

Tuesday, 23 June 2015

## **RECORD ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE SPEND IN NSW BUDGET**

A record \$1.66 billion in this year's NSW Budget will be invested to protect the State's precious national parks and to preserve and to protect significant heritage assets and local communities from pollution and environmental harm.

This is a 3.9 per cent increase on last year's Budget to help secure the State's environment and heritage for generations to come.

Environment and Heritage Minister Mark Speakman said: "The increased budget expenditure is a clear demonstration of the priority the Government places on securing a better future for the people of NSW by supporting a healthy environment."

Key portfolio budget highlights include (2015-16 spending unless otherwise indicated):

### **Environmental Protection**

- More than \$160 million will be allocated to the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to ensure strong environmental regulation of industry and enforcement of environmental legislation, and a strong response to pollution incidents.
- This includes \$5.6 million which will be allocated to support the EPA's role as the sole authority undertaking compliance and enforcement for all gas activities in the State under the NSW Gas Plan.
- More than \$56 million will also be spent by the Environmental Trust to increase opportunities for the community, industry and agencies to protect their environment through restoration, research and education and support programs.

### **Waste**

- \$66 million (within the EPA's budgeted expenditure of \$160 million) will be allocated to transform waste management in NSW and to increase education around better waste management practices across all sectors of the community.
- An additional \$49 million is being contributed to these programs from the Environmental Trust, to support a total investment in waste and resource recovery of \$115 million.

### **Container Deposit Scheme**

- The Government is committing \$2.65 million towards the design and implementation of a cost-effective container deposit scheme to reduce litter.

### **Climate Change**

- \$26 million will be allocated to help the community to prepare for floods and coastal erosion. The funding will support local councils to develop and to implement coastal and floodplain management plans and to undertake works to restore and protect the State's magnificent coastline and its estuaries.
- A further \$34 million will be set aside to improve the energy productivity and competitiveness of the NSW economy in order to help prepare the State for the challenges of the future, including changing climate.

### **Biodiversity**

- \$7 million will be allocated to the Office of Environment and Heritage for the design of the biodiversity reforms that will deliver the Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review Panel's recommendations.

### **Parklands**

- More than \$120 million (over four years) will be spent to improving parklands (Western Sydney Parklands and Parramatta Park) in Western Sydney, where more than three million people call home.
- More than \$22 million will be spent by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Mount Annan and Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens to upgrade facilities and infrastructure, including construction of the new Horticultural Display Centre.
- Nearly \$13 million of capital investment will be made in Centennial Parklands for upgrading park facilities, including completion of Robertson Road Synthetic Fields and improvements at E.S. Marks Athletics Field.

### **Heritage**

- The NSW Government will commit \$47 million towards conserving and celebrating the State's unique Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage.
- The NSW Government is providing more than \$20 million over the next four years, including \$13 million of new funding, to preserve and refurbish heritage properties under the care of the Historic Houses Trust.