



# MEDIA RELEASE

RUTH FORREST MLC

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## GOVERNMENT INACTION ON EROSION LIKELY TO SEE HOMES LOST

Years of government inaction is likely to cost Hellyer Beach residents their properties, Independent MLC for Murchison Ruth Forrest said today.

The government has this week informed the owners of three properties immediately under threat from erosion in the Detention River, that a planned retreat, and thus abandonment of their properties, is the final decision after years of requests for action from residents.

“This is a devastating outcome for the property owners and one which could and should have been avoided if the Minister and his predecessor had addressed this issue when it was first raised several years ago” Ms Forrest said.

“The excuse that it is too late to act is no comfort to residents who have been looking for a solution to this problem for years. Had the Government acted earlier the cost could have been much less, and even now there are measures which could be taken to save these properties which the government has chosen not to pursue” Ms Forrest stated.

“This is a clear case of the Government failing to respond to a community issue, raised by concerned residents, who took all the reasonable steps to assist Government to provide a timely solution” Ms Forrest stated.

“The Government have failed miserably over the past 12 years to provide clear direction on the issue of coastal erosion and now Tasmanians, who have done all they can to bring the issue to the attention of the Government in a timely manner may soon lose their homes” Ms Forrest said.

Ms Forrest has been in correspondence with government departments and Ministers on behalf of the property owners since July 2009, at which time the situation required urgent action, and is extremely disappointed that none was taken.

Ms Forrest is also concerned that other Hellyer Beach residents could face the same problem in the future if the river continues to erode the banks at a similar rate.

“The loss of property could well extend far beyond the three properties immediately under threat with considerable property and financial loss to a number of Hellyer Beach residents” Ms Forrest said.

“The issues of setting a precedent for the State in the management of erosion in this particular case is a nonsense, as it is simply the fact that the former Minister and the Government have

continued to sit on their hands and fail to respond, let alone act, on the broader issue of erosion in Tasmania” Ms Forrest stated.

“The blow out in any costs to deal with this case and the scale of the problem are problems of the Government’s making” Ms Forrest said.

Ms Forrest is calling on the Government to fully compensate the residents who have been failed through the inaction of Government as this is a cost that could have been avoided with timely attention.

“The Government have a moral, if not legal, obligation to compensate those residents of Hellyer Beach who are directly affected by this decision” Ms Forrest said.

“In addition, the \$100,000 promised at the last election to address this issue must be made available to support any work that can be undertaken in this area” Ms Forrest said.

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For further information contact Ruth Forrest on 0419 879 524.