



Marion Scrymgour

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

November 06 2006

OPERATION SOS: SAVE OUR SUBURBS

This Wet Season will be the **LAST CHANCE** the northern suburbs have to shield themselves from the cane toad onslaught – so the NT Government is today kicking off Operation SOS: *Save Our Suburbs*.

Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour today announced a further \$150 000 funding to Frogwatch, as well as the commencement of a joint campaign with the community organisation to help Palmerston and Darwin residents prepare their backyards for the toads' arrival.

"This is suburban warfare – we must secure the hatchets and arm ourselves for the inevitable," Ms Scrymgour said.

"All predictions are that the cane toad will reach Palmerston and Darwin this Wet Season – but that does not mean we should sit back and cry defeat.

"The NT Government has renewed funding to Frogwatch to the tune of \$150 000 – bringing our overall commitment to this organisation to almost half a million dollars.

"The money will help Frogwatch run cane toad control initiatives such as toad musters, as well as community education programs."

Ms Scrymgour said the NT Government had spent over \$1.2 million on cane toads, including the funding to Frogwatch.

"The NT Government is determined to protect our unique Territory lifestyle from the spread of this pest," Ms Scrymgour said.

"This is why we announced in June last year that it will subsidise the cost of cane toad traps by \$30 per trap – available for traps approved by Parks and Wildlife.

"I urge more people to take advantage of our subsidy scheme and purchase their traps to help control cane toads in their area."

Ms Scrymgour said the Operation: SOS campaign would include newspaper and radio advertisements, as well updated Web site information to give residents information about making their backyards cane toad-free.

Darwin and Palmerston residents can help to "cane toad proof" their backyards during the campaign by:

- Erecting fencing around your yard, using metal sheeting, shade cloth or fine mesh;
- Eliminating any standing water and using sprinklers infrequently;
- Turning off unnecessary garden lighting as it attracts insects, that attract toads;
- Eliminating rubbish or debris in your yard that toads shelter in during the day;
- Regularly patrolling your yard and removing toads before they have a chance to breed.

People who find a cane toad/s should contact FrogWatch on 1800 243 564 or email toadreport@frogwatch.org.au.

Contact: Maria Billias 0401 119 746

