

REPORT
of the
BIRD FORUM
19 February 2010

*Informing the Commissioner for Sustainability
and the Environment's Investigation into:*

- *ACT Government tree management practices and Canberra's urban forest renewal; and*
- *Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves), the Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores.*

Prepared for
The Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment
by BEACONHILL Consulting

February 2010

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1. INTRODUCTION

On 19 February 2010, selected scientists, researchers, government officers, and members of environment, wildlife and ornithological organisations met at the seminar rooms of the CSIRO Sustainability Ecosystems, Gungahlin Homestead, Crace. The gathering was to provide information for the:

1. the ACT Government's tree management practices and the renewal of Canberra's urban forest (referred to as the Tree Investigation) ([Attachment E: Investigations – Terms of Reference](#)) and;
2. the Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves), the Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores (the Canberra Nature Park Investigation) ([Attachment E: Investigations – Terms of Reference](#)).

The objectives of the Bird Forum were identified on the program provided to all participants. To:

- provide and/or identify information on birds that is relevant to the Investigations of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment;
- allow people with expertise and knowledge to collectively share their views on the effect of the urban forest and nature reserve system on the diversity, quantity and health of birds in the ACT and region;
- identify sources of existing information and gaps;
- identify likely and possible future changes in the urban forest and nature reserve system and highlight the current and future challenges and opportunities for birds from these changes;
- identify innovative approaches that might need to be explored to better manage the urban forest and nature reserve system to afford greater protection for birds;
- identify priority areas for research; and
- consider resourcing needs for the above.

2. PROCEEDINGS AND OUTCOMES

Following a welcome by the Commissioner, and an update on the investigation, Peter Davey, Chair of the Forum, outlined the program and proceedings. The program was divided into:

1. presentations made by experts in the relevant fields who provided updates on current and previous research into bird habitats and needs, and Urban Forest renewal; and
2. small focus group discussions, feedback and general discussion on priority areas.

Presentations

[Attachment A](#) lists attendees and [Attachment B](#) is the Forum Agenda. The first presenter, Fleur Flannery, provided an overview of the Urban Forest Renewal program. Chris Davey, a CSIRO scientist and President of the Canberra Ornithologist Group (COG), spoke of the value of the urban forest for birds, and provided data on some of the research that has been undertaken on nest boxes in the ACT. Phil Gibbons, Senior Fellow at Fenner School ANU, provided the final presentation, and discussed the loss of trees and offsets.

Participants were invited to ask for clarification of issues at the end of each presentation, and issues for clarification and areas of concern raised by participants during presentations were:

- In the Urban Forest Program presentation of the study of the health of trees in Deakin, what is the relationship criterion for the categories of very poor, poor and safe?

- What is lacking is a strategic PR program to inform community about what is happening
- Poor urban design and planning is core of the problem – need to get planning right – need a complete re-shift in the way we plan our city
- Molonglo is an opportunity – we need to get in now as it is all wrong at present
- It is difficult for some organisations to meet the submission deadlines. Maxine reiterated that the deadline for submissions was now 12 March and assured all present that extensions were available if they contacted her or her office
- Where does climate change fit into this?
- How do you have a more strategic communication program? - People don't know what is happening...which is perhaps why the media picked it up and ran with the issues.
- Is there any evidence, for cost per annum of maintaining artificial hollows?
- Is there any indication that you can accelerate hollows in trees?
- To what extent does planning address the issue in new suburbs that the verges are too small to sustain a tree of the structure and size needed to create an urban forest?

The Commissioner undertook to ensure these issues were considered in the investigation.

Focus Group Sessions

All participants were allocated to one of three identified focus groups:

1. connectivity,
2. innovative approaches, and
3. community partnerships.

Within each group participants were asked to consider their topic in relation to the challenges and opportunities; funding opportunities, constraints and future options; planning; and to recommend priority actions.

