



Election Commitment – Water Quality – Lake Tuggeranong

Talking points

- Since 2018, the ACT Government has invested \$40 million to construct wetlands and other water quality assets in the Lake Tuggeranong catchment to clean polluted stormwater, resulting in a 15% reduction in pollution in Lake Tuggeranong.
- For several years, the Healthy Waterways team within the Office of Water has conducted research, monitoring, modelling and other data analyses to understand the water quality problems in Tuggeranong and solutions to them. Based on this work, the Office of Water has been developing options for Government consideration to mitigate the pollution and algal bloom problems in Lake Tuggeranong.
- The Government has committed to the development of the *Healthy Waterways Plan for Lake Tuggeranong*. The options identified and future community engagement will be considered in development of the Plan.
- Fire damage occurred between 27 and 28 September 2025 to one of the three platforms that make up the lake Tuggeranong floating wetland and is currently being assessed. Key considerations include:
 - Safety: to avoid the platform breaking apart and blocking the dam outlet in storms.
- Repair or replacement of the platform: a decision is required on whether the platform can be repaired or must be replaced. Insurance coverage for repair costs will need to be assessed as part of the decision-making process, noting that the plantings themselves are excluded from the policy.

Background information


- Water quality in Lake Tuggeranong is poor, resulting in potentially toxic blue-green algal blooms for an average of around three months in summer and closing the lake to primary (e.g. swimming) and secondary (e.g. kayaking) contact due to health risks.
- Excessive levels of faecal coliforms sometimes also occur in the lake, leading to closures.
- The main finding for research is that contemporary pollution from the catchment is the primary driver of algal blooms in Lake Tuggeranong. In-lake interventions (e.g. bubblers) will have little impact until the catchment inputs of pollution can be curbed.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 21/10/2025
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- Since 2018, ACT Government has invested around \$40 million to build 12 constructed wetlands and other water quality assets in the Lake Tuggeranong catchment to clean polluted stormwater.
- According to water quality models, seven of the recently built assets are intercepting 15% of the pollution destined for Lake Tuggeranong. The modelling has demonstrated that water quality assets are necessary to intercept unavoidable pollution but are not sufficient to solve the pollution problem on their own.
- The most impactful and cost-effective options for mitigating pollution in catchments are ones that prevent the stormwater from getting polluted in the first place. Initiatives like targeted street sweeping and community partnerships to prevent pollution have the potential to make a real difference on the quality of our urban lakes.
- Over the past three years, Healthy Waterways has trialled community partnerships to prevent pollution from residential blocks and road verges and have worked with city operations teams to improve the management of Government-owned green space.
- Since many catchment pollution mitigation options involve changes to the management of blue-green corridors, Healthy Waterways plans consider how options will also affect other objectives for blue-green space, e.g. flooding, Ngunnawal values, urban heat, biodiversity, amenity and travel, recreation etc.
- The aim is for the Healthy Waterways plans to be living documents that are updated as new knowledge comes to hand.

History

- Healthy Waterways is a program to address water quality and quantity problems in Canberra and the ACT through planning and on-ground actions.
- Stage 1 of ACT Healthy Waterways began in 2014 as a \$94 million joint initiative of the Australian and ACT Governments. It was completed in June 2021.
- In 2020, the ACT Government invested a further \$1 million to build a floating wetland in Lake Tuggeranong, to begin planning for the next stage of works, and to extend the research program.
- From February 2021, a total of \$29.66 million in ACT Government initiative funding was invested in 4 tranches. Most of the funding was for activities to June 2025, with recurrent annual funding from the 2025-26 FY for 8 FTE of staff and \$287,000 for operation and maintenance of newly built water quality assets.
- Healthy Waterways funding has been used to:
 - Design and build 27 constructed wetlands and other water quality assets.
 - Run pilot community partnership programs targeting leaves on verges and fertiliser use in residential gardens.
 - Work across Government to adopt water sensitive practices.
 - Build an evidence base—research, monitoring, data analysis and modelling—to underpin planning and on-ground actions.
 - Carry out planning and restoration activities in the rural Naas-Gudgenby River catchment.

