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For immediate release

Potential Cable Beach ramp closure out for public comment

The Shire of Broome Council is asking the local community to have its say on whether driving vehicles north of the rocks on Cable Beach should be prohibited in December and January, given the potential negative impact to turtle hatchlings.

Turtle nesting season is from October until March each year, with the Shire already having restricted vehicle access to the beach during these months.

However, a recommendation from the Yawuru Park Council (YPC) supports the full closure of the beach to vehicles from 1 December to 31 January annually to further safeguard turtle hatchlings.

Research presented to the YPC by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - made up of representatives from the Shire, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and Nyamba Buru Yawuru – shows that tyre ruts are having a harmful impact on the survival chances of hatchlings.

Flatback turtles are native to Broome and special to the Yawuru people. They are also a threatened and vulnerable species, and are therefore legally protected. The Flatback Turtle community that nest at Cable Beach are local inhabitants and likely form a distinct nesting rookery.

Shire of Broome president Harold Tracey said the community should provide input on this important decision.

“The Shire wants to find a solution that can safeguard our unique turtle hatchlings while also ensuring our beaches can be enjoyed by all.”

“Most beaches in northern Australia are inaccessible or closed to vehicles during turtle nesting seasons, and current beach closures during the night and on high tides will continue regardless,” he said.

“There will be knock-on impacts should the Cable Beach access ramp be closed in December 2022 and January 2023, such as extra vehicles using Gantheaume Beach instead. Traffic counts collected by the Shire indicate that this impact will be manageable for these months”.

The public comment period will run from September 1 until September 28; to make a submission, e-mail shire@broome.wa.gov.au.

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