



Northern Territory

BUDGET 2004

Moving the Territory ahead... **less tax, more jobs, great lifestyle**

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Chris Burns

Minister for Parks and Wildlife

Marion Scrymgour

Minister for Environment and Heritage

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GREAT ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LIFESTYLE

Budget 2004 commits \$84.1 million to conservation and natural resources to protect the Territory's unique lifestyle.

"We've got a great lifestyle in the Territory and our clean, unspoiled environment along with our unique natural and cultural heritage has a lot to do with that," Minister for Environment and Heritage Marion Scrymgour said today.

"Spending in this year's Budget is part of the Government's long-term plan to protect our environment and our wonderful natural and cultural assets.

"It includes \$6.1 million to fund an independent Office of Environment and Heritage."

BUILDING BETTER PARKS FOR TERRITORIANS TO ENJOY

Extra funds for Territory parks will ensure they continue as first-class natural recreation and tourism resources:

- \$1 million for minor new works for upgraded visitor facilities across the park system
- \$500,000 for Gregory National Park
- \$575,000 for Limmen National Park
- \$390,000 to upgrade facilities at the Territory Wildlife Park and Alice Springs Desert Park
- \$1.3 million for ongoing maintenance at Darwin's George Brown Botanic Gardens

Minister for Parks and Wildlife Dr Chris Burns said the Territory's wonderful national parks would continue to be protected in Budget 2004 for the benefit of Territorians and tourists.

"It's a strategic investment that will boost our lifestyle and keep the Territory moving ahead by enhancing our attractions to visitors," Dr Burns said.

CONSERVING AND PROMOTING TERRITORY HERITAGE

Budget 2004 also includes funds for conserving and promoting places and objects that have contributed to the Territory's history and cultural identity, including:

- \$580,000 for conservation management of Government-owned Heritage properties
- \$330,000 for the NT Heritage Grants program



- \$260,000 for conservation and interpretive projects for Territory WWII heritage sites
- \$80,000 for the provision of a secretariat and assessment services for the Heritage Advisory Council
- \$40,000 for the conservation of Central Australian sites associated with the Stolen Generation

PROTECTING OUR UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

Government understands that taking care of the environment must be a joint effort involving the community and Budget 2004 includes initiatives to encourage tailored community participation, including:

- \$200,000 boost to \$520,000 to assist local environment groups, including a new \$460,000 community based environment protection grant scheme
- \$365,000 for the Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management to protect the centrepiece of Darwin's unique lifestyle and one of the Territory's greatest natural assets
- \$330,000 for litter abatement and recovery programs
- \$200,000 for programs to protect native species from cane toads
- \$150,000 for the Greenhouse Friendly Housing Competition to encourage energy and water efficiency

"Initiatives contained in Budget 2004 will help to ensure that future Territorians can enjoy our magnificent environment, and will provide an ongoing boost to our all-important tourism industry, which provides thousands of jobs for Territorians," Ms Scrymgour said.