[Attachment C](#) lists the results of each focus group's discussions. Following is a list of the key priorities identified by each group:

CONNECTIVITY PRIORITIES:

- **MOST IMPORTANT:** To maintain and increase appreciation and commitment to an urban environment that encourages Australian native birds, consideration needs to be given to:
 - Planning for new developments that requires a much clearer focus on landscape level connectivity to include adequate corridor structures, adequate road verges with appropriate understorey, appropriate fire management aspects, and takes account of existing natural assets such as creeks, wetlands, woodland and grassland areas in the planning processes
 - Planning processes that include as a matter of priority environmental advice and to achieve this the role of the Conservator should be expanded to include consideration of landscape level planning
 - Examining examples of landscape planning in the urban context such as the Chicago Wilderness Project and the London Wetlands Centre to highlight opportunities for greater urban population connectivity to and appreciation of natural assets
 - Connecting people with nature as a priority to maintain the unique "Bush Capital" image of Canberra in both new and existing urban areas

- Developing a positive vision for Canberra that both builds on the “Bush Capital” image and creates a community-owned value for landscape connection.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES PRIORITIES:

- Initiative to increase the introduction of the off-set policy
- Identify trees to go beyond the 50 years to be “hollow” trees for birds – strategy to select trees to go past the “age” policy.
 - Or areas become parks for a group of trees with hollows which can be actively managed for conservation values OR areas within the urban parks
- Mid understory Management (i.e. grasses and shrubs)
 - A lot of birds relative/need mid or understory...not just the trees
- Look at future planning
- In the new suburb of Kenny – there is one house in a remnant area leased out as a rural lease – which keeps the old trees
- Try to encourage birds into suburb trees i.e. superb parrot
- Reserves are the main source of trees and urban trees provide the connectivity, need to map connectivity, to identify “critical habitat streets” so that trees are not removed until connectivity is maintained
- Change in thinking on urban fringe from “reserves” to “conservation lease” to manage the urban interface e.g. Kinleyside
- Well managed conservation leases generally have better habitat than native reserves
- Ground cover – focus on what should be planted e.g. appropriate locations and target less common species of birds – need to increase the numbers of less common species of birds so plant species for these, e.g. Honey Eaters, Finches
- Funding –household environmental levy/conservation levy as an addition to routine budget allocation
- Plantings in schools and public places i.e. ovals; and for carbon sequestration, education and recreation e.g. walking dogs

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PRIORITIES

- Education program – tree health – public actions
- Develop park care or urban care groups to develop landscapes, manage property and local environment for trees and birds
- Ongoing engagement – needs long term vision and funding
- Urban Forest Renewal Program uses negative language – go out and find problems
 - Also identify positives
 - Find success stories
 - Start planting before removals, demonstrate pruning and taking care of trees
- Complex urban population – not everyone is thinking eucalypts and hollows and birds.

3. PRIORITY ACTIONS

Following the focus group discussions, a member of each focus group reported back to all participants on the issues their group considered most important, plus their key priorities.

The Commissioner then set the scene for further discussion by asking the following question of the participants: “What strategically is the lever that you would pull to make a difference?”

Within the areas of connectivity, innovative approaches and community partnerships, responses highlighted the key areas of concern. Discussion developed around five main areas: future timely planning, strategic connectivity, nest boxes and tree hollows, community engagement, and funding and resources.

Planning was identified as the core issue of concern. The need for a collaborative whole of government approach to planning (and understanding the vision) was a key concern. The need for tree size to be considered when planning verges in new suburbs, and the importance of under canopies to small birds was discussed. It was recommended that these issues need to be considered much more when planning, especially new suburbs, and when thinking of fire breaks and fire control. Molonglo was identified as a key area where intervention and active connectivity planning could occur now.

The need for a *strategic connectivity* map that identifies key links across the city was strongly expressed by several participants. Dr David Shorthouse said that he had developed a map of this type approximately seven years ago, and offered to assist the Commissioner to source a copy for the investigation. Research has shown that the anticipated connectivity networks might not be as expected and that further research needs to be conducted.

Nest boxes have been promoted as an alternative to using tree hollows, but the need for boxes to be monitored, maintained, and species-specific, has to date reduced their effectiveness and use by species of concern. It was agreed that further and ongoing research is required.

Community education and engagement were high priorities across all three focus groups. The diversity of communities and the need to consider and apply the most appropriate methods to access and engage the different communities was highlighted. Community care programs, ongoing community education through provision of information and positive media stories, and education and engagement of families in urban care through programs for their children at schools were key points of discussion.

Resources, funding and opportunities to access funding via means other than the government, including the establishment of trusts using “roundup” funding, and community “ownership” levies were considered. There was significant debate about offsets and the need to be very clear on what is being offset and what is being traded.

[Attachment D](#) lists the points discussed as presented, in more detail.

