

Submission  
No 42

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED AERIAL SHOOTING OF  
BRUMBIES IN KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL PARK**

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**Date Received:** 12 September 2023

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Due to the unnecessary suffering and cruelty caused by both aerial and ground shooting, the proposed culling of brumbies in these methods should be immediately stopped.

Referring to the “Assessment of animal welfare for helicopter shooting of feral horses” report

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It actively raises questions about whether or not shooting horses from a helicopter is an effective tool to reduce populations.

Recent independent reports by equine scientist Joanne Canning and biostatistician Claire Galea raised significant concerns about the methodology used to count the wild horse population. The implausible numbers of horses being reported close to 20,000 cannot be true if you spend time in the observing wild horses in the park. Since the bush fires of 2019-2020 decimated the population, this has not been taken into consideration.

Given the lack of confidence and the discrepancies on the number of wild horses in the park a recount is the only way to correctly 100% confirm the numbers in the park and base the future management of the population. At present the numbers are based on flawed data methods and therefore deem management plans unlawful and any justification for ground or aerial shootings unlawful.

The inhumane slaughter of wild horse in aerial culling should not be allowed. This is not an accepted method of humane methods of animal control. Wild horses have been shot and be left to bleed to death causing unnecessary suffering and pain, mares have spontaneously aborted their foals.

Aerial and ground shootings do not guarantee a cruelty free way of managing the horse population. There unique terrain of KNP means even the most skilled shooter cannot accurately and instantaneously end a brumbies life with a head shot. If brumbies take shelter in trees once shot they are likely to be left to bleed to death. This is unacceptable.

Other humane and proven methods of control should be researched such as chemical castration and continued rehoming to manage numbers. I oppose shooting brumbies within traps as this is cruel and unnecessary.

NPWS and the government have a responsibility to maintain the mental health of the public. The trauma and stress caused by the decisions to aerial cull, to abandon dead horses in the park, and to cause unnecessary suffering, is something that should be considered. This is being watched globally. These decisions reflect very badly on the current government and it's understanding of the importance of the horses to the cultural heritage of the area, to the connection the public have to the horses AND the actual real picture on the ground if you spend time in the park.

There are ways to manage the wild horses, the current plan is an eradication plan based on flawed data. Please speak to people that rescue them, that train them, that work with them, and understand the value of these heritage horse before it is too late.