

The Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs Committee
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH, WA 6005

Dear Chair,

PETITION NO. 011 – VEHICLE BEACH ACCESS, BORANUP

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission regarding the issues raised in our petition. My apology for the delay in lodging this but was not aware of the offer as we have been away.

I write to you as a concerned recreational fisher dismayed at the decision by the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions to close vehicular access to Hooley Road Beach. I am local fisherman and have fished this area for over 50 years involved with fishing club venues. We as a family have fished this beach many times during the summer. I was down at the location on 5th March 2021 when vehicular access was open, so was surprised to see and hear comments that it had been closed in January 2021. We were astounded and dismayed when we heard about the abrupt closure.

I have been provided the following responses that I do not feel are adequate reasons for complete closure of vehicle access.

The risks mentioned that since 2017 three vehicles have become bogged and submerged with the incoming tide and there has been effluent runoff from the vehicles into the fragile marine environment.”

In regard to vehicles becoming bogged, this needs to be addressed by proper signage educating the public. People need to take responsibility for their choices. Putting rocks on the track and closing everything off is not appropriate.

We don't see where it is the responsibility of DBCA to recover bogged vehicles costs incurred should be the responsibility of the owners.

These management pressures, coupled with a very high energy coastline, make it paramount to protect the fragile coastal ecosystems of the marine park's intertidal zone as well as the littoral zone and primary dune systems of the national park.”

South Beach should not be classified as a fragile eco system .

South Beach does not have any dunes or vegetation.

Winter storms erode most of the beach each year making it inaccessible and returns each summer.

The hooded plovers do not nest here and in all the years we have been fished this beach we have not seen one hooded plover (only the common plover has been sighted occasionally).

The beach we are speaking of is not a swimming area or surfing. We have been going to this location for many, many years and can say that we have not seen any surfers or swimmers. Hence there is zero interaction between these activities.

Fishing from the beach should be encouraged to reduce the amount of dangerous rock fishing in the area.

Since this beach was closed the increased pressure on Hamelin Beach was very notable with over 200 vehicles per day over easter.

We would like some evidence where this was put out for public comment as everyone we have spoken to had no idea that this was coming and are disgusted with the abrupt closure.

We believe that any risks can be better managed through community input and appropriate signage and education campaigns. Simply locking people out is a lazy management strategy that has significant social impact.

We are seeking your support in bringing this issue to the attention of the appropriate Government departments and instilling on them the value of vehicle access to Hooley Road beach.

In closing I would like to point out that in the short time of 21 days I received 881 signatures objecting to the closure, which indicates a high percentage of the local population are in agreeance with the petition.

Sincerely

PETER LANGRIDGE

16th August 2021