

To whom it may concern,

I wish to submit my feedback concerning the review of pest animal management by the National Resources Commission (NRC).

To begin, I am a 24 year old university graduate who has been involved with both the sporting shooting and hunting community for a number of years. Currently, I am a SSAA member as well as a member of the SSAA's Hunting and Conservation program and finally, have recently become qualified in the Supplementary Pest Control program between the National Parks and Wildlife Service and SSAA.

Before I provide my views on the topic of pest animal management strategies, I would like to highlight the fact that as an educated individual who chooses to participate in the shooting sports, I am able to see past my own personal interests – which may be misconstrued by some to be individual bias, as view the matter in question through a broader scope; forgive the pun.

It is widely known that the Australian native ecology suffers at the hand of introduced flora and fauna species and one need only ask a child attending primary school of this. However, many are aware of the problem at hand, yet few may discuss at the length the combined strategies that may be implemented to address the issue. I use the phrase “combined strategies” due to the fact that, as with any case of infestation, there is little to no chance that a singular solution is the answer but rather a carefully planned and systematically implemented series of solutions addressing the same issue, but from differing perspectives.

Which brings me to my feedback on the matter of the management of pest animals in New South Wales. Firstly, I would like to make apparent my very strong support towards the efforts of the Supplementary Pest Control program, which allows qualified shooters to assist in pest animal management within National Parks, under the supervision of NPWS staff. I would implore those reviewing the matter to examine the data collected by NPWS staff and discuss with them at length the benefits that the program has already achieved as well as future directions of the program to maximise its effectiveness.

Finally, I view the current restrictions that are in place for the hunting of deer on both public and private land within NSW to be detrimental to the control of feral deer species within the state. I would like to remind those who are reviewing pest animal control within NSW that all species of deer within the country are introduced and thus, their presence within any of our native ecosystems is damaging. The control of these feral species is hampered through legislation classifying deer species as restricted game and therefore requiring individuals to attain an R-Licence through the Department of Primary Industries in order to legally hunt deer on both public and private land. This game restriction is counter-intuitive to the overall

goal of controlling deer species as the additional licencing and training costs deter would-be hunters from going out on their own time to assist the state in the control of these animals.

To close, I would implore the Natural Resource Commission to adopt the aforementioned concept of “combined strategies” when conducting their review, but rather in the context of a combined group of organisations addressing a singular issue – I fully acknowledge that the issue of pest animal control may attract a plethora of opinions and proposed strategies from varying organisations; some of which may conflict. My final words on the matter to review the data from the NPWS and identify successes in the SPC program and look to further promote and expand the program in the future.

Yours Sincerely,

Aaron James Burke