



Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc.
Floor 2 191 Liverpool Street
Hobart TAS 7000 Australia

Phone: (03) 6234 3552
Fax: (03) 6231 2491
Tct6@bigpond.com

ABN 63091237

Media Release

Tuesday 18 August 2009

Drastic reduction in funding for fox eradication by Australian Government a nightmare for Tasmanian wildlife

The Tasmanian Conservation Trust today condemned the Australian Government's decision to reduce their funding for the Tasmanian Fox Eradication Program from \$2.5 million for 2008-09 to only \$1.0 for 2009-10.

In March this year the Fox Eradication Program submitted an application to the Australian Government's Caring for our Country program for \$2.83 million per year for four years (2009-2013). This amount was matched by a commitment by the Tasmanian Government of \$2.5 million per year. An offer of \$1.0 million for 2009-10 was sent to the Tasmanian Government in August 2009. The Australian Government funding has only been provided for one year rather than the requested four years.

The TCT calls on the Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett, to reverse this disastrous decision. "The reduced level and security of funding makes the establishment of foxes in Tasmania much more likely and increases the chances of extinctions of Tasmanian native species," said Acting Director Peter McGlone.

"There are 78 native species at risk from fox predation with 12 listed as threatened under the Commonwealth and/or State threatened species legislation. Species now found only in Tasmania such as the eastern quoll, Tasmanian bettong and pademelon may go extinct because of this funding cut.

"The eradication of foxes from Tasmania is without doubt the number one conservation priority facing the state and we simply cannot see how the Australian Government can justify such a major funding cut.

"Offering funding for only one year also makes program planning extremely difficult and will lead to many staff seeking other, more secure, employment.

"This decision also makes no sense financially. If we fail to eradicate foxes from Tasmania, millions of dollars will be spent every year controlling them in perpetuity.

“With so many native species at risk from foxes and the urgent need to prevent them establishing, we can only imagine that this decision is the result of Canberra bureaucrats being out of touch with the realities of feral animal management.

“We call on Minister Garrett to show leadership on this issue of great national importance and guarantee long-term funding at the level requested by the Fox Eradication Program.”

Further information:

Peter McGlone

Phone: 03 6234 3552

Mobile: 0406 380 545