

## SUSTAINABLE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The 2014-15 ACT Budget invests \$46.3 million in the environment and biodiversity and to ensure that areas of national environmental significance continue to be protected from threats such as overgrazing, weeds and ongoing development, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services Shane Rattenbury and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development Simon Corbell announced today.

### **Molonglo Valley – stage 2 implementation of the NES Plan**

**Work will continue in the Molonglo Valley to protect the local environment from potential impacts of residential development in the area and enhance the natural habitat.**

The Molonglo Valley is known habitat for the Pink-tailed Worm-lizard, the Swift and Superb Parrots as well as natural temperate grassland and box gum woodland. The 2014-15 Budget provides \$5.3 million to deliver a four year program of projects in the Molonglo Valley to meet the ACT Government's commitments in the Molonglo Valley Plan for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance (NES Plan).

### **Enhanced biodiversity stewardship**

**The 2014-15 ACT Budget provides \$959,000 to continue the enhanced biodiversity stewardship program in 2014-15.**

The program will deliver a package of works that will contribute to enhanced biodiversity through new and follow-up rabbit control projects and work to control weeds of national significance. Funding will also harness the potential of community volunteers in delivering positive environmental outcomes by expanding the ParkCare program.

### **Environmental offsets**

**The ACT Government is committed to sustainable growth and development. To minimise the impact of development projects, the 2014-15 Budget provides over \$1.5 million in funding toward environmental offset initiatives.**

This includes a total of \$872,000 allocated over four years to conserve an area in Macgregor West (Jarramlee) to offset the impact on the Golden Sun Moth and natural temperate grassland of the Lawson South residential development. This funding will deliver projects with the overarching aim of improving the long term condition and sustainability of the natural temperate grassland and Golden Sun Moth population within the offset site.

A further \$462,000 is provided over three years to extend the Gungaharra Grasslands Nature Reserve by 21.6 hectares and the Mulangarri Nature Reserve by 22.8 hectares. Both reserves support Striped Legless Lizard and Golden Sun Moth habitat and will be used to offset the impact on these species from development at Exhibition Park in Canberra.

## **Isabella Weir spillway upgrade**

**Funding of \$10.2 million is being invested to increase the capacity of the Isabella Weir as part of the water quality protection system on Tuggeranong Creek.**

The proposed Greenway Lakeside development (Southquay), which is immediately downstream of Isabella Weir and pond, prompted a re-assessment of the flood safety issues associated with the weir. Increasing the capacity of the spillway will ensure national design guidelines are met.

## **Bushfire management and maintenance operations**

**The 2014-15 ACT Budget will deliver \$8.805 million over four years for ongoing bushfire management and maintenance operations in rural and forest areas across Canberra.**

This includes two new dedicated positions; the first focussed on managing the 4,500 km network of rural fire trails and access roads with the second position focused on management of the ACT's 7,000 ha commercial pine plantation resource and its associated recreational activities.

This funding will also support maintenance activities in the former pine forest areas including fire management and weed control.

The ACT's Strategic Bushfire Management Plan also has \$3.5 million funding over two years to implement activities including the upgrade, design and construction of fire trails and construction of Inner Asset Protection Zones and water access points.

\$1.9 million has been allocated to implement the recently prepared Stromlo Forest Park Bushfire Management Plan.

## **Parks and City Services**

**The 2014-15 ACT Budget provides \$15.2 million over four years to assist with the management of Canberra's national parks and reserves and to help maintain urban parks, trees, shopping centres and other community open space areas.**

In 2013, the ACT Government commissioned a review of Parks and City Services (PACS) to look closely at the current operating environment and to identify ways of ensuring the sustainability of critical services PACS delivers.

The review found that to reasonably sustain core PACS functions, and continue to deliver important municipal services to the Canberra community, an increase in base funding was required.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring quality services are provided to the community. The outcomes of the review will ensure continued delivery of services into the future as the city continues to grow.