

Submission
No 297

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

Name: Name suppressed
Date received: 26/08/2012

Partially Confidential

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5
Parliament House
Macquarie St, Sydney

26/8/12

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to express my dismay that hunting will be allowed in National Parks.

I am disturbed that the current state government has seen fit to use our National Parks as a bargaining chip to gain votes for an unrelated political goal. The Shooters & Fishers Party is not interested in National Parks or conservation. I understand that they have blocked every single move to establish a new National Park in this state. All they care about is to have some animal to kill. To surrender National Parks to the control of their members and/or the Game Council of NSW goes against everything that National Parks are about - conservation of environments, a refuge for wildlife, and a place for the public to enjoy without risk of being shot!

Why is it necessary to use amateur/recreational hunters for culling feral animals? Aren't there NPWS-hired professionals already trained for this if it's required? I suspect all of this talk about feral animals is just a smokescreen to make the idea of hunters in our parks more palatable to the public.

This is the second time the state government has given concessions to the Shooters & Fishers Party. The first time was when a moratorium was placed on the establishment of new Marine Parks, and the decision for a restricted fishing zone around Fish Rock & Green Island near South West Rocks was reversed. That was despite overwhelming scientific and public support of Marine Parks. Another shameful decision that put the Grey Nurse Shark at further risk of extinction.

I object to the state government using our environment as a bargaining chip to buy votes from the Shooters & Fishers Party. National Parks are not theirs to give over to hunting, they belong to the public, and they are for peaceful enjoyment of nature and conservation of our wildlife. I've seen no evidence that shooting feral animals controls populations, in fact I've heard it has the reverse effect by scattering populations, or driving them into more inaccessible areas. I'm not convinced that allowing amateur/recreational shooters into National Parks will not result in harm to native animals, or possibly a bushwalker/camper getting shot (as actually happened in New Zealand).

I am also concerned that it won't stop at the current legislation, that hunting will be opened up in more areas, with less restrictions. The state government has shown they're prepared to favour the bloodlust of the Shooters & Fishers over the protection of our wildlife.

I recently spoke to someone who had spent some time living with a family of pig hunters. He said that hunters routinely go into National Parks to shoot animals without a permit (i.e. for 'fun') and that it was common practice for them and for hunters in general to INTRODUCE feral animals such as deer into National Parks in order to maintain

their 'sport'. This man I spoke to said he accompanied them on a hunt where they flushed and shot a fox, as well as a rock wallaby. They initially only injured the wallaby, which no doubt lay bleeding in fear and pain for who knows how many seconds or minutes before another hunter killed it.

I fear that this legislation will only increase incidents of this kind, and that hunters not necessarily knowing all the details of the legislation will feel they have carte blanche to go into National Parks and shoot at anything that moves. And I'm certain that these hunters will be more interested in MAINTAINING feral animal populations than eradicating them.

I ask that this decision is reversed and that National Parks will be free from shooting by recreational hunters.

Yours sincerely,

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