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- Draft two of five Healthy Waterways plans for solving water quality problems in selected waterbodies. The remaining plans will be produced over the next two to three years with existing funding.

Traditional Custodian Engagement

Talking points

- The Government recognises the need to strengthen our approach to engagement with Ngunnawal Traditional Custodians, and other Aboriginal people with a connection to waterways across this region. This means moving beyond consultation and towards deeper collaboration.
- With that in mind, the Office of Water procured an Aboriginal consultant to support relationship building and collaboration across a range of water resource management matters in September 2024.
- The first phase of consultation explored a range of important themes related to water management, such as cultural flows, water management governance, restorative cultural practices and knowledge sharing with community.
 - A listening report capturing what was heard during the first phase of consultation was circulated with attendees and is intended to inform improved water policy and program development.
- The second phase of consultation took place over August-September 2025 and sought to apply what has been heard to various programs and policies and seek feedback on that application from the community.
 - A listening report for Phase 2 consultations is being drafted.
 - This consultation has supported the development of the ACT Water Strategy, ACT and Region Catchment Strategy, ACT Environmental Flow Guidelines, ACT Long-term Watering Plan and Healthy Waterways Catchment Planning.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 10/10/2025
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Key information

- The ACT Office of Water contracted engagement professional and facilitator, Paul Knight (*Dharawal / Yuin*) to develop and implement a consultation program with Ngunnawal Traditional Custodians and other Aboriginal people with connections to the lands and waters of the upper Murrumbidgee River.
- The consultation has been designed to help strengthen relationships between the ACT Government and First Nations communities, enhance the cultural safety and inclusiveness of water management decision-making in the ACT, and promote a greater understanding of First Nations perspectives on water issues.
- This consultation involves working collaboratively with First Nations communities to identify their priorities, concerns, and desired levels of involvement in decision-making processes, as well as to develop a culturally safe and effective engagement strategy for the project.
- The Phase 1 Listening Report is a summary of what was heard through comprehensive consultation with Ngunnawal, Ngambri, Walgulu and Ngarigo peoples across the upper Murrumbidgee River catchment region. All groups have self-determined their custodianship of this region, either in part or wholly, and that has been respected throughout this process. This program does not seek to grant any one group cultural authority over the upper Murrumbidgee region or take away any rights regarding cultural responsibility.
- Communities consulted in Phase 2 highlighted the importance of:
 - recognition of cultural authority in Government documents;
 - ongoing lines of engagement and partnership on the application of cultural values to water programs;
 - the need for knowledge sharing within Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) frameworks; and
 - more community capacity building opportunities.

Background information

- The Office of Water conducted a competitive procurement process, which resulted in the appointment of Paul Knight.
 - Eight vendors were approached (seven Aboriginal, one non-Aboriginal) and provided an opportunity to respond to the Statement of Requirements. Responses were open for one month (17 June to 15 July 2024).
 - The Office of Water received four responses (three Aboriginal, one non-Aboriginal). The Assessment Panel unanimously recommended appointment of Paul Knight.
- The contract is funded through:
 - *Safeguarding the Territory's Water Resources business case 2024-25 and 2025-26*
 - *Restoring the upper Murrumbidgee River 2024-25 – 2028-29 (Commonwealth funding)*
 - *Implementing Water Reforms in the Murray-Darling Basin 2024-25 – 2027-28 (Commonwealth funding)*

