



MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

MEDIA RELEASE

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SNOWY MOUNTAINS CLOUD SEEDING LEGISLATION TAKES EFFECT

The legislation allowing a research project for winter cloud seeding in the Snowy Mountains to proceed takes effect from today, NSW Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Ian Macdonald, has announced.

Mr Macdonald said the issue had been the subject of healthy debate in the wider community and he appreciated the contribution of a range of interest groups.

“One of the benefits of this research project is the potential to mitigate the impact of climate change on our precious alpine environment,” Mr Macdonald said.

“We want to make sure future generations can enjoy the Kosciuszko National Park as it is now.

“This proposal was reviewed by an 11-member expert, independent scientific panel which concluded the research project would not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An assessment by the Department of Environment and Conservation reached the same conclusion.

“Unfortunately, the fact remains that average temperatures in our alpine areas have been on a slow but steady rise since the early 1960s.

“Therefore, our snow falls are shrinking and the animals which depend on snow cover to survive – such as the Mountain Pygmy Possum and the Corroboree Frog – are under increasing stress.

“We have also stated clearly that projections indicate that under continuing dry weather patterns, Snowy Hydro water storages may be depleted from the current low levels, to less than 36% - the lowest ever recorded – by 2007/08.

“Extra flows into the Murray River could help generate additional electricity.

“The Natural Resources Commission will monitor the results from the research project and report to Government.

“I look forward to reviewing the outcomes of the research project in due course.”

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