

STATE BUDGET

2018-19

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND WATER DAVID SPEIRS MP MEDIA RELEASE

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Coasts and parks a priority for State Government

The Marshall Liberal Government's first budget puts a focus on practical environmental outcomes through significant investment in parks, coasts and greener communities.

The 2018-19 State Budget delivers \$34.4 million of funding over four years for the environment to deliver all its election commitments including more protection for South Australia's precious coastlines.

\$5.2 million is allocated over three years to breathe new life into our coastal environment as the first defence against the changing climate.

Minister for Environment and Water David Speirs said there would be extensive work to make sure the State's coastline and beaches are kept pristine.

"We are very lucky in South Australia to have some amazing beaches and shorefronts and we need to protect those for future generations," said Minister Speirs.

"This \$5.2 million will go towards sand replenishment on metropolitan beaches, research and development associated with sand retention, seagrass meadow restoration, establishing artificial reefs and creating wetlands and stormwater harvesting schemes around Gulf St Vincent.

"This investment in our coastline is part of the new government's focus on environmental outcomes that build resilience in our environment in a practical way."

National Parks across the state will also receive an on-ground boost through the addition of 20 extra park rangers at a cost of \$7.5 million over four years.

"Park rangers are at the forefront of conservation in South Australia," said Minister Speirs.

"Unlike the previous government who oversaw a decline of ranger numbers from more than 200 in 2002 to just 83 in 2018, this government is committed to rangers and the protection of our natural environment.

STATE BUDGET

2018-19

“Rangers are trusted by South Australians and play an invaluable role in managing our parks and caring for wildlife.”

The State Government will also implement the Greener Neighbourhoods program which will provide \$500,000 per annum to local metropolitan councils to enhance community streets.

“The Greener Neighbourhood program will allow communities to take ownership of the revegetation of their local streets providing positive environmental outcomes,” said Minister Speirs.

“The culmination of these important programs and initiatives will tackle the impacts of the changing climate in a practical and meaningful way.”

The 2018-19 State Budget has also allocated \$1 million to help preserve heritage listed properties.

\$500,000 over two years will establish a heritage grant fund and \$500,000 will be spent on restorative works at Ayers House.

“Heritage is an area of great importance to the new government and through our grant funding and restoration of Ayers House, we are committed to preserving and enhancing some of the state’s most important places after years of neglect.”

In order to meet the \$715 million savings task by 2021-22 left by the former Labor government and to deliver the new State Government’s priorities, the 2018-19 State Budget includes the following savings measures in the Environment and Water portfolio:

- \$11.6 million over four years from climate change programs, predominantly attributable to expenditure set aside for uncommitted climate change projects in future years (\$7.7 million). The remaining \$3.9 million includes the winding back of expenditure on Carbon Neutral Adelaide and Building Upgrade Finance. This is offset by increases to Greener Neighbourhoods (\$2 million over four years) and the development of a cross-government climate change strategy and blue carbon initiatives.
- \$120,000 over four years from reducing the membership of the Premier’s Climate Change Council. The council will still have the relevant experience to function properly consistent with the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007.
- \$4.9 million over four years for refocusing and reprioritising the waste reform program at the Environment Protection Agency (EPA).

STATE BUDGET

2018–19

- \$6.15 million over three years of cost recovery at the EPA as result of increased licence fees for regulatory functions and services as well as licensing of facilities with underground petroleum storage systems.
- \$2.7 million over four years from reviewing and repositioning services and programs within the EPA. This is the equivalent to 5 full-time positions.
- \$650,000 over four years to discontinue the Dob in a Litterer program.