4. CONCLUSION

The forum identified five key areas for attention, being:

- future timely planning at a landscape level
- strategic connectivity
- nest boxes and tree hollows
- community engagement
- funding and resources

The Commissioner thanked all present for their active participation and valuable contributions, and especially Chris Davey for making the meeting possible. The meeting had provided significant new information to add to considerations for the investigation.

Attachment A: Attendees

Natasha Ackland	Manager Wildlife, RSPCA
Greg Baines	Senior Ecologist, Parks, Conservation and Lands
Con Boekel	Conservation Officer, Canberra Ornithologists Group Inc (COG)
Jenny Bounds	Conservation Officer, COG
Prue Buckley	TAMS Urban Tree Management
Martin Butterfield	Coordinator, Garden Bird Survey, COG
Mr Geoff Butler	Environmental consultant, member Tree Investigation Reference Panel
Dr Maxine Cooper	Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment
Mr Chris Davey	President COG, scientist CSIRO
Peter Davey (<i>Chair</i>)	Member NRM Council
Michael Doherty	CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Fleur Flannery	Urban Forest Renewal Program, Territory and Municipal Services
Joern Fischer	Post-doctoral Fellow, Fenner School
Ian Fraser	Chair ACT NRM Committee; Vertego Environmental Consultancies
Dr David Freudenberger	Greening Australia, Director of Science and Major Projects
Phil Gibbons	Senior Fellow, Fenner School
Bill Handke	President, Canberra Indian Myna Action Group
John Hibberd	Executive Director, Conservation Council ACT Region
Dr Michael Mulvaney	Dept of Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water
Laura Rayner	PhD candidate, Fenner School
Alison Russell-French	President, Birds Australia
Dr David Shorthouse	Visiting Fellow, Fenner School; member Canberra Nature Park Expert Reference Group
Karen Stagoll	PhD Scholar, Fenner School
Sue Streatfield	Greening Australia

Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment staff in attendance: Dr Matthew Parker, Larry O'Loughlin, Narelle Sargent, Jane Spence

Attachment B: Forum Agenda

Chair: Peter Davey NRM Council

9.00	Welcome <i>Dr Maxine Cooper, Commissioner</i>
9.05	Overview of Urban Forest Renewal Program <i>Fleur Flannery, TAMS</i>
9.25	The Investigation <i>Dr Cooper</i>
9.30	Value of the Urban Forest for Birds <i>Chris Davey</i>
9.40	Nest Boxes <i>Chris Davey</i>
9.50	Loss of trees and off-sets <i>Phil Gibbons</i>
10.00 - 10.15	<i>Morning Tea</i>
10.15	Group session to specifically discuss (<i>ALL</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges and opportunities - Funding opportunities, constraints and options yet to be explored - Priority Actions <p>Group 1 to focus on connectivity Group 2 to focus on innovative approaches Group 3 to focus on community partnerships</p>
11.45	Groups report back <i>ALL</i>
12.15	Discussion on Priority Actions <i>ALL</i>
12.45	Conclusion and Thanks <i>Dr Cooper</i>
1pm	Finish

Attachment C: Focus Group Sessions

The focus groups identified major issues for consideration in the Investigation.

CONNECTIVITY

- Look at new areas of development e.g. Forde
- Creek lines, flood ways etc should be offering much more
- Risk portfolios should be different in those places
- Requirements for adequate corridors must be recognised
- Implication connectivity should imagine “private” land? – should we put resources into looking after the private land?
- Significant backyard trees should be registered
- With small blocks and larger houses, we need to maximise use of public space
- Planning bloody planning
- Plan the corridors differently
- Connectivity of structures and systems which the birds then use (e.g. the underneath bit)
- Connectivity for what
 - Then what do they need (different for each species)
 - Bigger is better for corridors
- Stepping-stones and islands also help/provide connectivity
- Planning recommendations
 - Personal and property (infrastructures) safety barriers in place
 - Do not include backyards
 - Regeneration buffers
- Ongoing maintenance needs to be visible
- Consider not just the suburbs but also the edge
 - Fire buffers should be in the suburb, not the edge
- Fire management should consider needs of small birds
 - Perhaps maintain patchwork
- Great need for environmental planning
 - ACTPLA needs environmental expertise
- Plan for the landscape
 - Might be bigger blocks of habitats and restoration
- Connectivity includes connecting people to the bush
 - If you like, birds in the garden, they are there for many reasons and from many places
- Vision for the city – bush capital- that links habitats and places. The tone of getting the message is important
- Use Molonglo to develop the connectivity
 - Corridors plantings
 - Strategic long term planning not necessarily tree by tree
 - Perhaps more trees East Molonglo and not so many central
- Expand role of conservator to landscape planning
 - Advice to government review process of ACTPLA rejecting conservator
 - ACTPLA needs environmental engineers
 - Conservator does not have planning staff
- Develop rules e.g. save the creeks, develop backyards
- Block yield is maximised
- Environmental advice needs to be adequate/appropriate
- Road verges in new developments need to be large enough for an urban forest
- Remember the smaller species – e.g. Callistemon
- Bush Capital – landscape, environment, community

