

Submission
No 99

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I object to the aerial culling of wild Brumbies. It is haphazard, indiscriminate and cruel.

While I understand the concerns regarding the protection of native and threatened species in the KNP, I have concerns regarding the 2027 deadline that I see as the focus of this plan, rather than how best to sustainably manage these horses ongoing. I believe there are better methods that could be employed which might be slower but less detrimental to the herds overall wellbeing and that would be less stressful and unkind.

I was recently in the UK and saw some of the wild Exmoor ponies out in the Brecon Beacons. There are websites dedicated to the conservation of these ponies. They are carefully managed in the hope their numbers will 'increase' and allow the public to continue viewing these magnificent ponies. Their genetic pool is small and they are having to manage the blood lines to ensure the long term welfare of the ponies on the moor.

The native flora & fauna of the National Park could be preserved through containment of the brumbies to certain areas whilst slower but more compassionate methods of managing the complex herd relationships and connections could be given consideration. Rehoming of the younger horses and careful culling of the older horses would give better results for a longer and more sustainable population of the horses that would remain.

To arbitrarily decide that we must have just 3,000 of these horses by 2027 seems to be putting other factors first and once again, as with many of the decisions we are witnessing around our environment, long term sustainability is not truly being considered. It seems to be another ill-considered, knee jerk decision.

To actually consider slaughtering 15,000 horses in 3 years - and how unsustainable this is for the herds - shows me the lack of real-life consideration that this proposal has been given. I believe a better solution can be found. We just need to want it enough - and be prepared to put in the resources that a better action plan would require.

Aerial culling fails to consider the following: -

- horses being culled in such a haphazard and random manner would not give consideration to the hierarchy within the herds or the health of the animals concerned (even with respect to shooting pregnant mares);

- it is extremely distressing for all the horses and many cause themselves serious injuries from being terrified and chased by the helicopters - running into fences, and impaling themselves on trees and posts, breaking legs and suffering harm;

- the horses are often not killed outright and suffer which is in contravention of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979;

- the scale of the cull is extreme - to consider shooting 15,000 horses in 3 years is horrifying;

- this indiscriminate method will not allow purposeful selection of the horses and their gene pool and social groups will be decimated which would put at risk the wellbeing and future for the horses left behind;

- the horses that remain will be forever traumatised;

The 2027 deadline has been determined with little consideration for the impacts of such an extreme culling regime. This is NOT practical or humane.

If this government truly had saving threatened flora & fauna as its overall focus, they would be putting policies in place across the country to stop native forest logging and halt the destruction of areas of high biodiversity due to inappropriate development. None of this is happening quite so fast as this proposal to shoot thousands of innocent horses.

Koalas, Eastern Pygmy Possums, Swift Parrots, Powerful Owls, Glossy Black Cockatoos and numerous bat species are all heading for extinction due to habitat clearing for development but this is not being stopped so clinically as this proposal suggests for KNP. It seems hypocritical.

The brumbies are much loved and yet they are confined to this small area so of course their numbers are causing concerns - human population growth means that increasing numbers of species are finding themselves suddenly 'in the way' - this is happening in the US where entire packs of wolves and families of bears are being killed purely because their habitat is shrinking and they find themselves in places inconvenient to humans.

This problem is one caused by humans. Yet it's always the animals that have to pay the ultimate price.

Aerial shooting must not be used. There are other methods which can be effective but the government must be prepared to fund them and provide the necessary resources.

This plan is not only wicked - it is unsustainable long term and would not give a satisfactory outcome for the brumbies left behind.

Please do not kill these majestic animals like this. Consider other options.

Thank you.