

Tuesday 6 September 2011

\$1.1 BILLION INVESTMENT IN PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government will invest **more than \$1 billion** in the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to deliver important services and programs for rural and regional communities across the State, the Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, announced today.

Ms Hodgkinson said that the Budget will maximise opportunities for the Department of Primary Industries, which covers areas including Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries, Water, Catchment Management Authorities and Crown Lands.

“This \$1.1 billion investment will deliver funding to ensure that the services provided by DPI are relevant, sustainable and effective for the State’s primary industries sector,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The NSW Government cannot afford to procrastinate when it comes to the role and responsibilities of the DPI. After 16 years of mismanagement under NSW Labor, now is the time for renewal and innovation within DPI.

“Farmers in NSW understand that the current DPI model must evolve to ensure its relevance well into the future, and that there is better collaboration with other agencies in the sector, including Livestock Health and Pest Authorities and Catchment Management Authorities.

“NSW now has an opportunity to refocus and renew the services provided by DPI to better reflect the changing face of the State’s farming community. This process has already commenced.”

Highlights for 2011-12 Budget include:

- **\$390 million** across the agriculture, fisheries and biosecurity sectors of DPI, which will include funding for science and research, particularly food security
- **\$190 million** to protect valuable agricultural land and continue world class research and industry development programs
- **\$120 million** investment in biosecurity, which includes funding to control noxious weeds.
- **\$90 million** to be spent on NSW fisheries, some of which will go toward funding the NSW Government’s commitment for a scientific audit of marine parks as well as restructuring the commercial fishing industry
- **More than \$380 million** will be invested in Catchment Management Authorities and Crown Lands, including \$230 million for the proper management of the State’s 33,000 Crown reserves
- **\$260 million** investment in NSW water management, and \$97 million for the State’s water utilities, of which \$84 million will go toward the *Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program* to fund important sewerage and water upgrades in the State
- **\$32 million** for natural resource management under *Catchment Action NSW*, of which \$27 million will go to the State’s Catchment Management Authorities to improve local environments and undertake state-wide projects

- **\$13 million** to continue the \$57 million biosecurity upgrade of Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute to ensure it is prepared to deal with biosecurity threats
- **\$12.3 million** for coastal infrastructure repairs on maritime assets on Crown Land including major maintenance works at Batemans Bay, Bermagui, Coffs Harbour, Eden, Nelson Bay, Port Macquarie, Swansea and Wollongong
- **More than \$11 million** to fund water and sewerage programs within 60 Aboriginal communities across NSW
- **\$11 million** to control noxious weeds across NSW, which includes an extra \$1.5 million in 2011-12 to improve agricultural productivity to protect the environment
- **\$7.5 million** for the continued rehabilitation of artesian bores as part of the *Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative* (GABSI), which is an infrastructure renewal program funded jointly by NSW and the Commonwealth
- **\$5.5 million** to meet the Government's commitments under the *Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Act 1995*, which will see the continuation of sand pumping and dredging at the entrance of the Tweed River
- **\$1.7 million** to further establish a biosecurity information management system to improve capacity to deal with biosecurity threats in NSW
- **\$1.4 million** for shark meshing throughout NSW to continue an extremely successful program

"This Budget demonstrates that the NSW Government is committed to ensuring there is real value for the State's agricultural sector in the services provided by DPI," Ms Hodgkinson said.

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