



THE ADMINISTRATION OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Caring for Our Country grants

The Australian Government recently advertised the availability of funding for environmental projects that will add to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in all Australian States and Territories. Commonwealth officers Michael Schultz (known to many on Norfolk as the facilitator for Natural Heritage Trust funded projects) and Tony Bartlett visited the island to talk to the key land managers, to provide copies of the Caring for Our Country Business Plan and to encourage participation in the grants scheme.

Caring for Our Country replaces the previous Government's Natural Heritage Trust, Coast Care and other grant systems, rolling them all into a single package. The new grants are aimed at funding larger amounts to be managed in the regions, instead of a range of individual grants which are managed from Canberra. Projects that involve a range of stakeholders, community groups and volunteers are looked upon favourably, and sub-projects proposed by incorporated groups may be funded through devolved grants provided to a central applicant. All applicants will be competing with grant applications from the whole of Australia.

The Administration of Norfolk Island is coordinating a grant application which will aim to provide funds to undertake works across the island that tackle the island's main threats to biodiversity, weed control and feral animal eradication. Many of the projects identified have been recommended by consultants over the years as key activities where protection of listed species (plants or animals), habitats or ecosystems will be enhanced by removal of invasive species (plants or animals).

Any individual or group who wishes to include a project for funding under the Administration's grant application is encouraged to contact Margaret Christian at 22001 to talk about the best way that their project can be included.

Incorporated organisations are still eligible to apply for amounts from \$20,000 to \$50,000 for projects that fit within the Priority Areas identified in the Caring for Our Country Business Plan.

The Business Plan can be viewed online at www.nrm.gov.au, or if internet access is not available, some extra copies are expected to arrive in the weekend mail for distribution or copying.

If you wish to have a project included please contact Margaret by 30 January to discuss the best way forward.

16th January 2009