

Submission
No 67

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Submission for enquiry into Proposed Aerial Shooting of Brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park.

Dear Committee.

I am writing this submission to express my support for the Proposed Aerial shooting of Feral Horses within Kosciuszko National Park. My points are:

Aerial culling of pest species is carried out in all states of Australia across all land tenures and is accepted as an effective and humane way of reducing feral animal numbers.

Deer, camel, pig, goat, donkey, and horse numbers are aerial culled throughout the country. Only horses in NSW National Parks are exempt from this practice currently.

Horses are aerial culled in Victoria and the ACT National Parks and horse welfare has not been highlighted as an issue of being being inhumane. Why should it be different in Kosciuszko National Park?

The current practice of culling of horses within KNP by trapping, yarding, shot in the yard or sent to abattoirs is very stressful for the animals. Re homing is a good outcome however this will never adequately or significantly reduce numbers in any meaningful way.

Horse numbers within KNP have exploded due to inaction forced upon the NPWS from political decisions, such as the former Deputy Premier, John Barilaro's Kosciuszko Heritage Horse Bill. It is on the record that his Bill was drafted by Mr Barilaro's friend, a former National Party member who runs a business doing horse treks within KNP. This Bill was designed to stall or slow down the control of feral horses. This issue of feral horses in KNP has been around for over twenty years and the effective strategy by a small but vocal number of Brumby advocates to stall and make claims of animal cruelty only makes the problem get larger with more animals having to be killed continually.

I have recently walked to the headwaters of the Murrumbidgee River and was shocked to see the destruction of the springs by horses' hooves. You cannot drive through KNP without seeing Piles of horse poo everywhere.

Threatened species, fragile alpine vegetation and waterways are at a tipping point within KNP due to damage done by the hard hooves of feral horses.

Everyday I drive regional roads and despair at the shocking number of native animals being maimed and killed as so called road kill. I am a native animal carer and the number of animals left to die a painful death is distressing. When people drive past dead and mangled wildlife, no one bats an eyelid but humanely shoot a feral horse and someone sees a carcass, all hell breaks loose.

The Guy Fawkes aerial culling of horses was highlighted over twenty years ago as being inhumane. The final enquiry determined that unfortunately a small number of horses suffered during this procedure. This incident is commonly referred to as the Guy Fawkes massacre by some Brumby advocates, when in fact the official enquiry did not believe this to be the case.

Now in 2023 aerial culling is strictly monitored by animal welfare advocates such as the RSPCA, veterinarians, air observers and ground crews. Animal welfare, as it should, will be at the top of all criteria for aerial culling operations.

The fact is that no one wants to see animals die. Statistics show that aerial culling which is done under strict animal welfare guidelines by expert shooters operating under strict Standard operating procedures is one of the most humane ways of dealing with feral animals.

Kosciuszko is a National Park, not a horse park.

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into this enquiry.