



ACT Government

2003-2004 BUDGET

PROTECTING OUR GRASSY WOODLANDS

The Stanhope Government has moved to protect and restore Canberra's grassy woodlands, Chief Minister and Minister for the Environment, Jon Stanhope, said today.

The ACT Government has allocated \$1.671 million over four years to protect and restore grassy woodlands in the valleys and lower hills slopes of the ACT.

"The people of Canberra cherish our nature parks and the bush that surrounds and my Government has recognised and acted on the need to safeguard our natural environment.

"Canberra's grassy woodlands are in urgent need of remediation and protection.

"These woodlands once covered much of the valleys and slopes of where Canberra is now built.

"Remaining areas are now threatened by urban expansion, are fragmented or are in a poor condition.

"My Government has set aside substantial funds over the next four years to restore woodlands in habitats previously cleared of trees and to protect and enhance remnant woodlands in rural areas. This includes the appointment of two additional field staff to assist in the establishment and ongoing management of the woodland reserves.

"The protection and restoration of these woodlands will also protect the habitat for about 20 threatened and declining woodland birds which have suffered most from habitat loss in the ACT region.

"We are increasing the amount of yellow box/ red gum woodland going into reserve by a third.

"The funding will allow the grassy woodlands to be incorporated into the Canberra Nature Park, adding large areas in good condition in the Jerrabomberra Valley and East Gungahlin.

"It will also enhance the conservation values of remnant woodlands in rural areas, by enlarging small patches and linking them in a program of landscape reconstruction.

"My Government recognises the importance of community involvement in the maintenance of our environment, and the funding for this initiative will support community partnerships and education for grassy ecosystems.

"This will further ensure the protection and sustainability of these important environmental habitats into the future," said Mr Stanhope.

Media Release



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The funding under this budget initiative will be guided by the Lowland Woodlands Conservation Strategy, released for public comment by the Chief Minister earlier in the month. This strategy details a system for the integrated management, protection and enhancement of lowland woodlands in the ACT.

Specific initiatives covered in the strategy and funded through the budget include:

- Adding to the Canberra Nature Park grassy woodland in good condition at Callum Brae in the Jerrabomberra Valley (300 hectares) and Gooroo in East Gungahlin (750 hectares);
- Planting yellow box and red gum trees in secondary grassland (woodlands previously cleared of trees) to restore woodland habitat;
- Protecting habitat for threatened woodland species.
- Enhancing conservation values of remnant woodlands in rural areas, by enlarging small patches and linking them in a program of landscape reconstruction; and
- Supporting community partnerships and education for grassy ecosystems.

Statement ends.