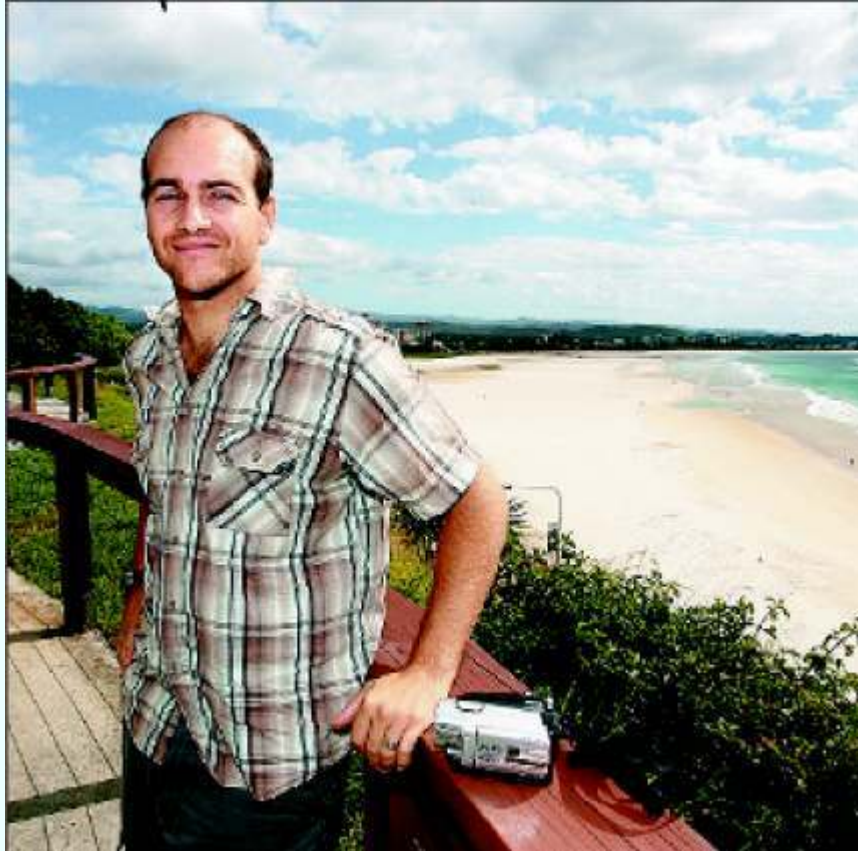




## Stage works now like shifting sands



**FUNDS WORRY ...** Neil Lazarow is concerned there will not be much money left after the first stage of the Kirra Beach restoration project.

# Kirra cash erosion

A LOCAL environmentalist fears the State Government's \$1.5 million pledge to restore Kirra Point will be 'chewed away' during the first stage of the program.

The State Government is also refusing to disclose details of the second and third stage of development.

Neil Lazarow, from lobby group Kirra Point Incorporated, said while the first stage, which commenced last week, was necessary, the Government needed to focus on long-term goals to ensure the reef and the break would be returned to their former state.

"It is a really positive first step but moving 20,000 cubic metres of sand will chew away a big chunk of the Government's \$1.5 million," he said.

"The community is going to really need to pull through to see this project complete."

By KATE HICKSON

The first stage involves shifting 10,000 cubic metres of sand to fill the ponds on upper Kirra Beach and a further 10,000 to restore beach access at Palm Beach, which was affected by the May storms.

A Gold Coast City Council spokesman said the first stage was expected to be completed in four weeks.

Climate and Sustainability Minister, Kate Jones, said this month's sand excavation program was the first of three stages in a long-term plan to solve the problem caused by sand pumping in the Tweed River.

Ms Jones said she was hopeful of an 'immediate improvement'.

"Only a small proportion of the \$1.5 million allocated by the Bligh Government to restore Kirra Beach will be used to fund this current excavation work, which is

being undertaken by the Gold Coast City Council," she said.

"Details of the next steps for the works at Kirra Beach are yet to be finalised."

Meanwhile, members of the group are still investigating whether environmental clauses in the sand pumping contracts were breached.

Mr Lazarow said 'really detailed questions' had been submitted as part of an external review of the contracts.

Currumbin MP Jann Stuckey initiated the external review as the last avenue after two Freedom of Information requests to view the contracts were denied.

The Gold Coast City Council is holding a community meeting tomorrow at 6.30pm at the Outrigger Resort, Twin Towns, Coolangatta. The meeting will seek community input into options for the second phase of work.