

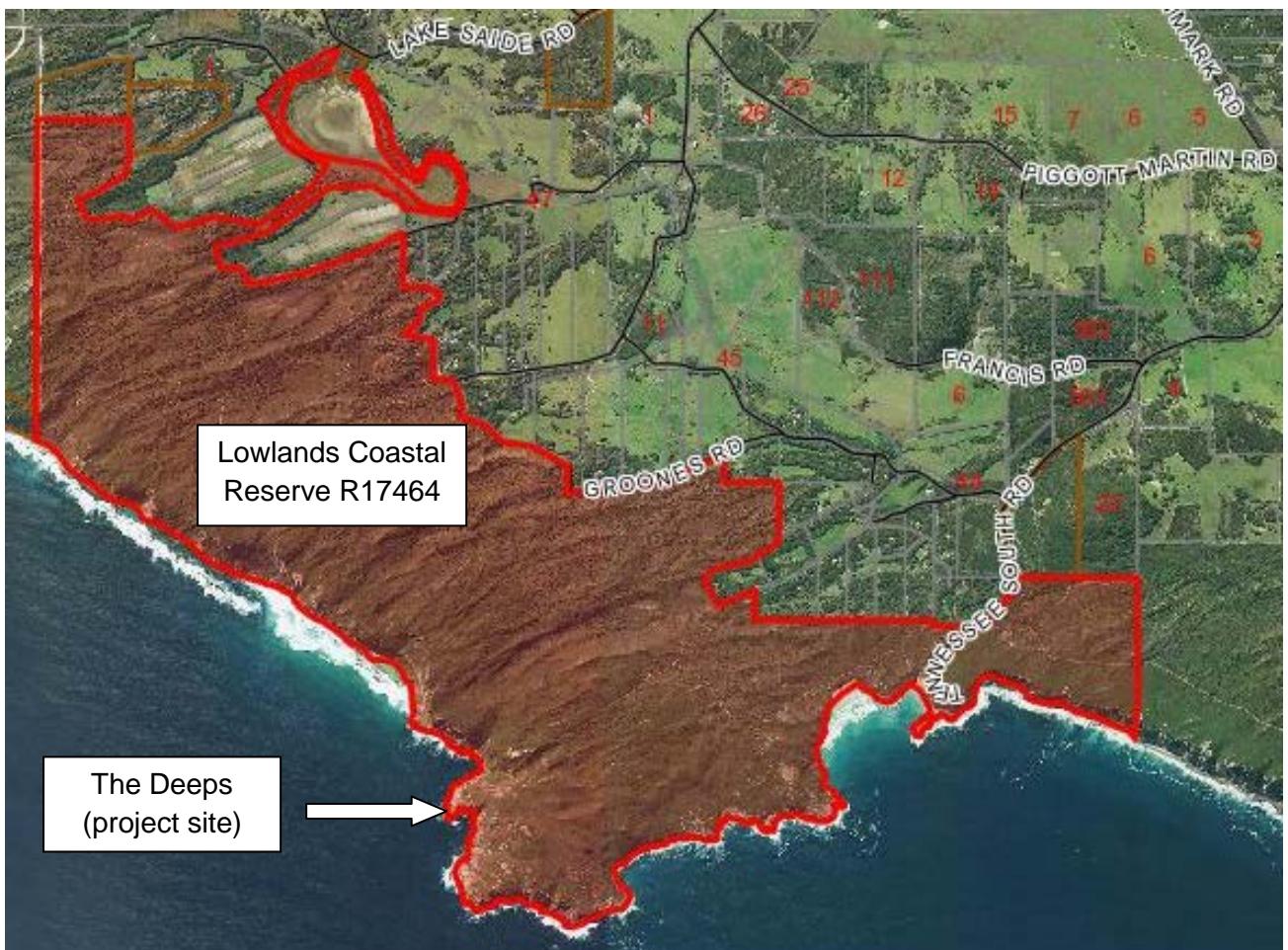
**5.3: STATE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FUNDING -  
LOWLANDS RESERVE**

<b>Land Description</b>	: Lowlands Coastal Reserve (R17464)
<b>Proponent</b>	: City of Albany
<b>Owner</b>	: Crown Land Managed by the City of Albany
<b>Business Entity Name</b>	: N/A
<b>Attachments</b>	: Letter from State NRM offering grant of \$26,000.
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	: Executive Director of Works and Services (S Grimmer)

**IN BRIEF**

- This \$46,000 project will allow visitors and Fire and Emergency Services reliable access to this popular fishing spot, without drivers feeling the need to drive off tracks, and consequently damage the surrounding environment. Without accepting the \$26,000 funding from the State Natural Resource Management Office, this project cannot proceed this financial year.
- The State Natural Resource Management Office will provide funding of \$26,000. With \$20,000 funding (already budgeted) from the City, this project can be undertaken this financial year.

**Maps and Diagrams:**



Location Map





Site Map

**RECOMMENDATION**

**ITEM 5.3: RESPONSIBLE OFFICER RECOMMENDATION  
VOTING REQUIREMENT: ABSOLUTE MAJORITY**

**THAT Council:**

- 1. APPROVE the offer of funding totalling \$26,000 from the State Natural Resource Management Office for the project “Biodiversity Conservation through the stabilisation of 4WD tracks within Lowlands Coastal Reserve”; and**
- 2. AUTHORISE the transfer of \$20,000 from existing approved job numbers (\$10,000 from Trail Maintenance (job number 0107); \$10,000 from Natural Reserve Maintenance (job number NR999)).**

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The City of Albany submitted an application to the State Natural Resource Management Office in June 2012, for the project *Biodiversity conservation through the stabilisation of 4WD tracks within Lowlands coastal reserve*, totalling \$46,000. On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2012, the City received notification that the application was successful, and that the City was being offered \$26,000 funding.

