



## PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE

NSW Parliament • Parliament House, Macquarie Street Sydney 2000

**Referred by:** Australian Labor Party  
**Date Referred:** 3/03/2023  
**Proposal Title:** National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) to employ an additional 100 Field Officers Base Grade 1/2 with offset  
**Cluster:** Planning and Environment

**Proposal No:** C1512

**Date Published:** 20/03/2023

### General Government Sector Impacts

	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	4-year Total \$'000
Expenses (ex. depreciation)	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-
Less: Offsets	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Operating Balance:</b>	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Offsets	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Capital Expenditure:</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Lending/(Borrowing):</b>	-	-	-	-	-

### Total State Sector Impacts

<b>Net Lending/(Borrowing):</b>	-	-	-	-	-
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### Notes and costing assumptions:

The policy proposes to hire an additional 100 field officers within National Parks and Wildlife Services over three years to focus on weed and pest management. These roles are permanent.

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) assumes that under a phased recruitment, 34 field officers will be hired in year 1, another 33 in year 2, and another 33 in year 3.

The policy states that the cost of these field officers should be offset from the “reserved” and “unallocated” funds in the Regional Growth Fund. The PBO considers this to be feasible given that the estimated cost to hire the field officers (\$14 million over the forward estimates) is only about 2 per cent of the total reserved and unallocated balance in the Fund.

Thus, the cost of the policy over the forward estimates is nil.

The PBO notes there will be ongoing labour costs beyond the forward estimates because the roles are permanent. The PBO cannot ascertain whether the roles may be continued to be supported through the Regional Growth Fund because that would depend on how much funds would be left available for reallocation in the future.

## Notes and costing assumptions continued:

### Assumptions:

- Each field officer is paid the Grade 1/2 salary as outlined in Table 1 below. These are based on the [Crown Employees Public Sector Salaries 2022 Award](#).
- The field officers will start at the year 1 salary grade and will move to the next grade every year thereafter until they reach the maximum grade (year 4).
- Wages are escalated at 3 per cent per year from 2022-23 to 2023-24 and 2.5 per cent per year thereafter based on the NSW Public Sector Wages Policy 2022.
- Oncost rates are 22.14 per cent in 2023-24, 22.64 per cent in 2024-25 and 23.14 per cent in 2025-26. Oncosts increase by 0.5 per cent per year because superannuation is due to increase by 0.5 per cent per year until it reaches 12 per cent in 2025-26.

**Table 1 - Field Officer GR1/2 salary**

Field Officer GR1/2	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Year 1	52,570	54,147	55,501	56,888
Year 2	53,897	55,514	56,902	58,324
Year 3	55,140	56,794	58,214	59,669
Year 4	57,711	59,442	60,928	62,452

**Table 2 – Labour costs over the forward estimates for 100 field officers, phased over three years**

Field Officer GR1/2	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
No. of hires (annual)		34	33	33
No. of hires (cumulative)		34	67	100
Labour costs (\$'000)		2,249	4,619	7,180

- Based on information received from the Department of Regional NSW, there is a total of \$607.9 million of reserved and unallocated balance in the Regional Growth Fund. However, these funds are classified as grant expense, therefore, the reallocation will entail reclassifying the funds to labour expense, which will still have nil impact on net operating balance.
- The Regional Growth Fund is currently used to provide grants for major projects that support long-term economic growth and job creation in the regions. The PBO assumes the necessary regulatory changes and/or approvals to allow the use of funds to hire NPWS field officers would be completed in 2022-23.