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Helping preserve the ACT's potable water supplies

The ACT Labor Government has today allocated \$13.9 million to help reduce demand on the ACT's potable water supplies, Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water, Simon Corbell, has announced.

The funding, to be allocated over two years, will fast-track the replacement of storm water drains with wetland pond developments which will, in turn, provide non-potable water for irrigation of local parks, ovals and open green spaces.

"Protecting our potable water supplies is a matter of urgency for the ACT Government and in response, the Government is using the Budget to fund the construction of ponds in Dickson and Lyneham that will provide secure non-potable water sources," Mr Corbell said.

"This initiative is part of the successful *Think water, act water* strategy that has already resulted in a 20 percent reduction in water consumption since 2002.

"It also supports the *Where Will We Play* program which will ensure that no outdoor sporting facility in the ACT will rely solely on the drinking water supply for irrigation by 2013," he said.

This program fulfils commitments made through the Labor-Greens Parliamentary Agreement.

The ACT Government has partnered with the CSIRO to develop the Canberra Integrated Urban Waterways project, a long term master plan for the implementation of stormwater harvesting in the ACT.

The Commonwealth Government has already provided \$10.2 million as part of the Water Smart Australia program to assist in the construction of a pond in Mitchell to provide non-potable water for irrigation.

"The ponds serve several important purposes. They improve water quality and create aquatic habitats for several species of plants and animals, as well as improving the appearance of the landscape," Mr Corbell said.

“These ponds are evidence the ACT is taking a practical approach to ongoing water shortages around the ACT.

“The ACT Government is focused on reducing the demand on our potable water supplies and increasing supply capacity.

“Projects being undertaken by ACTEW, including the Murrumbidgee to Googong pipeline project, purchasing of water from Tantangara Reservoir and enlarging the Cotter Dam, are all part of securing Canberra’s water supply.

5 May 2009

Media Contact: Patrick Cronan 6205 0401(w) 0432 758 224(m)