

Dear Premier

I wish to express grave concern about the environmental, agricultural and future cost implications of the NSW Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2009! In doing so I join the concern expressed by RSPCA NSW, the Invasive Animals CRC and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

I am president of the Australasian Wildlife Management Society which is the professional body representing those involved in research, academia, management, education and policy associated with wildlife management in the Australasian region. The society has been in existence for 22 years and membership is composed mainly of Australians and New Zealanders.

The society believes the Bill will not contribute to a reduction in the long term impact of pest/feral animals because recreational hunting can not achieve this. The proposal ignores the science on this matter which has been established over the last thirty years in the Australasian region. Stakeholder groups and government have worked to establish best practice in vertebrate pest management over this period and the Bill ignores this best practice.

Should the government support the establishment of game reserves on private property the public of NSW and Australia will be faced with a new suite of vertebrate pests in the future. The Bill proposes to release on these game reserves exotic birds which currently do not exist in NSW and which are listed as either extreme or serious environmental/agricultural pests by the Australian Vertebrate Pests Committee. There is no way of containing these birds on the game reserves so it is inevitable that populations of new pest animals will establish and add to the already significant cost of controlling existing pest species. It is always cheaper and more effective to prevent damage arising than to manage, control or eradicate damage caused by established pest animals. This is a fundamental principle!

From a humane and animal welfare viewpoint the Bill does not address the best practice codes that have been recently established in NSW and are about to be adopted nationally. It would be a diabolical if the government supported a Bill which ignores best practice codes the NSW government has led the way with in Australia.

The Bill also proposes that recreational hunters be permitted to hunt pest animals and certain species of native birds and mammals in national parks with the permission of the Minister for the Environment. Again my society seriously questions the environmental/agricultural damage reduction benefits of such a proposal. There is no evidence that recreational hunting will reduce impact in such situations. It is beyond belief to permit native species such Common Bronzewing pigeons, Purple swamphen, White Ibis, Straw necked Ibis, Black Swan and the Topknot pigeon be culled in National parks and on private land while approving the release of extreme threats like the exotic Bobwhite quail, California quail, guinea fowl, Chukka partridge, Pheasant and Spotted Dove on private game reserves from which they will escape and establish pest populations. Such thinking was in vogue 150 years ago when Acclimatisation Societies were popular. I think we have moved on from there!

I ask that you heed the pleas of my society and those of the RSPCA NSW, the Invasive Animals CRC and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW by not supporting the NSW Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2009 as it presently stands. As proposed it will have long term negative impacts for the

NSW and Australian environment and agricultural production systems and will cost the public considerably as populations of new exotic pest species establish.

My society would be happy to advise further on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Terry Korn PSM
President
Australasian Wildlife Management Society
0268847298
0417747298
tjkorn@bigpond.net.au