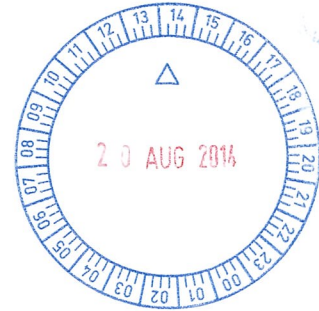


Standing Committee on Public Administration 'Inquiry into the potential environmental contribution of recreational hunting systems'

PROBLEMS



Can't kill enough animals to be effective

- Feral animals very smart
- Many feral animals quite small: rabbit, fox, cat
- Feral animals hard to find in the bush: easy to hide
- Cats notoriously difficult to find
- Hard to shoot in the bush where sight is restricted
- Much easier to shoot on farmland
- Need to stake out and be patient to kill animal: most people don't have the required patience
- Most feral animals are active at night when most recreational shooters aren't
- Annual Red Card for Fox shoot doesn't kill very many animals
- An invitation to shoot on our bush property for Red Card for Fox day was declined because of the difficulty in actually being able to shoot anything
- Even a shooter paid \$500/day to shoot feral animals on our bush property for 12 months gave up after 4 months because it was too hard
- Need regular program to prevent re-incursion from adjacent area

Spread dieback and weeds

Increase trampling and track damage, including creation of bogs

Increased camping with increased cutting down of vegetation and risk of fire

Danger to walkers, campers, naturalists, DPaW staff

Likely introduction of feral pigs and other feral animals by the hunters themselves

Likely to kill native species

Recreational hunting impossible to manage, supervise and control

- Irregular and un-coordinated
- Lack of DPaW staff and resources

SOLUTION TO FERAL ANIMALS IN PUBLIC LANDS

Integrated program

- Baiting
- Trapping
- Targeted shooting

Needs regular and consistent activities

Need trained personnel to undertake well-planned and co-ordinated program

Dr Eddy Wajon, Past President, Wildflower Society of WA (Inc)
20 August 2014

In our opinion, it is highly unlikely that there will be any environmental benefits of a Recreational Hunting System in WA. Rather we believe it would be counterproductive and result in increased problems as detailed in our written submission to you.

This is particularly so in our fragile natural ecosystems on public lands in the south-west of WA, and with WA being such a large state.

I will focus on the Perth Metropolitan Region.

There is already a significant problem with the sub-culture and habits of off-road vehicles and their recreational activities. Bush-bashing, rubbish dumping, and shooting of protected wildlife occurs in many of our natural bushland areas, resulting in irreversible degradation.

The Banksia woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain are especially vulnerable to degradation by disturbance of the topsoil. Once the top 10cm of 'soil' - mostly sand - is disturbed, degradation sets in.

- Professor Stephen Hopper (UWA) often quotes that statement.

An example of the shocking impacts of this hoon culture is at the Anstey-Keane Damplands, Bush Forever site 342, in Forrestdale. This site, rich in species of flora and fauna, is in the highest priority category for conservation. Serial rubbish dumping, bashing of gates and fences to gain access, timber cutting, horse riding, trail bike riding and bush bashing by 4 WDs have all been common recreational activities.

Indeed last year on Monday 30th September, the Wildflower Society and the Urban Bushland Council jointly held a guided bush walk with botanists in this site, attended by ~60 people.

At the end of the walk, 2 horse-riders came out of the bushland and told us that there was someone in there shooting and they left in a hurry. So we had ~60 people at risk of a stray bullet, and the wildlife was obviously at risk - kangaroos, wallabies, woylies, reptiles.

This is a totally unacceptable situation.

So the presence of recreational shooters is a risk to users and to the wildlife.

We strongly recommend that a licensed recreational shooting system not be introduced for WA.

Further we recommend that much more resources be allocated to land managers (whether the Department of Parks and Wildlife or Local Government Authorities) of the conservation estate to properly establish and manage conservation areas and provide on-ground Ranger services.

**Mary Gray President Urban Bushland Council (Inc)
Member, Conservation sub-committee, Wildflower Society of WA (Inc).**