



## Recommended grassland reserve in Majura Valley will protect threatened species

The ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment Dr Maxine Cooper has recommended the ACT and Australian Government establish a grassland reserve in the Majura Valley to protect the endangered Grassland Earless Dragon and other endangered species; and afford long-term protection to the endangered Natural Temperate Grassland – the crown jewel of grasslands. Endangered grasslands are protected in reserves in all of the ACT's valley areas except in the Majura Valley.

In a report to the ACT Government on lowland native grassland, the Commissioner confirmed the ecological importance of the Natural Temperate Grassland sites in Majura Valley, which is one of two areas in the ACT where the Grassland Earless Dragons are found. The other area where they are found in the ACT is Jerrabomberra Valley. There are only three major areas of grasslands left in the world that support the endangered Grassland Earless Dragon.

"There is an opportunity now to act to protect these endangered species", said Dr Cooper. "Their existence is precarious. Through land use changes and development much of their natural grassland habitat has been removed. The importance of these species is acknowledged by both the Territory and Australian Governments."

The Grassland reserve would be located near Majura road, north of the Canberra Airport.

Canberra Airport Group has managed the lowland native grassland on their land such that it is in good condition" Dr Cooper said. "By making land to the north of the airport a grassland reserve we can afford it long-term protection and sustain a habitat where these endangered species will survive and hopefully thrive".

"The main grassland locations in the ACT and the endangered species that inhabit them can be protected and enhanced by creating a new grassland reserve in the Majura Valley and expanding Mount Ainslie Reserve, Aranda Bushland and Black Mountain Reserve" Dr Cooper said

"By managing the key processes threatening the lowland native grassland and strengthening managements through policy and legislation, we can preserve these areas for future generations" Dr Cooper said.

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