Water Efficiency Program

Talking points

- The Water Efficiency Program was announced in the 2024-25 ACT Budget and is being designed by the City and Environment Directorate.
- The Water Efficiency Program aims to save 6.36 gigalitres of water per year in the ACT. This amount is equal to that granted by the ACT to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder in June 2024.
- The objective of this Program is to improve the ACT's drought and climate resilience and support the ACT's long term water security.
- This will be achieved by improving the water efficiency of ACT schools, businesses, households and government facilities.
- The Program will also incorporate:
 - Water audits and irrigation upgrades for ACT sportsgrounds
 - A community water efficiency education program; and
 - Measures to improve the efficiency of non-potable as well as potable water use.
- Water efficiency audits have been completed for 143 ACT Government facilities and identified significant and cost-effective opportunities for water savings. Several facilities completed shower and tap efficiency upgrades in 2024-25.
- Audits are in progress for 100 educational, commercial, community and residential buildings, to guide the detailed design of water efficiency initiatives.
- Water audits were completed for 20 sportsgrounds in 2024-25 and are in progress for a further 20 sportsgrounds. Irrigation efficiency upgrades have commenced, with 50 moisture sensors installed in ACT sportsgrounds during 2024-25.
- A measurement and evaluation system has been established for the program.
- A review of best practices in water efficiency regulation is currently underway, alongside an evaluation of behavioural change initiatives aimed at improving water use efficiency.
- The City and Environment Directorate is working closely with water utility Icon Water to design the program. This will help ensure that the program is consistent with Icon Water's own water security activities.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 10/10/2025
Cleared for public release by: Executive Branch Manager
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Background information

- The ACT Government received \$58.8 million for granting a 6.36 GL/year in water entitlement to the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. These funds were provisioned in the Budget to fund the WEP.

Water Pricing – Water Abstraction Charge Review

Talking points

- The Water Abstraction Charge which applied in the 2024-25 financial year has been increased by 3.00% for the 2025-26 financial year, as per the decision in the 2016-17 Budget.
- Work is underway to better understand the relationship between the Water Abstraction Charge (WAC) and expenditure on water planning and management activities.
- This is a complex matter which requires a considered and informed approach underpinned by a thorough understanding and assessment of the WAC's methodology.
- Given the wide-reaching impacts associated with any changes to water pricing, the government will ensure that any changes are framed by an appropriate transition plan to ensure consumers are afforded additional stability.
- A review of Non-potable Water was undertaken by ACT Treasury in 2021. It made a range of recommendations including that the appropriateness of the current pricing framework for non-potable water should be considered.
- The government notes that addressing issues with the WAC will impact both potable and non-potable water pricing and is carefully considering how to address this matter.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 22/08/2025
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Key information

WAC Fee determination

- The Water Abstraction Charge is made by the ACT Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water through a determination under Section 107 of the *Water Resources Act 2007*.
- The current Water Abstraction Charge is made in the *Water Resource (Fees) Determination 2025*. The WAC is separately determined for two categories including:
 - water taken for the purposes of urban water supply (i.e. potable/drinking water use) – \$0.732 per kilolitre in 2025-26; and
 - surface water or groundwater taken for non-potable use - \$0.354 per kilolitre in 2025-26
 - Revenue from the WAC is currently collected as consolidated revenue and is not hypothecated. Expenditure of consolidated revenue is set out in the ACT Budget.
- While Revenue Policy is a matter for Treasury under the Administrative Arrangements, the City and Environment Directorate prepares the proposed fee determination, in consultation with Treasury, for the Minister's consideration.
 - City and Environment Directorate areas that reviewed the proposed 2025 determination include the Finance and Legal teams; the Environment, Land and Technical Regulation Branch of Access Canberra; and policy areas with responsibility for environment and water.
- The potable WAC was increased in 2006-07 and the ACT Government has applied annual indexation of three percent since 2017-18.

WAC methodology

- The ACT's method for calculating water charges has not been updated since the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission's (ICRC) 2003 review.
- The ICRC calculated the Water Abstraction Charge based on three components:
 - Water Supply Costs: this is the recovery of costs for catchment management, biodiversity and environmental monitoring, environment protection, water utility regulation, health monitoring and regulation, water policy and legal services,
 - Environmental Cost: this is a value estimated for the cost to the environment caused by altering the timing and magnitude of downstream flows by retaining water in dams and abstracting it in the ACT, and
 - Scarcity Value: this is the value associated with the consumptive use of water in the ACT that prevents alternative use for other economically valuable purposes such as irrigation.
- The Territory has since agreed to several policy and legislative instruments, including the *Water Act 2007* (Cth), 2010 National Water Initiative (NWI) Pricing Principles and the Commonwealth Water Charge Rules (WCRs).
- In September 2023, the then Treasurer and Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction agreed to review the ICRC undertaking an in-confidence review of the WAC methodology. The ICRC's final report was received in February 2024 and is informing methodological options currently being considered.
 - The report has not been publicly released.
 - The then Treasurer referred to the ICRC's review in response to a QTON (No.140) during the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-25 public hearings.

