

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

Natural Resources Commission

FAQ



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE 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 ACTION AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE 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 scale
- » 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

The NRC review emphasised the need to adopt a more strategic and people-centric approach to securing NSW's biosecurity future. The NSW Government is delivering on this through its extensive biosecurity reform package and a regional planning focus, which is designed to foster community participation in safeguarding our State from biosecurity risks, including pest animals.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHANGES FOLLOWING THE REVIEW?

Regional focus

Regional pest animal management plans will be developed in each Local Land Services (LLS) region in close consultation with biosecurity stakeholders, adapted and targeted to each region's needs. These plans will guide investment decisions for existing government, industry and individual landholder resources that can be dedicated to coordinated pest animal management.

This regional approach will ensure that pest animal management tools, actions, and investments are catered to the needs and impacts experienced in each region.

Strong governance framework

A State Pest Animal Committee will be established to complement the State Weeds Committee, and revitalise State oversight of pest management.

The NSW Government will continue to collaborate closely with the Australian Government and other states and territories through the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS), by supporting research that focuses on detection and prevention strategies, and through the expansion of the PestSmart portal and FeralScan.

Wild deer

A NSW Deer Management Strategy will be released to provide guidance to all stakeholders about the impacts and management of wild deer.

Deer will be retained in Schedule 3 Part 1 of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002*, with hunters requiring a licence. At the same time, through the re-developed Ecological Deer Management program, the NSW Government will continue to permit the suspension of deer hunting regulations in areas where numbers of deer have increased and deer have been identified in regional pest plans due to the risk they pose to primary production, the environment, and the community.

Wild dogs

Specific management approaches will be considered in the updated NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy due to be completed before the end of 2017, and in regional pest animal management plans in 2018. The current wild dog pest control orders will remain in place until these plans are finalised.

Feral cats

To minimise increases in the feral cat population, the NSW Government is investing in promoting responsible cat ownership with the online NSW Pet Registry; stopping breeders selling cats without micro-chips to pet shops; providing grants for councils to target micro-chipping, registration and de-sexing; and supporting the development of education materials.

Non-indigenous game birds

Non-indigenous game birds will remain in the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002*. There are currently no wild populations of non-indigenous game bird species in NSW and the legislation includes an offence for anyone releasing game animals for the purpose of hunting them in NSW.

Hunting and firearms

The NSW 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.

Importantly, 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.

DID THE NRC PEST REVIEW INCLUDE NATIVE ANIMALS?

The NRC was tasked with considering introduced terrestrial and freshwater vertebrate species and the scope of the review excluded native animals and marine species. However, some stakeholders raised concerns in submissions to the draft NRC report about the impacts caused by some native animal species and identified kangaroos as one of great concern. The NRC responded by including a recommendation the Government commission an independent review of native animal management in NSW.

The 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 OEH establishing a working group which will provide input into the wildlife review to assess kangaroo impacts and management actions.

May 2017

Further information:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity