

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

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DINGO SUBMISSION

I am an 86 year old woman, with a passion for the conservation of our unique environment. This passion has lead me to make this submission. We are losing native species at an alarming rate. Predation by feral animals is an important factor in this loss. For example, feral cats have directly contributed to the loss of over 20 native mammal species. Dingoes have an important role to play in this situation.

Dingoes have always been an essential part of the Australian environment. They are a crucial component of First Nations culture. For example, the Dingo Songline is one of the most important, stretching from Western Australia to Queensland. Dingos are associated with water and posses skills in finding both above and underground sources.

When Westerners invaded Australia, they introduced domestic animals including dogs, cats, sheep, cattle, goats, deer, pigs and horses. Most of these species have become feral, over time and have decimated our unique landscape and species. For example, wild and domestic dogs sometimes form packs and go on killing sprees, for which dingoes are often blamed.

Dingoes also form packs which classically range from three to twelve members. The alpha pair are the only ones to breed and they teach and discipline the rest of the pack, which are usually related. Dingoes hunt to eat. They don't kill for entertainment.

Currently in NSW, dingoes are classified as wild dogs, with the requirement that they be killed in National Parks. This situation is dysfunctional for the following reasons.

When dingoes are allowed to fulfill their role as Australia's native apex predators, their presence returns the overall environment to its natural balance. Therefore, dingoes are a crucial driver of diversity.

It is essential to acknowledge the dingo - dog distinction. Contemporary studies now use up to 195,000 markers and indicate that overwhelmingly, Australia's wild-living canids are dingoes, with hybridisation relatively uncommon in stable, undisturbed populations. In New South Wales, more than three-quarters of sampled wild canids showed over 93% contemporary dingo ancestry.

When dingoes are killed in the cruel ways currently used, this can mean that the alpha male is removed from a functioning pack. Once this happens the pack can disintegrate which can lead to increased so called nusiance behaviour.

Experience has shown that, where dingoes are allowed to remain in the environment such as a large farm, various positive results follow. Feral animals such as goats are removed, so young trees and shrubs can thrive. Erosion no longer occurs along the banks of waterways. Excess kangaroos and wallabies are removed, so overgrazing is controlled. This means domestic animals such as cattle and sheep have sufficient feed.

Farmers and graziers no longer have the expence of eradicating feral animals. Their livestock thrive. Rivers contain clean water again. So its an all round win, win situation.

MY RECOMMENDATION

Take the first step of the many that are needed. Allow dingoes to thrive in National Parks in NSW.

Thank you for accepting, considering and acting on my submission.

Beverlev Crosslev.