

ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee

Dr Annie Lane,
Conservator of Flora and Fauna
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601
environment@act.gov.au

Dear Dr Lane

Draft - Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan.

Thank you for your invitation to provide comment on the draft Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan. We consider the draft plan to be a comprehensive document that provides a best practice and scientific basis for the on-going (and adaptive) management of the impacts of kangaroos in the ACT. It has obviously progressed since the Committee discussed the proposed approach to the document last year, where it was to be a more succinct document that referred to the ACT Kangaroo Management Plan (2010) and did what was legally required following the declaration of the Eastern Grey Kangaroo (EGK) as a controlled native species. It now not only provides an update to the original plan but brings together the latest research and expands the policies to include other land tenures, which is useful.

The NRMAC supports the plan and considers it to be another example of the ACT leading the way on management of urban kangaroo populations and probably a template for the management of other urban wildlife populations. It is comprehensive and extensive and covers all the issues; it is also easy to read at a general public level.

The NRMAC has a number of specific comments and questions to assist in the finalisation of the plan:

1. The critically important information in Appendix 2 (kangaroo densities in ACT reserves and other areas) needs to be used more in the 'Environmental impacts' section. Thanks to the quality and extensive research now available, the ACT now has scientifically defensible 'Target Densities' for kangaroos for four broad vegetation types (Section 5.3, p. 45). Appendix 2 provides the quantitative nature of the 'problem' – many areas of the ACT have kangaroo densities well of above these four thresholds. This is a key reason management such as culling is required. However, the link between 'sustainable' kangaroo densities and actual (measured) densities does not come through clearly in the body of the document. This needs addressing.
2. Tables 4 & 5 and Section 3.8.3 provide a useful summary of the rigorous and local research on the ecological impacts of kangaroos. However, the 'what's the problem?' case isn't well communicated.
3. With regard to monitoring and evaluation of EGK at an ACT population level rather than at a reserve or Kangaroo Management Unit level, we noticed that the number of kangaroos culled between 2009 and 2016 in Canberra Nature Park has increased fourfold (some of this may be due

GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601

The ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee is appointed by the ACT Government to advise on the management of our natural environment.

ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee

to the counting of pouch young and better seasons) and on rural land between 1997 and 2015 has increased 7.5 times.

- a. Is there an overall monitoring and evaluation plan for EGK at an ACT level including the impacts of culling to the ecosystems we are attempting to benefit and productivity of rural land, in addition to the monitoring of impacts of culling on individual species and habitats?
 - b. It may be appropriate to stand back a little from the detail, look at the bigger picture and bring together all the monitoring of individual species and locations. This exercise is something that members of the committee may be able to assist with.
4. The plan provides an excellent textual summary of desired grassy vegetation structure needed for threatened fauna, but lacks illustrations (images, etc). It needs a photo of what unsuitable (and heavily grazed by kangaroos) faunal habitat looks like versus what quality (patchy) tussock-inter-tussock habitat looks like under low kangaroo grazing pressure. Dr Brett Howland may be able to provide such photos.
5. Figure 3 needs improving:
- a. 'EGK' needs to be spelled out in the Figure caption.
 - b. The green bars provide no value.
 - c. A dotted line showing the desired kangaroo density (0.9/ha?) would improve this important data.
6. We suggest the term 'total grazing pressure' be added to the glossary. A possible definition is: *'the total demand for forage by animals compared to the available (seasonal) supply of forage herbage'*.
7. For the benefit of the broader community it is essential that a number of fact sheets or Q&As which cover the topics be developed to assist residents to appreciate the complexity of the issues.

We commend the authors of this important plan.

Yours sincerely



Chair

23 March 2017

GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601

The ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee is appointed by the ACT Government to advise on the management of our natural environment.

ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee

Dr Annie Lane,
Conservator of Flora and Fauna
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601
environment@act.gov.au

Dear Dr Lane

Draft - Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan.

