

Bike path threat to cassowaries

A BICYCLE path linking Mission Beach's villages could impact on the town's cassowary population, according to conservation group C4.

Spokeswoman Liz Gallie said more road deaths were likely as a result of the bike path's construction.

"There have been two adult cassowary deaths in a month after the birds have attempted to cross roads at the coastal tourist town," Ms Gallie said.

"The bikeway-walkway has widened the road and extended into an open area at a known cassowary road crossing."

Ms Gallie said residents had observed the birds reaching a dead end at the steep embankments created by the construction and subsequently darting on to the roadway.

Ms Gallie said the birds were most at risk during the holidays and urged motorists to be on the lookout for cassowaries when driving.

"Mission Beach is known for being the best chance of seeing a cassowary in the wild," she said.

"It can be anticipated that there will be an increased and hurried flow of traffic along all roads at Mission Beach over the holiday period, particularly on Cassowary Drive.

"C4 has suggested a temporary extension of the 60km/h as far as the crossing until the problem is solved and then a permanent reduction in the speed limit with traffic calming devices."

C4 has designed and is placing temporary signs to help alert drivers to the increased risk for cassowaries attempting to cross in the 80 km/h stretch of road on Cassowary Drive.

"We are asking motorists to be extra careful and watch out for cassowaries on roads at Mission Beach this holiday season and to observe the signs," Ms Gallie said.