

**Submission
No 392**

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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A submission to the Legislative Enquiry into Dingos in National Parkes 21st July 2026.

Submitted by Jillian Prince. Primary Producer,
Contact . Email:

I am a primary producer and sheep grazier situated approximately 60 km north-east of “Yathong” National Park in New South Wales. My family and I run a 60,000-acre property, primarily producing lamb, providing food for Australians. Our business depends on being able to raise lambs safely and reliably, with acceptable and predictable levels of loss.

I write to express serious concerns about the current and future management of Dingoes given our current experiences and those of producers of the Western Division, the impact the growing amount of landscapes that will become National Parkes or Public Lands with the Governments 30/30 goals. I ask that the Legislative Council Inquiry strongly support effective, coordinated Dingo and wild dog control that recognises both conservation values and the rights and livelihoods of neighbouring landholders.

I also express my concerns for the calling of this enquiry, the chair of the board and her political position. While the inquiry into dingoes in national parks addresses important ecological and cultural questions, the composition of the committee driving it is concerning and lacks balance.

By being chaired by a member of the Animal Justice Party, with a majority of Labor representatives, the panel appears weighted toward animal rights perspectives rather than those with balanced animal welfare objectives and direct experience in livestock production.

For an issue that could significantly reshape dingo management policies and impact livestock producers and in turn the future of food production for our nation, a more balanced representation across rural, agricultural, and conservation interests is imperative. It would strengthen the overall credibility and fairness of the process.

I also ask the Inquiry to be cautious about some of the claims being made about the supposed benefits of dingoes to biodiversity, and to note the substantial scientific work – including that of Dr Peter J.S. Fleming – which documents the serious impacts of dingoes/ wild dogs on livestock production and questions a number of popular misconceptions.

Dingoes and wild dogs (including dingo–domestic dog hybrids) are a major, well-documented threat to sheep and lamb production in eastern Australia. As a landholder in close proximity to a National Parks and reserves, I bear the direct and immediate consequences of any failure to control Dingo (including wild dog) populations within that Park and in the broader landscape.

Key points in my situation:

- I run approximately 3,000 breeding ewes and produce around 4,000 lambs per year.
- My property is within dispersal range of Yathong National Park (50kms) Nombinnie (100kms) and Koonaburra National Park (70kms), any increase or protection of dingo populations there will only heighten the risks and affects of not only our business but all those around us.

- Despite best efforts – fencing, trapping, shooting, night paddocking, participation in coordinated Local Land Services (LLS) control programs – people in the western division experience significant livestock losses to Dingoes and wild dog composites.
- In some years, lambing percentages have fallen to 20% due to predation, often with associated animal welfare issues (maimed lambs, ewes attacked while lambing).

These losses are not just economic but also incredibly distressing to witness the pain they cause mauled and hunted sheep. They undermine long-term business viability from the causes of fear and suffering to livestock.

In my situation I feel that we are carrying the burden of decisions made about predator management within National Parks, without adequate consideration of our position nor adequate mitigation for the initial financial burden, but also the cumulative effects.

Nationally, wild dog impacts on livestock have been estimated in the tens of millions of dollars per year when stock losses and control costs are combined. In sheep country, the effect on lamb survival and flock structure can be devastating, forcing many producers to reduce or abandon sheep enterprises altogether, our family members in Queensland Boulia area totally shut down their sheep operation due to the predation behaviours and economic burden Dingoes had on their flocks. In NSW, where sheep are major contributors to regional economies, anything that increases wild dog pressure near parks directly threatens the financial viability of businesses like mine and the towns that depend on us.

I draw some information from the work of Dr Peter J.S. Fleming and colleagues (formerly NSW Department of Primary Industries / Vertebrate Pest Research Unit) that provides a strong scientific foundation for understanding the impacts of dingoes/wild dogs on livestock and the importance of strategic control that you will no doubt be referred to many times over the process of receiving submissions but just in case, I refer the Committee in particular to:

- Fleming, P.J.S., Corbett, L.K., Harden, R. & Thomson, P. (2001). *Managing the Impacts of Dingoes and Other Wild Dogs*. Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra.
- Allen, L.R. & Fleming, P.J.S. (2004). *Review of Canid Management in Australia for the Protection of Livestock and Wildlife – Potential Application to Coyote Management*. *Sheep & Goat Research Journal*.
- Fleming, P.J.S. et al. (2012). *Wild Dog Management in Australia: Practices, Impacts and Strategies* (NSW DPI / Invasive Animals CRC materials).
- Fleming, P.J.S. et al. (2014). “The management of wild canids in Australia: a review”, in Johnson & Ritchie (eds), *Carnivores of Australia*.

