
From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Thursday, 19 May 2022 4:43 PM
To: Glennon, Chris; Sweaney, Mark; Cotsell, Peter; Orgill, Oliver
Subject: wild dog proposal
Attachments: Draft Business Case 2022-2026 Wild dog position.pdf

OFFICIAL

G'day Gents

Please see attached draft wild dog position proposal for your consideration and comment. I would be interested in any feedback you could provide both (positive and negative) I feel this proposal may help in both providing the ACT some succession plan for our dedicated wild dog position and also assist in the better management of wild dogs across the three wild dog plan areas (Shannon's Flat/Bredbo, Adaminaby/Yaouk and ACT).

This proposal does not intend to undertake any increase in areas where wild dogs are currently undertaken (in ACT or NSW) but adds an extra resource into the current footprint.

I have had a brief discussion with NSW NPWS regarding this proposal and they have expressed in principle support of the concept but are unable to commit financially beyond a twelve month period (at this stage)

The next steps would be to float the concept with NSW Local Land Services and see if there is any initial support that would warrant progressing a further more accurate breakdown of costs and areas of management.

Anyway open for suggestions and comments, this is still very much a draft proposal.

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

2022-26 BUSINESS CASE

Proposal name:	Secondary ACT Pest Animal Controller (Wild dog) position
Brief Description:	This proposal seeks to employ a secondary wild dog trapper within the Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit to ensure that there continues to be adequately skilled staff in this field.
Existing Program:	The Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo and Adaminaby/ Yaouk Wild dog working groups have been in place for approximately 20 years. ACT has been actively involved in these plans since inception and is currently formalising an ACT Wild dog working group with its rural landholders.
Funding:	July 2022-June 2026
Proposal development:	This proposal has been developed by Warren Schofield (Director ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services) with input from individuals experienced in wild dog management and ACT land management and operational staff.

1. Background

Both ACT Parks and Conservation Service and NSW National Parks Service have areas within their respective conservation estate where wild dogs/dingoes are retained to perform the function of top order predator. (See map 5) this is stated in the Wild Dog Working Group plans as a key objective

To mitigate the impact of these wild dogs both land management agencies contribute to wild dog control through cooperative Wild Dog Working Group plans. These plans outline the commitment from all stakeholders within the identified areas and provide a forum to discuss issues within the plan areas. Total area covered by the current Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo, Adaminaby/Yaouk and (in development) ACT plans is approximately 187,000ha including conservation areas. (See map 1)

Despite improvements in wild dog management through these cooperative plans, livestock (mainly sheep) attacks by wild dogs continue to be an issue for some landholders in the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo, Adaminaby/Yaouk and ACT plan areas.

Areas of private land within NSW have been identified as being destocked of sheep due to the threat of livestock predation. Landholders within the Yaouk valley have expressed concern that the continued threat posed by wild dogs inhibits them from running sheep thus effecting their on-farm income.

The area covered by the current (2) full time PAC's is considered too large to adequately implement sufficient ongoing proactive wild dog management (both in NSW and ACT).

Concerns have been raised at Wild dog meetings and as a result the Adaminaby/Yaouk wild dog group have provided a written letter to the ACT outlining concerns regarding the resourcing for wild dog management in Southern Namadgi National Park. (See Attachment 1)

Large areas of private land within the Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo plan area (Clear Range) are privately owned by 40+ individual landholders, most of which are absentee and do not run livestock and therefore unlikely to have the capacity or willingness to undertake necessary wild dog control on their properties to achieve a level of control that reduces the impact of wild dogs on neighbouring sheep producers. The terrain in this area is conducive to wild dogs and there is a known population of wild dogs present across this area that impacts on neighbouring livestock producers. Access is also a limiting factor within this area due to the rough terrain.

2. Current resources

Currently there are 2 (full time) PAC's focused on wild dog control employed in this area (Shannon's Flat/Bredbo, Adaminaby Yaouk, and ACT). Allocation of time (days) is identified in the WDWG plans.

(See Attachments 2-3 and table 1)

ACT:

Employees a single fulltime PAC dedicated to Wild dog control This position is managed through the Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit (BRS). This position works across both government and private tenure within the ACT, with significant time allocated to the Southern Namadgi area to control wild dogs that impact NSW landholders in the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk plan areas. The remainder of time is allocated to proactive and reactive wild dog control around private land within the ACT.

In addition to this fulltime position ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) allocate additional resources to undertake proactive ground baiting within Namadgi National Park targeting Wild dogs.

ACT employs external wild dog contractors for additional control work during peak seasons (Autumn and Spring) or as needed to supplement the fulltime position.

NPWS:

Contributes to wild dog control through a contract arrangement with LLS for approx. 114 days wild dog work in the Adaminaby/Yaouk plan area.

*Note NPWS has no tenure in Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo plan and thus does not contribute to this plan.

LLS:

Current NSW resources are limited to full-time a single LLS PAC in the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk plans. This PAC is consistently required to focus on reactive control in response to livestock attacks across both plan areas. This necessity for reactive control limits the ability of this PAC to undertake proactive control whilst undertaking reactive control.

This LLS position holder has authority to cross into the ACT (on request) if required to undertake reactive control in response to livestock attacks within NSW.

Additional LLS PAC's are required to assist in seasonal wild dog control or backfill when resident PAC is not available.

- **Table 1**

Full time PAC Commitment to Adaminaby/Yaouk & Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and ACT Wild dog plans					
	LLS	NPWS	ACT BRS	ACT PCS	
Adaminaby/Yaouk	62	105	39	12	218
Shannon's Flat/Bredbo	112	0	60	15	187
ACT	0	0	120	13	133
Total	174	105	219	40	530
	Total FT PAC days				

*Note- ACT makes a financial contribution to NPWS for the equivalent of 9 days for the Adaminaby/Yaouk plan

3. Resource issues

The full time LLS PAC allocated to the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk plans has approx. 288 days identified commitment to the plan areas. (See Attachments 2-3 and table 1)

Given that a full-time employee can only physically work approx. 200-210 days per year on ground, this commitment is deemed unachievable by a single PAC.

(See table 2)

Additional LLS PAC's are required from other WDWGs within the South East LLS to undertake seasonal or additional wild dog control in the Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk plan areas. By relying on assistance from these PAC's those plans can suffer gaps in proactive (and reactive) wild dog programs due to the absence of their PAC when required in the Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk areas.

ACT has a single position allocated to wild dog control. Neither PCS or BRS has staff skilled or qualified in wild dog control and is presently unable to backfill absences from work by the full-time position holder.

ACT does not have a large enough area within the ACT to justify the employment of a secondary full time PAC dedicated to wild dog control.

Both LLS and ACT utilise local contractors for additional work but there is a limited number of skilled and qualified Wild dog contractors available that can assist in proactive and reactive wild dog control. Often agencies (ACT and NSW) rely on the same contractors which may lead to contractor unavailability when required.

Table 2

Individual annual PAC working days	
Days in the year	365
Weekends	105
Work days	260
Public holidays	13
ARL	20
Sick/personal days	10
Training	7
Office/wet days	10
Total PAC days available	200

4. Proposal

This proposal seeks support (both in principle and financial) from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services (Tumut) and NSW South East Local Land Service (Cooma) for the employment of an ACT based Pest Animal Controller (PAC) with the capacity to work under a cooperative nil-tenure approach in the Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo, Adaminaby/Yaouk and ACT Wild dog working group plan areas.

This proposed position would be a full-time employee of the ACT Government (within the Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit) but work within the plan areas both within ACT and NSW to contribute to the management of wild dogs (and other identified pest animals) across all land tenures as required.

This position will assist in an improvement in resources allocated to these 3 plan areas where there has been an identified gap in skilled on ground wild dog control resources.

ACT will fully fund all costs associated with the position including salary, training, and vehicle expenses.

This proposal would require LLS and NPWS to 'employ' ACT as a contractor to implement wild dog management on NPWS estate and private land within NSW (restricted to the plan areas) to ensure that adequate resources are employed to manage wild dogs.

Table 3

Agency contrabutions			
Adaminaby/Yaouk			
Tenure	ha	days	\$ per annum
NPWS	4,800	16	\$9,600
LLS	4,500	15	\$9,000
ACT	12,700	41	\$24,000
Shannon's Flat/ Bredbo			
Tenure	ha	days	\$ per annum
NPWS	0	0	\$0
LLS	32,000	103	\$61,800
ACT	28,000	90	\$54,000
Total	82,000	265	\$158,400

*Note costs are estimated @ \$600 per day ex GST (this is TBC as current contract rate)

Individual agency areas, associated costs are calculated by the following formula.

(Agency area ha) divided by (days) x (\$ per day)

(See Map 1 and Map 3)

5. Preliminary cost estimate

Financial Impacts Summary		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Totals
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense Impacts						
Expenses	staff	120	120	120	120	480
Expenses	vehicle	30	30	30	30	120
Expenses	Total	150	150	150	150	600
Revenue						
	NPWS	10	10	10	10	40
	LLS	70	70	70	70	280
	Total	80	80	80	80	320
Staffing Impact		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Totals
Total	Additional FTEs (number)	1	1	1	1	1

ACT will fully fund all costs associated with the position including salary, training, equipment, and vehicle expenses.

Meat baits for NSW tenure will be sourced and or provided by LLS and NPWS for the pre agreed baiting regime.

Meat baits for ACT tenure will be sourced and or provided by ACT for the pre agreed baiting regime.

Costs and approvals associated with aerial baiting would be the responsibility of the relevant land management agency.

Under this arrangement ACT PAC's would work as contractors on NSW private land and NPWS estate at an agreed rate of \$600 per day ex GST (TBC). This rate is calculated by agency area within the identified plans.

(See table 3)

6. Governance

The proposal will be proposed to be implemented as of July 1 202. All governance of staff management will be the responsibility of the Act Government through the Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit.

Contract management will be the responsibility of the Act Government through the Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit.

Wild dog work implemented through this cooperative arrangement will be undertaken inline with relevant state and territory legislation and individual agency policies and guided by the cooperative WDWG plans.

Authority to undertake wild dog work on private lands within NSW will be required to be sourced by LLS with approval for identified ACT employees (as a contractor) to access and implement necessary works programs on this land.

7. Risk

By not employing additional resources in the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo, Adaminaby/Yaouk and ACT WDWG areas there is a risk of continued (and possibly increased) attacks on livestock from wild dogs. This not only creates financial pressure on individual landholders it also impacts their mental health and can produce negative animal welfare outcomes.

Ongoing wild dog attacks create negative media for agencies/ governments and erode relationships between land management agencies and private landholders.

Ongoing livestock attacks can impact whole rural communities both financially and in regard to mental health.

Consequences of poorly resourced wild dog management can result in grazing land being destocked due to wild dog attacks thus reducing farm viability and economic loss not only for the individual but the broader community and associated support industries.

8. Performance Measures and Evaluation

The KPIs for this proposal will be measured primarily by a reduction in livestock attacks and areas remaining available or restocked for livestock (sheep).

Other indicators may include.

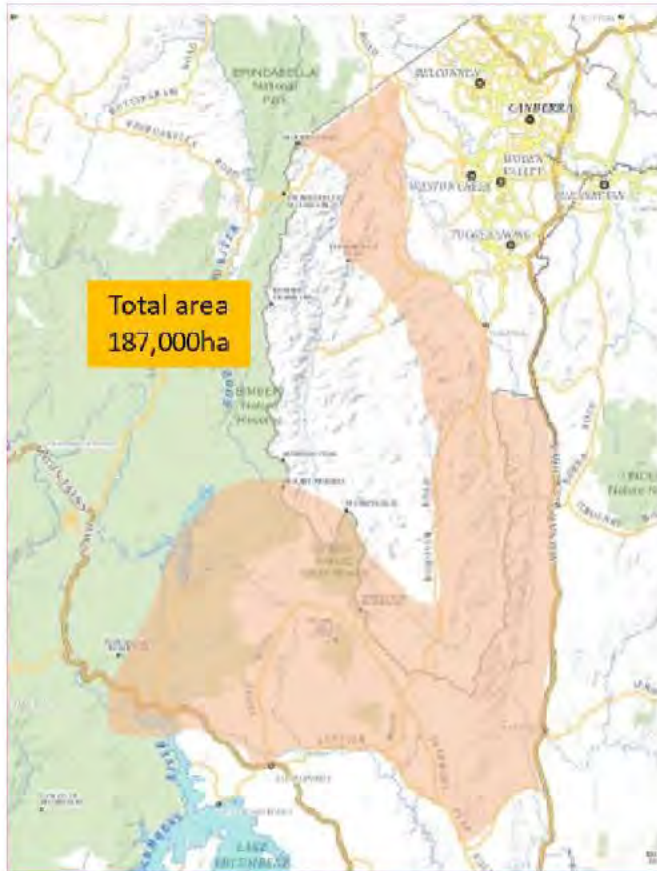
- wild dogs destroyed (trapped/shot)
- Baits laid (ground/aerial)
- Bait takes (fox and wild dog)
- Trap nights
- Hrs/days of effort

Although difficult to quantify, overall satisfaction from stakeholders that the wild dog programs in the identified areas are meeting the objectives indicated of the cooperative plans is the best indicator of achievement. This may be captured through the development of an annual '*Stakeholder satisfaction survey*' to assist in evaluating 'success' of WDWG programs.

9. Maps

Area indicated in the following maps are approximate area measured in Hectares. Areas were developed through a desk top exercise utilising information derived from current and previous PAC's knowledge of the areas and consultation with individual agency staff.

