



Jon Stanhope MLA

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LONDON WETLANDS BOSS SHARES EXPERTISE ON TRUST MANAGEMENT MODEL

Plans to establish a Trust to manage and develop the Jerrabomberra Wetlands took a step forward today, with a visit to Canberra from the Chief Executive of the UK-based Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT), Mr Martin Spray.

Mr Spray, whose organisation manages the world-famous London Wetlands, met the Chief Minister and then met separately with departmental officials to discuss and advise on the ACT Government's plans to establish a trust for the Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

The WWT manages nine wetlands in the UK including the London Wetlands Centre, which attracts more than three quarters of a million visitors a year and which has active research, conservation and educational programs.

"I have had a productive and enlightening meeting with Mr Spray and am now more convinced than ever that a trust is a model that will work for the Jerrabomberra Wetlands," Mr Stanhope said.

"Mr Spray has given me confidence that a trust will ensure a sustainable future for the Wetlands."

Mr Spray encouraged the Government to press ahead with plans for a master plan for the Reserve, which would identify opportunities to enhance habitat for sedentary and migrating birds, as well as opportunities for new infrastructure to enhance the experience of visitors.

"Mr Spray has confirmed that through his experience with three UK-based wildlife trusts, the establishment of an independently-resourced trust is perhaps the single-most important step in guaranteeing the long-term survival of the world's wetlands," Mr Stanhope said.

Mr Stanhope said he had previously discussed the concept of establishing a wetland trust with local environmental experts at two roundtable meetings he convened in 2009.

Minor amendments have been made to a Draft Plan of Management for the Wetlands following the recent completion of the CSIRO's sustainability study on the Eastlake and wetlands interface. The Draft Plan of Management will be considered by Cabinet and referred to the Committee for Planning and the Environment in coming weeks.

Statement ends

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