



## Media Advisory

### Bluecliffs State of Emergency

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Time: 3pm

# Local State of Emergency declared for Bluecliffs erosion

This is an official message from the Civil Defence Controller Simon Mapp

Update – Bluecliffs state of emergency - #2

Emergency Management Southland continues to coordinate efforts in response to the declared state of emergency for the Bluecliffs community.

Since declaring a local state of emergency for the Bluecliffs area on Thursday, the Emergency Management Southland team has been working with Southland District Council, Environment Southland and local residents. This will continue during the week as more activity in the area gets underway.

Group controller Simon Mapp said, “This week we hope to see the attempted bar opening at the Waiiau River mouth as well as a plan for the removal of dumped material at the old fly tip.”

“Environment Southland has been working on plans to open the bar for sometime, and those plans can now be acted on, which means we’ve been able to move swiftly to try and create a new opening in the bar.”

The bar opening will hopefully reduce the erosion in front of the properties and the tip for a period of time, which will enable further conversations with the community about the future of the area.

The work site for opening of the bar will be established from Monday, and preparations for opening will continue throughout the week.

“The health and safety of those involved in the opening is being carefully considered. Timing of sea swells and tides will play a key part in the success of the opening, and Meridian is supporting this by managing the river flow.

“It is a highly complex and changing environment, and it’s unknown how well this opening may work or how much time this might provide the residents.”

During the week, Emergency Management Southland will be restricting public access to the boat ramp and some roads in the area to manage access to the active work site for contractors and everyone’s safety.

“We’ve had reports of people visiting the area to have a look. Please avoid any unnecessary travel to the area while this state of emergency is in place. This is for the safety of residents and those working in the area.”

Last week Southland District Council’s building inspectors confirmed the homes and structures are currently safe and noted no issues with wastewater or land slumping at this stage.

There has also been progress on managing the old community tip.

In September last year, Southland District Council contractors managed to clear the bottom seaward end of the fly tip before work was halted when the potential risk of explosives being in the site was known.

This created a 15m to 20m barrier between the sea foreshore and the material in the tip and since then, no tip material has gone to sea. The bulk of the material that was removed was mainly burnt domestic rubbish bags of waste with the odd metal, steel bits and pieces, for example an old couch, and some car parts.

Any of the rubbish identified to date would not be considered to have any potential environmental harm.

Council and contractors are urgently developing a new plan on how to deal with the remainder of the tip, given the accelerated erosion.

ENDS

This release has been issued by the Duty Public Information Manager on the authority of the Southland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Controller.

Contact Duty Public Information Manager, ph 027 384 0104

Website: [www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz](http://www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz)