

Penny Sharpe

Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy
Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council



Media Release

NSW kicking goals in private land conservation

Friday, 9 February 2024

Note: Vision, images and case study available here: <https://bit.ly/3vFNQF8>

The NSW Government is proud to be making a major contribution to the conservation of important native species and habitats by supporting private landholders to enter into conservation agreements with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust.

The Trust's annual report shows that in the last financial year, the NSW Government committed ongoing funding to 16 new landholders to manage more than 91,000 hectares of protected land.

That's an area sixteen times the size of Botany Bay, south of Sydney.

Of those, the 55,000-hectare Gayini Conservation Area is the largest funded conservation agreement the Trust has entered into, demonstrating the NSW Government's commitment to support caring for country obligations of Aboriginal landholders.

A further 16,481 hectares has been protected through 56 conservation partnership agreements with landholders.

In the last financial year, the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust added 4500 hectares of protected koala habitat on private property, surpassing program targets and bringing the total number of hectares voluntarily managed for conservation by landholders under the NSW Koala Strategy to 8333 hectares.

The Trust's four-year investment plan will target areas of significant biodiversity and support the state's goals to halt biodiversity loss and protect species.

For more information, interested landholders can visit www.bct.nsw.gov.au

Quote attributable to Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, Penny Sharpe:

"The total area protected by private property owners across NSW is now 500,000 hectares – that's an area nine times the size of Sydney Harbour.

"These landholders are protecting our most at-risk species, like koalas and lesser-known species like the Australasian Bittern, as well as habitats like the snow gum woodlands and grasslands of the Snowy Monaro.

"Private landholders across NSW are making a major contribution to conservation. We thank these landholders for their commitment and for contributing to biodiversity outcomes for NSW."

Quote attributable to Biodiversity Conservation Trust CEO, Erin Giuliani:

"With each new area brought into a conservation agreement, the number of threatened species we protect grows. Right now, we protect more than 200 threatened species and over 130 important landscapes that aren't well-protected by conservation areas like National Parks or reserves.

"We will continue to add to these numbers using our rigorous monitoring methods, recently accredited by the globally recognised Accounting for Nature framework."

What is the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust?

The NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust, or BCT, is the NSW Government agency tasked with protecting and enhancing biodiversity on private land across NSW. It was established under Part 10 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

What is private land conservation?

Private land conservation is the protection of native species and habitat on privately-owned land. Landholders enter into a long-term agreement to maintain and enhance biodiversity on their properties.

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