Map 1 – total wild dog control areas



AREA

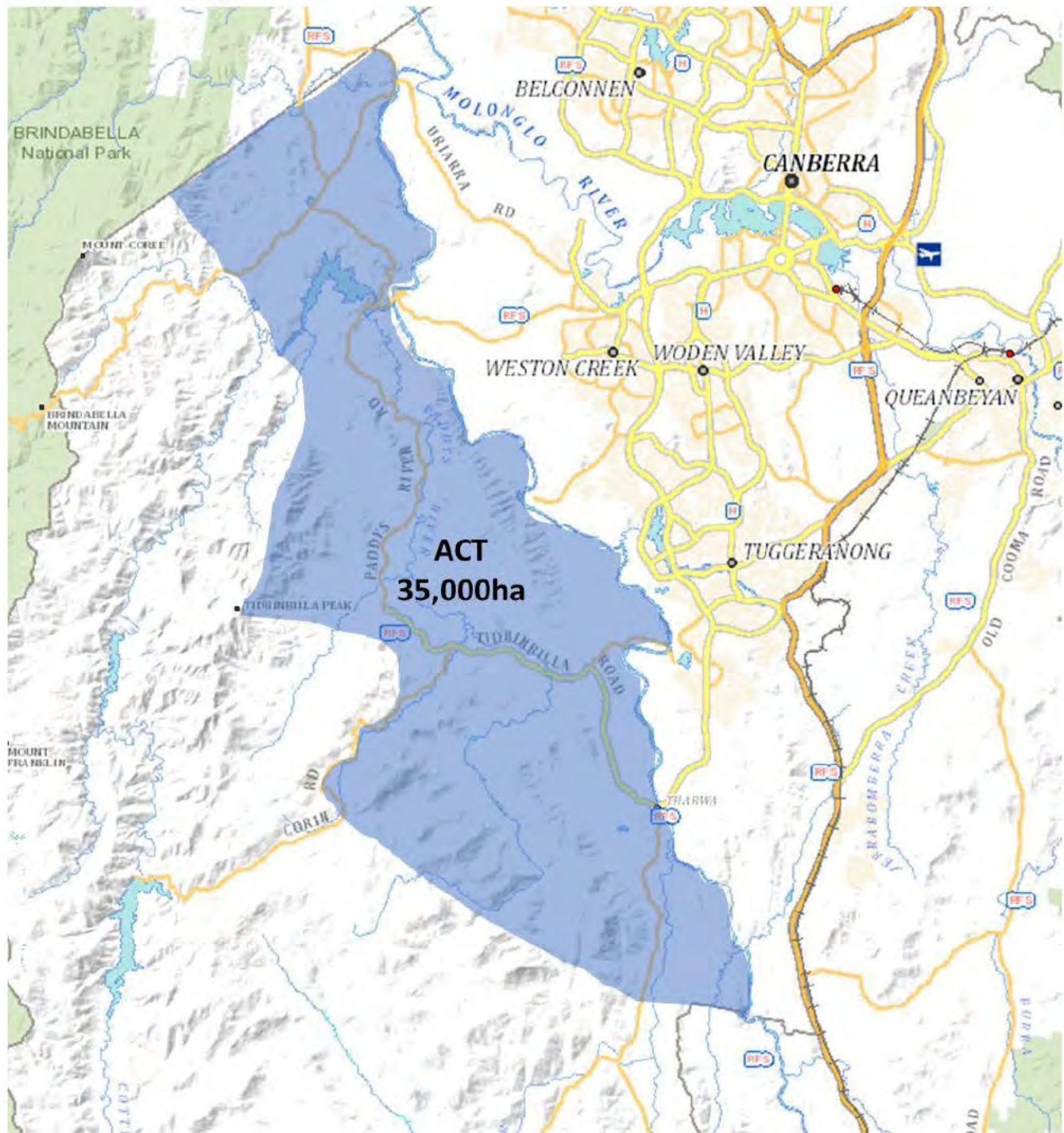
- ACT 75,700 ha
- NPWS 41,800 ha
- LLS 69,500 ha
- Total 187,000 ha

- Total 187,000 ha
- Requires 3 FTE
- @200 working days per FTE
- Total 600 days per year.
- $187,000/600 = 312$ ha per FTE per day

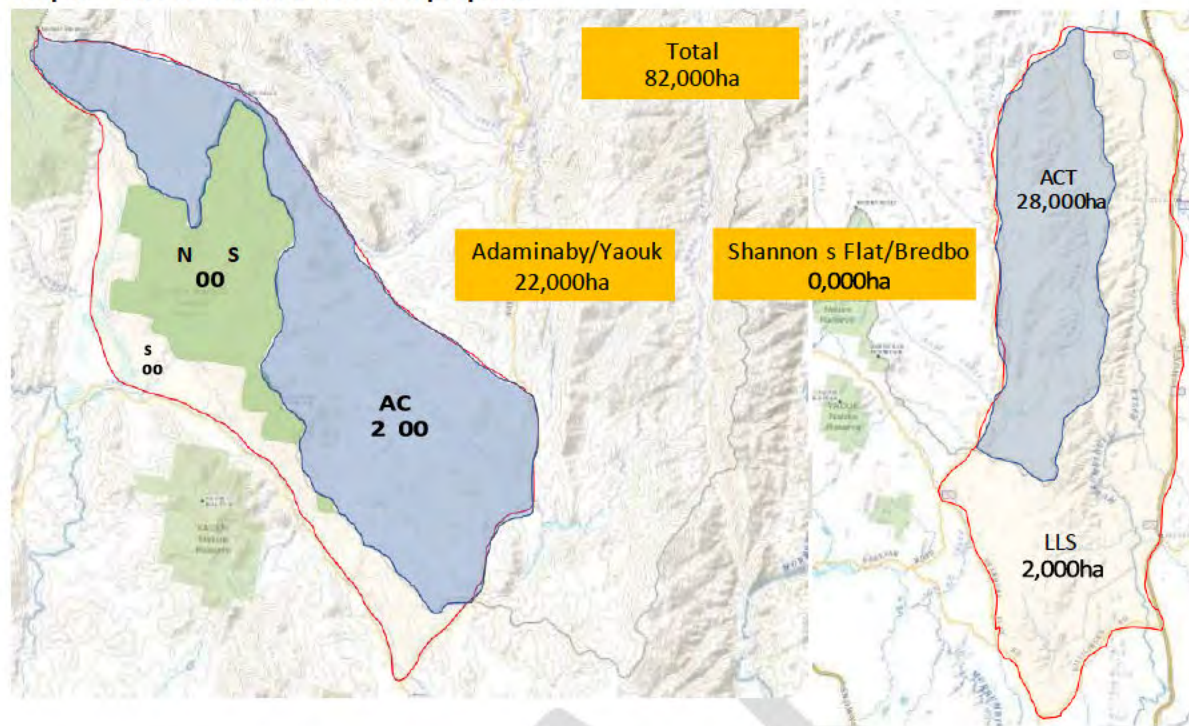
Days required

- ACT 242 days
- NPWS 133 days
- LLS 222 days
- Total 597 days

Map 2 - ACT Wild dog plan area



Map 3 – ACT PAC area under new proposal

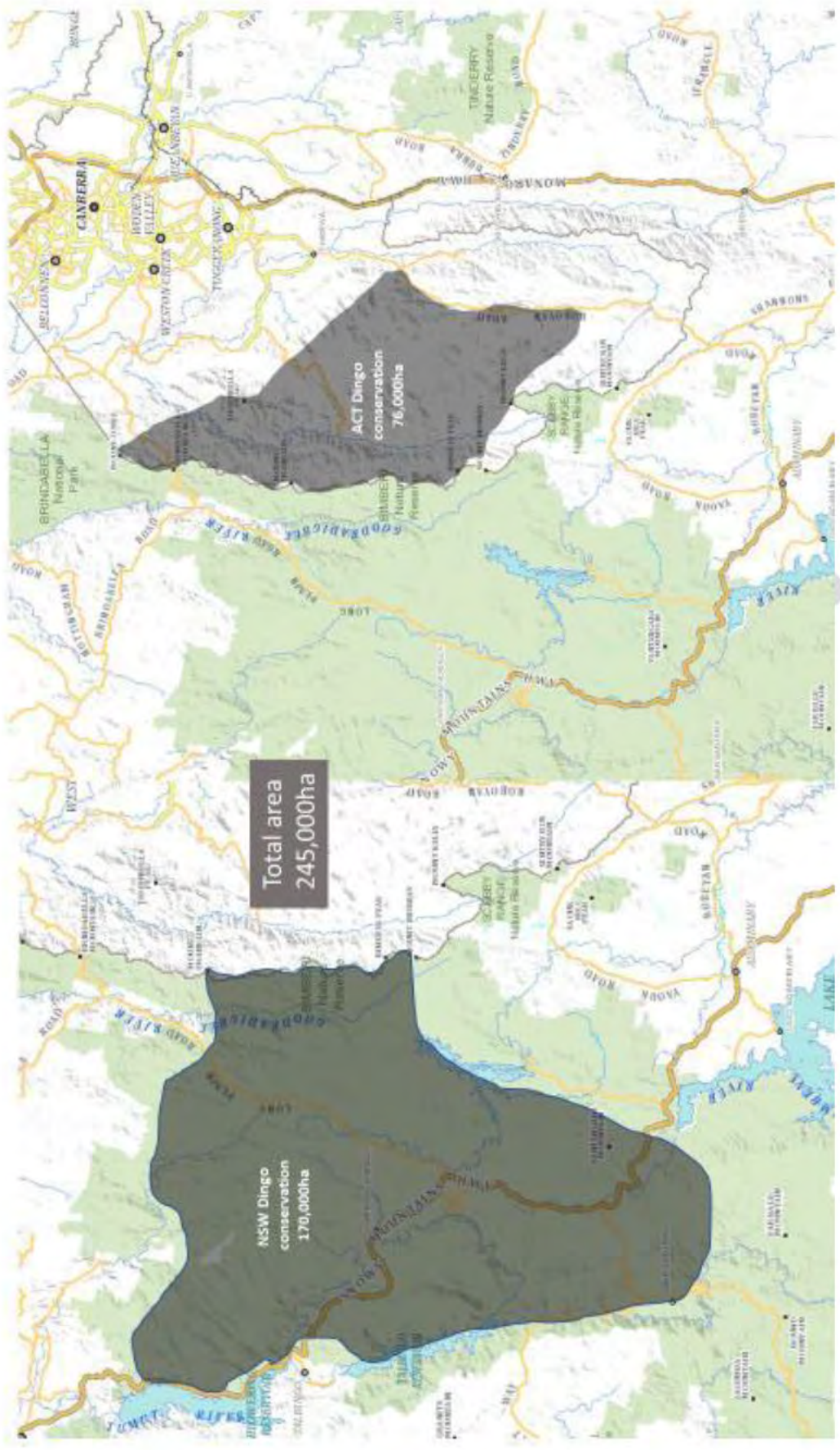


Map 4 – LLS PAC area under new proposal



Map 1 Dingo conservation area NSW/ACT

DRAFT



Attachment 1

South East Local Land Services

1-3 Sharp Street

Cooma NSW 2630

Tel: 02 6455 7200

www.lls.nsw.gov.au/region

24th March 2022

Director
Biosecurity and Rural Services
Attn: Mr Warren Schofield
500 Cotter Road Weston Creek ACT 2611
Sent by email : warren.schofield@act.gov.au

Dear Warren

Pest Animal Controller (PAC) Resources Within the ACT

The Adaminaby/Yaouk Wild Dog Working Group met today and has requested that we write to you on its behalf. As you are aware there has been increased dog activity including stock losses in areas adjacent to the southern and western borders of the ACT. This has followed a number of years of relatively quiet dog activity with minimal to no stock losses.

The Adaminaby/Yaouk Wild Dog Working Group believes that an additional full-time permanent PAC resource is needed to support the current permanent PAC. Employing an additional full-time position will allow a move from the current reactive work towards the implementation of more proactive control strategies. Additionally, the ability to cover PAC staff absences would be improved and allow continuity in the implementation of the control program.

The ongoing baiting programs that are undertaken by ACT PCS general rangers would benefit through a targeted approach by the additional experienced PAC ensuring improved control outcomes. Additionally, a seasonal trapper would not need to be employed to support the current ACT PCS PAC.

The Working Group requests that consideration be made to permanently employ an additional PAC and would appreciate feedback on this issue before the next working group meeting in September.

Kind regards

[Redacted signature area]

Wild Dog Co-ordinator

Landholder Representative

Landholder Representative



Local Land Services

We help secure the future of agriculture and the environment for NSW communities.

www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Attachment 2

Shannon's Flat, Bredbo and Michelago November 2015 – November 2020

Agency	Activity	Commitment	"In kind"	Financial	Total	% of costs
SE LLS	+ Management	9 days	\$5,745		\$90,195	44.8%
	+LLS PAC trapping and ground baiting	112 days	\$67,950			
	+ Meat baits	4700 baits	\$16500**			
ACT PCS	* Management	10 days/yr	\$5,000		\$58,000	28.8%
	* ACT PCS trapper	60 days/ yr	\$30,000			
	* Contract trapper	20 days/yr		\$15,000		
	* Ground baiting by Namadgi NP Staff	15 days/yr	\$7,500			
	* Camera Trap monitoring	3 days/yr	\$1,500	\$1,500		
	* Meat baits	1500		\$1,500		
Land Holders	#Management	40 days / yr	\$15,800		\$52,930	26%
	*#Ground baiting	94 days / yr	\$37130			
Total					\$201,125 CHECK	100%

* ACTPCS costed at \$500/day

+ LLS costs are based on the current daily contract rate of \$607. This is being reviewed. LLS PAC costs are based on 2017/18 actuals and may vary from year to year according to need.

