



Ginninderra Catchment Group

ACT Election Priorities 2024

Prepared by Ginninderra Catchment Group for
ACT Election Candidates from Ginninderra and Yerrabi

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Background and Context

The Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) operates within a unique urban and peri-urban environment, delivering programs that support ecological health, community education, and citizen science. GCG is a key partner with the ACT Government in managing the ongoing challenges of managing invasive species, sediment control, and maintaining plantings require a coordinated and well-funded approach to ensure on-ground environmental restoration delivers environmental outcomes.

Current Situation

Currently Ginninderra Catchment Group, along with the other two catchment groups in the ACT, receives \$150,000 each annually in ACT Government funding via four-year contracts for the Community Environmental Education and Stewardship Program (CEESP). The current CEESP contract ends on 30 June 2025.

FrogWatch receives annual funding of \$94,000 (indexed) and the current contract ends 2026/2027.

Waterwatch receives annual funding of \$107,000 (indexed) and the current contract ends 2026/2027.

Landcare ACT, our peak representative body for community Landcare in the ACT and region, currently receives no ongoing administrative funding from the ACT Government.

In the lead-up to the 2020 ACT election, all three major parties (Labor, Liberal, Greens) indicated they supported ongoing core funding for the three catchment groups and the FrogWatch and Waterwatch programs.

While we are pleased the FrogWatch and Waterwatch funding has been renewed and indexed, we are concerned about future funding for our catchment work under CEESP:

- Funding has not been guaranteed past June 2025, which makes our ability to forward-plan difficult and security of employment for our staff precarious.
- Funding has not been indexed, which means in a high-inflation context, we are having to function with less.
- Additionally, funding has not kept up with an increasing amount of core catchment work. In 2019 we supported 19 volunteer groups, which rapidly expanded to 33 in 2024. These additional groups require time for onboarding, and ongoing education, relationship building, and on-ground assistance with their new restoration sites.

Why This Matters

Supporting catchment groups and community-led programs ensures that environmental stewardship and volunteer coordination continue to thrive in the ACT. By investing in local capacity, the ACT Government can sustain its holistic approach to managing the Bush Capital

Our Requests – what we want

To build on existing commitments and ensure long-term sustainability of catchment health and community-led environmental programs, we propose the following priorities for the next ACT Government. This document aims to encourage all parties to match the [commitments made by the ACT Greens](#) in their 2024 election platform.

1. Secure Funding for Community-Based Catchment Management

- Request: \$250,000 annually with indexation for Ginninderra Catchment Group to continue its critical role in waterway health, weed management, and community education through coordinating over 33 volunteer groups, managing citizen science initiatives like FrogWatch, and delivering on-ground projects.
- Request: \$75,000 annually with indexation for Landcare ACT to continue its leadership role as the peak Landcare organisation in the ACT.

2. Strengthen Citizen Science Programs

- FrogWatch Program: Continue funding-certainty for FrogWatch (\$110,000/year, indexed), a critical program that contributes to waterway health and biodiversity monitoring.
- Waterwatch Program: Maintain support for Waterwatch (\$120,000/year, indexed), ensuring the continuation of ACT's comprehensive water quality monitoring program.

3. Enhance Volunteer Capacity and Community Engagement

- Increase Funding for ACT Government staff working in Volunteer Coordination: Provide additional support for the volunteer coordinators to enhance community involvement in conservation activities. This will facilitate more community engagement and capacity building across the 100+ volunteer groups working on ACT's natural landscapes.

4. Support Integrated Environmental Management and Strategic Planning

- Environmental Directorate: Establish a dedicated environmental directorate to unify land and water management and separate these responsibilities from planning and development.
- Conservation Area Protection: Implement legislative protections for high-value conservation areas, reducing conflicts with development and steering growth towards lower conservation value lands.

5. Address Emerging Environmental Challenges

- Expand Biosecurity and Weed Management Programs: Increase resources for early intervention against invasive plants and animals, safeguarding biodiversity and reducing long-term management costs.

6. Recognise and Promote Aboriginal Cultural Practices in Land Management

- Provide dedicated funding and support for Ngunawal/Ngunnawal and other Indigenous groups to integrate cultural practices into environmental management.

In conclusion, the Ginninderra Catchment Group urges all ACT election candidates to recognise the critical role of community-based environmental stewardship and to commit to securing sustainable, long-term funding.

By supporting our outlined priorities, the next ACT Government can ensure continued progress toward a healthier, more resilient natural environment for the Bush Capital.