

Public Administration Committee

From:
Sent: Thursday, 27 March 2014 8:00 AM
To: Public Administration Committee
Subject: Inquiry in to Recreational Hunting on Public WA Land

Lauren Mesiti

Committee Clerk

Standing Committee on Public Administration

Legislative Council Parliament House

Perth WA 6000

Re: Inquiry in to Recreational Hunting on Public WA Lands

Dear Lauren,

I understand Government is considering whether there should be access to public lands for recreational hunters and would like to offer the following comments.

Understanding the reticence of government to open public lands for recreational hunting because the issue would how would this be controlled, perhaps we could consider the following:

- WA has the most rigid firearm laws in the world meaning those who have firearms have already passed stringent prequalification requirements by law.
- Access to public lands could also require additional prequalification of hunters, for example membership to the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia thereby automatically by membership holding \$20million in public liability insurance.
- Hunters should also hold a membership to an incorporated association like Conservation Australia Inc where all members have to pass both theory and practical testing on field hunting and basic bush techniques (including conservation principles).
- the Government could issue licences to approved individuals in order to maintain a register and some control as to who has access to hunt in public lands.
- a code of conduct and ethics would form part of such licencing in much the same way as fishing is controlled for species and sizes and catch numbers.

As a recreational hunter myself who participates on private land of people I personally know and via Conservation Australia Inc and Farm Assist, I for one feel that those who enjoy hunting would have no issues complying with any such regulations of control.

In order to achieve some form of "policing" control, the government could allocate designated areas where hunting could be undertaken thereby preserving any sensitive areas such as water catchments or fragile native bush areas and therefore have these designated areas monitored by existing park rangers.

I believe the bulk of Western Australian shooters are very responsible people and would be willing to comply with whatever controls are implemented for hunting on public land as is demonstrated by the currently low incidence of illegal hunting on crown land today.

Many countries in the world successfully allow hunting on public lands and we know that in NSW this is currently being en-actioned.

As a side issue, we do have an endemic feral pest issue in WA with feral dogs, foxes, cats and rabbits decimating both native flora and fauna. Recreational hunting could well enhance the control of these pests and indeed recreational hunting should be for these prescribed pests only.

Anyway I trust my comments have been of some use.

best regards

Maurice Dessauvage