



PRIME MINISTER

NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST - BENEFITS FLOW TO TASMANIA

The Premier of Tasmania and I today signed the Partnership Agreement for the Natural Heritage Trust.

With this signing, Tasmania will start to receive the benefits from the biggest ever environmental package.

Projects from the Trust have been delayed for far too long.

I regret very much the delay caused by the ALP and Democrats, who like to paint themselves as environmentally caring.

These delays caused unnecessary damage to the environment and cost Tasmania the jobs that will come from these projects.

However, I am delighted to report that we are now in a position where the environmental works and jobs can start to flow.

While the Commonwealth is still assessing most of Tasmania's proposals for 1997-98, I am keen to get the good work started as soon as possible. Accordingly, I am delighted to announce a number of projects for Tasmania today. These projects for 1997-98 are attached.

As is evident from these projects, the work is real and it is beneficial. No more reports or committees or inquiries.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the most significant environmental package in the nation's history - we will not see it wasted.

The environment is important for a state like Tasmania, which relies so much on tourism. The Natural Heritage Trust will help protect this important asset.

We will be announcing the rest of Tasmania's projects in the near future.

I look forward to a productive relationship with Tasmania as we restore the environment in Tasmania.

7 October 1997

Attachment

The Commonwealth is delighted to fund a number of improvements to the Tasmanian environment. These projects, among others for 1997-98, include :

- \$96,000 for "Operation Rehab", a strategy to control four types of weeds on the west coast, focused on gorse control, with follow up planting of native vegetation;
- \$65,000 for the North Esk Land Care Group for the rehabilitation of the North Esk. Work will include willow removal and revegetation to improve water quality, so developing a major natural asset in Launceston for community use;
- \$20,000 for the Quamby Bend Landcare Group to return the Lower Quamby Brook to its natural course by removing weed infestations, revegetating with natives and restricting stock access;
- \$39,000 for Exton Landcare to stabilise major stream banks in the area and improve riparian buffer zone management. Work will include repositioning snags across the rivers and controlling weeds;
- \$27,000 for Marine Foresters to restore marine habitat in the Derwent. The proposal will restore *Macrocystis* to four selected areas in the Derwent and remove large beds of sea urchin infestations;
- \$30,000 for vegetation restoration as submitted by the Upper Derwent Valley Landcare Group. The aim is to exclude livestock from environmentally sensitive areas such as north facing slopes and stream banks. The project will also revegetate to aid soil stabilisation, water quality, stock shelter and native fauna habitats. On-ground works include 45km of direct seeding using local seed and nearly 9 km of fencing.
