



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Burning for Biodiversity at the Territory Wildlife Park

Rural residents are being invited to the first in a series of *Burning for Biodiversity* activities at the Territory Wildlife Park this Sunday.

Park manager Stuart Traynor said *Burning for Biodiversity* aims to determine which fire regimes have the greatest positive or negative impact on flora and fauna.

“Many Territorians need to understand the effects of different fire regimes and identify the most appropriate fire management to maintain biodiversity in their area,” Mr Traynor said.

“The Park is working with the national Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre to determine the different effects different fire regimes have on different plants and animals.

“Scientists from the CSIRO and Charles Darwin University are experimenting with different burning patterns through the use of 18 fire plots that have been established at the Park.

“An important aspect in all this is community engagement and getting people to understand the different scientific outcomes as the experiments are happening.”

Mr Traynor said fire is a natural part of the environment in northern Australia and people should not be dismayed over the appearance of burnt country.

“Most plants recover very quickly and to the surprise of some people, few animals are killed,” Mr Traynor said.

“However, there are warning signs that biodiversity is declining in many parts of northern Australia and the cause is connected to current burning practices.

“The question is not whether we should burn or not but rather, how often, how much and at what time we burn.

“Different animals are favoured by different fire regimes and there is not a single regime that suits us all but the community’s involvement is crucial in determining the best type of burning regime for their particular area.”

Mr Traynor said this Sunday’s *Burning for Biodiversity* activity would start at 1pm at the Park’s Flight Deck amphitheatre with CSIRO Tropical Ecosystems Research Centre officer in charge, Dr Alan Anderson, presenting a talk about the effect of different fire regimes on wildlife.

People will then make their way to the Park’s Goose Lagoon to burn the patch of bush inside the *Burning for Biodiversity* loop walk from 2pm to 3pm, during which time CSIRO staff will be available to talk informally to people about the impact of fire.

Those attending the *Burning for Biodiversity* activity will gain free entry to the Park.

The next *Burning for Biodiversity* activity is scheduled for 1 July when people will be able to tour the CSIRO fire research plots at the back of the Park.

Ends

**Media Note – For more information contact Stuart Traynor on 8988 7200**

Issued: 9.30am Wednesday, 23 May 2007