

**Submission
No 331**

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

Organisation: Australian Pig Doggers and Hunters Association
Date received: 29/08/2012

NSW Public Land Submission from Australian Pig Doggers and Hunters Association.

As an association representing members across NSW and Australia we would like to bring to the Committee's attention some key points raised by our members.

As an Approved Hunting Organisation with the Game Council some of our members are active participants in the Game Council R license program controlling feral animals in Declared and designated NSW State Forests. On behalf of our members we would firstly like to congratulate the Game Council for the great work this department does both on the ground and promoting ethical hunters in our State Forests.

As an association we would like to see the GC model expanded to other designated areas of Crown Land eg nature reserves. The GC model operating in State forests recognises that value of trained hunters with dogs. The use of dogs in controlling feral pest animals is a highly effective control measure when coupled with ethical and humane practices APDHA promote. We as an association would like to table a Trial/Study with help of the Game Council, NSW DPI and NPWS for effective control of feral pigs with dogs inside NSW National Parks.

The current data on the use of dogs in locating and holding feral pigs in National Parks is outdated. A new collaborative approach reflecting the changes in technology, training and breeding needs to be tested and the results analysed and published as a control method .

(Katahira et al 1993) Caley and Ottley (1995)

The association would also like to raise as a concern the conversion of State Forest (Tuckers Rock road Repton) to National Park. Over the last few years this area has turned from a State Forest enjoyed by many local residents as a natural bush land setting to ride horses walk dogs and ride motorbikes. Since converting to a National Park , gates have been installed access restricted and warnings issued to people wishing to use the area as they did under the State Forest allowable activity. The tracks are not being maintained and on questioning the local NPWS ranger it seems there is no budget to maintain the area to the same degree as Forests NSW had done previously.

As an approved Hunting Organisation for the Game Council in NSW we would like to table the option of R license hunters operating in State Forests the use of conditionally registered Quad Bikes, for the purpose of Feral Animal Control. The use of conditionally registered Quad bikes in SF's would allow the hunter's better access to the formed tracks within the SF that are not accessible by traditional 4wds. Some of the common reasons 4wd access is inhibited is due to vegetation growth, fallen trees and storm related erosion of tracks. The use of quad bikes by the R License hunter would be limited to the formed tracks within the State Forest but as the footprint and disturbance on the quad bike is smaller than traditional 4wds we see a benefit to the hunter in mobility and less environmental impact to the formed tracks. The committee may not be aware but as these are state forests and the vegetation is significant tracks can hold water and suffer from deep erosion problems year round. In

some cases remediation vehicles can't gain access to fire tracks and bogs due to significant rainfall over extended periods.

The association would like to bring to the committee's attention the control of feral animals in NSW. Our members are engaged with private landholders across the state in most cases our members are the preferred control measure. Our approach to feral pest management through the use of highly species specific trained dogs and hunters provides a tried and proven method most Private Land owners both encourage and endorse. We don't see our method as the only control method but as part of a coordinated approach in controlling and eradicating feral pigs. Some examples where our control method could be utilised on public land would be after aerial shooting locating and dispatching animals not identified during the aerial shoot due to a covering tree canopy. Animals that are Trap and Bait wise the solitary boars that don't pick up the baits and don't walk into the traps. Trained dogs are highly effective against these animals. Where high vegetation makes identifying and ground shooting of animals cost prohibitive. Our members can provide a collaborative approach across private and public land on a geographic location Private Land owners working with NPWS giving access to trained hunters with dogs.

The association would also like to see an expanded version of designated dog friendly areas for travellers. For example people travelling with dogs on holidays (The free camping model) allowing these groups overnight stay with dogs in designated Fireplace areas inside National Parks and State Forests. We would also like to see provisions made for dog friendly areas inside National Parks. An example would be where a main road traverses a National Park a designated area could be made for overnight stays with dogs close to the Main Road. Or access to some designated camping locations with dogs. The model is already working in NSW where beach access is restricted one side due to heavy National Park restrictions but on the other side where the beach is council operated vehicles and dogs are allowed. The association isn't asking for large allocations of space for these areas only that these people travelling with dogs can be accommodated. Some of the demographic that would appreciate this consideration would be Farmers, Livestock Workers, Contractors ,Holiday Makers of all ages and Hunters.