



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW ENVIRONMENTAL TOURISM INITIATIVES

Chief Minister and Minister for the Environment Jon Stanhope today said the 2004-05 Budget provided funding to fulfil the Government's commitment to exploring environmental tourism opportunities in the ACT.

"We are very privileged in the ACT to have more than 50% of the Territory protected in Nature Reserves and National Parks," said Mr Stanhope.

"My Government is committed to protecting the environment while also taking the opportunity to promote these areas for tourism.

"Around Australia, tree top walks and elevated viewing platforms have provided visitors with an opportunity to explore the wonders of the environment without leaving a damaging footprint on the natural ecosystem.

"The 2004-05 Budget provides \$150,000 to investigate the engineering feasibility and potential locations for a tree-top walk in the ACT.

"One of the key themes of the *Canberra Plan* is 'Living with the Environment' through providing improved recreational opportunities in the ACT. This initiative is a good example of how the Government is exploring these opportunities in creative ways.

"In addition to examining the feasibility, the first stage of this project will also look at preliminary designs which complement the surroundings while providing a unique perspective of our natural environment to visitors to the ACT.

The Government has also provided \$250,000 to develop a unique Heritage Trail from Angle Crossing in the south to Uriarra in the north. This is separate to the \$250,000 which has also been provided to repair the walking track in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor linking Pine Island, Kambah Pool and the Cotter.

"With such a rich natural and cultural heritage in the ACT, the Government is committed to supporting initiatives to capitalise on these assets for the benefit of our community.

"The 2004-05 Budget fulfils our commitment to restoring our natural environment and enhancing opportunities to enjoy it," said Mr Stanhope.

Statement Ends