** Unit cost for meat baits is \$3.50

Land holder contributions costed at \$395/day. Baiting costs are based on actual baits delivered and assume one person lays 40 baits per day

Attachment 3

Adaminaby/Yaouk 2021

Agency	Control Works	Commitment	"In Kind"	"Financial"	Total
South East Local Land Services	Management	10 days/year	\$5,410		\$5,410
	LLS contribution to PAC	(62 days) Coordination, monitoring, capacity building, strategic and reactive control	\$33,500		\$33,500
	Aerial Baiting – Coordination	6 days/year	\$3,246		\$3,246
	Aerial Baiting - Helicopter	Contribution to running costs		\$1000	\$1,000
	Aerial Baiting - Meat Baits (private lands)	Provide		\$300	\$300
	TOTALS		\$42,156	\$1300	\$43,456
National Parks & Wildlife Service	Management	20 days/year	\$7,920		\$7,920
	Contribution to PAC	(114 days) Strategic and Reactive Control		\$61,500	\$61,500
	Supplementary contribution to PAC	(37 days) Strategic and Reactive Control		\$20,000	\$20,000
	Camera surveillance	10 days/year	\$3,960		\$3,960
	Aerial Baiting - coordination	10 days/year	\$3,960		\$3,960
	Aerial Baiting - Helicopter	Supply		\$6,500	\$6,500
	Aerial Baiting - Meat Baits	Purchase		\$2,000	\$2,000
	TOTALS		\$15,840	\$90,00	\$105,840
ACT Parks Conservation and Lands	Management*	5 days/year	\$1,375		\$1,375
	ACT employed PAC	30 days/year	\$13,200		\$13,200
	ACT employed Ranger	12 days/year	\$5,280	\$5,280	\$10,560
	Meat Baits	Purchase (9 days)			
	Contribution to Supplementary PAC	Strategic and Reactive control		\$5,000	\$5,000
	Camera trap monitoring	3 days/year	\$1,320		\$1,320
TOTALS		\$21,175	\$5,000	\$26,175	
Private Land Managers	Management*	4 days/year/per land manager	\$912/ per land manager		\$912
	Participate in strategic ground baiting programs	8 days/year/ per land manager	\$1824/ per land manager		\$1,824

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Friday, 1 April 2022 12:29 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Sweaney, Mark
Subject: ACT Wild dogs
Attachments: NNP Dog Bait Map.pdf

OFFICIAL

G'day [REDACTED]

Please see attached map indicating the areas (trails) where baiting is undertaken by ACT. These are the same areas where the proactive trapping program is undertaken. There have been no changes/reductions in the area where Wild dog control has undertaken within Namadgi National Park. There has been some limitations due to wet weather and accessibility across the ACT which may have prevented some areas for short periods but the full time ACT trapper has been undertaking the wild dog control in all areas of the ACT as normal.

As you were made aware of at the Adaminaby meeting Peter Erland had to take off some unexpected time due to illness, as soon as we were aware of this the following was implemented.

- LLS trapper (Brett Aitchison) was provided access to the ACT to respond to dog sightings and livestock attacks in your immediate area.
- ACT engaged a contractor (Tim Russell) to begin take over from Brett on Monday the 4th April and continue in that area for a minimum of 90hrs of on ground work. Tim has been requested to contact you to discuss where the current issues are. He has also been in contact with Brett Aitchinson.
- ACT annual baiting program will be delayed in this area by one week at the request of the contractor to allow him to use his dogs on the ground and so will now begin on the 11th April.
- ACT are seeking expressions of interest/availability from regional wild dog contractors to ensure there are suitably qualified resources available when/if required.
- ACT are currently undertaking works to provide maps that better display where wild dog work is undertaken.
- ACT are investigating the options/funding sources available for employing a secondary trapper position.



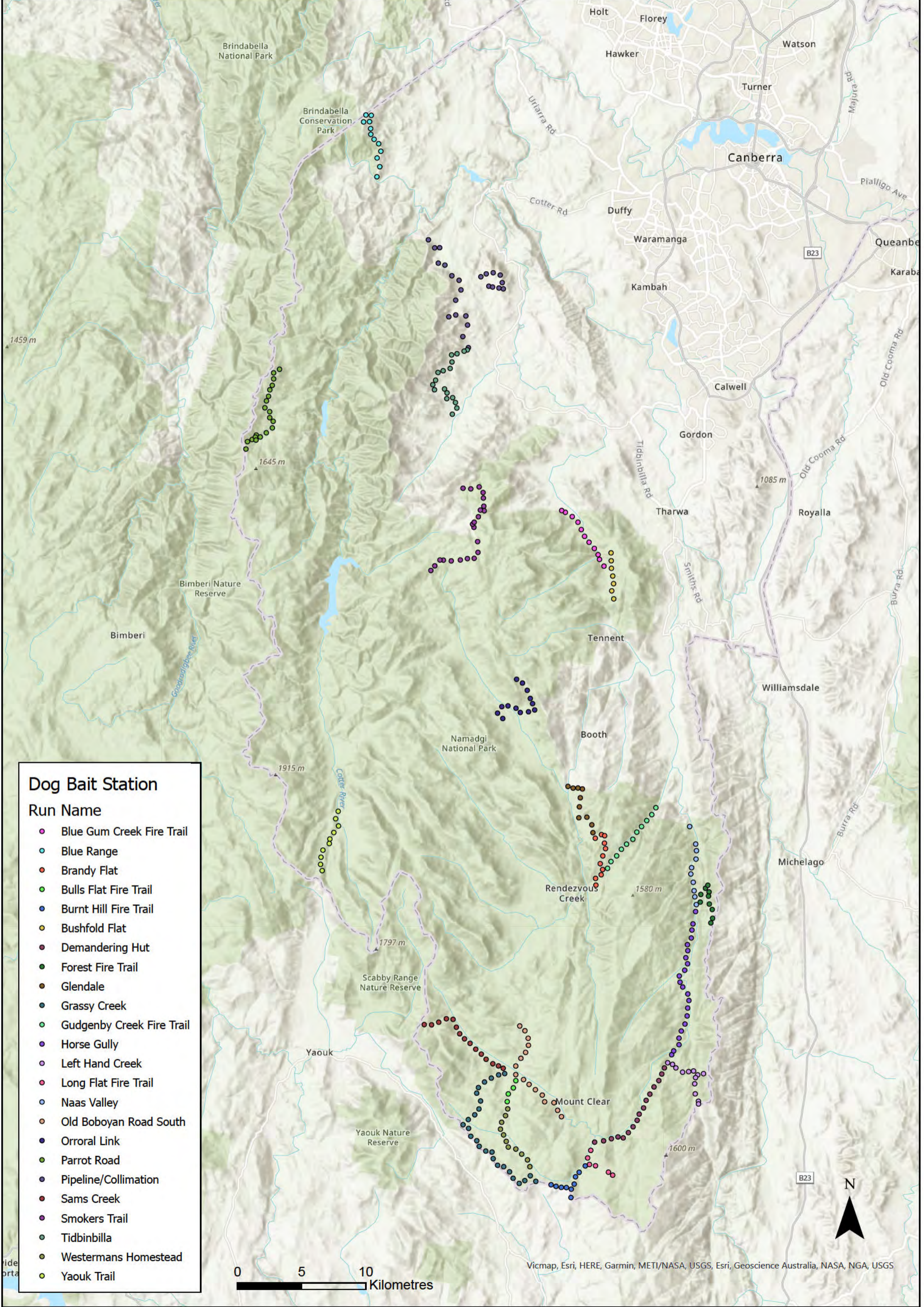
As discussed I am able to visit [redacted] if it helps and gather your input (on a map) of where you see the problem areas are and to identify if modifications can (or need to) be made to the current ACT wild dog program to ensure that it is still meeting the objectives within the Adaminaby/Yaouk and Shannon's Flat/Bredbo Wild dog plans. Please let me know if there is a day/time that would be suitable.

If you have any further livestock attacks or dog sightings please contact Tim Russell directly (in the short term) and or Richard Barnsley.

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob 



- Dog Bait Station**
- Run Name**
- Blue Gum Creek Fire Trail
 - Blue Range
 - Brandy Flat
 - Bulls Flat Fire Trail
 - Burnt Hill Fire Trail
 - Bushfold Flat
 - Demanding Hut
 - Forest Fire Trail
 - Glendale
 - Grassy Creek
 - Gudgenby Creek Fire Trail
 - Horse Gully
 - Left Hand Creek
 - Long Flat Fire Trail
 - Naas Valley
 - Old Boboyan Road South
 - Orroral Link
 - Parrot Road
 - Pipeline/Collimation
 - Sams Creek
 - Smokers Trail
 - Tidbinilla
 - Westermans Homestead
 - Yaouk Trail

0 5 10 Kilometres





Adaminaby/Yaouk Wild Dog Working Group Meeting

Thursday 23rd March, 9:00am - CWA Hall Adaminaby

Agenda

- 1) **Attendees:** [REDACTED] Mark Sobierajski, (LLS) Tim Davis, (LLS) Thomas Ross, (LLS) Belinda Dwyer, (LLS) Lewis McPherson (NPWS) Mark Sweeney, (ACT Parks) Warren Schofield, (ACT Parks) [REDACTED]
- 2) **Apologies:** [REDACTED]
- 3) **Confirmation of Previous minutes:** Accepted.
- 4) **Business arising from previous minute:** Nil
- 5) **Call for late agenda items:** Nil
- 6) **Operations updates, news and other concerns**
 - Pigs in Focus program 13th of April CWA Hall Adaminaby.
 - Measuring What Matters Survey.
 - a) **Land holders:**
 - [REDACTED]: Deer and pigs, no diggings at this point.
 - [REDACTED] Pigs and deer large number of foxes.

[REDACTED]: had a few dogs in February, quite a few pigs.

b) SE Local Land Services:

Tim Davis:

- New to the area still getting a feel for the area, Reports that [REDACTED] has destroyed 6 dogs at Yaouk since December. [REDACTED] shot a dog off his veranda.
- Dogs are about, keeping an eye on the boundary, when the weather cools down will start baiting.
- Extra support for seasonal baiting and trapping to commence late April to May.

Rodney Rankin: Report tabled at meeting.

c) National Parks & Wildlife Service:

- Business as usual, happy with the work Tim Davis has provided
- Aerial baiting to commence 18th of April

d) ACT Parks:

- Spring and a one-off summer baiting has been completed, access is still limited with wet tracks and blown out crossings.
- 378 additional contracted hours to Tim Davis and Rodney Rankin between September and February
- Autumn baiting to commence late March early April.
- Re-established historic bait runs.
- Luke Beaman 2-year contract full time trapping as of the 31st October 2022
- Advertisement recently closed for a permanent trapper position.
- Upcoming Landholder baiting training session and to also working with ACT landowner to get a Wild Dog Plan in place.
- Recommence a Newsletter to keep stakeholders informed.
- Aerial Shoot in May.
- Working on getting aerial baiting approved.
- NSW landholders and agency representatives to attended ACT stakeholder meeting. Meeting to discuss and map strategic aerial bait lines in the ACT. Attendees: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Luke Beaman, (ACT) Tim Davis, (LLS) Robert

Freebody, (LLS) to be held at Namadgi Visitors Centre Nass Rd, Tharwa ACT date to be confirmed, suggested end of April.

7) Recommended control actions for next six months:

- Community and Aerial baiting

8) Wild Dog Management Plan

- [REDACTED] and Thomas Ross discussed ideas with the plan, [REDACTED] to take back comments to landholders to view.
- Ongoing with an update of the formatting.

9) General Business

Luke Pope (LLS) to get back to ACT Parks on an alternative proposal with PAC support.

10) Pig Collaring Program update:

- Commence in the next financial year.

11) Next meeting date and venue

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CWA Hall Adaminaby

12) Actions:

Thomas Ross Seek extra support for work in the Tollbar area.

NPWS Send ACT parks there aerial baiting lines.

Thomas Ross Contact landholders form the spread sheet Ruth Cox created.

Thomas Ross Tim Davis and [REDACTED] to identify areas of concern with absentee private landholders for baiting recommendations.

Suggested formatting a letter from the Wild Dog Working Group outlining the importance of baiting to the community, or a personal phone call.

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Saturday, 14 May 2022 7:11 AM
To: Glennon, Chris; Sweaney, Mark
Subject: FW: Meeting Follow-up

OFFICIAL

G'day FYI

I have sent this response to [REDACTED] regarding wild dogs, I am sure that [REDACTED] will not be entirely happy that [REDACTED] list of requests has not been fully met, but believe that what has been put in place is addressing the current wild dog issues in the Shannon's Flat area.

I will send through the draft proposal for the additional position for your perusal before taking it to NPWS and LLS.

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
Biosecurity and Rural Services
500 Cotter Road Weston Creek ACT 2611
Ph 02 620 784 80 | Mob: [REDACTED]
Email: warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Web: <http://www.environment.act.gov.au/>

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Saturday, 14 May 2022 7:13 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>; [REDACTED]
'brett.aitchison@lls.nsw.gov.au' <brett.aitchison@lls.nsw.gov.au>; Scott Townsend <scott.townsend@lls.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Meeting Follow-up

OFFICIAL

G'day [REDACTED]

Thanks for meeting with Peter Cotsell and myself at [REDACTED] on the 26th April to discuss in person your concerns regarding wild dog activity in the Shannon's Flat area. Please see below responses to your questions. Apologise for the delay in responding as I was away on leave and have been off work ill this week.

