweed River Sand Bypass pumping.

During the past six years, 10 million cubic metres of sand has been pumped off Point Danger, resulting in a pileup of sand off Coolangatta and Kirra.

Apart from the loss of the iconic surf break, rocky reefs have been covered and Kirra has been left with a beach resembling a desert.

Sand pumping engineers were hoping a big storm or cyclone swell would move the sand, but only one eighth of the sand pumped from Point Danger has moved north to Gold Coast beaches.

Kirra Surfriders president Stuart Ball said the sand impact had destroyed the surf break.

"We would like to see something done to restore the 'Kirra Kegs' 20-second tube rides," Stuart said.

"We have lost our training beach and have to use Duranbah for our club competitions."

Local businesses have been affected and membership numbers are down in the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club, according to club manager Sheldon Steele.

The Kirra Paddle Out has received strong support from professional surfers including 2007 world champion Mick Fanning, who will speak on the day of the paddle out, as well as surfing legends Michael Peterson and Wayne Deane, Kirra surfing pioneer John Standing, Griffith University's Centre for Coastal Management expert Neal Lazarow and Surfrider Foundation marine biologist Bob Moffatt.

State and local politicians will also attend.

Gold Coast band Quiet Excitement will play the national anthem and their single *Let Kirra Be Kirra*.

Another lobby group seeking solutions for Kirra's problems, the Kirra Point Committee, is also involved in supporting the paddle out.

The Australia Day Paddle Out at Kirra will commence at 10am (Qld).

For further information, contact Andrew McKinnon 0412 754974 or Matt Butel 0405 388720.