The findings from this body of work directly relevant to this Inquiry include the Economic and welfare impacts on livestock with wild dogs, including dingoes and hybrids. The causation of substantial economic losses to sheep and cattle producers through direct killing and maiming, reduced lambing/weaning rates and increased management costs (Fleming et al. 2001) finding that attacks are often severe and indiscriminate, with Dingo’s sometimes killing or wounding far more animals than they consume, which creates both

ethical and welfare concerns for livestock and mental strain for landholders. A first hand account from Mog Davies, Kalyanka Station, Wilcannia shared that a male dingo was teaching his offspring to hunt and destroyed more than 15 lambs in one night. Their intestines were removed and liver and kidney eaten but the rest of the body remained intact other than the maul marks to subdue the lambs.

Fleming's research strongly supports coordinated, landscape-scale control methods (1080 baiting, trapping, shooting, exclusion fencing), implemented consistently across tenure boundaries, rather than fragmented or "park-only" approaches (Fleming et al. 2001; 2012) which we see as an important part of controlling populations. When National Parks and other public lands do not participate effectively in coordinated programs, they act as "source" areas from which dogs disperse onto neighbouring farms, continually re-seeding wild dog problems despite private land efforts. Dingoes and Dogs do not see a fence as a reason to stop a hunt.

In the case of Pure v's Hybrid Dingo or Dog, Fleming and others have documented widespread hybridisation between dingoes and domestic dogs in eastern Australia. In many areas, a high proportion of wild canids are hybrids rather than genetically "pure" dingoes.

From a livestock and welfare standpoint, the damage done by a dingo–dog hybrid is no different from that of a "pure" dingo. Efforts to draw a sharp management distinction between them on agricultural boundaries are impractical and irrelevant to stock protection.

Maintaining viable sheep production near parks is not compatible with allowing uncontrolled populations of any wild canids (dingoes, hybrids or feral domestic dogs) to persist immediately adjacent to grazing lands.

Some advocates argue that dingoes should be protected or re-established as "apex predators" to control foxes, cats and herbivores. Fleming's work emphasises that these ecological arguments are complex, site-specific and often overstated, and they are not a justification for leaving neighbouring producers unprotected.

Any experimental or conservation-based management of dingoes must be carefully designed, robustly monitored and not imposed on unwilling neighbouring landholders who bear the risk.

In short, Fleming's research confirms what producers like me see on the ground: wild dogs are a serious, predictable problem, and effective, coordinated control is essential if sheep and lamb production is to remain viable near public lands.

ABRES estimates wild dogs cost Australia's agricultural sector up to \$302 million per year. The average price of lamb at sale yard prices on the 20 July 2026 is \$300 per head. The cost of losses to business is too high to negate.

Recent literature, including the paper "The myths of reintroducing dingoes to control feral animals" (e.g. Nimmo et al., 2020, *Global Ecology and Conservation* – as summarised on ScienceDirect), identifies a number of misconceptions that are directly relevant to this Inquiry. These analyses, consistent with Fleming's work, caution against oversimplified narratives about dingoes as a "solution" to biodiversity decline.

Key misconceptions highlighted include:

- **Misconception 1: Dingoes will reliably control feral predators such as foxes and cats.**

The evidence shows that dingo–fox–cat relationships are variable and

context-dependent. In some systems dingoes may suppress foxes; in others, foxes and cats persist or even increase. Relying on dingoes as a broad-scale, low-cost biocontrol tool for foxes and cats is not supported by consistent empirical data.

- **Misconception 2: Re-introducing or protecting dingoes will automatically restore “natural balance”.**

The historical ecosystems in which dingoes evolved have been fundamentally altered by land clearing, grazing, changed fire regimes, and the introduction of multiple pest species. Simply increasing dingo numbers in this altered landscape does not guarantee positive biodiversity outcomes and can produce unintended consequences.

- **Misconception 3: Dingoes can replace conventional pest management.**

The ScienceDirect article and Fleming’s work both make clear that dingo presence does not remove the need for active fox, cat and herbivore control. In some situations it can complicate management by adding predation pressure on livestock and some native species, while foxes and cats still require direct control.

Misconceptions continued:

These findings are important for policy:

- ***They show that claims that protecting dingoes in National Parks will deliver straightforward net ecological benefits are scientifically contested and often overstated.***
- ***They underline the risk that rural communities are being asked to absorb real, quantifiable economic and welfare costs on the basis of speculative or mixed ecological benefits.***

Any proposal to reduce wild dog control or to create protected dingo populations near agricultural land must therefore be evidence-based, cautious, and must not shift the consequences onto producers without our consent and without effective safeguards.