1. An immediate increase in trapping and baiting (crisis response) is needed in response to the recent wild dog activity
 - ACT agreed to allow immediate access for NSW Local Land Service trapper (Brett Aitchison) to work in Namadgi in direct response to livestock attacks in NSW when the Act trapper was off work with health issues.
 - ACT employed a contract wild dog trapper to address wild dog activity in Southern Namadgi for additional work on top of the regular seasonal work. This work will continue until the end of May when the ongoing need will be reassessed.
 - Ground baiting program in Southern Namadgi will be extended until the end of June
2. Traps need to be kept open according to need (after hours, weekend and holiday work needs to be permitted)
 - During the recent Easter and ANZAC day long weekends traps were not able to be left open in some areas due to the high influx of park visitors. ACT is investigating how we can ensure that traps are able to be kept open when required through use of contractors scheduling, and use of ACT staff with adequate training in firearms use.
3. Aerial baiting to be requested by Namadgi. This is needed due to access issues (trails are wet and muddy, snow will soon be an issue, side-by-side vehicles cannot be sourced due to Covid). Aerial baiting is a sensible solution in the short term
 - Aerial baiting is not currently undertaken within the ACT. Buried ground baiting is the preferred management option as it reduces the likelihood of non-target animals taking baits and is undertaken along access trails identified by wild dog trappers as areas where wild dogs frequent and baits are situated to achieve the best uptake by Wild dogs.
 - ACT ground staff including the full time ACT trapper will reassess the current on ground baiting strategy to ensure that it continues to be an effective part of the integrated wild dog program.
 - Approval for the current contractor to use side by side vehicles has been confirmed and he has been informed that he can use this if required to access trails deemed too boggy for a vehicle.
4. Additional trapper position - needs to be fast tracked
 - The request for this additional position is in process and funding sources are being sourced. The request has been progressed to senior management. ACT will be meeting with NSW NPWS to discuss wild dog resources and other cross border pest animal management issues. ACT will also meet with LLS to discuss how resources could be enhanced in the Adaminaby/Yaouk and Shannon's Flat plan areas. ACT has received a letter from the Adaminaby Wild dog working group and LLS highlighting concerns over current wild dog control resources.
5. After the initial "clean up" trappers need to be permitted to work in areas "where the dogs are" rather than "where the sheep are". Less focus on the outdated conservation-control area model, and increased focus on responsible land management practices. Of course, all controls need to be balanced and carefully monitored to ensure conservation goals are met. We are not talking about broad-scale culling. A few minor adjustments will help significantly.
 - ACT has been, and continues to be a signatory on the cooperative wild dog working groups (WDWG) in your area (both Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk) and through these plans continues to remain committed to contributing to the coordinated efforts to reduce the impacts of wild dogs on livestock on private land. The ACT contribution to these plans is currently implemented through the employment of a full time position dedicated to wild dog trapping. This full time position is currently supplemented by contractors as required in peak seasons or when the full time position holder is unavailable. Wild dog baiting is undertaken seasonally within identified area of Namadgi National Park and through the use of buried meat baits, these baits are in place throughout periods of the year when wild dog activity is highest to achieve a higher rate of uptake. The area where the above works are undertaken is within a "buffer area" between agricultural production (both in ACT and NSW) and areas within Namadgi National Park where wild dogs control is not undertaken to allow wild dogs to perform the function of a top order predator in the natural ecosystem. The retention of a population of wild dogs within conservation estate (both in NSW and ACT) is also identified as an objective within the cooperative WDWG plans.
6. Sharing of information is not adequate. Communication between Namadgi teams, and with affected landholders needs improvement

- Communication with neighbouring landholders is of high importance for ACT in wild dog management. Wild dog activity needs to be reported as soon as possible so trappers can respond. Richard Barnsley is the initial point of contact for wild dog control program within ACT and maintains ongoing contact with both ACT trappers (permeant and contract) and NSW Local Land Service operational management and on ground staff. Richard has provided you with his contact details and is able to provide updates regarding on ground wild dog work within the ACT.
7. Better fencing around the park boundaries needed.
- NSW Local Land Services (through the WDWG) has approached ACT regarding wild dog fencing projects in the Shannon's Flat/Bredbo and Adaminaby/Yaouk WDWG plan areas. ACT is supportive of the continued investigation of these projects if stakeholders believe fencing will assist in the ongoing management of wild dogs in these areas. ACT will continue to liaise with the LLS and WDWG's regarding placement and specifications for proposed fencing.
8. Namadgi has demonstrated capacity for change in the past (eg: fire trails, changes to dog "buffer zones")
- Through discussions with landholders, experienced wild dog trappers and Namadgi staff, the ACT wild dog program is being continually assessed to ensure that it continues to achieve all objectives outlined in the cooperative wild dog plans. Through conversations with previous and current experienced wild dog trappers the current areas where wild dog work is undertaken within the ACT is deemed workable and this will continue to be the model undertaken by the ACT to ensure that the objectives (protecting livestock and conserving a population of wild dogs) outlined in the WDWG plans are achieved.

As discussed at the meeting at [REDACTED], ACT continues to be proactive and committed to wild dog management and continues to be part of the cooperative wild dog working groups. We continue to seek input from our current full time wild dog trapper and others experienced in this field to ensure that programs are developed and implemented in a way that meets the program objectives. I believe that the ACT has employed resources and actions that will address that current wild dog attacks in your area, and will continue to work with yourselves and other stakeholders to manage wild dogs in this area.

Happy to catch up on the 26th May if required to discuss further, but would ask that a representative from LLS also be included in the discussion to ensure that all stakeholders remain informed.

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
Biosecurity and Rural Services
500 Cotter Road Weston Creek ACT 2611
Ph 02 620 784 80 | Mob: [REDACTED]
Email: warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Web: <http://www.environment.act.gov.au/>

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 28 April 2022 4:05 PM
To: Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Cc: [REDACTED]; brett.aitchison@lls.nsw.gov.au
Subject: Meeting Follow-up

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the ACT Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks Peter and Warren for coming on Tuesday!

Unfortunately, we discovered bitten sheep [REDACTED] after you left. The injuries appear to have been sustained several days ago. Three were bitten, and one of those died overnight from the injury. Most upsetting. Yesterday at the school bus stop, we heard that the dogs are causing problems for at least two more neighbours. Clearly there are lots of dogs, and they are going everywhere.

Summary from Tuesday....

1. An immediate increase in trapping and baiting (crisis response) is needed
2. Traps need to be kept open according to need (after hours, weekend and holiday work needs to be permitted)
3. Aerial baiting to be requested by Namadgi. This is needed due to access issues (trails are wet and muddy, snow will soon be an issue, side-by-side vehicles can not be sourced due to Covid). Aerial baiting is a sensible solution in the short term
4. Additional trapper position - needs to be fast tracked
5. After the initial "clean up" trappers need to be permitted to work in areas "where the dogs are" rather than "where the sheep are". Less focus on the outdated conservation-control area model, and increased focus on responsible land management practices. Of course, all controls need to be balanced and carefully monitored to ensure conservation goals are met. We are not talking about broad-scale culling. A few minor adjustments will help significantly.
6. Sharing of information is not adequate. Communication between Namadgi teams, and with affected landholders needs improvement
7. Better fencing around the park boundaries needed
8. Namadgi has demonstrated capacity for change in the past (eg: fire trails, changes to dog "buffer zones")

We would like to arrange another meeting, so we can review our progress. We are very happy to host the meeting, and make another pot of tea! Everyone is busy, so a phone / internet catch up is also fine with us. Are you free on **THURSDAY 26th MAY, 9:30am?**

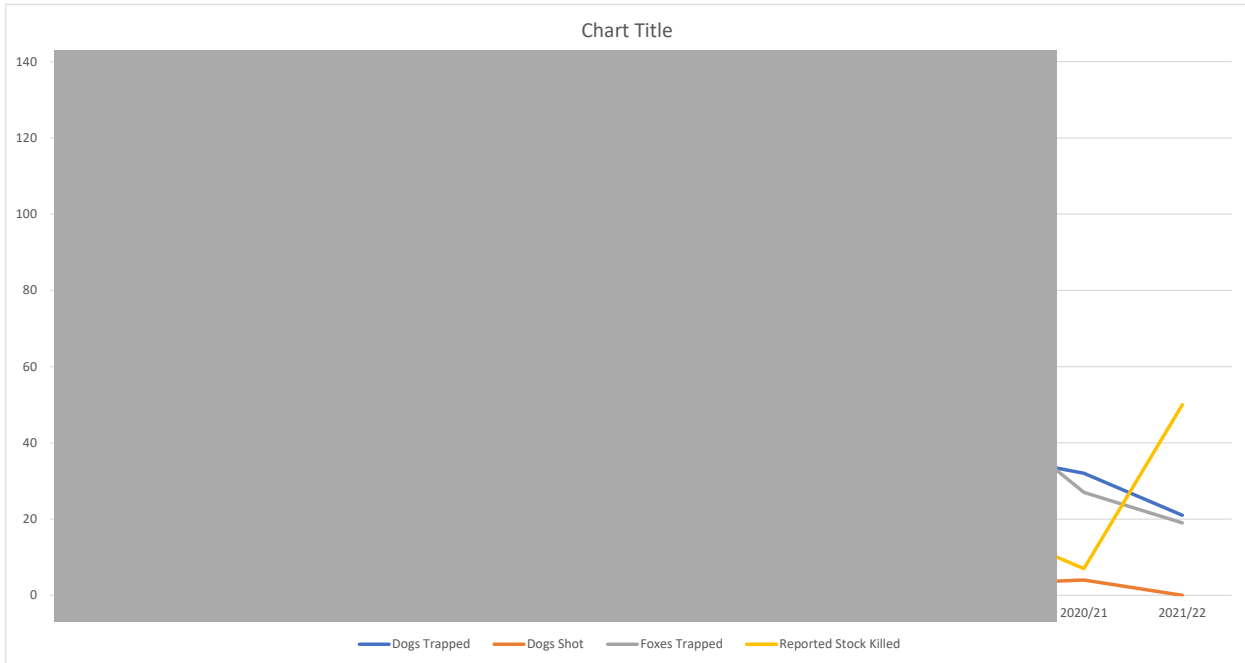
Our invitation to take you (or a co-worker) for a drive to illustrate our requests remains open. If there is anything we can do to support the process, please let us know asap.

Thanks again for venturing out this way, and for your help in getting this sorted out.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	1019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Dogs Trapped											32	21
Dogs Shot											4	0
Foxes Trapped											27	19
Reported Stock Killed											7	50
Reported Stock Bitten											0	33
Trapper Hrs											1232	859
Traps Set											404	258
Cats Trapped											2	1
Baits Laid											77	0
M44 ejectors Set											0	0
Trap Nights											2934	2096



		Traps Set	Trap Nights	Dogs Trapped	Dogs Shot	Foxes Trapped	Cats Trapped	Baits Laid	M44's Set	Sheep Killed	Sheep Injured	Hours Spent
18-19												
18-19												
18-19												
19-20												
19-20												
19-20												
20-21	ACT	160	1139	9	0	19	0	54	0	7	0	319
20-21	YA	152	1267	20	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	574
20-21	SF	92	528	3	2	7	0	23	0	0	0	339
21-22	ACT	131	853	6	0	19	0	0	0	5	0	454
21-22	YA	68	644	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	206
21-22	SF	59	599	6	0	0	1	0	0	45	33	199
TOTAL		1619	11383	104	8	130	7	518	14	95	35	5243

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18-19												
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20-21	ACT	160	1139	9	0	19	0	54	0	7	0	319
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21-22	ACT	131	853	6	0	19	0	0	0	5	0	454
21-22	YA	68	644	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	206
21-22	SF	59	599	6	0	0	1	0	0	45	33	199
21-22		258	2096	21	0	19	1	0	0	50	33	859
TOTAL		2980	20670	187	16	241	13	1036	28	140	37	9627

	Traps Set	Trap Nigh	Dogs Trap	Dogs Shot	Foxes Tra	Cats Trap	Baits Laid	M44's Set	Sheep Kill	Sheep Inji	Hours Spent
18-19											
19-20											
20-21	404	2934	32	4	27	2	77	0	7	0	1232
21-22	258	2096	21	0	19	1	0	0	50	33	859
TOTAL	1619	11383	104	8	130	7	518	14	95	35	5243

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19-20											
20-21	404	2934	32	4	27	2	77	0	7	0	1232
21-22	258	2096	21	0	19	1	0	0	50	33	859
TOTAL	1619	11383	104	8	130	7	518	14	95	35	5243



	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Trap Nights											2934	2096
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	Traps Set	Trap Nights	Dogs Trapped	Dogs Shot	Foxes Trapped	Cats Trapped	Baits Laid	M44's Set	Reported Stock Killed	Reported Stock Bitten	Trapper Hrs
2010/11											
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21-22	258	2096	21	0	19	1	0	0	50	33	859
TOTAL	1619	####	104	8	130	7	518	14	95	35	5243

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Dogs Trap Total								
Dogs Shot Total								
Foxes Trap Total								
Trap Night Total								
Reported : Total								
Reported : Total								
Trapper H Total								

From: McLeod, Rebecca
Sent: Wednesday, 15 March 2023 2:09 PM
To: Sweaney, Mark; Schofield, Warren
Cc: McIntosh, Sally
Subject: Draft Wild Dog meeting notes
Attachments: 2023 09 03 - Wild Dog meeting notes.docx

UNOFFICIAL

Hope I captured it – got a bit lost along the way.

Rebecca McLeod

Biosecurity and Rural Services

Phone: 62059247 | Email: rebecca.mcleod@act.gov.au

ACT Government

500 Cotter Road, Weston Creek ACT 2611 | www.environment.act.gov.au



Wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee notes

9 March 2023

- Welcome Introductions apologies

In attendance: Mark Sweaney, John McRae, Renee Brawata, Olive Orgill, Rosie Coonie, Louisa Roberts, Stephen Alegria, Warren Schofield, Johannes Botha, Pete Cotsell, Chris Glennon

Apologies: Michela Watts

Background to the formation of the committee

Warren outlined the escalating pressure and concerns of NSW bordering landholders and, more recent, ACT landholders.

Draft Terms Of Reference

Will stand over for the next meeting to allow everyone to review and make comment.

Current concerns raised by landholders

18mths ago, concerns were raised by boarder ACT neighbours. Conversations have been ongoing at the same level. ACT landholders have now started asking where we are at now with the program, acknowledging ACT gov challenges. They feel we're headed towards dropping off the programs.

Options paper has been put forward to help alleviate concerns, including aerial baiting. Warren committed to landholders about raising the proposal of aerial baiting.

Options to address the concerns (open discussion)

- Aerial baiting program – short or long term
- Provide access for LLS trappers on ACT land to provide backup for ACT trapper staff.
- We do need to do more to alleviate landholders concerns?

QUESTION – are we suggesting a one-off push then return to the program or a long term change.

ANSWER – the level of control needs to have flexibility. We do need to have a trapper who knows the terrain and animal movements.

QUESTION – The Scientific Committee have concerns around baiting inside the reserve, distance into the park where the baiting takes place, etc. This needs to be clarified (Johannes)

QUESTION – approach to dog control over the last 20yrs has been a stakeholder driven approach. It's served us well. It's a model that underpins what we do in the dog space. Questioning - Are our stakeholders satisfied overall? Do we look at consultation groups over individual landholder concerns. Need to look at stakeholder engagement and stakeholder groups.

Overall there is a perceived stock loss that equates to perceived trust in the ACT government.

The importance of engaging stakeholders – what is the method to have input. Look at who our stakeholders really are. Should be considered broader stakeholders?

Discussion paper – could we specifically include the ecological risks and benefits.

