



ACT Government
2004-2005 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

CONTINUING THE CLEAN-UP OF OUR BURNT FORESTS

The 2004-05 Budget provides for the ongoing clean-up and replanting of our burnt plantation estate using the proceeds of insurance claims.

Urban Services Minister Bill Wood said ACT Forests lost approximately 10,500 hectares of its pine plantation in the January 2003 bushfire – two-thirds of its plantation estate.

“A major component of the clean-up operation is the massive debris removal program, which involves heaping into piles and burning material that cannot be salvaged,” Mr Wood said.

“ACT Forests has so far cleared approximately 4500ha of the burnt estate, with the Budget to provide \$6 million over the next three years to complete the program. This will involve clearing those areas where access and terrain make clean-up operations more difficult.

“Over the next four years, ACT Forests intends to plant around 4930 hectares, which is just under half of the plantation area destroyed during the 2003 bushfires.

“The Budget allocates \$8.94 million over four years for the pine re-establishment program and \$1.77 million over four years for the native/exotic establishment program. This funding covers site preparation, planting, fertilising and the purchase of seedlings.

“Next financial year, ACT Forests intends to plant 1.2 million pine trees over an area of 1,200 hectares and 350,000 native and exotic plants over an area of 700 hectares. The plantings will take place in areas such as Deeks Forest Park and Pierces Creek.

“The Budget also allocates \$3.19 million over the next four years to develop Stromlo Forest Park and the Fire Abatement Zone to enhance recreational opportunities.

“A further \$1million has been allocated for the replacement of burnt fencing, while \$1.15 million will go towards rehabilitating and improving roads in forest areas,” Mr Wood said.

Statement ends.

