



### General Information

#### What is the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme?

The Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme (MCKFP) is part of the Forest Conservation Fund (FCF). The FCF is a voluntary programme to protect old growth and under-reserved forest communities on private land in Tasmania. The FCF was established as part of the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement in May 2005.

The objective of the FCF is to protect up to 45,600 hectares of private forested land, targeting old growth and under-reserved forest communities. The target includes up to 2,400 hectares of forest to protect the karst values in the Mole Creek area.

The Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme will support landowners with forest who are willing to place a conservation covenant on their land or are willing to sell their forested land, if a suitable buyer is found.

The MCKFP will continue until the end of June 2008, until the target of 2,400 hectares is met, or the money allocated (\$3.6 million) is exhausted.

#### What are the benefits of the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme if I want to protect my forested land?

The MCKFP allows you to:

- participate voluntarily in the MCKFP;
- have a free and non-binding site assessment of your forested land by a Field Agent;
- choose which management actions you want to undertake;
- continue to use the covenanted area for some business needs if you choose (eg occasional grazing, domestic firewood collection);
- choose how long the conservation covenant will last;
- discuss the financial incentive you want to receive for placing your forested land under a conservation covenant;
- protect your forested land for future generations;
- be recognised for protecting the karst values of the Mole Creek area;
- be recognised for protecting your forested land; and
- improve your knowledge about land management for conservation, and receive ongoing support.

#### How will the Mole Creek Karst Forest programme work?

Landowners will have an opportunity to participate in a **voluntary** negotiation process. The process will allow you to negotiate a price for the conservation value of your land.

Need more information?

Contact the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme Administrator,  
The Tasmanian Land Conservancy, on 03 6225 1399  
or visit [www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html)

If you decide to participate in the MCKFP, the following steps are involved:

**Step 1:** Complete the Registration of Interest form and send it to the MCKFP Administrator, the Tasmanian Land Conservancy. **The closing date for Registrations of Interest is Wednesday 28 February 2007.**

**Step 2:** The MCKFP Administrator will sort the registrations of interest by priority. Properties with more of the priority features, and particularly with priority karst, and early registrations of interest, will be contacted first.

**Step 3:** A Field Agent with substantial knowledge of forest management will contact you to arrange a suitable time for a site assessment. The Field Agent will visit your property to assess the conservation value of the forest and the karst. The Field Agent will be able to discuss management options and actions with you such as grazing regimes, weed control and fencing. If the forest and karst values on your property are not those sought by the Programme, information on available alternative land management programmes will be provided to you by the Field Agent.

You should take time to consult with family, business associates or other advisers, such as legal or financial advisers, on the implications of entering into a conservation covenant, or selling part or all of your property.

**Step 4 – Covenant:** Once you have decided on the details of what you want to offer, the Field Agent will negotiate a price with you, assist you in completing a proposal including a financial agreement, and prepare a draft covenant for you to check. The Programme allows for a 90 day negotiation period (from beginning of negotiations with the Field Agent, to completion of the proposal and draft covenant), as a reasonable timeframe to reach a conclusion for each individual. If you are happy with the details for the proposal and covenant, you sign the proposal and submit it to the Programme Administrator.

**Step 4 – Sale:** Once you have determined that you wish to sell, the Field Agent will assess your land for the MCKFP priority features, and assist you in completing a proposal, which will be submitted to the Programme Administrator. The buyer will be required to protect the forested land in perpetuity.

**Step 5:** Proposals are presented to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Heritage for approval.

**Step 6:** If your proposal is approved, a financial agreement will be offered to you (or the buyer, in the case of sale). You will receive your first payment once you accept the financial agreement. You may need to liaise with the Field Agent again to finalise the conservation covenant prior to it being submitted to the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries and Water.

If your proposal is not approved then the Field Agent will discuss your proposal with you, and provide you with details of other land management programme options, if available.

**Need more information?**

Contact the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme Administrator,  
The Tasmanian Land Conservancy, on 03 6225 1399  
or visit [www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html)

## What is the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme looking for?

The MCKFP will give a higher priority to forest that is:

- over a significant cave, or has a high density of features such as caves, streamsinks and sinkholes, or is in the catchment area of a significant cave;
- old growth or under-reserved (see Fact Sheet 4);
- connected to the Mole Creek Karst National Park or other conservation areas; and
- larger in area.

In general, higher payments will be made for properties with more priority features, specifically karst priorities, and for sale or a permanent covenant compared with a 12-year covenant.

## Who is the Programme Administrator?

The Programme Administrator is responsible for assisting landowners in the MCKFP process, providing advice and supporting participants. The Programme Administrator will manage the overall on-ground delivery of the MCKFP as well as managing the Field Agents.

The Programme Administrator is the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and can be contacted on 03 6225 1399.

## Who are the Field Agents and what do they do?

There will be one or more Field Agents provided by the MCKFP Administrator. They will undertake a site assessment for you, negotiate a draft covenant and help you in completing any relevant paperwork. The Field Agent will assist you to ensure the process is as straightforward as possible.

The Field Agents will:

- be independent from the Government;
- be experienced in assessing Tasmanian vegetation communities; and
- have good communication skills and a practical understanding of farm management and practices.

## Who manages the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme?

The Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage (DEH) administers the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme with assistance from the Tasmanian Government Department of Primary Industries and Water (DPIW). The DEH has contracted a Programme Administrator (the Tasmanian Land Conservancy) to deliver the MCKFP, who will be the main point of contact for landowners interested in the MCKFP.

Need more information?

Contact the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme Administrator,  
The Tasmanian Land Conservancy, on 03 6225 1399  
or visit [www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html)

Two committees have been established to help implement and manage the MCKFP:

- *FCF Steering Committee*

This committee comprises members from both the Australian and Tasmanian governments. The FCF Steering Committee coordinates the development and implementation of the FCF and the MCKFP.

- *Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme Guidance Group*

The MCKFP Guidance Group has been established to assist in guiding the Programme and represent the community's views. The Programme Guidance Group comprises of representatives from these organisations – Timber Communities Australia, Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, NRM North and the Tasmanian Land Conservancy.

### Fact sheets in this series

1. General information
2. Site assessments and advice
3. Landowner covenant proposals
4. Frequently asked questions and answers
5. About the Agreements
6. Assisted land purchase

If required, Field Agents will also be able to provide the following fact sheets:

7. Tax implications
8. Possible Centrelink considerations
9. Checklist for proposals

Need more information?

Contact the Mole Creek Karst Forest Programme Administrator,  
The Tasmanian Land Conservancy, on 03 6225 1399  
or visit [www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/land/forestpolicy/fcf/index.html)