

New signs and ‘dog prohibited’ zones at Pottsville and Hastings Point

A new Coastal Ranger to assist with protection of threatened species

Two areas have recently been declared ‘Dog Prohibited’ zones under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*, located at the mouth of Cudgera Creek, Hastings Point and Ambrose Brown Park and adjacent foreshore, Mooball Creek, Pottsville.

Tweed Shire Council’s Coordinator Sustainability and Environment, Jane Lofthouse said the ‘dog exclusion’ area at the mouth of Cudgera Creek, Hastings Point had been in place for several years.

“This change of classification to a ‘dog prohibited zone’ formalises the exclusion zone under the appropriate legislation and regulations, however, the intent, location and size of the zone remains the same,” Ms Lofthouse said.

“Declaring the ‘dog prohibited’ zone at Pottsville is to provide an option for families to have a safe swimming and recreational area without dogs. These zones are also in place to protect threatened species.”

Highlighting the importance of the dog exclusion zone at Hastings Point was the successful breeding of a Beach Stone-curlew chick in 2018. This critically-endangered bird has rarely been recorded successfully breeding in the Tweed and this would not have been possible without the support of volunteers, the community and responsible dog owners.

In a recent review, Birdlife Australia recommended that, as a priority, dogs be prohibited at the mouths of estuaries as these are critically important foraging and nesting areas for shorebirds that are already under significant pressure from recreational activities.

To assist with protection of threatened species along the Tweed coast, Council recently employed a Coastal Ranger who will focus on educating the community. Ranger Wayne wants to encourage anyone who is unsure of the current zones along the beaches to stop and have a chat with him.

“If you see me out and about, please don’t be afraid to stop and have a chat. My role is to provide education to the community about the dog zones along the coast, but also to ensure compliance with the new and current regulations,” Ranger Wayne said.

New signs have now been installed at the new ‘dog prohibited’ locations and at other locations where signs were missing.

The recent designation of the dog prohibited areas is not related to the review of off-leash dog beach areas which has been postponed for consideration under the Tweed Coastal Management Program. Community consultation on this issue will be undertaken in 2020, including appropriate use of beaches and foreshore areas.

The delineation of these areas are in the attached maps. View all dog off-leash beaches via the online mapping tool at www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/WalkMyDog.

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