- ‘The *State of the Lake and Waterways Report (2022)*, prepared by the Office for the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, recommended that the ACT Government publish an annual detailed breakdown of how WAC revenue is expended.
- The government’s response agreed in-principle to this recommendation, noting its support for transparency in applying charges for cost recovery and relevant expenditure.
- The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has an existing statutory role under the *Water Act 2007 (Cth)* to monitor and report annually on regulated water charges.
 - The report includes government expenditure and revenue for water planning and management activities within the Murray-Darling Basin.
- The ACT Government is required to collate and report its water management expenses to the ACCC each year.
- The WAC is set and collected by the ACT Government. The ICRC has no legislative responsibilities for setting or regulating the WAC.
 - The ICRC makes price directions to Icon Water for charges to recover water delivery and sewerage costs. The ICRC has no legislative responsibilities in setting the Water Abstraction Charge.

National Water Reforms – Recovery of water planning and management cost

- Microeconomic reforms related to water pricing have been agreed by successive governments under the National Competition Policy, National Water Initiative (NWI, 2004), *Water Act 2007 (Cth)* and the Murray-Darling Basin Plan (2012).
- The ACT is a signatory to inter-governmental agreements that give effect to these water reforms. Specifically, the ACT has agreed to implement water pricing and institutional arrangements that promote economically efficient and sustainable use of water resources, water infrastructure assets, and government resources devoted to the management of water.
- The NWI pricing principles promotes user-pays and pricing transparency, in respect of water supply systems and cost recovery for water planning and management.
- In line with the NWI, pricing principles, the WAC is intended to recover water planning and management costs not included in the provision of water supply, reflect the environmental costs from water abstraction, and the value of water as a natural resource.

Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River Program

Talking points

- The ACT community have long advocated for better protections in the upper Murrumbidgee River.
- The upper Murrumbidgee River is the 320km stretch of the Murrumbidgee River (a major tributary of the Murray-Darling system) that lies between its headwaters in the Kosciuszko National Park and the Burrinjuck Dam near Yass.
- Funding provided under the Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River FFA agreement provides the ACT with \$7.58m over five years. The funds are supporting an expansion of current river health science and monitoring programs, on ground river restoration activities and First Nations and broader community engagement in program delivery.
- This work will enhance our understanding of how the upper Murrumbidgee River responds to different flow regimes which has the potential to better protect the environmental, cultural, social and critical human water needs that our region relies on.
- Empowering the community and First Nations people to continue their advocacy for the river will be key to the long-term success of the program.
- The ACT Project Work Plan that outlines how the \$7.58m will be spent over the next four years have been signed off by the Australian Government. It includes \$3 million for erosion control, fencing, riparian planting, and instream habitat structures.

The work has potential to benefit the river well beyond the 5-year timeframe of the program.

Key information

The upper Murrumbidgee River

- The upper Murrumbidgee River supports a wide range of values including water supply (domestic, urban and agricultural), critical ecosystem functions (e.g. fish population connectivity, biodiversity, threatened species), and social and cultural (Aboriginal culture, swimming and recreation).
- Water quality is fundamental to maintaining these values, and this is dependent on maintaining clean river flows from high in the catchment.
- The river is home to several threatened native fish (including natural, self-sustaining populations of Macquarie Perch and Murray Cod). However, only 6 of the 9 native fish that were historically known to occur within the reach continue to be found in the river.

A note on Snowy Hydro

- Since the establishment of Tantangara Dam, over 95% of the headwaters from the Murrumbidgee River is diverted under the Snowy Hydro Scheme.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 10/10/2025
Cleared for public release by: Executive Branch Manager
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- The ACT understands that Tantangara Dam, and in turn Snowy Hydro operations, play a critical role in Australia meeting its 82 percent renewable energy target.
- We are conscious, however, that the achievement of this target should not come at a broader ecological cost. This is particularly important when the impacts of climate change are already being felt.

