Adam Giles  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Bess Price  
Minister for Parks and Wildlife

Darwin’s favourite weekend retreat gets $39 million dollar upgrade

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The Giles Government is investing $39 million in improvements to Litchfield National Park as part of Budget 2015, including funding to complete sealing of the Litchfield Park Road.

“The waterfalls of Litchfield National Park are a favourite weekend escape for Darwin residents, as well as a mecca for tourists and we want to make it easier for everyone to enjoy this beautiful slice of the Top End,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“This $39 million investment includes $28.5 million to seal the remaining 14 kilometres of the Litchfield Park Road and construct a new bridge over the Lower Finniss River.

“Labor promised to complete this project a decade ago but failed to deliver. The Country Liberals will complete the sealed loop, including the new bridge, within three years.

“This will slash travel times to the Park for locals and provide an alternative all-weather tourist loop.”

Tourism NT estimates that sealing the Litchfield National Park loop, including the new bridge, will deliver an annual economic benefit of $14.4 million.

“Litchfield is a busy park with close to 330,000 visitors last year and we hope this additional 2WD access will help disperse people throughout the park’s many swimming and camping sites,” Mr Giles said.

Better access and more visitors require better facilities and the Government is investing more than $10 million in park infrastructure as part of Budget 2015.

“Recent research by Tourism NT shows that Litchfield has the highest satisfaction rating of any Territory experience and we want it to stay that way so we’re investing in facilities at the key sites Territorians and tourists love,” Minister for Parks Bess Price said.

Upgrade works include:

- Upgrade Florence Falls Site - $4.83 million
- Buley Rockhole Redesign - $1.56 million
- Enhance Tolmer Falls - $2.32 million
- Upgrade Termite Mounds - $1.01 million
- Redesign Tjaynera Falls (Sandy Creek) Campground – $710 000
- The Cascades bridges and platforms - $120 000

“Today it was great to visit beautiful Florence Falls which will receive the largest slice of these funds with works including additional car parking, a new concrete path and stairs into the plunge pool, additional campsites and new toilet facilities,” Minister Price said.

“This work builds on significant park investments last year which included the installation of Wi-fi at Wangi Falls.

“Territorians love getting out to Litchfield. It’s often one of the first places locals take interstate visitors as it’s a great way to show off the natural beauty of the Top End and can be done in a day trip from Darwin.

“Litchfield is one of the jewels in our parks crown, supporting 50 tourism operators and I’m thrilled we’ve been able to provide such a comprehensive package of upgrades in Budget 2015.”

The Litchfield upgrades are part of a suite of critical tourism projects and programs being funded right across the Territory in Budget 2015.

"Over the next two years, the Territory economy will strategically tilt towards the tourism industry and the Government is laying the groundwork now to prepare the industry for this shift. We will not repeat Labor’s mistakes by failing to plan for this new landscape,” Mr Giles said.

“The Territory tourism industry is starting to show signs of recovery after years of decline under Labor but we know that infrastructure will be a critical economic driver going forward.

“That’s why Budget 2015 includes funding for key tourism roads in the Top End and Central Australia, as well as a $4.75 million Tourism Infrastructure Development Fund that will promote the development of new and improved tourism products.”

Labor’s promise from 2004 can be viewed here: http://www.territorystories.nt.gov.au/bitstream/10070/77459/1/20040513_litchfield.pdf

A map of the road upgrade is attached below.

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[Long link to Litchfield park road upgrade map]