New plan of mgmt. for Namadgi – can use this to look at this as a platform to engage with stakeholders and have broader consultation around wild dog management

- Conservation objectives/projects and Scientific committee
- Aerial baiting as an option for wild dog control in the ACT in the future

If this was pursued, it would de-tract from a through Autumn aerial baiting program.

Landholder suggestion to do short term aerial baiting. We are allowed to bait at 10 baits per km. Logistically we don't have the aircraft certified to bait. Air ops needs to be in the helicopter. Would need to draw resources from other areas. NSW Parks cant fly ACT. Wouldn't be able to get it up and running til May (co-insides with KMP).

It would be going against ACT Govt commitments around best practice baiting which are part of our objective in action plans.

It would require consultation with conservation stakeholders.

NSW 30 baits per km. ACT 10 baits per km. Better off doing target baiting with good access. Would need an off-label permit to bait at 30 baits per km.

Aerial shooting - all agree its not an agreed on short term solution. Will put the effort into the Autumn program.

Baiting is the keystone to every control program. Aerial v onground has been looked at from heaps of agencies. If we cant ground bait, we should aerial bait. Reason we haven't done in the past is because they are accessible by ground. (ollie)

Access into all areas of the park - Will know by end of this week exactly where we cant get into. Where we cant, will look at ways we can change the baiting run to achieve a good result.

Ecological – 1080 has minimal impact on ecological values.

Feral Scan used as a modern, instant time method to communicate dog sightings and action.

Re-cap

we've met our objectives. There is a loss of confidence. A lot of that is about communication about what we're doing. Structure of on ground effort communicated back to landholders.

They heard about track access issues and baiting that didn't happen. Prioritizing, clear communication back to those loosing stock.

End of shift reports from trappers.

Baiting data onto maps so it can be shared more easily and frequently. Meeting with landholders in April. Then will switch to less frequent comms

Working closely with Namadgi with track access issues and resourcing difficult areas. Re-establishing runs Mick used to do that haven't been touched. Autumn baiting done to the standards we've set out into the plan. Re-establish the injector lines and anywhere we miss or not accessible – communicate that really clearly.

Now – second contractor working with Luke and the affected landholders – private land to help knock down dogs causing the spike in stock losses. Hoping to extend into a more coordinated landholder baiting program – autumn baiting.

Empower the trappers to do their own baiting – equipment, baiting, etc. Tools to do their job.

Used to send out monthly stakeholder newsletters. Dropped off in recent years from lack of engagement from landholders.

Is there more we can do with supporting landholder engagement in baiting. Is it collaborative with the wild dog plan.

Role the landholders have in dog control. Control of animals on rural lands. Collaborative plans? What are they. *1080 has restrictions and staff will need to know where and how to place the baits.

Second position advertised. Second landholder meeting in April. Autumn program underway.

Next meeting 1 month from now

From: Sweaney, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 8:28 AM
To: Schofield, Warren
Subject: Re: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

I'll give any till end of the week he doesn't seem too sure

From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 8:00:27 AM
To: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Sorry that was a bit tongue in cheek, I expect that there is no draft and can write off ever seeing it. I did call him yesterday chasing the email list he said Yeah, Yeah I'll get it to you tomorrow.

I think we need to move forward and let Mr Barnsely focus on his darting.

When will you know if Ant will take on the Pest TO3?

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob

From: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 March 2023 7:07 AM
To: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

I emailed RB yesterday asking for the latest draft.

From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 4:10:02 PM
To: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

How did we go with this?

From: Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 17 August 2022 1:19 PM

To: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>

Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Howdy,

Agree with Sweaney. We will have a Wild Dog Management Operational Plan finalised in the next fortnight. I suggest everyone reads that so they have an informed idea of what we **currently** do, where and why.

Cheers,

Richard B.

From: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 17 August 2022 12:58 PM

To: Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>

Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi Ren,

When is the SMT it would be good to catch up before this makes it there. A map of where we currently control and why is still on the way and really helps inform the discussion.

I don't think we should put up options such as territory wide protection, it may not be workable, but keen to meet and discuss.

My opinion would be to keep it simple, and both stakeholder groups (there really are two opposing sides) can 'win' in this situation;

- No change to current control program, areas, techniques etc. (We have a control program that largely achieves its objectives)
- Formalise protection in a conservation area, the primary protection is that no control programs applied in those areas without new approvals (We have healthy population of dingoes in Namadgi, but there is nothing stopping us potentially aerial baiting the whole park, or large parts of it.)

Mark

Option	Protection	Pest status	Control requirements
No change	None	Territory-wide	None under NC Act [animal welfare and weapons obligations only]
Formalise current 'protection zone' (in Namadgi/Bimberi) only	In 'protection zone' only	Territory-wide except for 'protection zone'	Would apply in 'protection zone' only
Protection in reserves	In reserves only	Territory-wide except for reserves	Would apply in reserves only
Protection overall	Territory-wide	None	Would apply Territory-wide

From: Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 16 August 2022 4:09 PM

To: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Looks like the wild dogs have boltedwould be great to be involved in such a debate.

From: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 16 August 2022 2:11 PM

To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi all,

A table would be really helpful. Would be good to have a column clarifying exactly what instruments would need to be amended and in what way. Best R

From: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 16 August 2022 12:49 PM

To: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Thanks Richard – table is great. It’s a really good segway to what I have been meaning to write back to everyone re where to from here.

I have been asked to put together a two pager for Rosie to take up to the SMT for consideration about the best way forward on the dingo issue. The first page will be a bit of background (Hannes has kindly offered to pull together the legislation section) and then I will articulate a couple of different options as ways forward, including pro’s and con’s that people have articulated in this email chain, on the second page.

I’ll try and pull this together this week, and will then share it within this group for a quick fact check. In particular, Warren can I please get you to check that I have the wild dog plan/commitments to NSW info correct and anything relevant to this if that’s ok?

Thanks
Ren

From: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 16 August 2022 12:39 PM
To: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Table could be useful. Only the options mentioned to date.

RK

From: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 16 August 2022 11:58 AM
To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi all,

I’ve been following this debate with great interest. A few points to lob in:

*One of the strengths of the first approach (i.e. remove them as a pest animal and develop a Controlled NSMP as we do for kangaroos in an analogous situation) is that it would push us to think about ways to protect farmers’ legitimate interests in other ways. Here’s a new one that is clearly working for some <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2022-08-14/donkeys-guard-against-sheep-farm-dog-attacks/101309622>; there’s also Maremma dogs <https://www.northqueenslandregister.com.au/story/3633281/maremmas-keep-wild->

[dogs-away/](#); <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-08-15/gabyon-maremmas/14020432>. We know we have an important population of genetically relatively pure dingos – are we doing all we can to minimise impacts on them? Is it time to try some new approaches? Taking them off the pest list would help push us in this direction. But I think both options could work.

*It is important to recognise that hybridisation with dogs is a major threat to dingoes, and that we are quite likely to be making it worse by the trapping, which has been shown to increase instability of social groups <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0006861>, which can drive hybridisation. There's also some evidence this instability can actually drive increased rates of attack on livestock – see para from this article pasted below.

Suggest that once people are happy, the options are articulated clearly and, if others here are supportive, I'm happy to raise with the Divisional Leadership team for an initial discussion.

Best

From Wallach et al 2009:

“Another observable symptom of pack disintegration appears to be an increase in attack rates on livestock. Allen and Gonzales [37] provided experimental evidence suggesting that calf losses are higher where dingoes are baited than where they are left undisturbed. They found, as we did, that baiting does not always reduce dingo numbers. A similar pattern was found at Pandie Pandie (no control) and Mungerannie (annual poison-baiting). We found no signs of dingo predation on cattle at Pandie Pandie (N=56), while at Mungerannie 14% (N=44) of carcasses were calves, and all appeared to have been killed by dingoes (Wallach & O'Neill unpublished). Similarly, several weeks after Nantawarrinna was poison-baited in 2008, a neighbouring property lost 24 of 30 sheep to dingoes in one day. The sheep were killed but not eaten (T. Coulthard, personal communication). Long-term data on coyote control also indicate that control does not significantly reduce livestock predation [38] nor does it improve production [39].”

From: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 15 August 2022 10:45 AM

To: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi All

A bit of scientific literature to add to this debate.

First, let's talk about hybridisation, and how our “box fitting” conservation policies and the need to define “native as good” and “introduced = bad” struggle with it. Here is an interesting article, that challenges the concept, recognising that hybridisation is a natural phenomenon that allows for the process of evolution, similar to how adaptation and range shift will challenge our concept of local ecological “communities” and their composition. Increased ability to detect hybridisation through genomics means that more and more occasions of hybridisation are now being found. Of course, the anthropomorphic changes to the landscape in which animals now interact has sped, and continues to speed, this process.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fevo.2021.637100/full>

The most recent genetic assessment of ACT populations was undertaken by Kylie Cairns in 2020

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ece3.3487>

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20210327/Research-challenges-perception-that-dingoes-are-virtually-extinct-in-the-wild.aspx>

The study identified populations in the ACT containing on average more dingo genes than other SE populations, (between 75-90%) from memory. I also find her statements very relevant to our current situation - *“Wild dog’ isn’t a scientific term – it’s a euphemism,” “Dingoes are a native Australian animal, and many people don’t like the idea of using lethal control on native animals...therefore... the term ‘wild dog’ is often used in government legislation when talking about lethal control of dingo populations.”*

There is evidence to show the introgression of domestic dog genes into dingo populations has not impacted their functional morphology or ecological function as a top predator in these ecosystems. In other words they might carry some dog genes but this essentially hasn’t changed them. They remain dingoes.

<https://meridian.allenpress.com/australian-zoologist/article-abstract/41/3/338/447847/Introgression-does-not-influence-the-positive>

I think we should be brave here and set the standard for the rest of Australia to follow – it’s a good opportunity for the ACT to be seen as leaders in this space, to recognise that we have a legal and ethical responsibility to identify the dingo as a native species in the ACT, and to manage the persistence of these populations to prevent further introgression. I think we can do this, but we need to think about framing policy that is strong both now and into the future.

Ren

From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 12 August 2022 3:41 PM

To: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

G’day All

I found another two cents to continue funding the discussions

Drawing legislative protection lines on the map (for any species) may limit our ability to manage the identified “protected’ species if required for population management i.e. what happens if the dingo population increases within the protected area to a point where it has a detrimental impact on another protected species, will we have the legislative provisions to enable population management within that defined protected area?

My personal view is also what are we retaining/ protecting this animal in the environment to undertake the function of a top order predator in the natural ecosystem not for its genetic purity as a species.

Although it would be great to say that Namadgi has a population of pure dingoes that will never be the case as 70% is not pure, 80% is not pure, 99% is not pure.

And even if they are deemed 100% pure we will still need legislative mechanisms or policies in place to both conserve and control them as they do not have free reign over the environment as previous to white settlement, agriculture and urban development has now limited their ability to roam free.

I do think we need to be mindful that personal views (on either side of the debate) aren’t the main drivers for decisions of government, but help inform the decisions of government.

No easy answer and I don’t think there is a right or wrong answer, hence why this debate has been going on for 200 years already.

Warren Schofield

Director

ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services

Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate

warren.schofield@act.gov.au

Mob

From: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 12 August 2022 1:24 PM

To: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

My personal view is that dingoes (animals occupying that ecological niche) should ultimately have “protected” status at least in reserves in the ACT, even if control in those reserves is permitted, subject to requirements.

However, the “Namadgi/Bimberi protection zone for now” option is a good one: it’s a great first step in providing recognition for the species, can potentially be implemented without controversy, and only places *new* requirements on the relevant government agency (us).

Another way of conceptualising the “protection zone” proposal is that management *outside* the zone would continue to be based on the dingo’s status as a pest (this status would remain, outside the zone), whereas management *inside* the zone would be based on its new status (within the zone only) as a native animal, with similar protections to other native animals in the ACT (such as eastern grey kangaroos). Currently, no protections apply within the (informal) “protection zone”.

I think we should aim, in the longer term at least, for wider “protected” status for the dingo as a principle, as this would provide deserved recognition, presently missing, for the species as a native animal. Currently it is the only native mammal, bird, reptile or amphibian that is not legally considered a native animal in the ACT (and is in fact classed as a pest).

Current dingo/wild dog management across mainland Australia can unfortunately involve a lack of recognition for a species that was here before Europeans, but is now beleaguered across much of its original range. Sometimes, in my personal view, this lack of recognition extends to misrepresentation. While since diluted somewhat genetically, the dingo still fulfills a vital ecological role where it remains.

Regards

Richard Koch

Senior Ranger, Compliance
ACT Parks and Conservation Service
02 6207 6487, [REDACTED]

From: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 12 August 2022 12:58 PM
To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hello Ren

Please see responses to your questions in blue below.

c

From: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 12 August 2022 12:32 PM
To: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi Craig

Sorry to hear we have given you nightmares with this debate lol!

I'd like to hear what others think of your pitch. My only question is about what would happen if in the future we wanted to shift the conservation zone? For example, if we want to increase the conservation zone to an area that no longer requires control (for some made up reason). – [This would require a boundary amendment to the 'protection' area map in the regulation.](#)

If I have read your email correctly, we could do targeted baiting in it for a specific purpose, but not stop baiting out of it, unless we go back and re-define the zone under the Act (which is also possible I assume?). – [You're correct on all points.](#)

Please understand I'm just being devil's advocate here - I actually think it's a really workable solution for where we are at. Your genius at 2am astounds me 😊

Ren

From: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 11 August 2022 1:56 PM
To: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>

Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hello all

I woke up thinking about this at 2am. Thanks Barnsley.

Richard K and I have spoken about it this morning. Building on from Hannes' good proposal and Warren's comments, I'd suggest amending the NC Regulation (per s.16(b) of the [NC Act 2014](#), part of the definition of "native species") to prescribe the Dingo as a native species in a defined area within our reserve system, and therefore protected under the NC Act 2014. This would involve:

- Developing a robust definition covering wild dingo / wild dog, and
- Creating a map formally defining the boundary of the protection area within Namadgi National Park and the Bimberi Wilderness Area, and
- Incorporating Hannes' proposed exception in s.12 of the NC Act (defining "native animal") but applying the exception to the protection area only.