Funding the Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River Program

- The ACT entered into a Federation Funding Agreement schedule 'Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River 2024-25 – 2028-29' with the Australian Government on 12 September 2024.
- Contingent on meeting each milestone outlined within the schedule, the agreement provides the ACT with \$7.58 million over 5 years to improve the health of the upper Murrumbidgee River.
- The ACT Project Work Plan for implementing the \$7.58 million has been approved by the Australian Government and has been published on the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water website..
- The Project Work Plan outlines four years of restoration activities, with over \$3 million allocated to erosion control, fencing, planting, and instream habitat structures.
- An additional \$2.5 million will fund research and monitoring, focusing, in part, on the ecological impacts of Snowy Hydro flow diversions.
- The Project Work Plan also supports community-led initiatives and prioritises meaningful engagement with Nggunawal people, including a co-designed Cultural and River Health project.

Background information

- In November 2023, the Australian Government committed more than \$55m to improve the health of the Upper Murrumbidgee River (ACT and NSW). This included:
 - \$15m over 3 years to address river health, water quality and habitat
 - \$5m over 5 years for new science and monitoring projects
 - \$5.3m over 5 years to support the review of the Snowy Water Deed
 - \$30m for additional river flows during extreme drought conditions
 - improved annual reporting to improve transparency in Snowy Hydro water management.
- The Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River Program is funded through the first two dot points.

ACT Water Strategy - refresh

Talking points

- Work is nearing completion on the refresh of the ACT Water Strategy. The Strategy will guide the next 20 years of water resource management. It will also provide an opportunity to reflect more contemporary information and emerging priorities, including climate change, a growing population, urbanisation and ageing infrastructure.
- In response to the call for greater integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and objectives into the Strategy, further targeted engagement was undertaken in August/September 2025 through the First Nations Engagement and Facilitation Program.
- Engagement has involved working collaboratively with First Nations communities to identify their priorities, concerns, and to embed values and voices to guide inclusive and culturally responsive water management.
- The Strategy refresh is being finalised with the focus being on addressing the First Nations engagement outcomes.
- The new Strategy is scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2026.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 10/10/2025
Cleared for public release by: Executive Branch Manager
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Key information

- The *ACT Water Strategy 2014-44: Striking the Balance* (Strategy) is the ACT Government's central policy position guiding the direction of water policy within the Territory.
- In line with the ten-year review period, the Office of Water has been refreshing the Strategy and the associated Implementation Plan. The main changes to the Strategy being considered are a greater focus on:
 - providing strategic direction and aspirations,
 - improving monitoring and evaluation,
 - improving reporting requirements to support information sharing, and
 - incorporating water interests and values of First Nations people (an additional outcome has been added).
- Public consultation occurred between 15 May and 28 June 2024 and included a community information and feedback session, a **targeted stakeholder** session as well as a short and long form survey on YourSay.
- A Listening Report, which provides a summary of the feedback received during May/July 2024 engagement has been released on the YourSay webpage. An addendum maybe released following targeted consultation with First Nations people.

2025-26 Budget Initiatives

Talking points

Climate action – Continuing climate change action and environmental protection



	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	4,426	3,540	1,448	1,375	10,789
Expenses – Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	207	0	0	0	207
Expenses – Justice and Community Safety	296	0	0	0	296
Offset – Expenses – Provision	-505	-513	-338	-343	-1,699
Net cost of services	4,424	3,027	1,110	1,032	9,593

