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COCKLE CREEK ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS A FIRST FOR NSW

Environmental improvement works have begun at the mouth of Cockle Creek, down stream of the old Pasmenco site, strictly controlled by the first Environmental Management Plan prepared under the Contaminated Land Management Act in New South Wales.

The construction of a 32 metre rock 'finger' groyne to address erosion issues began this week and will be followed by the removal of the entrance spit.

The Cockle Creek entrance is currently subject to high rates of ongoing erosion of the western shoreline. These problems are further complicated by the fact that sediments are contaminated by heavy metals from nearby industry.

The improvement works will help to decrease erosion and halt the loss of identified wetlands in the area, improve tidal flushing of the Cockle Creek entrance, limit the disturbance of contaminated sediments and improve navigation.

"By limiting the erosion of the shoreline on the western side which forms part of a state significant wetland, the levels of heavy metals entering the lake will be decreased, in turn protecting the wetland," Lake Macquarie and Catchment Coordinator Jeff Jansson said.

"The build up of sediments at the spit has made the Lake difficult to negotiate without running aground or disturbing the bed. There are environmental risks if the contaminated bed sediments are disturbed," he said.

The project forms part of the Lake Improvement Works undertaken by The Office of the Lake Macquarie & Catchment Coordinator.

It is anticipated that the project will be completed in March.

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