



# **The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP**

## **Minister for Primary Industries**

## **Minister for Small Business**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Friday 25 October 2013

#### **NSW GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES INTENTION TO RE-DECLARE HUNTING IN STATE FORESTS**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, has today gazetted the NSW Government's preliminary intention to re-declare 358 State forests for licensed volunteer hunting, pending the outcome of Forestry Corporation's updated risk assessment.

Ms Hodgkinson said hunting will not take place until the NSW Government has considered the risk assessment, which is due to be completed in the second half of November.

"The NSW Government believes in the role of volunteer hunters in contributing to co-ordinated pest management programs," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"Following the findings of the independent Governance Review of the Game Council of NSW – known as the Dunn Report – I needed to be confident that volunteer licensed hunting took place in the appropriate State forests and in the safest manner possible.

"This is why I asked the Forestry Corporation to update the risk assessment.

"Last week, legislation passed Parliament to improve eradication and management of introduced pest animals and introduce more robust and effective oversight of volunteer hunting.

"This followed through on the NSW Government's commitment to implement key recommendations in the Dunn Report.

"We are now following through with our commitment by moving to restore volunteer hunting in a timely manner."

Ms Hodgkinson said while 358 State forests are being re-declared, the final number which licensed hunting is allowed to take place in will depend upon the outcome of the updated risk assessment.

"Forestry Corporation completed a thorough risk assessment in 2005, which has been reviewed twice, and is in the final stages of completing an updated risk assessment," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"This will be a thorough and complete process, and the findings will be taken into account before a final declaration is made."