

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGET SECURES BILLIONS MORE FOR REGIONAL NSW

People living and operating businesses in regional NSW will continue to benefit from a record infrastructure spend, after the NSW Government secured billions of dollars in additional funding for regional towns as part of the NSW Budget 2018-19.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro today announced the NSW Government has introduced the *Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund Bill* which will ensure the \$4.154 billion in proceeds from the Snowy Hydro Scheme transaction with the Commonwealth Government, will be used to fund projects in regional NSW.

Mr Barilaro said the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund will be invested in visionary projects that will deliver for regional NSW for generations to come.

“We said every cent of the full value of the Snowy deal would go to rural and regional NSW, and today we absolutely confirm this commitment through legislation,” Mr Barilaro said.

“The projects this Fund will support will be big-picture ones, that reflect the legacy of the Snowy Hydro project itself,” he said.

Mr Barilaro said today’s budget also includes \$40 million for scoping studies into potential projects that may be supported by the Fund, including examining the viability of inland ports and national and international freight services.

The new Fund comes on top of the monies already committed to rural and regional NSW infrastructure projects in the 2018-19 Budget for the next 4 years, including the \$1.3 billion Regional Growth Fund program which continues to roll out, with bridges and roads, sporting clubs and cultural facilities popping up all over the state.

“Last year we announced the \$1.3 billion Regional Growth Fund, and at the time some people thought we wouldn’t be able to allocate that amount of money to worthy projects across regional NSW.

“Well, I am pleased to say in just one year, over \$300 million of the Regional Growth Fund and the Regional Environment and Tourism Fund has already been committed to projects that will benefit business owners and families in regional NSW. And there

is more to come – for example the latest round of the \$300 million Stronger Country Communities Fund has seen more than 1,000 submissions for new or upgraded local community and sporting infrastructure projects.

“As these projects start jumping off the paper and into real life, our regional communities will begin to see the payoff and benefits of our investments.

“It’s important to remember that this record investment is the end result of strong economic management – years of hard work and tough decisions – that have put us in the position where we can deliver projects that people in regions don’t just need, but want, including tourism attractions, town beautification and sports facilities,” he said.

Key highlights from the 2018-19 Budget for regional NSW include:

- **\$50 million** to support local businesses and communities in mining-related areas through another round of the highly successful Resources for Regions program;
- **\$24 million** to build three new Doppler radar weather stations that will transform weather reporting services in the Central and Western parts of regional NSW;
- **\$20 million** to help businesses and communities on NSW Borders through a new Cross Border Commissioner’s Fund with **\$4 million** reserved for the Canberra District Rugby Centre for Excellence providing high quality sport and recreation facilities for people on the NSW-ACT border and broader southern NSW region; and
- \$25.9 million to promote tourism and regional business, particularly Indigenous tourism as well as environmental tourism to assist the protection of koalas including:
 - **\$10 million** for new tourism and culture projects in the Far West bringing tourist dollars and new lifestyle options to residents and visitors to the Far West from Broken Hill to Bourke to Brewarrina;
 - **\$8.5 million** to tourism and environment fund projects in Tamworth and the Clarence Valley; and
 - **\$7.4 million** for completing the conversion of the remaining motor registry network to Service NSW service centres across rural and regional NSW.

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