

Estuary Fence Mended - But Permanent Solutions Sought

Jacob Brookie

Fencing protecting Manawatū Estuary mudflats was replaced last week but ongoing vandalism has Horowhenua District Council already considering other options.

Council says vandalism to the temporary fencing at the southern end of Foxton Beach is believed to be linked to recreational off-road vehicle use in the dunes, and access is restricted to protect the sensitive estuary environment, in particular nesting birds.

Grant Purdie, Board Member of the New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association, said the group supports the fencing and, as a member of the Manawatū Estuary Management Team (MENT), he has been helping develop a fencing and signage strategy alongside Council to determine areas where vehicles will be banned under Council's new Public Places Bylaw.

Council's Group Manager, Community Experience and Services Brent Harvey said the issue will be raised during this month's MENT meeting.

"Council acknowledges the significance of the estuary and that the ongoing management of the dunes is a broader issue that involves multiple partners."



Above: Council says the fence is often vandalised, with four instances of significant damage in the past two years.

Right: The repaired fence at the estuary last week



Tyre-tracks snake through the damaged fencing and into the bird resting area.

