



Gabrielle Upton
Minister for the Environment

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday 15 July 2018

\$61m FOR BACK Paddock CONSERVATION AREAS

The NSW Government has \$61.4 million worth of funds for farmers and landholders who want to turn the back paddock into a conservation area.

“We are encouraging land owners with land that has potential for conservation to apply for funding to manage that land for the betterment of the local environment,” Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton said.

“It does not mean we are asking for the land to be handed over to anybody, but we are willing to help landowners to fund the work needed to manage it as a conservation area.

“We want to work side by side with land owners to find the best way to preserve their local environment. It’s a win for the environment, a win for landholders, and it’s a win for the community,” she said.

Altogether, some \$61.4 million in new NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) funding for 2018-19 to support NSW landholders is now available, she said.

“The four Conservation Tenders launched earlier in the year got a very strong interest from landholders, so we are hoping that others will follow suit.

“So far, more than 270,000 hectares of private land are being managed as conservation areas around the state. Keeping private land as private land but adding to the amount of high grade conservation land is a great outcome,” she said.

BCT Chairperson the Hon. Robert Hill AC said there had been hundreds of inquiries from landholders about the BCT’s first round of programs since March 2018.

“The BCT’s first four Conservation Tenders were heavily subscribed and strong interest in the BCT’s first rounds of Fixed Rate Offers and Conservation Partners Grants proves there is a real appetite for private land conservation right across NSW,” he said.

“The funding in 2018-19 is part of the NSW Government’s unprecedented investment of \$240 million over five years to 2020-21, and \$70 million per year ongoing, in a new private land conservation program, to be delivered by the BCT as part of the government’s land management and biodiversity conservation reforms.”

Background

The BCT has committed \$46.6 million to its Conservation Tenders in 2018-19 and is expecting to call for expressions of interest from willing landholders to participate in new tenders in August 2018 and February 2019.

The BCT has committed a further \$10 million for its Fixed Rate Offers in 2018-19. Landholders can express interest in an in-perpetuity conservation agreement in high-priority conservation areas in NSW, to be funded at a fixed price in dollars per hectare per annum to manage parts of their property for conservation.

The BCT has also committed \$2 million to continue its Conservation Partners Grants in 2018-19. Eligible landholders with an agreement with the BCT who do not receive annual conservation management payments can apply. The grants can help landholders maintain the ecological value of properties by funding activities such as fencing, pest and weed control, supplementary planting and habitat restoration.

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