A record amount of more than $1 million will be spent by the NT Government in 2004-05 supporting grass roots action by environment and heritage organisations, it was announced today.

Environment and Heritage Minister Marion Scrymgour said this included $460 000 for a new NT Government environment grant scheme – a first for the Northern Territory.

“This is the first time the Territory has had a grants system available to everyone – everyone from the local school to landcare groups will be able to apply,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“Many organisations in the community work very hard to protect and enhance the environment upon which our great lifestyle depends.

“This Government believes in backing Territorians who give up their valuable time to protect our environment and heritage.”

Ms Scrymgour said this amount comes on top of the $250 000 to be spent on Litter and Recycling Grants and $330 000 for Heritage Grants and the National Trust.

Funding will also be provided to support the Cool Communities Project – a community based network of households reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gases.

“The 2004-05 Budget is full of unprecedented money for the environment,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“All up $1 million is to be spent supporting grass root initiatives by Environment and Heritage Organisations.”

Of the $460 000, Keep Australia Beautiful will receive $160 000, and the Environment Centre will get $15 000.

“These amounts have already been allocated to these groups who recently sought funding for next year’s financial allocations,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“The funding for the Environment Centre reflects the valuable advocacy work this group does in raising environmental issues before the wider the community.”