

**INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed

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SUBMISSION

Opposing the Lethal Control of Dingoes in NSW National Parks and Reserves

1. Purpose of this submission

I am writing to formally object to the ongoing lethal control of dingoes (*Canis dingo*) within NSW national parks, nature reserves and other conservation reserves managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). I ask that NPWS end the use of 1080 poison baiting, aerial baiting, trapping and shooting of dingoes inside park boundaries, and adopt a conservation-first approach to dingo management consistent with the ecological and cultural significance of the species.

2. Dingoes are a native apex predator, not a pest, inside conservation land

Dingoes have been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years and are recognised as the continent's only remaining native land-based apex predator. Ecological research on trophic cascades shows that where dingo populations are left intact, they suppress overabundant herbivores such as kangaroos and deer, and help control introduced mesopredators such as foxes and feral cats, which in turn benefits smaller native mammals, birds and vegetation. Removing dingoes from a landscape can trigger the opposite effect: an increase in feral cat and fox activity and unchecked growth in populations of introduced herbivores such as deer and feral pigs.

National parks exist specifically to conserve native species and natural ecological processes. Continuing to poison and shoot a native apex predator inside these reserves runs directly against that core purpose, and undermines the ecological function the parks are meant to protect.

3. The current legal and policy framework is inconsistent

Under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, dingoes are specifically excluded from the protections given to other native wildlife in NSW. Instead, dingoes are managed as 'wild dogs' — a category that also includes feral domestic dogs and hybrids — and are classified as a priority pest species under the Biosecurity Act 2015 and regional pest animal management plans. This means a genuinely native species can be baited and destroyed inside a national park, while every other native animal in the same park is legally protected.

The NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy 2022–2027 states an intention to balance control of wild dogs with dingo conservation, restricting control to areas of high livestock risk. In practice, however, broadscale aerial and ground baiting programs continue across large areas of national park estate, including remote areas with no adjoining livestock, and including significant baiting undertaken under bushfire recovery programs. This submission asks that the balance be shifted decisively away from lethal control inside conservation reserves.

4. Genetic evidence undermines the 'wild dog' justification

Historically, control programs were justified partly on the assumption that most wild-living canids in NSW were hybridised feral dogs rather than dingoes. Recent DNA testing, including research from the University of NSW,

has found that a large majority of wild dingo-like animals across the state carry high or pure dingo ancestry. This means current baiting and trapping programs are, in substance, targeting and killing dingoes — not primarily feral domestic dogs — despite being administered under a 'wild dog' pest framework.

5. First Nations perspectives

Dingoes hold deep cultural significance for many Aboriginal communities, who regard them as kin rather than pests. In 2025, the inaugural National First Nations Dingo Forum brought together representatives from around 20 Nations and produced a National First Nations Dingo Declaration opposing the ongoing killing of dingoes and calling for Traditional Owner-led management. Programs such as the Minyurnai Dingo Management Program, run by Bandjalang rangers on an Indigenous Protected Area in northern NSW, demonstrate that combining traditional knowledge with scientific monitoring can support coexistence rather than lethal control. NPWS should give genuine weight to these perspectives in reviewing dingo policy on public conservation land.

6. Recommendations

I ask that the following changes be made to dingo management policy in NSW national parks and reserves:

- End the routine use of 1080 poison baiting, aerial baiting, trapping and shooting of dingoes within the interior of national parks and reserves, reserving any control activity for a narrow, clearly justified buffer zone directly adjoining agricultural land experiencing verified stock losses.
- Amend the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and associated policy so dingoes are recognised and protected as a native species within the NPWS estate, rather than being managed solely as a 'wild dog' pest.
- Commission an independent, transparent review of the NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy 2022–2027, including publication of baiting locations, quantities and outcomes, and genetic testing results, so the public can assess whether current practice matches stated conservation goals.
- Invest in and expand non-lethal livestock protection measures for landholders neighbouring parks — such as guardian animals, exclusion fencing and improved husbandry — as an alternative to broadscale lethal control.
- Support and resource Traditional Owner-led dingo management programs, such as the Minyurnai model, as a template for other parks and reserves across the state.

7. Conclusion

Dingoes are a native Australian species that play an important ecological role and hold deep cultural value. National parks should be places where that role is protected, not eroded through ongoing lethal control programs designed primarily around agricultural pest management. I urge NPWS and the NSW Government to reform dingo policy so that conservation, not eradication, is the default approach within national parks and reserves.

Thank you for considering this submission.