



# Robyn Preston MP

## Member for Hawkesbury

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **NSW GOVERNMENT FUNDING TO UPGRADE CROWN LANDS FACILITIES IN HAWKESBURY**

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP has announced the NSW Government will deliver \$122,931 in funding to improve Crown land reserves and community facilities in the Hawkesbury area.

Robyn Preston MP said the funding is being provided by the NSW Government under its Crown Reserves Improvement Fund (CRIF) program and will be a great asset to the community.

“Crown reserves provide land for recreation, community organisations and facilities and protect our environment including habitat for native plants and animals,” Ms Preston said.

“I know how important these assets are to Hawkesbury so the announcement of \$110,681 for the maintenance and improvements of Freemans Reach School of Arts hall is well deserved. Works will include the construction of a retaining wall, repairs to the iron wall, fencing, new pathways, painting, tree pruning and the installation of a fire hydrant.”

The Mechanics Institute was granted land, locally known as Freemans Land, by the Department of Lands for the Freemans Reach School of Arts building which was largely built by volunteer labour and was opened on 11 April 1901.

Over the decades the Freemans Reach School of Arts hall has been hired by families holding parties for WW1 and WW2 soldiers who were farewelled by family before going to war. Weddings, christenings, birthday parties, church bazaars, presentation nights have all been held for locals. It has been a school room and much more.

“I’d like to congratulate Glenda Chapman for submitting the application for this grant,” Ms Preston said.

Hawkesbury River County Council will also receive CRIS funding of \$12,250 for the harvesting of aquatic weeds from the nearby Nepean River.

“Maintaining and enhancing our Crown reserves means residents have access to quality spaces for sports and fitness, or to just relax, rejuvenate and to get in touch with nature and each other.” Ms Preston said.

Minister for Lands and Water Kevin Anderson said Crown reserves play an important role in business, tourism, recreation, well-being and the biodiversity of the state which is why the NSW Government is delivering this funding.

“Crown land covers around 34 million hectares or 42 per cent of NSW and we have about 35,000 Crown reserves that accommodate parks, community halls, nature areas, showgrounds, sporting facilities, camping areas and walking tracks,” Mr Anderson said.

“They also provide support to community groups like Men’s Sheds, Police Citizens Youth Clubs, Surf Life Saving clubs Scouts and Girl Guides. These groups all do amazing work which is why it is so important the NSW Government continues to support them.

“These projects funded by the NSW Government will benefit many thousands of people and contribute to the cultural, sporting and recreational life of hundreds of communities with the potential to provide stimulus to local economies and create jobs.”

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