- Be grumpy positively – happy to be grumpy
- We need to wean ourselves off the budget needs of land release. Not sustainable when we hit the borders
- Increased urban density will put pressure on spaces (urban Forest) inc. use by residents
- Urban forest can be assisted by wetlands
- Chicago Wilderness Project – dual function of conservation and connection
- London Wetland Centre
- Connecting nature and connecting people with nature
- More shrubs – some areas are ok
- Where is the danger assessment?
- Species mix – keep a great variety that might survive into the future (ruling out weeds – we have to draw the line even if some birds like them)

CONNECTIVITY PRIORITIES:

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Education program – tree health - public actions
- How do you get people involved and achieve?
 - Only when there is immediate threat. I.e. Corroborree Park got people active
 - Educate – work on small scale to get people involved
- Assess tree for hollows prior to removal
- Engage community as part of information source
- Using existing community groups for engagement
- Involve community with development of options – e.g. gardening groups
- People do care about trees, what is there now, but need to show them what is good about what is going to happen
- No knowledge about roosting – 55 years rotation won’t lead to hollows
- Importance of Canberra Nature Parks for protection of birds
- Opportunities for community to access with little vegetation – plant anything
- Engage community groups in monitoring programs and action

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PRIORITIES

- Education program – tree health - public actions

- Develop park care or urban care groups to develop landscapes, manage property and local environment for trees and birds.
- Ongoing engagement - needs long term vision and funding
- UFRP program uses negative language – go out and find problems
 - Also identify positives
 - Find success stories
 - Start planting before removals, demonstrate pruning and taking care of tree
- Complex urban population – not everyone is thinking eucalypts and hollows and birds

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

- Planning and regulating systems focused on individual tree assessment, rather than “a whole of landscape planning” because cumulative impact = death by a thousand cuts
- Development funding for conservation i.e. off-sets
- Look at using urban areas to do ecological things i.e. hollows in power poles (Canadian model), e.g. Ford advertising environmental criteria
- Urban design
- Challenges:
 1. ACT different to NSW because in ACT the government owns the land and therefore the government needs to pay for the offset on ACT land; and
 2. a small area of land in ACT with not a lot of opportunity to off-set
- Opportunity: to bring NSW birds to ACT by offsets
- Registered trees: - need to increase the attributes that are looked for i.e. hollows
- Add “hollows” assessment to ACT SOE Report
- Need to plan to protect remnants in other dominant areas. i.e. Molonglo in “planted” majority area with scattered woodland
- Need to use Central Molonglo as an opportunity to trial some of the things happening at Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve and Goorooyaroo Nature Reserve i.e. conservation, hollows and focus on river corridor for biodiversity, recreation in the suburbs, not just in the corridor
- Cats – containment
- Planting in gardens in new suburbs i.e. native species

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES PRIORITIES

- Initiative to increase the introduction of the off-set policy
- Identify trees to go beyond the 50 years to be “hollow” trees for birds – strategy to select trees to go past the “age” policy
 - Or areas to become parks for a group of trees with hollows which can be actively managed for conservation values OR areas within the urban parks
- Mid understory Management (i.e. grasses and shrubs)
- A lot of birds relate to/need mid or understory...not just the trees
- Look at future planning
- Suburb of Kenny – one house in a remnant area leased as a rural lease – keeps the old trees
- Try to encourage birds into suburb trees i.e. superb parrot
- The creation of corridors for Superb Parrots through suburbs, linking feeding and nesting habitat, using the model in Harrison, the Gungahlin (?) Creek Heritage corridor; particularly applicable to remaining areas to be developed in Gungahlin, but also Belconnen and the Molonglo Valley. Note: this corridor was not actually planned for the parrots, but enough of the original native trees (especially Blakelys Red Gum) were left for them to use as a corridor.
- Reserves are the main source of trees and urban trees provide the connectivity, need to map connectivity, to identify “critical habitat streets” so trees not removed until connectivity is maintained

