

Tuesday, 18 June 2019

## **54 MILLION PARK VISITORS TO BENEFIT FROM BUDGET BOOST**

Access to the State's vast network of national parks will be improved as part of a \$149.5 million investment over four years in the 2019-20 NSW Budget.

Minister for Environment Matt Kean said \$25.2 million has been allocated in this year's Budget to begin extending, upgrading and improving walking trails and other visitor facilities.

"We want to ensure the 54 million visitors to our national parks each year, including people with restricted mobility, enjoy world-class experiences," Mr Kean said.

"We are not only improving our park walks, but also expanding safety programs and developing new online and digital tools to enhance the visitor experience.

"This investment will help bolster the \$19.5 billion that national parks contribute to the NSW economy through nature-based tourism."

To protect NSW parks and reserves, \$17 million will be spent as part of a \$125.9 million commitment over four years to upgrade and maintain the fire trail network, which is vital for fire prevention and control.

Threatened species conservation is being boosted with \$32.3 million (\$65 million over three years) to secure populations of threatened species in the wild. This includes \$21.1 million for the State's Saving our Species program and \$11.2 million for the NSW Koala Strategy.

Under the third year of the \$45 million NSW Koala Strategy, the \$11.2 million will be provided for more koala habitat, local community action support, improved koala health and safety, and conservation.

For private land conservation in priority areas, \$51.3 million (\$212.7 million over four years) is being provided for the Biodiversity Conservation Trust of NSW to build on the 19,000 hectares already conserved in its first year of operation.

Through the 'Waste Less, Recycle More' initiative, Australia's largest waste and recycling program, \$143.3 million is being invested in 2019-20. This includes funding to recover and recycle more waste, keeping resources circulating in the economy.

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