



Mr Bjarne Nordin
Committee Manager
Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee
Parliament of New South Wales

By email: PublicAccountsCommittee.PAC@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Nordin

Thank you for the opportunity to answer in detail the question I took on notice on 20 November 2020 at the Public Accounts Committee's Examination of the Auditor-General's performance audit reports February–July 2019.

The Committee asked me about the Biodiversity Conservation Trust's arrangements in terms of fire management protocols, and I agreed to seek further advice on grants to assist conservation partners with fire recovery.

I am pleased to advise the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) is providing more than \$1 million under its Conservation Partners Grants to assist 47 landholders with sites impacted by the bushfires, with further support underway for more landholders. Grants have been available for weed control, pest control, fencing, assisted revegetation, and other works as needed.

Adjustments have been made to allow higher payments in initial years for essential conservation infrastructure such as fencing, and erosion control works; and paying for works which have previously been implemented but need to be undertaken again because they have been impacted by the fires. The BCT has also allowed payment for works that have already been completed, if they were urgently needed to protect the conservation area.

The BCT has also assisted with site recovery plans, and the assessment and coordination of fire recovery works. The BCT has collaborated with partner agencies and facilitated landholder access to support from other agencies including for fencing, pest control and track works.

If you have any questions about this advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Paul Elton
Chief Executive Officer
22 December 2020

Head Office: Parramatta

4 Parramatta Square
Level 7 South, 12 Darcy St
Parramatta NSW 2150
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta, NSW, 2124

www.bct.nsw.gov.au

email: info@bct.nsw.gov.au
phone: 1300 992 688

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