

## Next Steps

**Now**

Open entrance when required, as per the entrance management policy

**Now**

All future development proposals on low lying land around Bega River should be above 3 m AHD (in the absence of a contemporary flood study)

**10-100 yrs**

Progressive raising / relocation of low lying assets to above 2.5 m AHD

## In Brief

- 1) Bega River entrance may be opened when water level reaches 1.36 m AHD(\*).
- 2) Bega River entrance may be opened between 1.26 and 1.36 m AHD if there is significant rainfall predicted within the catchment in the next 24 hours.
- 3) Relevant authorities will be notified before opening the entrance.
- 4) A pilot channel will be excavated to initiate entrance breakout.
- 5) The trigger level for entrance opening will be increased progressively in the future in response to returning the lake to a more natural opening regime and to incorporate sea level rise.

(\* ) AHD = Australian Height Datum. Zero AHD is approx. mean sea level.

# Managing the Bega River Entrance

An entrance management policy for long term sustainability



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# Why Manage the Entrance?

Bega River is one of the most popular recreational estuaries in the Bega Valley Shire. Like most Intermittently Closed and Open Lakes or Lagoons (ICOLs) Bega River's ecology and habitats have adapted to its unique behaviour of sometimes being open and sometimes being closed to the ocean.

Recreational and rural development around the foreshores of the estuary means that inundation may occur when estuary levels are high and the entrance is closed. Some of the more significant assets inundated under these conditions are parts of the Tathra Golf Course, Tathra Bermagui road and agricultural land further up the catchment at Jellat Jellat. In accordance with the Bega River Entrance Management Policy, Council may artificially open the entrance of the lake when foreshore flooding becomes excessive.

In an effort to minimise future artificial intervention, the Policy also targets flood risk management around the foreshores. In time, it is hoped that all significant development around the estuaries edges have been raised, relocated or flood-proofed so that the lake entrance can be left to open more naturally.

Future climate change, and sea level rise in particular, also means that council needs to start planning carefully for future development on low lying lands surrounding all coastal lakes and estuaries in the Shire, including Bega River.

# Entrance Management Process