Thank you for your invitation to provide comment on the draft Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan. We consider the draft plan to be a comprehensive document that provides a best practice and scientific basis for the on-going (and adaptive) management of the impacts of kangaroos in the ACT. It has obviously progressed since the Committee discussed the proposed approach to the document last year, where it was to be a more succinct document that referred to the ACT Kangaroo Management Plan (2010) and did what was legally required following the declaration of the Eastern Grey Kangaroo (EGK) as a controlled native species. It now not only provides an update to the original plan but brings together the latest research and expands the policies to include other land tenures, which is useful.

The NRMAC supports the plan and considers it to be another example of the ACT leading the way on management of urban kangaroo populations and probably a template for the management of other urban wildlife populations. It is comprehensive and extensive and covers all the issues; it is also easy to read at a general public level.

The NRMAC has a number of specific comments and questions to assist in the finalisation of the plan:

1. The critically important information in Appendix 2 (kangaroo densities in ACT reserves and other areas) needs to be used more in the 'Environmental impacts' section. Thanks to the quality and extensive research now available, the ACT now has scientifically defensible 'Target Densities' for kangaroos for four broad vegetation types (Section 5.3, p. 45). Appendix 2 provides the quantitative nature of the 'problem' – many areas of the ACT have kangaroo densities well of above these four thresholds. This is a key reason management such as culling is required. However, the link between 'sustainable' kangaroo densities and actual (measured) densities does not come through clearly in the body of the document. This needs addressing.
2. Tables 4 & 5 and Section 3.8.3 provide a useful summary of the rigorous and local research on the ecological impacts of kangaroos. However, the 'what's the problem?' case isn't well communicated.
3. With regard to monitoring and evaluation of EGK at an ACT population level rather than at a reserve or Kangaroo Management Unit level, we noticed that the number of kangaroos culled between 2009 and 2016 in Canberra Nature Park has increased fourfold (some of this may be due

GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601

The ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee is appointed by the ACT Government to advise on the management of our natural environment.

ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee

to the counting of pouch young and better seasons) and on rural land between 1997 and 2015 has increased 7.5 times.

- a. Is there an overall monitoring and evaluation plan for EGK at an ACT level including the impacts of culling to the ecosystems we are attempting to benefit and productivity of rural land, in addition to the monitoring of impacts of culling on individual species and habitats?
 - b. It may be appropriate to stand back a little from the detail, look at the bigger picture and bring together all the monitoring of individual species and locations. This exercise is something that members of the committee may be able to assist with.
4. The plan provides an excellent textual summary of desired grassy vegetation structure needed for threatened fauna, but lacks illustrations (images, etc). It needs a photo of what unsuitable (and heavily grazed by kangaroos) faunal habitat looks like versus what quality (patchy) tussock-inter-tussock habitat looks like under low kangaroo grazing pressure. Dr Brett Howland may be able to provide such photos.
5. Figure 3 needs improving:
- a. 'EGK' needs to be spelled out in the Figure caption.
 - b. The green bars provide no value.
 - c. A dotted line showing the desired kangaroo density (0.9/ha?) would improve this important data.
6. We suggest the term 'total grazing pressure' be added to the glossary. A possible definition is: *'the total demand for forage by animals compared to the available (seasonal) supply of forage herbage'*.
7. For the benefit of the broader community it is essential that a number of fact sheets or Q&As which cover the topics be developed to assist residents to appreciate the complexity of the issues.

We commend the authors of this important plan.

Yours sincerely,


Chair

23 March 2017

GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601

The ACT Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee is appointed by the ACT Government to advise on the management of our natural environment.

From: [NRMAC](#)
To: [Environment](#)

Subject: Letter to the Conservator - Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Date: Thursday, 23 March 2017 2:44:37 PM

Attachments: [Letter to the Conservator - Draft EKG Controlled Native Species Management Plan.docx](#)

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a letter to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna from the Natural Resource Management Advisory Committee providing comments and feedback on the Eastern Grey Kangaroo: Controlled Native Species Management Plan.

[REDACTED] (Chair) has approved this letter, but it is yet to be signed. I am happy to provide email correspondence to verify her approval if needed. To meet the deadline I've sent through the unsigned version; when I hear back from [REDACTED] I will send the signed letter by mail.