

MEDIA RELEASE

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Welcome to new Environment Minister David Speirs

The state's peak environment body has warmly welcomed the appointment of David Speirs as South Australia's new Environment and Water Minister.

"Minister Speirs has demonstrated a long standing and deep commitment to environmental issues," said Conservation SA CE Craig Wilkins.

"He has also shown his willingness to consult with and listen respectfully to the community environment sector, which provides a massive volunteer and paid workforce looking after much of the state's important nature.

"We look forward to working with him, as we face together a long list of environmental, water, climate change and natural resource challenges," he said.

During the state election campaign, the Liberal Party committed to a range of positive policy commitments, including:

- Protecting the iconic Kallakoopah Creek wilderness in the Simpson Desert
- Review of native vegetation and significant trees protection
- New ranger positions and community funding
- Reform of Natural Resource Management to ensure greater community involvement
- Creation of a new metro National Park and Green Adelaide

(see attached list of key commitments with more detail)

"We also look forward to working closely with Dan Van Host Pellekaan as Minister for Energy and Mining, and Stephan Knoll as Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, Local Government & Planning.

"Public support for renewable energy and public transport, as well as the fracking moratorium in the South East is very strong, and we welcome their commitments in this area," he said.

Conservation SA thanks the outgoing Minister for Environment, Ian Hunter for his strong climate change and renewable energy advocacy, and his outstanding defence of the integrity of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and a healthy Murray river system.

"Former Minister Hunter was a great advocate for the health of our most important River – a legacy we hope the new Minister will embrace on behalf of all South Australians.

The sacking of Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources chief Sandy Pitcher, however, is concerning.

“We are surprised and disappointed that Sandy Pitcher has been let go as the head of the Environment Department. She was widely respected for her focus on partnerships, climate change policy and the positive shift she was making to the culture of the Department.

“We hope the new Chief Executive will recognise the importance of partnering with the community to solve environmental challenges.

“Pretty much everything that makes our state liveable and prosperous is dependent on a healthy environment.

“We look forward to working with the new Marshall Government to look after our most important assets: healthy landscapes and oceans, clean energy and transport, resilient farmland and a planning system that protects biodiversity and connection to nature,” he said.

Release ends

Further comment: Craig Wilkins, 0417 879 439

Attached: List of key Liberal Party commitments with more detail