

## **WaterNSW Response to the Natural Resources Commission State-wide review of pest animal management issues paper.**

In response to the draft report, the WaterNSW would make the following comments

### **Responsibilities and Roles**

Roles and responsibilities for the coordination of pest management are not clear across the state. This issues paper seems unclear as to how the Draft Invasive Species Plan 2015 – 2022 will be implemented.

There needs to be a strong coordination role from a lead agency that is able to both staff and resource the delivery of key functions:

- Increase community engagement in pest management through education and extension activities, be the first point of call for pest management issues
- Facilitate partnerships between government agencies and other landholders to work on regional management programs for agreed prioritised pests
- Assist in information sharing, lessons learned can be transferred through the local region
- Develop research partnerships to trial new technologies for the control of pest species.
- Have an overall view of how, when and where pest management is occurring throughout a local region

Water NSW agrees with the issues paper that relationships between stakeholders require a continuity of staff and stability of organisations to be successful. Frequent changes to the responsibilities of government agencies and the reduction of extension staff is the one of the key challenges with the delivery of pest management control in New South Wales.

### **Regional Focus**

As a land manager, with landholdings in all parts of the state, WaterNSW supports a regional approach to the delivery of pest management functions. A regional focus allows a better overall view of pest management problems within an area without losing the ability to have effective planning and enforcement

### **Shared Ownership**

WaterNSW acknowledges there are a range of motivations and perspectives in relation to pest management control. Within the NSW Greater Sydney region problems are experienced with an increase in rural-residential development, absentee landholders and lifestyle property owners. These groups can be reluctant or not capable of controlling pests.

Education programs run by Local Land Services that are currently used to educate these new owners on pasture and stock management could also incorporate pest management messages and key contacts for their area. WaterNSW would like to see these messages also contain information on how pest species contribute to poor water quality outcomes, both on farm and within their local catchment area.

### **Priority Pest Species**

WaterNSW would like to see an increased emphasis on the control of pest species from a water quality perspective. These impacts, both direct (carp in waterways) and indirect (pigs disturbing ground surface leading to erosion), need to be considered as a priority given that good quality water supply is such a valuable community resource.

WaterNSW is particularly concerned with the future risks of contamination of water supply dams through the use of new pest management techniques. An example of this is the introduction of the *Cyprinid herpesvirus 3* which due to its high mortality rate has the potential to lead to massive numbers of dead carp within our water storages. This would have a significant detrimental impact on water quality in these dams and WaterNSW ability to manage such an incident.

### **Shared Knowledge and Professional Development**

WaterNSW recognises the importance of capacity building its staff to meet the changing demands of pest control activities. Establishing an industry standard pest animal training program that is targeted at the various levels of implementation, planning and decision making would be supported and encouraged. This training should be supported by an industry wide data capture tool such as the Biosecurity Information System that is accessible by all stakeholders eg. through web based technologies. This would allow transparent and accountable real time recording of pest management actions undertaken by government agencies, industry and landholders.

Thank you for accepting our feedback and we look forward to review the findings of the issue paper.

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WaterNSW