

Question on Notice

No. 1448

Asked on Wednesday, 15 November 2023

MR S O'CONNOR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the \$262.5m allocated in the 2022-23 Queensland Budget for the continuation of the Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030 for land acquisitions and capital works to increase Queensland's public protected area estate—

Will the Minister (a) advise the funding expended to date and (b) provide a breakdown of where this funding has been allocated?

ANSWER:

Through the 2022-23 State Budget, the Queensland Government committed \$262.5 million over four years to expand the public protected area estate. This is the single largest investment for protected area expansion in Queensland to date.

In the 2022-23 financial year, \$17.1 million of the \$262.5 million was acquitted through the acquisition of four properties. These included: approximately 259 hectare land parcel adjoining Lockyer National Park; approximately 3,495 hectare former grazing lease over Long Island in Broad Sound; approximately 2,435 hectare land parcel adjoining Grongah National Park; and approximately 17,216 hectare former grazing property located west of Charleville. A further \$78,000 was spent on acquisition costs such as valuation and surveying fees on properties not yet settled.

In 2022-23, the Department of Environment and Science (the department) expended an additional \$2.9 million of funding from other sources on the acquisition of a further five properties. This was supported by \$790,000 of capital expenditure in post-acquisition set up works.

To date in 2023-24, the Queensland Government has secured a further five properties, with funding of \$13.1 million from the \$262.5 million acquitted to 31 October 2023 for the properties and a further \$42,000 on pre-settlement acquisition costs.

Four of these acquisitions will become additions to existing public protected areas. The fifth acquisition is an approximately 1,640 hectare freehold grazing property on the northern end of Curtis Island, in the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

The department are also in advanced negotiations in relation to a pipeline of properties, that are anticipated to be finalised over the next six to 12 months.

In addition to these land acquisitions, the department has expended approximately \$3.6 million for operational expenditure and \$1.4 million for capital set up of acquired estate as it is transitioned and then dedicated as a protected area under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*.

Since the release of the Protected Area Strategy in October 2020, the department has acquired 21 new properties having invested over \$72 million.