



Media Release

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REPURPOSING FLOOD DEBRIS SAVES \$2.4 MILLION IN THE NORTHERN RIVERS

More than 10 Olympic sized swimming pools of flood debris has been diverted from landfill and reused, saving \$2.4 million following a collaborative effort between the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and Richmond Valley Council.

The debris, made up of soil and vegetation from landslips during the 2022 floods was collected from the damaged Naughtons Gap Road and now repurposed for the Northern Rivers Rail trail.

More than 12,000 tonnes of the material has now been placed along both sides of the trail to provide added stability and improve safety for cyclists.

NSW EPA Executive Director Operations, Jason Gordon said this is a great example of what can be achieved when we all work together.

“Severe weather events often generate significant waste volumes and it can be challenging and costly to clean-up. Rather than this material being dumped into landfill we’ve come up with a joint solution by reusing it to improve an important community and tourism asset.

“We know the impact the floods left on Northern Rivers communities is still being felt today but we are committed to continuing to work with Council and other agencies to ensure projects like this one come to life and help the region thrive once again.”

Richmond Valley Council Mayor, Robert Mustow said right from the word go the EPA engaged with us to come up with positive solutions.

“If this material ended up in landfill it would have cost \$2.4 million. This huge saving is fantastic for our community seeing important repair work done while enabling us to upgrade infrastructure.”

The EPA is continuing to work with Council on multiple flood recovery projects to minimise material being sent to landfill.

Naughtons Gap Road has been closed since 2021 and is set reopen in December as part of the \$15.8 million Betterment of Naughtons Gap Road project. The project to repair the road and make it more resilient to future natural disasters was funded jointly by the Australian and NSW Governments and was the first Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package project to start work. For more information visit [Council’s website](#).

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As the environmental steward and regulator of our State we are committed to a sustainable future.

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