

**Submission
No 369**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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As a professional ecologist I am amazed that we are baiting dingoes in National Parks. The first thing that has to happen is to stop calling them "wild dogs", an inaccurate name with no basis in science. Dingoes have been in Australia for thousands of years and the impacts they have on our native fauna have balanced out. They are unlikely to cause further extinctions and in fact are of benefit to park management in the following ways. NPWS spends a fortune on feral animal control, much of which could be saved by just letting dingoes do their thing. Dingos would take down goats (a major threat to biodiversity, especially in the more arid areas, and which actively compete with endangered rock wallabies for food and shelter) and pigs (another serious issue in national parks where they destroy vegetation and kill reptiles in torpor under rocks and logs), as well as reducing deer numbers, another growing issue in our parks. The amount of money saved in feral animal control by simply not baiting dingoes would be huge. Genetic research has demonstrated that dingoes are now a native species. Dingoes are also culturally important. Farmers and sheep graziers have other means available to control dingoes on their properties, such as guardian animals and baiting. Our National Parks are for the conservation of biodiversity and dingo baiting in reserved lands runs counter to this, inflating the feral animal control budget and achieving nothing but the extirpation of an apex predator that should be seen as an ally, not a pest.