- Change in thinking on urban fringe from “reserves” to “conservation lease” to manage the urban interface e.g. Kinleyside
- Well managed conservation leases generally have better habitat than native reserves
- Ground cover – focus on what should be planted e.g. appropriate locations and target less common species of birds – need to increase the numbers of less common species of birds so plant species for these. E.g. Honeyeaters, Finches
- Funding – household environmental levy/conservation levy in addition to budget allocation
- Plantings in schools and public places i.e. ovals; and for carbon sequestration, education and recreation e.g. walking dogs

Attachment D: Group Discussion of Priority Actions

Responses to the Commissioner's Question: "What strategically is the lever that you would pull to make a difference?"

- The need for a strategic connectivity map that will identify key links across the city was expressed by several participants, and the Commissioner agreed. The meeting was informed that a map of this type was produced by Dr David Shorthouse approximately seven years ago, and will provide a copy to the Commissioner for her investigation.
- Need a guide for planting
- There was significant debate about offsets, including the need to clearly define what is actually meant by the term "offsets"; and clarify what it is that is being traded, and what are the benefits that are being gained by the trade. In some cases you cannot replace the lost habitat with the same.
- Where the government is the main developer they would have to absorb the cost of offsetting - will be more hesitant without community support
- The definition and scope need to be very clear
- Conservation Council has paper on native vegetation protection which includes principles for offsets, from a Forum of experts in 2009; this has been provided to the ACT Government.
- An alternate model is needed if offsets are not accepted as workable
- Connectivity exists in networks - creek lines and roads- whether old or existing should be routinely used as wildlife corridors – We can be much smarter than at present because these issues are not yet considered at the planning stage
- Ridgelines and hilltops e.g. the Canberra Nature Park – is a possible big gap in the project if they are kept stove piped as at present
- Species mix is needed – can't expect every street to have the needed species for connectivity
- There is a report coming out soon on the research of six modelled species and connectivity. It identifies the weak links in the system e.g. there is a very poor link between Wanniasa, Farrer, Kambah and Mt Taylor
- Birds Australia research has found that some small birds won't fly more than 100 metres. This needs to be considered in the planning mix.
- Is there legislation that gives precedence to natural resources of ACT – if it is not there...what is the risk of it being put aside?
- At what point are these considerations being addressed? – Especially the governance issues?
- Need a whole of government approach – not just one agency should have the power to knock it back
- Waste wood should be directed into the firewood market. 45,000 tonnes currently come from scattered trees. The government is trying to phase out wood heaters but it is still a viable heating source. Need current fire wood suppliers would be more than willing or share resources equitably

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & FUNDING

- The key is to get a success story to kick off a successful community education program. All most people are aware of is the "dark" side on the front page of the Canberra Times (e.g. Gang Gang s looking for lost nest hollows). We need to find positives and promote them
- Reminder that three generations have benefitted from the forest which the early Canberra residents planted.
- Canberra Community is very diverse. For example, Landcare in Gungahlin - residents are time poor as they are young with children and have no time to do what was requested. We need to change our thinking to get them to participate – need to connect with them
- The Gungahlin community had an outreach worker who managed /motivated people and without that person, things have changed.
- Scoping paper – tree keepers (tree Carers)