## **DISCUSSION**

2. Lowlands Coastal Reserve is a popular location to visit by locals and visitors to the South Coast, for fishing, 4WDing, surfing, and for enjoying the outdoors. Popular sites within the reserve include Main Beach, Second Beach, Bum Rock and The Deeps. Access to these sites (except Main Beach) is via sandy 4WD tracks that become quite a challenge to visitors. These tracks constantly need attention to allow visitors, and fire and emergency services access to these locations, without drivers feeling the need to drive off tracks, and consequently damaging the surrounding environment.
3. This project primarily involves the stabilisation of the track to The Deeps using rubber belting, and more signage advising visitors of appropriate 4WDing techniques. Considerable time has been spent investigating an affordable solution to stabilising this track. Trial sites near Walpole were visited, and other professionals dealing with similar situations were consulted. Rubber belting installed at a shorter and less steep site within Lowlands Reserve in 2010, has been successful to date.
4. The Deeps track is 400 m long, and has a gradient of approximately 20 degrees straight up and down a coastal dune. Attempts have already been made to close the steepest part of the track, by installing steps and bollards, but vandals have pulled out bollards and driven down the steps. The City now believes the best way to manage these types of areas is to provide one good access track, to allow people to continue to use these areas, whilst also conserving the natural environment.
5. The Youngs Siding Community Association has already successfully closed and rehabilitated multiple tracks (approx 15 tracks, 10 years ago) that existed at The Deeps, created by people who could not get up the hill on the main track. Attempts have been made to maintain (i.e. grade) the main track in good order, to encourage people to stick to this track. However, in summer, when the sand is dry, the track remains difficult to ascend. Consequently, people have started driving off the track again, over rehabilitated areas.
6. It is thought that the careful installation and maintenance of rubber belting at The Deeps is the best way to stabilise the site. Three signs asking people to “Reduce Tyre Pressure” will be installed, as well as a sign at the bottom of the belting providing advice on how best to get up the hill. Brushing will be cut from the edges of tracks within the Reserve to assist with the rehabilitation of areas adjacent to the main track. Thousands of seedlings have already been planted in the area by the community, over a number of years.

## **GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION**

7. There are no Government consultation requirements relating to this matter.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT**

8. The following public consultation has been undertaken for this project:
- The Young Sidings Community Association is a partner in the project.
  - The South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. is a partner in this project.
  - The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council was consulted in April 2012, and they had no objection to the project.
  - Outcomes of the recently conducted 4WD Visitor Survey for Lowlands Reserve indicates that the community supports the idea of using rubber belting within Lowlands Reserve, and the need for more signs encouraging people to lower their tyre pressure.

## **STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

9. Under the *Local Government Act 1995*, Section 6.8, a local government is not to incur expenditure from its municipal fund for an additional purpose except where the expenditure:
- a. is incurred in a financial year before the adoption of the annual budget by the local government
  - b. is authorised in advance by a resolution (absolute majority required) or
  - c. is authorised in advance by the mayor in an emergency.

## **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

10. This item directly relates to the following elements of the 2011 City of Albany Strategic Plan:

***Key Focus Area***

*Lifestyle and Environment*

***Community Priority***

*Preservation of Albany's Uniqueness*

***Proposed Strategies***

*Protect remnant vegetation (particularly in urban areas) to preserve Albany's beauty and uniqueness*

11. This item directly relates to the following elements of Southern Shores 2009 – 2030

***8.4 Coastal Rehabilitation.*** *A Rehabilitation plans should be developed and implemented for damaged coastal environments based on recommendations and prioritisation in coastal management plans.*

12. This item contributes directly to the implementation of the Lowlands Coastal Reserve Management Plan (2003). Adoption Date 18/11/03 Adoption Reference OCM Item 13.5.1.

**5.3 4WD Vehicle Track Plan.** *The Deeps track is identified as the highest priority track in the Lowlands Coastal Reserve as these tracks are highly degraded. Belting is recommended for this site.*

13. This item achieves The Southern Prospects 2011 - 2016 aspiration of maintaining or improving our coastal and marine systems by establishing management priorities and managing threats to coastal and marine environments and ensuring that established landscape linkages with integrity of Coastal Corridor are protected and their condition improved.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

14. There are no policy implications relating to this matter.

**RISK IDENTIFICATION & MITIGATION**

15. The risk identification and categorisation relies on the City’s Risk Management Framework.

Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Analysis	Mitigation
<i>Project not approved and project does not go ahead. The natural environment continues to be degraded.</i>	<i>Almost certain</i>	<i>Minor</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Mitigation entirely dependent on Council and/or external funding.</i>

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

16. The City’s contribution to this project comprises in-kind staff time (approximately 8 weeks of 1 FTE over total period of project), as well as \$20,000 from existing approved job numbers (\$10,000 from Trail Maintenance (project number 0107); \$10,000 from Natural Reserve Maintenance (project number NR999)).
17. On-going maintenance of the site will be required, and is predicted to cost approximately \$5,000 every 3 years.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

18. There are no legal implications relating to this matter.

**ALTERNATE OPTIONS**

19. The Council may elect to not accept the funding in accordance with the State Natural Resource Management Office Program, and therefore forfeit the \$26,000 funding.

<b>Consulted References</b>	:	Lowlands Coastal Reserve Management Plan (2003)
<b>File Number (Name of Ward)</b>	:	EM.PLA.8 (West Ward)
<b>Previous Reference</b>	:	Nil.