



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Malcolm Turnbull MP
*Minister for the
Environment and Water Resources*

Brendan Nelson MP
*Minister for Defence
Federal Member for Bradfield*

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CONSERVING BLUE GUM HIGH FOREST, ST IVES

The Australian Government will help Ku-ring-gai Council to secure a historic parcel of rare bushland in Sydney, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Malcolm Turnbull, and Minister for Defence and local MP for Bradfield, Dr Brendan Nelson, announced today.

Mr Turnbull said a funding contribution of \$350,000 will help secure the Blue Gum High forest in St Ives.

The funding will specifically assist Ku-ring-gai Council in their efforts to purchase 102 Rosedale Road, St Ives, for the National Reserve System.

Dr Nelson welcomed the funding and said it would put an end to the threat of residential development and the clearing of critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest.

“Ku-ring-gai Council, a wide range of community groups and I have battled for years to save this parcel of land, and I hope this payment from the Government is the catalyst to finally secure the property for conservation,” Dr Nelson said.

“A purchase will complete 17 hectares of exceptional bush around the Browns Forest and Dalrymple-Hay Nature Reserve, in the very heart of our community. It is part of the Coalition Government’s growing partnership with local government to protect forever rare landscapes valued by the community and the nation.

“This is a stunning tract of bush, scarcely changed since Governor Phillip walked this area in March 1788, on the first inland journey by European settlers. Founder of the National Trust, Annie Forsyth Wyatt, had a vision of making it ‘a forest for all time’, and in the 1930s, despite the Depression, Ku-ring-gai Council acquired the first tracts of this reserve.

“Blue gum was used in early colonial buildings throughout Sydney, and this Blue Gum High Forest is the last significant remnant of what is now a critically endangered species.

“It supports a huge diversity of wildlife, from migratory and nomadic birds such as the dollar bird and threatened swift parrot, to native mammals such as swamp wallabies. It’s an important feeding area for grey headed flying foxes, and home to several threatened owls and bats.

“This jewel is worth saving not simply for its recreational and heritage value to the community, but also because of the ecological connectivity it provides to the surrounding large reserves.”

Mr Turnbull said the St Ives purchase will be the 303rd property the Australian Government has helped add to the National Reserve System over the last decade, building up the network of protected areas that conserves examples of our unique landscapes, plants and animals for future generations.

“Since 1997, the Coalition Government has invested more than \$105 million to build the National Reserve System,” Mr Turnbull said.

“Under our stewardship the reserve system has grown by more than 40 per cent – compared with a growth of just one per cent under the previous Labor Government’s meager \$5 million investment.

“Reserves now cover more than 11 per cent of the Australian continent, protecting more than 88 million hectares of our most distinctive and fragile landscapes.”

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