

Media release

Issued: Wednesday 23 November 2005

Murrayfield balances commercial, environmental and Indigenous cultural values

Launch of National Landcare Program Project on Bruny Island

The Tasmanian Indigenous community's property on Bruny Island, Murrayfield, the Indigenous community and the wider farming community are all expected to benefit from a new Greening Australia and Indigenous Land Corporation project launched by Tasmanian Senator Richard Colbeck.

The project, funded through the National Landcare Program, will protect Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and native vegetation communities, and rehabilitate saline land on Murrayfield.

Murrayfield was purchased by the Indigenous Land Corporation for the Tasmanian Aboriginal community in 2001.

Murrayfield covers 4,097 hectares. Murrayfield has a rich history of Aboriginal occupation and is a significant place for the local Indigenous community. It is also rich in natural values with 2 threatened plant species, and the southern-most population of grass trees in Australia, 5 threatened fauna species (including the largest colony of the endangered forty-spotted pardalote) and 5 threatened plant communities.

ILC Chairperson, Shirley McPherson said, Murrayfield is a very special place. The challenge is to integrate commercial operations, environmentally informed land management and cultural heritage protection.

"The ILC has drawn up plans that identify the property's cultural and environmental features and set out actions to preserve and enhance these values. Greening Australia's program will begin to implement those plans", she said.

Greening Australia Tasmania CEO, Jonathan Duddles said the work done through this project will help to implement the recently produced Native Vegetation Management Plan and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Survey, and to demonstrate best practice methods of managing natural and cultural values on a commercial farm. It will also rehabilitate non-productive salinity-affected land and these sites will be available as demonstration sites to other land managers.

"This is an exciting project that aims to incorporate Indigenous land management practices and knowledge with conventional best practice principles. Through this project we hope to be able to share Indigenous knowledge of natural resource management with the wider community, and also to offer training in aspects of natural resource management to members of the indigenous community" he said.

Media Contacts:

Jonathan Duddles, CEO Greening Australia Tasmania 0417 503814
Peter Keough, Public Affairs, ILC 0409 090 852