This approach has some advantages including:

- Avoiding issues with the general definition of native species being "...present in Australia or an external Territory before 1400" (s.16) and the debated taxonomy of dingoes/dingo hybrids/wild dogs. Hybrids were not present before 1400 but generally still occupy the same ecological niche.
- Does not require a CNSMP or NC licence for dog control work outside the protection area – on nature reserve, leased land or unleased land.
- Wild dingoes and wild dogs outside the protection area would continue being managed as a pest animal, hopefully addressing Warren's concerns.
- If there was a compelling need for wild dingo/wild dog control work in the protection area for conservation purposes, this could be authorised by a NC licence subject to expert advice from CR&E.

Further protection of the species could be considered in future, such as protection in reserves or overall. However, the proposal above would:

- Formalise current arrangements,
- Provide the protection that is currently missing under the NC Act in the informal protection area,
- Not involve any changes to current management outside the protection area.

I hope this helps.

c

Craig Jones

Assistant Director, Licensing and Compliance | Parks and Conservation

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From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 4:23 PM
To: Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>; Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

G'day All

I guess it's time to throw my 2 cents worth in on this topic.

At the end of the day I personally don't consider this change should impact how we manage this animal on ground where it impacts livestock, however we do need to also consider the political ramifications on the control side of the issue by taking the step away from the term wild dog.

At what point do we, and who consults or informs our partners/stakeholders in what is currently referred to as wild dog management.

ACT is signatory on 3 cooperative wild dog plans with NSW stakeholders including government (NPWS & Local Land Service) and private land managers

ACT is part of the National Wild Dog Action Plan with other jurisdictions

ACT has commitments with ACT landholder regarding wild dog management (a draft wild dog plan is being developed at the moment in line with the NSW plans)

Have we considered what this change will mean in this space?

Does NSW NPWS, as a conservation agency (who quite likely share some of the same population of wild dogs) support this name change?

I would consider that consultation with these various stakeholders should be undertaken to fully explore the benefits and negatives that this intended shift in classification could present in the broader context of wild dog /dingo management.

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

From: Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 4:01 PM
To: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Agreed but don't forget we currently control dogs/dingoes inside NNP/reserves. Don't jump too soon or we'll lose that option. Over to you Jones!

Cheers,
RB.

From: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 3:40 PM
To: Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hannes' suggestion is a good compromise or first step, in that no current practices would need to change on leased or non-reserve land. The Dingo would legally be a native animal inside reserves but would remain a pest outside. Ultimately, its pest status could be removed Territory-wide, giving it the same recognition as other native species, but with some requirements on its control outside reserves.

Regards

Richard Koch
Senior Ranger, Compliance
ACT Parks and Conservation Service
02 6207 6487, [REDACTED]

From: Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 2:52 PM
To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>
Cc: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Chalmers, Linden <Linden.Chalmers@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hi Ren

The Nature Conservation Act (NC Act) excludes animals on the Pest Animals Declaration from being classed as native animals for the purpose of the NC Act. We've previously proposed to change the definition of "native animal" under the NC Act to alter section 12b ("does not include a pest animal") by adding an exception for Dingoes in reserves. This will ensure that Dingoes can be protected inside reserves, but can continue to be managed as pest animal outside reserves. If needed, management of the species inside reserves can then be done via a controlled native species management plan made under Chapter 7 of the NC Act, or under a conservation license.

Regards

Hannes

From: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 2:28 PM

To: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>

Cc: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Thanks so much Craig this sounds sensible.

Can I ask please whether the Dingo needs to be added to the NCA or if its already there as per Richards email?

And if CNSMP is adopted, do you see any further changes to implementing wild dog control other than what already occurs/undertaken by Conservation Officers under the wild dog management plans (apart from issuing licences to trappers within the NP)? Anything significant that is missing from the picture?

Ren.

From: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 2:23 PM

To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>

Cc: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Botha, Johannes <Johannes.Botha@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

OFFICIAL

Hello Ren

If wild dingoes and wild dogs came off the pest species declaration, managing them under a CNSMP would be the preferred option from a regulatory perspective. A CNSMP could define areas where control activities are permitted.

Chapter 7 of the Act describes the broad process for making a CNSMP. I assume Biodiversity Policy is the lead with input from CR&E and PCS.

Thanks

c

Craig Jones

Assistant Director, Licensing and Compliance | Parks and Conservation

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From: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 11:51 AM

To: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>

Cc: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>

Subject: Can we change the status of the Dingo in the ACT?

Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi Craig

Thanks so much for starting this conversation. I've been meaning to email you for a couple of weeks, so this has given me a poke along lol.

I met with Mark and Richard Barnsley the other week, and we discussed the issue of changing the status of the Dingo to a native species under the NCA in the ACT. There seems to be broad support for this change, from previous email discussions led by Richard Koch. I know there is support for this from ecologists in CR, myself included, and that Rosie has agreed to follow this up with upper management/executive or whatever path it needs to go to make the change happen if that is what we wish to pursue.

We feel with the current Biosecurity/Pest policy review, a new Vertebrate Pest Strategy for the ACT and the new NNP POM being developed, the timing is ripe for this change to be consistent across these new policies and plans. We just need everyone at the table to agree and to find the best path forward to enable change.

So I would like to start an email discussion about the steps needed to make this happen and the preferred way forward for targeted control to continue if it does. Everyone is aware of the extreme sensitivity of the issue and the need for it to be carefully managed throughout the whole process, and I understand our resilient landscapes team is in the best position to undertake and provide advice on this.

There is a wish to maintain current control operations as per the three wild dog management plans (with the fourth ACT plan coming on), but also to create a "Dingo Conservation Area" within NNP where control is not undertaken. We are seeking to gain a balance between:

1. Recognising wild dogs in NNP as Dingoes. This includes hereafter referring to them as Dingoes and other wild dogs in plans, since the majority of animals have more than ~70% dingo genetics from the last study

and the use of only the generic term “wild dogs”, while technically correct, carries negative connotations with the public and is misleading (lets start to be honest about what we are doing);

2. Recognising and maintaining Dingoes as part of the native fauna of the ACT, and valuing the role they play in maintaining ecosystem function through trophic level balance, while also;
3. Recognising that they are a wild dog and predate on livestock therefore targeted control in areas of high predation are warranted. Control for this purpose is explicitly defined.

So my question is

1. Who needs to agree to this change to make it happen (do managers advise the conservator? The Scientific Committee the minister? I believe the Scientific Committee would provide strong support for this change)
2. How does it then officially get implemented? Who updates the NCA etc?
3. What is the best way forward then for control?

As per Craigs email below:

control options would be (1) Conservation Officers exceptions, (2) issuing NC Licences to PCS/landholders/trappers or (3) developing a CNSMP. Note that a decision to issue a NC licence is a reviewable decision and it is possible we could be taken to ACAT.

Just from my perspective (and I am not experienced in this area) but a CNSMP would have an advantage as its transparent, has public input, can incorporate current standing plans (such as the 4 wild dog management plans) but can also cover the issue of NC licences so it allows for flexibility (is this correct Craig?) and we could identify “control zones” in TNR and NNP and also designated “conservation zones” in these areas as well, so that we have security for populations over time.

I would love to hear others thoughts on the best way to take this forward. Let’s start the conversation and create some positive change for the species.

Regards

Ren

From: Jones, CraigS <CraigS.Jones@act.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 10 August 2022 10:13 AM

To: Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>

Cc: Koch, Richard <Richard.Koch@act.gov.au>

Subject: Dingoes

OFFICIAL

Hello all

Richard K mentioned there had been discussions about legislation concerning wild dingoes and wild dogs.

If you’re interested, the current situation is:

- *Canis lupus* (wild) – Wild Dingo/Wild Dog are declared pest animals under the *Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005* and not therefore protected under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014*
- Like all animals, Wild Dingo/Wild Dog are protected under Animal Welfare legislation and strong penalties, double or triple those under the NC Act, apply for causing unjustified, unnecessary or unreasonable injury, pain, stress or death.

If pest animal status is removed by new Biosecurity legislation, wild dingoes would become a native species under the NC Act so control options would be (1) Conservation Officers exceptions, (2) issuing NC Licences to PCS/landholders/trappers or (3) developing a CNSMP. Note that a decision to issue a NC licence is a reviewable decision and it is possible we could be taken to ACAT.

Please let me know if you’d like any more detail.

Thanks

c

Craig Jones

Assistant Director, Licensing and Compliance | Parks and Conservation

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From: Sweaney, Mark
Sent: Thursday, 9 March 2023 1:04 PM
To: McLeod, Rebecca
Subject: FW: WDD steering committee
Attachments: options-paper WDP final draft 09-03-2023.docx; WDD Terms of Reference 09-03-2023.doc; WDD Agenda 09-03-2023.docx

OFFICIAL

From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 March 2023 5:44 AM
To: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Alegria, Stephen <Stephen.Alegria@act.gov.au>; Watts, Michaela <Michaela.Watts@act.gov.au>; Cotsell, Peter <Peter.Cotsell@act.gov.au>; Orgill, Oliver <Oliver.Orgill@act.gov.au>; Roberts, Louisa <Louisa.Roberts@act.gov.au>; McRae, John <John.McRae@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Subject: WDD steering committee

OFFICIAL

G'day All

Please see attached documents for consideration for todays inaugural Wild Dog/Dingo Management Steering Committee meeting.

Please note these are draft documents to guide the initial discussion around the formation and purpose of the group.

Todays meeting will have a focus on addressing the recent concerns raised by landholders regarding the current effectiveness of the ACT wild dog control program, and to discuss what measures are being considered to alleviate these concerns.

Any questions please let me know

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

Options Paper

09/03/2023

ACT Wild Dog Management Program

Purpose of document

- The purpose of this paper is to provide background and information regarding the ACT Wild dog Management program so informed decisions can be considered as to control options that can be implemented in the short- medium and long term to ensure that the ACT government continues to meet its objectives regarding the management of wild dogs in the ACT.

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Version Control

Version number	Description of version change	Date	Author
ACT WDP v0.1	Initial draft	06/03/2023	Warren Schofield

1. Executive Summary

Current effectiveness of the ACT Wild dog management has been questioned by landholders (both NSW and ACT) who adjoin Namadgi National Park and there has been a request for increase in effort and an inclusion of aerial baiting in the short-term to ensure that wild dog populations do not increase to a point where they increase impact on livestock on privately held land.

2. Introduction and Overview

The ACT wild dog management program (WDP) has remained relatively stable for several years by through proactive management of wild dogs by implementing a combination of ground baiting with buried meat baits at intervals throughout the year and use of leghold traps. A main contributor in maintaining this stability was luxury of having the same individual (Mick Clarke) employed for a substantial number of years.

Having a Pest Animal Controller (PAC) who was familiar with the landscape and annual wild dog activity and who was able to pre-empt and mollify wild dog activity before major livestock losses were incurred is a major advantage in preventing or minimising impact on livestock. When Mick retired the WDP entered a period of instability as transition was made to a new PAC. Unfortunately, the replacement PAC (Peter Erland) became ill and subsequently passed away in August 2022. Additional factors that have not allowed this program to re-establish its stable footing include COVID lockdowns that limited ability for services to be delivered, Significant access issues due to impacts on the network access trails by both fire and flooding.

Through this period of relative instability BRS has implemented the WDP through the employment of contractors, the establishment of a secondary PAC position and routine baiting programs undertaken by PCS rangers.

There have been spikes in livestock losses on a small number of properties (NSW and ACT) neighbouring Namadgi National Park. Both ACT and NSW have been able to address these spikes when they occurred and were able to stop the livestock losses in relatively short time once reported.

Landholders from NSW and ACT made representations to EPSDD to raise concerns regarding the current ACT WDP and requested that more control be undertaken (including the introduction of aerial baiting as a control option) to alleviate the concern of a growing wild dog population within the ACT both on conservation estate and private lease.

3. Options to be considered

- **Maintain current level of control**
- **Modify current on-ground control program**
- **Implement an aerial baiting program as suggested by landholders**
- **Provide access to NSW Local Land Service Pest Animal Controllers into ACT to undertake intensive wild dog trapping program**

Option 1: Maintain current level of control

Summary

Maintain current WDP to the same level utilising proactive and reactive trapping of wild dogs by PAC employed by BRS and supplemented by short term contracts for seasonal proactive trapping and or reactive trapping when required. Continue to implement current baiting regime of blocks (5 weeks) of proactive baiting undertaken by PCS at scheduled intervals throughout the year.

Timeline

- Currently implemented and ongoing

Estimated costs

- No additional cost, implemented by internal staff and within current budget.

Benefits

- No additional resources required
- No additional expenditure required
- Maintains current level of control undertaken to manage wild dogs in the identified control footprint.

Disadvantages

- Does not alleviate the concerns raised by landholders (NSW and ACT) that the current program is meeting objective of preventing/minimising livestock attacks.
- Current baiting regime only has baits available in short periods, no other proactive control in some areas when baiting is not undertaken.
- Some baiting and trapping has been limited due to access issues

Risks

- Current level of control undertaken may not reduce wild dog numbers in the control area and they may reach numbers that cause increased livestock attacks and revert the WDP to a reactive position.
- The level of "trust" landholders have in the ACT government and or WDP will be damaged if current level of control is not reviewed or increased.
- If livestock losses increase more extreme alternatives may be requested by landholders including control in identified areas of conservation.

Option 2: Modify current on-ground control program

Summary

A review of current baiting strategy/program could identify possible modifications within the current control footprint that could assist in ensuring wild dog numbers are managed in the short term allowing transition to new PAC positions and regaining stability in delivery of the WDP and alleviating concerns raised by landholders.

