



**CONSERVATION
COUNCIL** ACT REGION

Submission to Department of Climate Change,
Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

The proposed listing as threatened of the Perunga Grasshopper and Canberra Raspy Cricket

13 August 2026

The Conservation Council ACT Region is the peak body for environment and climate groups in the ACT Region. We represent close to 50 member groups, bringing together a united voice on environment and climate issues to Government, business and community.

Since 1981 we have been at the centre of the region's most important wins for wildlife, bushland, climate and communities. As a hub for the ACT Region's environment and climate movement and a not-for-profit, non government organisation, we run campaigns, promote and upskill local groups, undertake research, advocate passionately, and engage and inform our community.

For further information please contact:

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Submission Details

The Conservation Council ACT Region appreciates the opportunity to provide comment to the Species Listing, Information and Policy Section of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) regarding the proposed listing as threatened of the Perunga Grasshopper, *Perunga ochracea*, and Canberra Raspy Cricket, *Cooraboorama canberrae*. For reasons discussed below, we are copying our submission to the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee (scientific.committee@environment.nsw.gov.au).

The habitat of these two beautiful insects found in our region's few remaining patches of intact natural grassland is in decline, so much so the ACT Government has proposed their listing as threatened, at the level 'Endangered', under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act). These insects are vital to soil health in the small and dwindling remnants of natural temperate grassland on which the Perunga Grasshopper and Canberra Raspy Cricket depend.

The Conservation Council strongly supports the ACT Government's proposal to list both species as threatened, in the threat category 'Endangered', under the EPBC Act.

We note that our member group Friends of Grasslands (FOG) has separately provided detailed submissions, informed by respected entomologists and ecologists, addressing the technical content of the draft listing assessments and conservation advice. We commend and support those submissions.

Natural Temperate Grassland in our region is already recognised as a critically endangered ecological community. The patches that remain are highly fragmented, often degraded and under continuing pressure from urban expansion, weed invasion, inappropriate fire regimes, feral predators and a changing climate.

The Perunga Grasshopper and Canberra Raspy Cricket are both highly restricted, ground-dwelling species confined to these threatened grassland remnants, and both are recorded only in very low numbers. As is so often the case for invertebrates, the case for listing is compelling on the evidence, yet these species can be easily overlooked in planning and development decisions precisely because they are small, cryptic and unfamiliar to the wider community. National listing is an important corrective: it will ensure their habitat requirements must be considered under the EPBC Act's referral and assessment process alongside better-known threatened species sharing the same grassland habitat.

Insects such as these two species play a disproportionately important role in maintaining healthy grassland soils, through processes including nutrient cycling, aeration and providing a food source for other native fauna. The decline of their habitat and populations are both symptoms of, and further contributors to, the broader deterioration of our grassland ecosystems. Protecting them is inseparable from protecting the grasslands themselves.

We urge the Australian Government to list the Perunga Grasshopper and Canberra Raspy Cricket as threatened species as proposed, in the threat category 'Endangered', and to ensure the accompanying Conservation Advice is adequately resourced and implemented so that listing translates into real protection on the ground.

We support FOG's call for listing by, and for DCCEEW's closer engagement with, New South Wales; this is essential given both species' habitat and threats are not confined by jurisdictional boundaries. We encourage you to work with the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee towards the *concurrent* recognition of these species' conservation status in that state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please do not hesitate to contact us if further information would assist.