

## **Strategies to reduce conflict; protecting wildlife, engaging the community - the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary experience**

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In 2008, ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands (PCL) began the construction of a Predator Proof Sanctuary within a nearby Nature Reserve and adjacent to several new suburbs. By June 2009, the 500 hectare Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary was constructed. A Steering Committee was formed early in the planning stages to advise on emerging issues and formulate a Management Plan. PCL now strives to manage a special sanctuary adjacent to new suburbs of Canberra. Sanctuary staff set about becoming the focus point for change management bringing together interest from the research community, government and the general public. Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is largely an outdoor laboratory to determine effects of various measured manipulations upon the enclosed woodlands. One of the core strategies of the new sanctuary is to remove all of the larger feral (fox, cat, dog, rabbit, hare) animals and actively manage the animals within. The resulting changes to the status quo of a woodland adjacent to a new Town Centre and suburban development will have effect upon the residents and wildlife. The challenge now is to manage the changes in both existing and reintroduced wildlife, and engage the local and wider community to participate in these changes in their extended backyard.