- **Mitigation policy and statutory reporting: \$4.516 million** over four years from 2025-26, including \$610,000 indexed and ongoing from 2028-29, including 1 x FTE SOG C and up to 4 x FTE Administrative Services Officer (ASO) 6;
- **Adaptation policy: \$2.227 million** over four years from 2025-26, including \$512,000 indexed and ongoing from 2028-29, to continue adaptation policy and statutory reporting requirements, including up to 2 x FTE SOG C and 1 x FTE ASO 6;
- **Energy policy: \$1.015 million** over two years from 2025-26, including 2 x FTE SOG C;
- **ACT Climate Change Council support: \$985,000** over four years from 2025-26, including \$253,000 indexed and ongoing from 2028-29, including 1 x FTE ASO 6;
- **Gas transition policy: \$900,000** over two years from 2025-26;
- **Community Zero Emissions Grants continuation: \$717,000** over two years from 2025-26, including 1 x FTE SOG B;
- **Strategic policy coordination and unit titles reform: \$503,000** in 2025-26, including 2 x FTE SOG B and 0.5 x FTE SOG C; and
- **Gungahlin Strategic Assessment: \$429,000** in 2025-26 to undertake necessary restoration and monitoring activities and deliver the offset commitments.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 28/08/2025
 Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext: 78628
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 TRIM Ref:

Climate action – Continuing the Zero Emissions Vehicle Strategy



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Capital	1,650	2,000	0	0	3,650
Offset – Capital	-1,650	-2,000	0	0	-3,650
Net capital	0	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	0	66	146	146	358
Expenses	385	105	0	0	490
Net cost of services	385	171	146	146	848

- **Charging infrastructure for the Government’s commercial EV fleet: \$3.650 million** of capital funding over two years from 2025-26, fully offset from the reprioritisation of existing funding for Zero Emissions Government Loans, and **\$209,000** in expense funding over two years from 2025-26, including 0.5 x FTE SOG B; and
- **Increase number of Direct Current fast charging hubs: \$281,000** in expense funding in 2025-26, including 0.5 x FTE SOG B and 1 x FTE SOG C.

Climate action – Electrification of Public Housing



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Capital	13,423	5,355	176	0	18,954
Capital – Housing ACT	0	333	338	0	671
Offset – Capital – Provision	0	0	0	-10,000	-10,000
Net capital	13,423	5,688	514	-10,000	9,625
Expenses	193	823	571	412	1,999
Expenses – Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development	0	152	0	0	152
Net cost of services	193	975	571	412	2,151

- **Gas to electric appliance upgrades in public housing: \$18.954 million** in capital funding over three years from 2025-26. For 1,600 public housing properties, including make-good requirements, associated ancillary electrical works and gas connection abolishment charges;
- **Deliver the Integrated Energy Plan electrification upgrades: \$1.926 million** in expense funding over four years from 2025-26.;
- **Communications with public housing tenants and data and issues management in Housing ACT: \$671,000** in capital funding over two years from 2026-27 for two FTE; and
- **Audit, compliance, monitoring and evaluation activities: \$225,000** in expense funding over four years from 2025-26.

Climate action – Improving energy efficiency for Canberra's homes and businesses



	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	4,627	4,406	3,339	3,406	15,778
Offset – Expenses	-176	0	0	0	-176
Offset – Revenue	-3,600	-3,800	-4,000	-4,150	-15,550
Net cost of services	851	606	-661	-744	52

Using revenue collected through the EEIS, deliver programs that assist vulnerable and low-income households, First Nations households and small-to-medium businesses to reduce energy costs and support the transition to net zero.

The funding comprises:

- **Employee expenses (up to 13 FTE) to support EEIS programs: \$7.327 million** over four years from 2025-26, including \$1.389 million indexed from 2028-29 to December 2030;
- **Home Energy Efficiency Program (HEEP): \$4.198 million** over four years from 2025-26 to deliver 700 free in-home energy assessments per year. The tender process to deliver this from March 2026 will start in September 2025;
- **Sustainable Building Program: \$1.2 million** over four years from 2025-26, to continue program and offer free energy assessment for 100 small businesses per year;
- **Administration of EEIS: \$1.022 million** over four years from 2025-26;
- **Expand First Nations Home Energy Support: \$766,000** over four years from 2025-26, to continue the pilot program and deliver free culturally appropriate energy efficiency support to first nations households. Yedung Mura has been contracted to deliver;
- **Commercial Buildings Electrification: \$200,000** in 2025-26, to commence the pilot program and transition three to four commercial buildings off gas; and
- **Complex Buildings Residential Electrification Pathway: \$100,000** in 2026-27, for program to identify funding sources for complex buildings.