- Various levels of public from low to proper urban planning – will only attract older people
- The Commission calls them tree carers, and is thinking of trying to get the youth involved in this activity
- Chicago wilderness program aims to reconnect the previously disconnected children of the city
- Connectivity – natural areas are connected – connect people to natural areas...can get schools involved
- Woodland strategy – had a good education program- it was launched – and went – but is a basis on which to work
- There are many good ideas but because they are underfunded, they don't progress,
- The replacement program started in 1992 – there was little funding and few resources...currently there is flack for being a replacement program.
- The Urban Forest Program is more strategic to look at – broader management and maintenance of trees – not just replacement. There is a lot of work to develop a program – it is not just a PR thing nor just community engagement
- There is a real opportunity to utilise existing community groups – urban care programs to link into park care – need to find the purpose of assisting the program and identify what can be used. Years earlier a program called Frog Watch was very successful at getting children involved and educated. Therefore we could use school children to educate and engage them and their families in an urban care program.
- Resources unfortunately often go to the “loud voices”. There is a program that may allow the idea of urban care education to be part of it. Need to build onto existing program that brings together other programs to achieve the outcomes.
 - This however raises the funding question. Some bushland is being protected by funding independent of the government.
 - Is the real issue the ongoing funding? Need a 10 year vision. We are at critical point in time- at a stage where we need to do something now
 - Levy buying would give the community ownership- Need to see it as not being levied on you, but you buying your own little bit of Canberra
- There is a small part of Canberra in Kingston where in a new high density housing area there is an area of grasslands, ponds and a creek, which is turning into a good water bird site, and has a far less litter problem than in any nature park. The community is engaged. The success of this needs to be investigated.
- A multi layered approach is needed – multiple sources to the funding solution. Suggest that developed could contribute to a trust. Perhaps people could pay the rounded up figure in Electricity bills and this money could go into the trust for development
- There was significant discussion about nesting boxes and their use. Research has shown that the bird species of concern in urban areas are not hollow nesters. Old trees have other aesthetic roles. Nesting boxes can have a role, but not to replace hollow trees.
- The Gungahlin Rd: \$20K was spent on nesting boxes to replace some of the trees lost during road construction – but it is not considered to be a good solution.
- It was agreed that nesting boxes in people's backyards can be educational; but problems become exacerbated if there is no program of monitoring and maintaining public boxes. Research showed that all the boxes in Bonython had Mynas nesting, not the species of concern. In Aranda where they trap Mynas, the Rosellas occupy the nesting boxes. Public boxes are good for short term education, but need to be cleaned and removed after two years. It needs a dedicated program.
- Birds Australia does not support nesting boxes to replace or be a substitute for hollow trees. They are strategically better in woodland areas when trying to encourage species viability. But it needs to be monitored and managed, and boxes need to be specific for species

Attachment E: Investigations – Terms of Reference

Investigation into the Government’s tree management practices and the renewal of Canberra’s urban forest

The Commissioner will investigate and report on the following matters:

1. the scope and efficiency of any enhancement that may be required to the Government’s existing tree management programs;
2. the benefits and drawbacks of considering funding for urban tree programs separately to climate change initiatives;
3. improved notification and consultation processes to support greater community involvement in urban tree planning and management, including risk mitigation, tree removal and planting;
4. the priority given in tree management decisions to environmental values, solar access and the retention of communities of trees in parks;
5. the sustainable reuse of timber from felled trees;
6. when replanting should occur following the removal of trees, the scope for pre-planting, and principles for the number and species of trees that should be replanted;
7. the need for enhanced management to maintain the survival and good health of trees;
8. appropriate safeguards to ensure contractors follow best practice and adhere to Government tree policies;
9. principles for the decision-making process where it is proposed that a tree is removed or is retained;
10. improvements to the Tree Protection Act or other relevant Acts in light of the above matters; and
11. resource implications associated with an enhanced program.

Investigation into Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves); Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores

An investigation will be undertaken into Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves); Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores that:

1. assesses the condition of the forests, woodlands and grassy woodlands in these areas, including the effects of grazing by stock and/or kangaroos, vertebrate, pests and weeds;
2. identifies actions to protect and enhance these areas, including land use or boundary changes while taking into account their purpose, values, and location and the status of indigenous species and communities protected in the nature reserve system;
3. reviews existing land management programs and practices for these areas and areas that adjoin them. This is to include but not be limited to agistment, leasing, culling arrangements, Land Management Agreements or plans of management which may apply;
4. identifies any urgent actions and longer-term changes that are needed to improve the management of these areas. This is to include identifying successful management measures that should be retained;
5. identifies knowledge gaps, research or survey needs, and compliance and monitoring requirements that may be necessary to support improved management programs and practices while taking into account the context of the areas and effects of climate variability;
6. identifies ways for ensuring effective communication and involvement of stakeholders, including Aboriginal people, whose actions potentially, indirectly or directly, affect these areas;
7. identifies potential biodiversity offset management actions or sites; and
8. identifies the evidence justifying the need for managing grazing pressure in the context of sound reserve management practices.