

Submission on Draft Report “Review of pest animal management”.

SSAA Grafton Branch NSW

Daniel Spears - President

On behalf of our almost 480 members at SSAA Grafton we make the following comments regarding the Natural Resource Commission Draft Report on Pest Animal Management.

For the record our branch and our members were not consulted by SSAA NSW prior to their submission and our branch does not support the recommendation to remove the Game Animal Status for the six deer species found in NSW. Nor do we support the removal of the G Licence requirements.

There are several control mechanisms already in place for land holders and a blanket reclassification to Pest Animal across the state is not supported by our branch and our members. We are extremely concerned that if the Game Animal Status of deer is removed we will see the use of aerial culling and poisoning. Both of these methods in our opinion is inhumane and will cause too much collateral damage to native species and livestock when used across public lands and private property. The use of poisons such as 1080 and Cyanide was advocated by NRC representatives at the Grafton Public meeting and we 100% oppose these inhumane methods of animal killing.

Many of our members hold G and R Licences issued by the DPI Game Licence Unit and believe that the best way forward is to expand the DPI GLU Model across more public lands. This model has proven to not only be very cost effective but offers superior benefits to the SPC Program currently being trialled in National Parks. There is no comparison between the DPI Game GLU with something like 20,000 Licenced Hunters ready to go compared to the pathetic take up of the SPC Program of well below 100 volunteers.

Our members ask why has such a focus been placed upon Deer when there are far bigger problems with Wild Dogs, Cane Toads, Carp and Indian Mynas? Why hasn't the government first sought to utilise the DPI GLU Licenced Hunters to their full potential by allowing increased access to Public Lands before turning to costly and more inhumane means of control?

We feel as though the Public Meeting held in Grafton was poorly timed and not well publicised. This prevented a very large number of interested members from attending due to work commitments. Do not take this as a sign that these members do not care. Every single member I have spoken to on this issue is very disturbed by the NRC's attempt to demonise deer whilst largely overlooking other existing and emerging pests. They are also very angry at the recommendation to halve the minimum land size for Local Land Services levies. This is nothing more than a money grab for LLS that will cost land holders with absolutely no return to them. It is apparent that organisations such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service cannot control pest animals in their jurisdictions but their refusal to allow R Licence holders access to assist can only be taken that they are not serious about controlling pest animals. Why else would any organisation not explore the use of a proven, cost effective and safe mechanism before turning to expensive and inhumane methods such as aerial shooting and poisons?

In Summary the SSAA Grafton branch is against the recommendation to declare deer a pest animal and suggest that the NRC recommend to the minister that Hunters be allowed greater access to Public Lands to hunt deer and pest animals such as pigs, goats, foxes, rabbits, cats and wild dogs and money be spent on educating land holders on the benefits of allowing Licenced Hunters onto their

lands for animal control. We also recommend that a bounty be placed upon Foxes, Wild Dogs and Cane Toads.

Regards

Daniel Spears

President

SSAA Grafton