Modifications considered include,

- Reviewing historic bait station locations for current operational requirements
- Intensifying the number of baits in the current areas baited.
- Extending the baiting period beyond the current 5-week baiting period.
- Establishing a coordinated landholder wild dog baiting program
- Identifying areas where access trail access issues limit normal bait delivery and identify repairs required and or alternative access options for bait delivery (by side by side, on foot)
- Employing a contractor to supplement the current PAC until recruitment is complete
- Undertake coordinated ground baiting on private land
- Adopt **wild dog scan** as a mechanism to better improve data sharing with landholders

Timeline

1st March - ongoing

Estimated costs

- Some increase in staff hours/cost dedicated to the baiting
- Increased contractor costs
- Additional baits required
- Access trail repairs

Benefits

- A review of baiting strategies will give a reference point in the program's effectiveness against current position
- Ground baiting can provide data to assess target species uptake and effectiveness of ground baiting.
- Will ensure that the WDP can maintain its objectives in current PAC transition phase
- May negate the need to utilise other bait delivery methods (aerial baiting) requested by landholders
- More consistent baiting may reduce numbers of foxes in the control area
- Coordinated baiting will increase ownership by all stakeholders and increase collaboration.

Disadvantages

- Will require more on-ground staff time
- May increase the number of Wild dogs taken from control area potentially impacting conservation objectives

Risks

- Minimal risk as baits would be laid as per Pesticide Control Order (PCO) in controlled distribution

Option 3: Implement an aerial baiting program

Summary

1080 meat baits to be deployed in strategic locations (with input from landholders) via helicopter (max 10 baits per km) to reduce the wild dog numbers in the control footprint on conservation estate and private land within the ACT. This is seen as a “short term fix” to the perceived increase in wild dog activity in the control area.

Timeline

ASAP-12 months (possible ongoing)

Estimated costs

- Significant increase in operational expenditure that is unbudgeted for in BRS
- Helicopter costs
- Additional baits
- Increase in staff time in planning and delivery of program

Benefits

Baits can be delivered in areas (within the control area where accessibility has been limited due to impacts of both fire and flood damage and or areas identified as historic dog movements occur where there is no feasible vehicular access.

Disadvantages

- Aerial baiting has not been used previously in the ACT and implementation would require significant investigation, consultation and planning to garner support from internal stakeholders and senior executive, which may take some time and not meet the immediate concerns raised by landholders.
- ACT staff have limited operational experience with aerial baiting.
- Delivery of 1080 baits through aerial baiting can be perceived as indiscriminate and results (bait takes) immeasurable.

Risks

- Use of aerial baiting using 1080 may increase opposition to the WDP and place pressure on the use of 1080 within the ACT.
- It may also be seen as country to the most recent Parliamentary agreement that stated a reduction in the use of 1080 as a position of the current government.
- If aerial baiting is undertaken and on-ground perceptions of the wild dog population are not reduced there may be further requests to increase aerial baiting in other areas of Namadgi (conservation areas)
- If aerial baiting is used to alleviate the current concerns of landholders, it may be expected to become a regular program regardless of effectiveness or cost.

Option 4: •Provide access to NSW Local Land Service Pest Animal Controllers into ACT (Namadgi) to undertake intensive wild dog trapping program

Summary

NSW Local Land Service wild dog coordinator has previously requested access for their Pest Animal Controllers into the ACT to undertake short term intensive wild dog trapping programs to reduce numbers of wild dogs within the ACT

Timeline

- Autumn/ Spring

Estimated costs

- No additional cost

Benefits

- Wild dog numbers may be reduced through this option
- Provides opportunities for inter-jurisdictional collaboration

Disadvantages

- ACT PACs already have established programs and PAC's for trapping so may be a duplication of resources.
- May send a poor message that ACT is unable to manage its WDP with its own resources
- Access issues would restrict areas of operations available to LLSPACs the same as currently encountered by ACT PACs.
- ACT has access to contractors that are able to perform this function if required

Risks

- ACT PAC's may get the impression that management do not have faith in their ability.
- LLS resources availability may not align with ACT programs (baiting)
- Short term trapping by outside PACs do not provide longer term proactive approach
- Reliance on one method (trapping) for control of wild dogs

4. Other considerations

Biosecurity and Rural Services Unit has sourced funding for an additional PAC position through Commonwealth invasive species funding. This position is for a two-year period (2022-2024) and has been filled and currently occupied by Luke Beaman.

The permanent PAC position left vacant by Peter Erlands passing is yet to be advertised as the decision was made to upgrade from a GSO7 to GSO8 in an attempt to attract experienced PAC's to the position. It is hoped that this position once filled will help stabilise the ACTWDP going forward.

Once both BRS PAC positions are filled it is possible that the ground baiting program can be reallocated to BRS for implementation freeing up PCS staff for other work on reserves and providing better continuity between the ACT proactive trapping and baiting program.

A proposal was put forward to LLS and NSW NPWS that would see ACT resources (PAC) work in NSW on border areas where wild dog control has been limited (Clear Range, Scabby Nature Reserve) this proposal was also tabled at both Shannons Flat and Adaminaby wild dog working group meetings for all stakeholders to comment on. Subsequent meetings between ACT, LLS and NPWS resulted in LLS being requested to provide an alternative option to resource this area but have not provide a response as of 22/02/2023.

An EPSDD Wild Dog Steering Committee will be established to ensure that any significant proposed changes in management of wild dogs/dingoes in the ACT can be discussed, considered and agreed upon to ensure that informed decisions can be made that do not adversely or unintentionally impact either conservation or control objectives.

5. Options Recommendation

EPSDD WILD DOG/DINGO STEERING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2023 - DRAFT

Background

Managing wild dogs/dingoes can be a challenging issue as government, EPSDD can have multiple objectives, including conservation of a top order predator in the natural ecosystem and also controlling the same animal to prevent or minimise the impact caused to livestock on adjoining farmland (either in NSW or ACT). This can also be a quite emotive and sensitive topic with strong advocacy from stakeholder groups with differing views on wild dog/dingo management.

The establishment of the Wild Dog/Dingo steering committee will assist in reviewing the process in which information around wild dog/dingo management in the ACT is collated and communicated. The Wild Dog/Dingo steering group is considered a key component in providing a platform for information sharing to guide decision making by EPSDD stakeholders.

Role

The role of the WDD Steering committee will be to provide a forum for identified internal (EPSDD) stakeholders to share information and provide updates on any proposed changes in strategies or policies relating to wild dog management including control and conservation. Identify knowledge gaps and improvements in research and or technology and to undertake periodic reviews of management objectives.

Objectives of the wild dog/dingo Steering Committee

- Drive and encourage an adaptive and collaborative approach to the implementation of the wild dog/dingo management programs within Namadgi National Park (including Tidbinbilla and other nominated reserves), leasehold land and other land where wild dogs/dingoes are present in the ACT or have a positive or negative impact/influence.
- Determine and assess high level risks regarding wild dog/dingo management programs and initiatives.
- Ensure wild dog/dingo management programs/projects/initiatives are consistent with current legislation, policies, and strategies.
- Determine and guide coordinated public messaging and communication regarding strategies and policies in relation to wild dog/dingo management.
- Ensure clear communication and liaison between the ACT and other jurisdictions in relation to wild dog/dingo management.
- Provide visibility of wild dog/dingo management programs and initiatives across key areas of responsibility within the EPSDD.
- Provide a recommended position on wild dog/dingo management issues to senior executive/ministers.

EPSDD WILD DOG/DINGO STEERING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2023 - DRAFT

* Note - the wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee may establish an operational working group(s) to oversee the detailed operational planning, delivery and reporting of a specific initiative or program. A representative of the wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee will be on any operational working group that is established.

Term

This term of reference is effective from 01/04/2023 and will be ongoing until reviewed or terminated by agreement of the wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee.

Membership

The wild dog/dingo Steering Committee members are:

- Senior Director Resilient Landscapes (Chair)
- Executive Branch Manager, Parks and Conservation Service
- Senior Director, Parks and Partnerships
- Director, National Parks and Catchments (Namadgi)
- Director, Biosecurity and Rural Services EPSDD
- Manager, Invasive Animals and Over-abundant Wildlife Resilient Landscapes
- Area Manager, Namadgi
- Area Manager, MRC
- Area Manager, Tidbinbilla
- Senior Director, Conservation Research
- Senior Fauna Ecologist, Conservation Research
- BAP policy
- CR Policy

EPSDD WILD DOG/DINGO STEERING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2023 - DRAFT

Administration

The wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee Meeting will be chaired by the Senior Director Resilient Landscapes. The chair will nominate a deputy from within the group to cover leave or unexpected absences.

The Manager, Invasive Animals and Over-abundant Wildlife Resilient Landscapes will act as the secretariat who will schedule meetings, prepare meeting agendas, record and circulate minutes and related documents.

Meetings

The wild dog/dingo Steering Committee will meet quarterly or on an as needs basis to address specific wild dog/dingo issues.

Wild dog/dingo Management Steering Committee agenda

9th March 2023

- Welcome Introductions apologies
- Background to the formation of the committee
- Draft TOR
- Current concerns raised by landholders
- Options to address the concerns
- Conservation objectives/projects and Scientific committee
- Aerial baiting as an option for wild dog control in the ACT in the future

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2023 5:07 PM
To: Glennon, Chris
Cc: Cooney, Rosie; Brawata, Renee; Sweaney, Mark
Subject: FW: Wild dog QTB
Attachments: QTB Wild dogs 15-02-2023.docx

OFFICIAL

Attachment included

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2023 5:06 PM
To: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>
Cc: Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Subject: Wild dog QTB

OFFICIAL

G'day Chris

Please see draft QTB on wild dogs as requested

Happy for feedback or input from others where required

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

ACT Wild dog management program

Talking points

Background

- The Dingo is estimated to have arrived in Australia 5,000-8,000 years ago and is considered the native apex predator in most mainland terrestrial ecosystems.
- The Dingo is known to the Ngunnawal peoples as Mirigang and holds a special place within the Ngunnawal society and dreaming since the first sunrise, representing resilience and protection.
- Mirigang within the Ngunnawal family groups were raised in the company of Women and Children and provide an effective hunting aid, a living blanket and protection against invaders while men were away for hunting or ceremony.
- Wild Mirigang also hold special place within the Aboriginal communities as their migration and footprints were tracked to find waterholes and pathways (songlines) across country to other food sources and neighbouring nation groups.
- Hybradisation with domestic dogs has occurred since European settlement in areas where livestock were grazed in areas where dingo populations were present.
- Genetic testing of a large number of animals (Wild dogs) has shown that there are no resident populations of feral dogs (domestic dogs gone wild) in the ACT region (A. Wilton unpublished data).
- The DNA evidence suggests that ACT wild dog populations can best be described as being dingoes with a small proportion of domesticated dog genes.
- It is estimated that populations of Dingoes in Namadgi NP, ACT, contain 75-85% Dingo ancestry, one of the highest values in SE Australia.
- The National Wild Dog Action Plan (NWDAP) defines wild dogs as “All wild-living dogs, which include: dingoes, feral dogs and their hybrids.”
- ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy 2012 – 2022 - Many dingoes in the ACT contain a proportion of domestic dog genes but are indistinguishable in the field from genetically pure dingoes. Together with pure dingoes these animals are termed collectively ‘wild dogs’.

Status of Wild Dogs/Dingoes in the ACT

- The ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy 2012 – 2022 states that *Wild dogs, including feral dogs, Dingoes, and their hybrids, can have significant impacts on livestock, especially sheep*. Because of this, wild dogs/Dingoes in the ACT have been listed as pest animals in the Pest Animals Declaration 2021, made under the Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005.
- The Namadgi National Park Plan of management states that *Dingo/Wild dogs perform the role of a top predator. Dingo/wild dogs are problematic for sheep graziers whose properties adjoin the park and the animals must be diligently controlled on these properties and within a defined area of Namadgi bordering sheep grazing areas to prevent losses*.

Impact

- Wild dog attacks on livestock conservatively cost the Australian economy upwards of \$89 million a year in lost production and control costs.
- Producers lose enterprise choice – farming small stock (sheep and goats) is unsustainable in areas where wild dog numbers are excessive.
- Stress – Prolonged wild dog attacks on livestock can cause serious emotional and psychological damage to rural families and their communities (ABARES 2014)
- Wild dogs originating from Namadgi National Park impact livestock on neighbouring properties both in the ACT and NSW.

Management of Wild dogs

- The Australian Pest Animal Strategy identifies the National Wild Dog Action Plan is an example of the success that can be achieved when all levels of stakeholders work together and assume responsibility for tackling a serious pest animal problem. The plan, facilitated by WoolProducers Australia, is supported by a broad range of key government and non-government stakeholders. The aim of the plan is to deliver best practice wild dog management that is safe, efficient and humane, and supports continuing economic activity while being socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable.
- Wild Dog management in the ACT has multiple objectives that that can be conflictive but the intent is through coordinated and cooperative management across all land tenures, to protect livestock enterprises from the impact of wild dogs and foxes, whilst maintaining a viable breeding population of dingoes/dingo type wild dogs within core areas of public lands to perform the function of top order predator in the natural ecosystem.
- *ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy 2012 – 2022 States that Wild dogs may perform an important role as higher order predators in natural ecosystems (Glen et al. 2007), irrespective of their genetic makeup or coat colour. The ACT Government therefore aims to maintain viable populations of wild dogs in conservation areas.*

Cleared as complete and accurate:

Cleared for public release by:

Contact Officers name:

Lead Directorate:

04/10/2022

Executive Group Manager

Steve Taylor (invasive plants)

Mark Sweeney (invasive animals)

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development

Ext: 620 78628

Ext: 620 72278

Ext: 620 72135

- ACT is signatory to three cooperative Wild Dog Management plans with neighbouring stakeholders in NSW including NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), South East Local Land Service (LLS) and private landholders.
- ACT is currently in discussions with ACT landholders to establish an ACT Wild Dog Plan based on the NSW plans. These plans (both NSW and ACT identify both control and conservation objectives).

