

Tuesday, 17 November 2020

CROWN LAND GETS A BIG BOOST IN NSW BUDGET

Communities across the State will benefit from a multi-million-dollar stimulus injection in the 2020-21 NSW Budget to improve public reserves and facilities on Crown land.

Minister for Water, Property and Housing Melinda Pavey said showgrounds, community facilities, Men's Sheds, and Crown reserves will all benefit.

"Crown land covers around 42 per cent of NSW, or 32.7 million hectares, and is essential to supporting community wellbeing, businesses, tourism, recreation, and the environment," Mrs Pavey said.

"The NSW Government has marshalled its COVID-19 stimulus fund to provide a budget boost to help our communities and Crown land managers bounce back from the impacts of bushfires and the pandemic by improving facilities."

The Budget includes a \$104 million package over two years to support volunteer Crown land managers and community organisations operating on Crown land to upgrade and maintain public reserves, showgrounds, and other community infrastructure.

The funding includes:

- **\$40 million** injection for the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund expanding to \$50 million in grants and loans for 2020-21, to support NSW's cultural, sporting and recreational life. The fund supports Crown land managers with repairs and maintenance projects, new recreational infrastructure, environmental initiatives, and bushfire, pest and weed control on Crown reserves;
- **\$20 million** for more showground upgrades bringing the government's total investment under its showground stimulus program to almost \$56 million;
- **\$31 million** to support a range of shovel ready projects on Crown land;
- **\$8 million** for bushfire prevention and hazard reduction work on Crown land; and
- **More than \$2 million** for upgrades of Men's Shed projects across the State.

"These investments will keep Crown land reserves in good shape and support hundreds of community organisations that use them," Mrs Pavey said.

"Showgrounds are multi-use hubs and many double as evacuation centres during bushfires and floods. Upgrading showground infrastructure will benefit communities while stimulating work for local tradespeople and materials suppliers.

"This year the expanded Crown Reserves Improvement Fund will prioritise projects that can build community resilience and restore amenities following the difficult times we have faced with bushfires and COVID-19.

“It is also great to see funding for Men’s Sheds, which allow men from all backgrounds to come together to make friends and work on meaningful projects in the company of others while supporting their health and wellbeing.”

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