Also includes funding related to the Community outreach program for household energy support:

- **Administer the Community Outreach Program: \$608,000** to contract a community organisation to administer an outreach program to deliver services such as front door energy support, events, workshops, financial capability support and capacity-building support to smaller community organisations; and
- **Energy wallet vouchers: \$357,000** to administer up to 1,785 \$100 energy wallet vouchers per annum to incentivise households to connect with, and seek advice from, contracted community organisations.

An open tender process underway to engage a community organisation to deliver the program starting October 2025.

Combatting invasive species and protecting Canberra's biosecurity



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	965	0	0	0	965
Net cost of services	965	0	0	0	965

Funding comprising:

- **Continuation of FTE: \$840,000** to continue six existing resources - 1 x FTE TO 4, 3 x FTE GSO 7, 1 x FTE GSO 8 and 1 x FTE SOG C position;
- **Electric Ants Response Plan: \$79,000** for the ACT's cost sharing contribution; and
- **Weed management: \$46,000.**

A proposal to come back in the 2026-27 Budget integrating the outcomes of the Strategic ACT Biosecurity Risk and Capability Assessment.

Delivering the ACT's Landscape Plan



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	2,943	981	0	0	3,924
Net cost of services	2,943	981	0	0	3,924

\$3.924 million in expense funding over two years from 2025-26 to undertake critical conservation action, enhance natural and urban climate adaptation developments, and develop environmental and urban adaptation policy to deliver the ACT's first Landscape Plan. The funding comprises:

- **Continuation of FTE: \$1.404 million** in 2025-26 to continue 1 x FTE Senior Office Grade (SOG) A, 3 x FTE SOG C, 2 x FTE Administrative Services Officer (ASO) 6, 1 x FTE Senior Professional Officer (SPO) C and 1 x FTE Professional Officer (PO) 2;
- **Weed and pest control programs: \$1.939 million** over two years from 2025-26 for contractors, supplies and to continue 1 x FTE Training Officer (TO) 3;
- **Ngunnawal Caring for Country Program: \$427,000** in 2025-26; and
- **Tree Canopy Cover analysis: \$154,000** in 2025-26.

The ACT Landscape Architect and Landscape Design resources associated with the establishment of the Office will be redirected from existing ACT Government agencies.

Protecting the Canberra Grassland Earless Dragon



	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	1,834	1,043	1,062	1,080	5,018
Offset – Expenses	-545	-187	-125	-127	-983
Net cost of services	1,289	856	937	953	4,035

The funding comprises:

- **Continuation of FTE: \$2.779 million** over four years from 2025-26 to continue five FTE positions, partially offset through **\$178,000** from 2024-25 Budget initiative Environmental Volunteers and Emergency action to preserve Canberra Grassland Earless Dragon, **\$214,000** of Commonwealth funding and **\$495,000** of existing EPSDD resources;
- **CGED colony at Melbourne Zoo: \$1.998 million** over four years from 2025-26 to establish a colony with 200 individuals;
- **Support CGED colony at Tidbinbilla: \$145,000** over four years from 2025-26; and
- **Field support monitoring activities: \$96,000** in 2025-26 fully offset from Commonwealth funding.

Safeguarding the Territory's water resources – Continuing the Water Efficiency Program



	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	673	0	0	0	673
Offset – Capital – Provision	-3,000	0	0	0	-3,000
Net capital	-2,327	0	0	0	-2,327
Expenses	2,370	0	0	0	2,370
Offset – Expenses – Provision	-3,000	0	0	0	-3,000
Net cost of services	-630	0	0	0	-630

The funding comprises:

