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Investing in our natural environment

Endangered species such as the Corroboree frog and the Grassland Earless Dragon, and some of the Territory's most precious and fragile ecosystems, will benefit from targeted funding through the 2010-11 ACT Budget, Chief Minister and Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Jon Stanhope, announced today.

"While the primary focus of this Budget is on our growing city, we must never forget that Canberrans are privileged to live so intimately with nature and that we have a responsibility to care for our environment," Mr Stanhope said.

"The 2010-11 Budget, delivered in this United Nations Year of Biodiversity, therefore includes some carefully directed funding."

Mr Stanhope said the Budget provided \$1.346 million over four years for the conservation of threatened species.

"New breeding programs for the Tasmanian Bettongs and the Grassland Earless Dragons will be established at Tidbinbilla and the Corroboree Frog breeding program will be continued.

"There's also funding for a program of tree plantings to create a more reliable food source for the Glossy Black Cockatoo.

"The Government has recommitted to a partnership with the University of Canberra to research threatened grassland animals, and a joint research effort with the Australian National University, which is seeing native animal species reintroduced into the Mulligans Flat Sanctuary after decades of local extinction."

Mr Stanhope said the Budget provided \$100,000 for the restoration of the Mulligan's Flat Dam, \$150,000 for the revegetation of Mt Painter and \$200,000 for weed control at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

He also announced that more than \$2.3 million would be invested over three years for physical upgrades at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands in consultation with a new interim board of management.

"With the urban development of East Lake imminent, and with considerable residential development already completed nearby on the Kingston Foreshore, it is important that we plan and invest diligently for the future of this important, natural jewel," Mr Stanhope said.

Improvements to visitor amenities will include work on the network of hides, infrastructure to enhance opportunities for the study of birdlife, and the construction of a new and more accessible walking track network.

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