

Submission
No 94

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed
Date received: 27/07/2012

Partially Confidential

To Whom It May Concern:

Unfortunately I have learnt of this inquiry too late to put together a more comprehensive and detailed submission.

Nonetheless, I wish to quickly give my opinion regarding pest management practice on public land. I would be happy to be called upon in person, should the Committee wish to hear from an 'average citizen' (as I profess no special expertise).

Conservation hunting should be allowed on public when possible. There are two main reasons why it is objected to. (1) An ideological position against firearms, human killing of animals, or both; and, (2) that it 'is' dangerous.

(1) There are varied reasons and justifications for an entrenched anti-firearm and anti-animal killing ideology. I am unable to address them all here. Nonetheless, if I did, it would be unlikely to change the mind of someone with a position so entrenched. I make this point to remind you, as a Committee, that when it comes to conservation hunting there is often a sensible position that should be supported that will (a) have fierce opposition; and, (b) not necessarily be the majority decision.

(2) Conservation hunting is not dangerous. A good example is the fact that it has, per capita, lower insurance premiums than almost any other activity. Further, the incidents that do occur in jurisdictions regulated similarly to NSW (that is, registered firearms, licenced firearms users, limits on type of firearm and so forth [note especially that the USA is not a similar jurisdiction]) are extremely infrequent. Even when hunters and other recreationalists (hikers, campers etcetera) share the same ground at the same time, the likelihood of an incident is still extremely low. Given the level of ignorance about firearms and their use in broader Australian society, I understand that a hiker hearing a gunshot nearby would be concerned. Nonetheless, their concern is not based in fact and would be easily remedied by education.

In addition to the lack of danger, conservation hunting helps manage pests. This is a disputed point, and I am sure you will read many long, detailed submissions that argue for and against with much impressive sounding research and statistics to support them. Suffice to say I think conservation hunting does help. Notwithstanding, even if conservation hunting had no impact, that is not a reason to restrict or unnecessarily limit it. A foundational point of Australian society is that individuals are free to do whatsoever they may choose, unless it has or would have a negative effect (as opposed to the [federal] government, which may only do what it is permitted to do by the Constitution). As I mentioned above, conservation hunting in the NSW system is not dangerous. Therefore, it would be improper for the government to restrict this freedom.

Therefore, I would ask that the Committee, when considering what to do with public land, pay particular attention to the limits that certain land classifications have on conservation hunting. Some classifications allow hunting, others (currently) do not. I would suggest that the Committee only classify land such that conservation hunting is not allowable when there is a specific, evidence-based need to do so.

Thank you.