

Submission to the NSW NRC State-wide review of NSW pest animal management

As a landholder adjoining the state owned Windamere Dam Foreshores (WDF), I make the following comparison and points with regard to improving control of pest animals.

I have farmed on my property adjoining WDF since 1884 and have witnessed the gradual, continual decline of the WDF while management and a succession of government ministers have defended their short sighted, short term outcomes as positive results and all the while excused the long term decline that has occurred to the detriment and cost of surrounding farmers. Most recently we have witnessed the anticipated addition of wild dogs.

The decline started with the continual increase in noxious weeds which has in turn provided a rich breeding ground for pest animals including pigs, goats, foxes, and now wild dogs and deer. The cost to surrounding farmers over the years in additional pest animal and weed control costs because of the lamentable mismanagement of the WDF is incalculable and could have easily been prevented.

To our east we have the Clandulla State Forest with the effort and resources expended by State Forests noticeable by it's complete absence.

There are two main issues that need to be addressed if we are to have effective pest animal control;

- 1) Consistency in application across the landscape (regardless of tenure). It should not matter who owns what land. The regulatory enforcement provisions for non compliance should be consistent and apply to all landholders, both public and private. Pest animals like weeds know no boundaries, neither should control efforts, enforcement provisions or regulations.
- 2) Good co-ordination is a must. We have seen the positive results become evident with the employment of a wild dog co-ordinator in the northwest of NSW in applying the National Wild Dog Control Plan, and recently the addition of a co-ordinator in northeast NSW. I believe the whole of NSW should be covered under such co-ordination with their brief expanded to cover the main vertebrate pest animals causing substantial adverse impacts to agricultural production and biodiversity, such as wild dogs, foxes, feral cats, pigs & in some cases rabbits).

How should pest control be resourced?

Under the very appropriate "shared responsibility" model, it is entirely reasonable for everyone to contribute. To this end all landholders should pay LLS rates down to a property size of two hectares with the pest insect levy broadened to "a pest levy". This could be used to fund strategic co-ordinated bait control programs. As it will be active landholders undertaking the actions, it is entirely reasonable that the broader rate paying community foot the bill to some extent.