

AWMS : AUSTRALASIAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Proposed Game law contradicts wildlife management science

The NSW Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2009 has the potential to set wildlife management in New South Wales back 150 years.

The Australasian Wildlife Management Society is the professional body representing wildlife researchers, managers, educators and policy makers in the Australasian region. It warns that if passed in its present form based on the arguments proposed by Shooter's Party representative Robert Brown, taxpayers will be faced with more rather than fewer wildlife management problems and costs in the future.

President of the society, Terry Korn said "there is no scientific evidence that recreational hunting reduces the long term impact of pest or game animals on agriculture or the environment. Mr Brown says recreational hunters have killed a total of 20000 pest animals in state forests since March 2006. Importantly Mr Brown does not say what percentage of the 20000 were rabbits, goats, feral pigs or foxes and where the hunting pressure was applied across NSW. Wildlife management science clearly shows that large scale coordinated, persistent and strategic approaches are necessary to reduce impact of feral or pest animals in the long term. This cannot be achieved with recreational shooting.

The proposal to establish reserves for recreational hunting of game birds not present in New South Wales and which are listed as extreme or serious environmental and agricultural threats by the Australian Vertebrate Pests Committee is a retreat to the old days of acclimatisation societies. These groups introduced to Australia many of the animals which are now national pests. They cost hundreds of millions of dollars annually to control and pose a serious bio-security risk," said Mr Korn.

"Should the proposed Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2009 be passed it will pose a long term environmental and agricultural cost for the New South Wales and Australian public".

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