



To: Public Administration Committee

I would like to make the following submission pertaining to point (b)(i) of the terms of reference for:

"Inquiring into the potential environmental contribution of recreational hunting systems", by the "Public Administration Committee".

I along with my wife, own and operate a primary production business based in the Shires of Donnybrook/Balingup and Boyup Brook. We have approximately 17km of owned boundary adjoining State forest and we strongly oppose the idea of recreational hunting on public lands in WA for the following reasons:

1. In my experience over the past 30+ years we have gone from a situation where there were very few illegal recreational hunters (observations and monitoring) and a limited number of feral pigs (the primary target) that were relatively easy to control. District farmers were able to keep pig numbers low.

Each year as the illegal recreational hunters increased in number so have the feral pigs.

The recreational hunters in the forest do not like to go hunting and come back with nothing for their efforts. Foxes and rabbits were released in Australia for the same reason. Professional managers get satisfaction from the elimination, not relocation of the feral pest and adhere to the guidelines laid down.

2. Hunting feral pests is a dangerous job requiring careful management. We deal with this on a daily basis in our work environment alongside public lands that are managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

This is **NOT** a suitable environment for recreational hunters.

3. We have been working with DPaW (then DEC) for about 7yrs to try and stop the recreational hunters in our area because it had got to the point where they were worse than the pigs with regards to theft, vandalism, arson, stock shot and stolen etc.

You may say that only licenced people may go hunting, however penalties are not severe enough to stop opportunistic criminals.

4. South West Vertebrate Pest control groups have been setup with support and co-operation from DAFWA and DPaW for 7 local community groups to manage their areas with the South West region of a line (approx.) Harvey to Albany.

This is a low key operation as recreational hunters are considered by most to be a threat for the reasons outlined above.

A lot of time and effort has gone into setting up a structure that works for local communities and Government land managers.

28th March 2014

Richard Walker