

Vandals destroy dune work

By **JANINE O'NEILL**

ENVIRONMENTAL vandals are destroying conservation measures at Fingal Beach.

Vegetation is being trampled, sand dunes destroyed and walkways ruined in what the Fingal Head Dunecare Group report to be a regular course of destruction.

In the wake of two walkways and a vehicle access route being destroyed at the beach earlier this week the group called on any witnesses to contact police.

More than 200 strips of wire, running between the fence poles of the walkways, were cut and panels broken, Dunecare president Kate Piper said.

She said the vandals had left the beach vulnerable to erosion and it could take weeks to reverse the damage already done.

"The walkways are there to prevent people from inadvertently trampling on sand dune vegetation," Ms Piper said.

"One of the only ways of preserving sand on dunes is by planting vegetation that binds the dunes and by keeping people from climbing along eroded areas.

"Every centimetre of height lost from sand dunes can mean weeks of recovery time."

Dunecare nursery supervisor Earl Hayes said beach signs have also been destroyed.

"The signs are coated in black the vegetation planted by local high school students has been torn out," Mr Hayes said.

"Every time someone tries to do something right at the beach it is wrecked.

"These environmental vandals are creating double the workload for volunteers and double the cost for ratepayers who pay for the replacement of materials."

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□ Fingal Head Dunecare Group president Kate Piper and nursery supervisor Earl Hays with fencing wire ripped down by vandals.