

The Secretary
3/5/04
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee
House Of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

THE IMPACT OF PEST ANIMALS ON AGRICULTURE

Submission by:

Mr G. W. Breadon

On behalf of GW & JA Breadon.

Dear Committee Chair,

The impact of wild dogs on the farming community is well documented and you need look no further than previous surveys, enquiries and evidence which can be found in the following documents.

- (1) Mansfield Wild Dog Group: Video "The Silent Slaughter" 1993
- (2) Hon. Graeme Stoney MP MLC. Government of Victoria, July 1993, Feral Animal Control – Report to the Minister for Natural Resources.
- (3) R Waters, June 1993, Wild Dog Control, A Short Discussion of the History, Issues and some Proposed Options for Change, Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources. Victorian Government.
- (4) HJ Grainger and DJ Jenkins, June 1996, Transmission of Hydatid Disease to Sheep from Wild Dogs in Victoria, Australia. International Journal for Parasitology, Vol. 26, No. 11, pp 1263 – 1270.
- (5) S Kelly and S McCracken, September 2000, Review of the Wild Dog Management Program. Volume 1 & 2, Australian Agribusiness Group.
- (6) Victorian and NSW Wild Dog Control Coordinating Committee, Proceedings of the National Wild Dog Summit, Wodonga, February 2002.
- (7) C Hallett, 2003, DNRE, Victorian Government, Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing Audit for the North East Region of Victoria.
- (8) Wild Dog/Fox Working Group, May 2002, Cooperative Wild Dog/Fox Control Plan – Brindabella & Wee Jasper Valleys. NSW.
- (9) North East Wild Dog Management Group, June 2003, Draft Wild Dog Action Plan North East Victoria.

From these papers it is plain to see that wild dogs have had, and continue to have, a huge impact on domestic animals, farming operations, native fauna and indeed the human population in general.

We must move on from the continual merry – go – round of inquiry, investigation, and report on the impact of these animals to the implementation of the already identified best practice control techniques.

The single most important thing which must be understood in the long history of wild dog impact and control is that the problem continues to exist. Wild dogs continue to cause havoc and heartache to land holders and the number of wild dogs caught continues at an unabated rate.

Expenditure on the already identified control techniques must be increased across all land tenures by both State and Federal governments of both political persuasions. State boundaries are no barrier to wild dogs nor are National or State Park boundaries. If the Australian public continues to demand more and more land to be “locked up” for the public good then they must be prepared to pay for the management of the pest animals which inhabit those areas. Wild dogs in particular will breed very well in these areas as they are at the top of the food chain. This fact must be addressed now before these public lands increase to unmanageable sizes and the full breeding potential of these animals is reached. Good Neighbour Policies and the like seem to be a one way street with public land managers enforcing regulations on private land managers with out the same regulations being enforced on themselves. Restrictions on boundary fence clearing and fence construction expenses are a typical example.

Victorian Government expenditure in particular is abysmal compared with that spent by other State Governments as was clearly shown at the 2002 Wild Dog Conference held in Wodonga. This disparity has become even more apparent following the increase in funding the New South Wales Government announced recently. (The Border Mail, Monday March 22, 2004)

Coordinated research must continue at both a Federal and State level into better control techniques but until these better techniques are identified and implemented the current tried and tested methods must continue without inhibition. The current program must be fully funded on a continual long term basis not on a knee jerk, reactionary, once only initiative funding formulae.

Community involvement, consultation and understanding will be much more forthcoming and positive once these very same communities, that live and work in these wild dog prone areas, can see that the Governments of the day are managing their public lands to the best practice concepts that they expect of the private land managers.

Yours sincerely,

Garry Breadon.