- **Design testing of water efficiency measures; program management, monitoring and evaluation; WSUD guidelines; regulatory upgrades; and bulk water re-use measures: \$1.202 million** in expense in 2025-26;
- **Continuation of FTE: \$709,000** in expense in 2025-26 for the OoW for four FTEs (4 x SOG C), including three FTEs funded under the 2024-25 Budget initiative (*Office of Water – Safeguarding the Territory's Water Resources*);
- **Sportsground irrigation upgrades and increase water re-use in Government operations: \$478,000** in capital funding in 2025-26;
- **Develop non-residential guidelines: \$195,000** in capital funding in 2025-26;
- **Continuation of FTE: \$177,000** in expense funding in 2025-26 for EPSD stream to continue one FTE (1 x SOG C) funded under the 2024-25 Budget initiative;
- **Continuation of FTE: \$177,000** in expense funding in 2025-26 for TCCS stream to continue one FTE (1 x SOG C) funded under the 2024-25 Budget initiative; and
- **Upgrades to ACT Government facilities: \$105,000.**

Safeguarding the Territory's water resources – Improving Lake Tuggeranong



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	327	0	0	0	327
Offset – Expenses	-150	0	0	0	-150
Net cost of services	177	0	0	0	177

Continuation of FTE: \$327,000 in expense funding in 2025-26, partially offset by **\$150,000** from existing resources, for 1 x SOG C and 1 x ASO 6 to continue existing positions in the Office of Water funded under the 2023-24 Budget initiative 'Protecting Canberra's unique environment – Expanding the Healthy Waterways project'.

Sustainable revenue – Motor vehicle duty (CMTEDD initiative)



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Revenue	19,170	25,300	27,300	29,200	100,970
Net cost of services	-19,170	-25,300	-27,300	-29,200	-100,970

Reflecting the increasing preference for low and zero emissions vehicles, from 1 September 2025, the complete concession for motor vehicle duty for zero emission vehicles will be replaced with a minimum 2.5 per cent duty and with increasing duty rates proportionally based on emissions and value. There will also be a new tax rate of eight per cent for motor vehicle duty on the value of vehicles above \$80,000.

Sustainable revenue – Utilities Network Facilities (CMTEDD initiative)



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Revenue	1,300	2,600	2,600	2,600	9,100
Net cost of services	-1,300	-2,600	-2,600	-2,600	-9,100

The Government will increase the Utilities Network Facilities Tax, charged on the owners of network facilities on land in the ACT, by an additional 2.5 percentage point increases above the wage price index (WPI) for 2025-26 and 2026-27. This will increase own-source taxation to sustainably deliver public services and infrastructure for the Canberra community.

FFAs not included in Budget Outlook as an initiative.

CAB2024/539 Murray-Darling Basin FFA schedule - Funding profiles



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	780	655	390	0	1,825
Revenue	-780	-655	-390	0	-1,825
Net cost of services	0	0	0	0	0

The Government will support the continued implementation of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan by investing in water reform activities that will contribute to water recovery, environmental water accounting data and information, and water market improvements.

CAB2024/539 Upper Murrumbidgee FFA schedules - Funding profiles



	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	2,580	2,200	500	500	5,780
Revenue	-2,580	-2,200	-500	-500	-5,780
Net cost of services	0	0	0	0	0

The Government will support planning and delivery of on-ground works, communications, science and monitoring projects to improve the health of the upper Murrumbidgee River.

The Project Work Plan for the ACT component of the Restoring the Upper Murrumbidgee River (RUMR) Program was signed off by Commonwealth in May 2025. It includes:

- \$3 million for erosion control, fencing, riparian planting, and instream habitat structures.
- \$2.5 million to fund research and monitoring, focusing, in part, on the ecological impacts of altered flow regimes in the upper Murrumbidgee River.
- Funds to empower the community and First Nations people to continue their advocacy for the river. This will be key to the long-term success of the program.

A strategic procurement plan outlining all the potential projects to be delivered through the ACT Government has been approved and procurements around communications and engagement work and rural restoration activities are currently underway.

Projects working to empower community and First Nations people are being planned and will be largely implemented between June 2026 and June 2028.

Key information

The above provides a complete listing of initiatives funded in the 2025-26 Budget under the Climate Change, Energy and Water portfolio, revenue initiatives that may have impacts on your portfolio policies, and new FFAs that were signed.