

NSW GOVERNMENT RESPONSE: STATE-WIDE REVIEW OF PEST ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Natural Resources Commission

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - LANDHOLDERS

WHAT WAS NRC PEST ANIMAL REVIEW?

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) conducted an independent, state-wide review of the management of pest animals in NSW. The purpose of the review was to identify opportunities to improve the management of pest animals across all land tenures for environmental, economic and social benefits.

In 2016 the NRC provided a comprehensive report to Government identifying key focus areas, with 33 recommendations for opportunities to improve pest animal management on public and private land.

The NSW Government's response contains legislative, governance and operational reforms based on these recommendations, emphasising its commitment to delivering improved biosecurity outcomes and strategic and coordinated pest animal management.

WHAT ARE THE KEY PRIORITIES FOR GOVERNMENT FROM THE NRC REVIEW?

Key themes identified by the NRC where the NSW Government is taking action include:

- » ensuring strong and responsive pest animal risk management that is outcomes-focused and based on regional priorities
- » strengthening governance and planning frameworks at the local, regional and state level
- » enabling communities to better engage with managing biosecurity and pest animal risks

- » implementing more strategic management practices
- » improving the knowledge base through long-term prioritised research activities
- » targeting funding to areas that achieve highest public benefit

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHANGES TO PEST MANAGEMENT FOR LANDHOLDERS?

Regional focus

Each of the 11 Local Land Services (LLS) regions will develop regional pest animal management plans to identify priority pests and appropriate management tools based on assessments of the risks they pose. Regional pest animal management plans, together with regional strategic weed management plans, will deliver comprehensive invasive species planning for each LLS region across the State.

Regional pest animal plans will identify the risks present in each region, set regional pest animal management priorities, and provide for the coordinated management of pest animal risks within and across LLS regions.

The plans will also guide resourcing and investment decisions for government, industry and individual landholders that can be dedicated to coordinated pest animal management.

Existing pest control orders (PCOs) will remain in place and continue to be enforceable until state and regional pest animal management plans are finalised.



Wild deer management

A NSW Wild Deer Management Strategy will be developed to identify knowledge gaps for wild deer management in NSW and outline best practice management techniques. Importantly the strategy will also inform the development of targeted approaches within regional pest animal management plans.

Wild deer will be identified as pests in regional pest animal plans where they are having adverse impacts on the economy, environment and community. The plans will identify options available to mitigate the risks and impacts posed by wild deer, including the option to suspend some game hunting licence conditions to improve deer control.

WILL THERE STILL BE PEST CONTROL ORDERS FOR DECLARED PEST SPECIES?

Under the new *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act), due to commence mid 2017, there is no longer a need to specifically declare particular pest animal species in legislation, or to rely on and continually amend lists of pest species in legislation. Whether or not something is declared a pest in legislation will have no impact on the management tools that can be applied.

For example, the European red fox is currently subject to a pest control order (PCO), which imposes specific obligations on occupiers of land to control the pest. However, once the Act, supporting regulations and regional pest animal plans are in place, land managers will be required to take reasonably practicable measures under the general biosecurity duty to minimise the impact of foxes in that particular area.

HOW WILL THESE CHANGES BENEFIT LANDHOLDERS?

Regional pest animal management plans will have an integrated management approach and consider all control options available to target the risks identified in each region. The plans will be developed in consultation with community stakeholders and will respond to the risks present in each region.

This regional approach will ensure that pest animal management tools, resources, and investments are catered to the needs and impacts in each region, and to ensure that investment is targeted and efficient.

The plans will also provide guidance on how both public and private land managers can meet their general biosecurity duty under the new legislation. The obligations for managing pests under the Act will apply equally regardless of whose land they are on. The Act binds Government, public land managers, private land holders and the broader community equally.

WILL THERE BE ANY CHANGES TO FIREARMS LICENSING FOR LANDHOLDERS?

The controls over the licensing, compliance and registration of firearms in NSW administered by the Firearms Registry will continue to apply to control pest hunting activities.

DO I NEED A LICENCE TO HUNT DEER ON MY LAND?

Landholders, members of their household or employees of a property will continue to be exempt from game hunting licence requirements for hunting deer on properties owned by the landholder.

WILL LICENSED HUNTERS STILL BE ALLOWED TO HUNT ON MY PROPERTY?

The Government will continue to provide for responsible and accountable hunting of game and feral animals on public and private land.

The Government supports the use of approved hunting organisation membership and programs to link hunters with landholders.

A landholder register and hunter register will allow licensed and reputable hunters to be sourced to assist landholders with deer management objectives. See the DPI's hunting website for more information www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hunting.

DID THE NRC PEST REVIEW INCLUDE NATIVE ANIMALS?

Although the scope of the review excluded native animals and marine species, the NRC review included a recommendation the Government commission an independent review of native animal management in NSW.

The NSW Government is undertaking a review of wildlife management as part of the biodiversity reform process. Kangaroos have been identified as a native animal that can have adverse impacts, with DPI and OEHS establishing a working group which will provide input into the wildlife review and discuss kangaroo impacts and management actions in response to heightened concerns in the community.

May 2017

Further information:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity