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MORE KOALA HABITAT PROTECTED IN SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

The Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) has invited two additional landholders to sign conservation agreements to protect an additional 1,485 hectares of priority koala habitat in the Southern Highlands.

In January, Minister Kean announced that five Southern Highland landholders were offered funded conservation agreements to protect and manage 1,094 hectares of koala habitat on their land.

BCT Board Chair, Prof Hon Niall Blair, said that the BCT Board's prudential management of the Biodiversity Conservation Fund means that additional funds have become available to invest in these two important and large-scale sites.

"This is a fantastic outcome to help save the threatened koala," Mr Blair said.

The resulting conservation agreements will play an important role in Minister Kean's commitment to actively protect and increase koala populations in NSW by 2050.

"With these additional agreements, a total of seven conservation areas in the Southern Highlands covering 2,579 hectares will be established as a result of the BCT's conservation tender, protecting critical koala habitat for generations to come," said Mr Blair.

"These seven landholders will typically be paid between \$178 to \$325 per hectare per annum to protect and manage this vital koala habitat.

"This is especially important after the devastating 2019-20 bushfires, which impacted the Southern Highlands koala population," said Mr Blair.

The Southern Highlands koala population has been identified as one of the most important populations in southern NSW, and a high priority for investment.

The koala habitat will be protected under covenants on title and the seven landholders will receive annual conservation management payments in perpetuity to manage this important koala habitat.

Conservation tenders are one of several mechanisms through which landholders can partner with the BCT in private land conservation.

To find out more, visit www.bct.nsw.gov.au, or call 1300 992 688.

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