



ACT Government
2005-2006 BUDGET

MEDIA RELEASE

**ADDITIONAL \$6 MILLION ALLOCATED FOR
STROMLO FOREST PARK**

Stromlo Forest, loved by generations of Canberra joggers, mountain bikers and dog walkers and destroyed in the 2003 bushfires, will be rebuilt into a world-class recreational zone, with an allocation of \$6 million in the 2005-06 Budget, Chief Minister Jon Stanhope said today.

“More than a million people a year used Stromlo Forest each year before the fires, making it the second most frequented recreational area in the ACT, behind Lake Burley Griffin,” Mr Stanhope said.

“The rebuilt park, based around Mount Stromlo, will prove even more popular with Canberrans and its facilities will put the ACT in the running to attract major national and international events.

“Commonwealth and world champion marathon runner Rob De Castella, who spent so many hours pounding the cross-country trails in the original forest park, has been deeply involved in developing concepts for a world-class cross-country course, with one, two and three kilometre loops.

“And former Olympic cyclist Stephen Hodge has helped design a criterium circuit capable of hosting national cycling events.

“These two initiatives alone elevate the park to an new level, benefiting not only local athletes but positioning the ACT to bid far more effectively for competitive events.

“In addition to the criterium, Stromlo Forest Park is eventually expected to be the focus of major cycling events such as The Mont 24 and the Brindabella Classic.”

Mr Stanhope said that \$6 million had been committed over four years for the development of Stromlo Forest Park. The funding was on top of the \$1.4 million in recurrent funding that had been allocated for maintenance of the site.

The additional funding would enable the Government to develop the cross-country and cycling circuits, construct toilet and changing facilities and a central marshalling facility, and improve entry arrangements to the site.

A significant replanting program would begin next spring, with up to 300 hectares of land along the Cotter Road to be replanted this year.

The replanting would involve a mix of native and exotic trees, creating woodland settings and open areas along with eucalypt stands and pine groves.

“The rebuilt park will offer something for everybody. The Government expects that it will be extremely popular with runners, horse riders, on- and off-road cyclists, triathletes, orienteers and school and family groups,” Mr Stanhope said.

“The Mount Stromlo area was badly burnt in the 2003 bushfires and the Government believes it is crucial that something of lasting value emerge from that experience. This investment reflects the Government’s commitment to re-establishing our damaged non-urban areas and is another big step in the community recovery process.”

Statement ends