Implementation

- Wild dogs are controlled in the ACT (and neighbouring NSW) on both government and private land through integrated management techniques. Control methods utilised include, leghold traps, poisoned baits, shooting, exclusion fencing and guard animals. Use of methods vary in effectiveness and adaption across the landscape (NSW and ACT) and only through combined use have landscape level effective results that meet wild dog control objectives.
- Control methods are implemented using best management practices and consider animal welfare, effectiveness, user and public safety and situational suitability.
- Poison baits are predominantly fresh meat baits injected with sodium fluoroacetate (1080). Baits are placed in strategic locations to target wild dogs (and foxes) Baits are buried to minimise the risk to non-target species including quolls and native birds. Mechanical bait ejectors are utilised in some areas within the ACT. Although Aerial baiting for wild dogs is possible within the ACT it is not currently considered a feasible control method within the wild dog control footprint.
- As 1080 is a natural occurring substance in some Australian plants many native Australian native animals have a high tolerance and therefore not susceptible to effects of the 1080 dose rate for wild dogs and or delivery method used in the ACT wild dog management program.
- There are limited alternatives to 1080 as an effective canid poison. Alternatives such as paraaminopropiophenone (PAPP) has limitations of use and effectiveness in the local management of wild dogs given that reptiles such as Rosenberg Goannas are highly susceptible to its effects. PAPP is contained in a premanufactured bait that is not as attractive as fresh meat baits.
- ACT is a financial contributor to the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) who undertake and or facilitate research into control methods for pest animal control (including wild dogs) and through this involvement remain aware and are able to have access to research and opportunities to be part of trials to improve control methods available.
- ACT be involved in several jurisdictional working groups that discuss best practice methods and new and emerging control methods for pest animal control. Through participation in these groups' information sharing is possible and techniques and experiences can be shared.

Cleared as complete and accurate:

Cleared for public release by:

Contact Officers name:

Lead Directorate:

04/10/2022

Executive Group Manager

Steve Taylor (invasive plants)

Mark Sweeney (invasive animals)

Environment, Planning and
Sustainable Development

Ext: 620 78628

Ext: 620 72278

Ext: 620 72135

Conservation

- Wild dogs perform the function of a top order predator in the natural ecosystem, preying and or scavenging on native (and introduced) herbivores, they may also have influence on populations of introduced predators such as foxes and feral cats.
- Cooperative wild dog plans identify conservation of a top order predator in the natural ecosystem as an objective of wild dog management.
- ACT Conservation Research will be undertaking a research project to better understand the ecological function of this top order predator in Namadgi National Park and the influence current wild dog control has on this function.
- Areas of Namadgi identified as core conservation do not have any wild dog control undertaken.
- Despite not having exact data on wild dog population density within Namadgi National Park it may be assumed that the population of wild dogs in Namadgi is stable as the number of dogs taken each year in control programs remain consistent.

Challenges

- Livestock producers can find it hard to accept that conservation of wild dogs is an objective of ACT (and NSW) Government land managers
- Limited control options available can reduce ability to effectively meet control objectives.
- Wild dogs can have large home ranges that see them impact on areas outside of ACT's management (i.e. NSW)
- There can be negative connotations when using terms wild dogs or dingoes depending on the audience.
- Impacts of wild dogs can be a highly emotive issue that can cause great distress to individuals and can pose significant media political or attention.
- Knowledge gaps in ecological functions of wild dogs can make conservation objectives difficult to defend.

From: Sweaney, Mark
Sent: Tuesday, 3 May 2022 4:12 PM
To: Schofield, Warren
Subject: RE: wild dogs

OFFICIAL

I haven't had a look yet, I guess we work under the NSW pesticide control order which specifies trail baiting etc, so there would have to be something in Act that explicitly negates that. Im meeting with Ollie tomorrow I'll ask him quietly

From: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 3 May 2022 3:16 PM
To: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Subject: wild dogs

OFFICIAL

G'day Sweaney

Did you find out anything about aerial baiting or trail baiting in the ACT? I haven't been able to pin down anything that tells me neither are allowed or why they are not. I'm sure it would be written in legislation somewhere but I came up empty.

Again not considering that we need to implement these but would be good to understand why they are not allowed to answer questions posed by [REDACTED] (or others)

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

Subject: pesticide use in ACT/Jervis Bay
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Start: Fri 16/06/2023 10:30 AM
End: Fri 16/06/2023 11:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Schofield, Warren
Required Attendees: Sweaney, Mark; Lenon, Ian; Dix, Rodney; Walters, Daniel; Roach, Adam

G'day All

Just wish to have a discussion regarding the use of pesticides in both the ACT and Jervis bay on the back of a recent inquiry from NSW Local Land Service regarding 1080 use at Jervis bay and also discussions with ACT landholders regarding aerial baiting for wild dogs using 1080 in the ACT.

Any questions please let me know

Thanks

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Meeting ID: 439 408 016 266
Passcode: TgQRYb
[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)



[Learn More](#) | [Help](#) | [Meeting options](#) | [Legal](#)

From: Schofield, Warren
Sent: Friday, 17 February 2023 6:56 AM
To: Barnsley, Richard
Cc: Glennon, Chris; Sweaney, Mark; Roberts, Louisa
Subject: RE: Aerial baiting NNP

UNOFFICIAL

Thanks Richard your objection is noted.

Warren Schofield

Director
ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services
Environment Protection and Sustainable Development Directorate
warren.schofield@act.gov.au
Mob [REDACTED]

From: Barnsley, Richard <Richard.Barnsley@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 16 February 2023 3:43 PM
To: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Cc: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Roberts, Louisa <Louisa.Roberts@act.gov.au>
Subject: Aerial baiting NNP

UNOFFICIAL

Hi All,

I recently was informed that there was an offer to ACT leaseholders to take a proposal for aerial wild dog baiting to EPSTD management. I would like to record my opposition to any such proposal. I believe it does not fit within guidelines of the ACT Pest Animal Strategy 21012 – 2022 nor the Namadgi National Park Plan of Management. Our recent programs have maintained a sufficient level of wild dog control and this has been reflected by minimal stock losses over the past 12 months.

Respectively,

Richard Barnsley

Vertebrate Pest Officer

ACT Biosecurity and Rural Services.

PH: [REDACTED]

From: Brawata, Renee
Sent: Thursday, 16 February 2023 1:56 PM
To: Sweaney, Mark; Glennon, Chris; Schofield, Warren; Cooney, Rosie
Subject: RE: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Hi Mark – slide 4 your control slide.

The data presented is very old (2008 – 15 years ago) and this really stands out as out of date. I think it would be worth changing it saying 15 years up to 200 sheep per year, but since the commencement of current baiting program between say 2018-2021 (so before you couldn't do control during rains), average of x sheep per year. This reflects the effectiveness of current control programs in reducing livestock predation.

Ren

From: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2023 11:30 AM
To: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Slightly updated version

From: Sweaney, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2023 11:12 AM
To: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Hi all,
Suggested six slide version attached. Needs tidying up but are we are happy with the content?

We'll need to add the research to the talking points –

- PhD student James Vandersteen will investigate the effects that Wild Dog control has on ecosystem structure and function including on introduced mesopredators, prey and vegetation. The research will investigate the effect of current control programs on the ecological role of Wild Dogs through comparing baited and unbaited areas.
- PhD student to understand the fate of carcasses generated by broad scale aerial control programs for feral herbivores (deer and pigs). The student will compare the fate of carcasses areas where Wild Dogs are currently controlled to areas where no Wild Dog control is undertaken.
- The ACT Government is working with researchers in NSW to collect and analyses genetic data for Wild Dog populations in the ACT. This will help us detect and monitor the introgression of feral dog genes into the population

From: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 February 2023 9:19 AM
To: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

This is great, thank you!

From: Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 February 2023 3:30 PM
To: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Hi all,
Cut down version attached with talking points (and original).
There is still plenty to finish off but I'll wait for advice on who is presenting.

Mark

From: Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 February 2023 2:48 PM
To: Burkevics, Bren <Bren.Burkevics@act.gov.au>
Cc: Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>; Sweaney, Mark <Mark.Sweaney@act.gov.au>; Cooney, Rosie <Rosie.Cooney@act.gov.au>; Brawata, Renee <Renee.Brawata@act.gov.au>; Patience, Tegan <Tegan.R.PATIENCE@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Hi Bren

Just trying to catch up with you to confirm arrangements for the abovementioned briefing. At this stage we are working to the arrangement assumptions below

- We are assuming that the briefing requirements might be
 - Minister to introduce the topic to the ECCB Committee – we are preparing talking points to suit. Say 5 mins
 - Presentation to be provided by Directorate representative (yourself as Conservator? But we are happy to do the preso if you so require) Say 15 mins
 - Discussion 10 mins
 - Total 30 mins.
- Mark Sweaney and Warren (in consultation with Rosie and Renee Brawata) are developing a presentation to be provided to the Committee.
- We will have this to you by COB tomorrow (Wednesday) for your comment with a view of using this to guide our engagement with the Minister on Friday afternoon.
- I will ask Tegan to set up a time to walk you through the preso

Will call you later to discuss

Cheers

Chris G

From: EPSDD Environment <EPSDDEnvironment@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 February 2023 11:28 AM
To: Burkevics, Bren <Bren.Burkevics@act.gov.au>
Cc: Patience, Tegan <Tegan.R.PATIENCE@act.gov.au>; Glennon, Chris <Chris.Glennon@act.gov.au>; Schofield, Warren <Warren.Schofield@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Hi Bren,

Please see below request from the MO, and let us know who you would like to attend this meeting?

Thank you

Anne

From: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 February 2023 6:04 PM
To: EPSDD Environment <EPSDDEnvironment@act.gov.au>
Cc: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>; EPSDDExecutiveOffice <EPSDDExecutiveOffice@act.gov.au>
Subject: Briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee - 21 February

OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon

Please see the request below from the MO who would like an official to attend a briefing with the ECCB committee on Wild Dog Management.

The briefing is on Tuesday, 21 February 2023 from 10.30 – 11.00 AM, can you please advise a rep who will attend the briefing with the Minister.

Any questions, please let me know.

Meaghan Evans | A/g Assistant Director, Cabinet and Assembly
Phone: 02 6207 7792 | Email: meaghan.evans@act.gov.au
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government

From: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDLO@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 February 2023 1:53 PM
To: EPSD Government Services <EPSDGovernmentServices@act.gov.au>
Cc: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDLO@act.gov.au>
Subject: Meaghan Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

OFFICIAL

Hi Meaghan,

Minister Vassarotti is looking for a rep to support her at the ECCB C'tee meeting please.

Thank you

Christy

Christy Fox
Directorate Liaison Officer
Minister for Planning and Land Management
Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate | ACT Government

From: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 February 2023 12:56 PM
To: EPSDD DLO <EPSDDDLO@act.gov.au>; VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

Hi,

See below, can we please have 1 EPSDD rep to present (likely Bren). No pre briefing is required.

[@VASSAROTTI](mailto:VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au) – Noah when they come back with a rep can you please send them the invite and also send it to EPPSD DLO and the EPSDD executive office. Can you then let the committee know that Paula Sutton and an EPSDD rep will be attending.

Thanks,

Emma

From: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 31 January 2023 5:42 PM
To: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>; VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

OFFICIAL

Hi Adriana/Emily,

The Committee is happy to accept a briefing from Minister Vassarotti on wild dog management on Tuesday, 21 February 2023 from 10.30 – 11.00 AM.

The Committee has booked the Kiribati Room for the briefing. Should the Minister wish to bring accompanying officials, please let me know in advance so that the secretariat can set up the room accordingly, as per COVID-19 room guidelines.

Should you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me.

We thank the Minister for this opportunity.

Kind Regards,
Miona Ikeda | Acting Secretary
Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services
Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity
Committee Support Office | Office of the Legislative Assembly
P 02 620 50199 | E miona.ikeda@parliament.act.gov.au



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From: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 13 January 2023 11:09 AM

To: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>; LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

OFFICIAL

Hi Adriana,

Thank you for your email.

The Committee are currently on their summer break, so I will have to get back to you in early February about meeting with Minister Vassarotti for a briefing on wild dog management.

Should you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me.

Kind Regards,

Miona Ikeda | Acting Secretary

Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Committee Support Office | Office of the Legislative Assembly

P 02 620 50199 | E miona.ikeda@parliament.act.gov.au



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From: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 12 January 2023 3:09 PM

To: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

Hi there,

Sorry I just saw this email. Disregard the one I sent earlier. Sorry I am filling in as office manager this week with Emily away.

Would 21 February 10:30-11:00am work?

Kind regards,

Adriana Boisen

Office of Rebecca Vassarotti MLA

t: (02) 620 78251 | e: vassarotti@act.gov.au

From: Sutton, Paula <Paula.Sutton@act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 6 December 2022 12:39 PM
To: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>; PATERSON <PATERSON@parliament.act.gov.au>
Cc: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

Dear Miona

Thank you for this email, and I'm glad that the committee wish to take up this invitation from Minister Vassarotti. I will hand you over to Emily, Minister Vassarotti's office manager to find some times that work for the Minister and Directorate officials and she will be in touch to find something that works for all (thank you so much Emily)

Kind regards,
Paula

From: LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 6 December 2022 11:28 AM
To: PATERSON <PATERSON@parliament.act.gov.au>; Sutton, Paula <Paula.Sutton@act.gov.au>; LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>
Cc: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

OFFICIAL

Dear Paula,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Chair to let you know that the ECCB Committee met yesterday to discuss the below matter, and the Committee would be happy to meet with Minister Vassarotti for a briefing on wild dog management.

If we could look into setting this up for a Tuesday morning in February 2023, that would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss further, or arrange meeting dates/times.

Kind Regards,

Miona Ikeda | Acting Secretary
Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services
Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity
Committee Support Office | Office of the Legislative Assembly
P 02 620 50199 | E miona.ikeda@parliament.act.gov.au



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From: PATERSON <PATERSON@parliament.act.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 16 November 2022 9:05 AM
To: Sutton, Paula <Paula.Sutton@act.gov.au>; PATERSON <PATERSON@parliament.act.gov.au>; LA Committee - ECCB <LACommitteeECCB@parliament.act.gov.au>
Cc: VASSAROTTI <VASSAROTTI@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Offering briefing on wild dog management to ECCB Committee

Thank you very much Paula,

I really appreciate the offer.

I will put this on the agenda for next meeting and the committee can discuss. But yes, it wont be until Feb likely I think.

Thanks, Marisa.

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA
Member for Murrumbidgee

Phone: +61 2 6205 1448 | Email: paterson@act.gov.au



The Greens acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' relationship with the land and water, and their rights and obligations as Traditional Custodians must be respected. As sovereignty was never ceded, the Greens recognise that to become a truly reconciled nation, we must act to empower, listen to, and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families and communities.