5. Specific Concerns Regarding Dingoes in National Parks

From the perspective of a landholder within dispersal range of a National Park, my main concerns are that controlled efforts within National Parks is often irregular, delayed, or constrained for policy, budgetary or ideological reasons. This undermines the effectiveness of control implemented on private land and allows dogs to reinvade from the Park and other public estates (Forestry, travelling stock routes, etc.). There is a deep concern that ideology will override the need to grow food to nourish the people of Australia.

While NPWS is tasked with conservation, decisions about predator management within parks directly affect my capacity to run livestock nearby.

In practice, neighbouring graziers could not be adequately consulted or informed about proposed changes to Dingo or dog management within parks, even though we bear the direct risk of increased predation. We are seeing examples of Primary Producers rights being ignored by the Renewable Energy Zones roll outs, the recent implementation and roll out of the EBPC Act and this is no different.

The proposal to protect or reintroduce and to treat dingoes as a protected native species within National Parks, or to reduce baiting and control for conservation reasons, pose a direct and immediate threat to my livelihood.

Whatever the legal classification, dingoes and wild dogs are capable of destroying a sheep enterprise if left unmanaged at the park boundary. Experience from other regions shows that a relatively small number of dogs can inflict heavy losses in a short time.

Having to deal with mauled lambs and ewes is deeply distressing. The suffering inflicted on livestock through preventable predation is inconsistent with modern animal welfare expectations is already enormous.

Continual losses, combined with a sense of powerlessness when dogs are harboured in nearby parks and this spilling out to inhabit and create communities in the landscapes around them will have real impacts on mental health in farming communities, contributing to stress, burnout and reluctance of younger generations to remain in sheep production.

At the business level, increased wild dog pressure has several compounding financial effects. It lower lambing/weaning percentages and higher mortality rates among ewes and lambs. There is a higher per-head costs due to additional labour, fencing, surveillance and control. It reduced confidence to invest in infrastructure, genetics and expansion. And in some cases, forced displacement from sheep into less profitable or less suitable enterprises.

At a regional level, the cumulative impact is significant because it will mean a reduced throughput for local sale yards, abattoirs, transporters and rural suppliers. The contraction or closure of sheep enterprises, affecting employment and associated services in country towns and the increased public and private expenditure on wild dog control, surveillance and administration, diverting resources from other regional priorities.

When lamb production falls or becomes less reliable, the effects are felt throughout the supply chain and ultimately by consumers. For a state like NSW, where lamb and sheep meat contribute substantially to export income and domestic food security, policy choices that risk undermining this sector should not be taken lightly.

I put a call out to grazier friends across NSW and got many replies with photos and stories about their experiences living near National Parks and Reserves. One response came from Geoff Davis, North Western NSW, 40kms from the Sturt National Park.

Between 2003 & 2007 Mr Davis estimates he lost approximately \$500000 to Dingo attacks on his flocks. Equate that to todays prices and it would be in the vicinity of 1.5 million dollars in a 4 year period.

During this period the Sturt National Park had a Schedule 2 protection for Dingos and monitored a 5km buffer zone for neighbouring primary producers. That meant that Dingos within the 5km buffer zone were subject to lethal controls.

The following photos are a very small portion of the devastation that he dealt with taken of stock that he found, tried to heal or lost due to Dingo predation within a very small window of time.





Mr Davis was able to ascertain that the damage in this instance was a pack of Dingos attacking his sheep. He was able to trap a male and a short time after found that a single female Dingo was teaching her pups to hunt and created this carnage to his lambs. He was able to shoot the female well inside his boundary.

Mr Davis said that he had to fence his own boundary, without financial assistance to stop predation of his sheep. He erected 40kms of Boundary fencing at the time it cost \$5,000.00 per kilometre in order to have some form of security for his livestock.

Mr Davis said that once the Sturt National Park began to control dog populations the predation of his sheep greatly diminished. Once the Schedule 2 over the park was abolished in 2010 dog attacks dropped.



Lamb found alive. Bite marks on neck and wounds fly stuck causing sepsis.



Same paddock same time lamb found mauled.



Wound on mauled lamb.

Primary producers Luke & Laura Finch, Monolon Station, North of White Cliffs, Western NSW shared the following information.

“While mustering a paddock in May, as we got all the mobs of sheep together we saw the 3 dogs running together, in front of the sheep. We chased the dogs, got 1 lost the other 2, called the neighbour over to put another plane in the air, after an hour we thought we lost the other 2, while going back to our sheep found the other 2, and got them both... it was 2 bitches and a dog, and by looking at them it was a mum and her last years pups.

Over shearing, while at lamb marking we had well over 100% in every paddock, when it came to shearing, in 2 paddocks where we haven't had signs of dogs we had lambing percentages of 112-118% lambing, in paddocks where we have signs of dogs and killing of dogs we had lambing of 28-35% lambing ... and we honestly can't put a number on the miss mothering of lambs. Monolon has been in the family since 1935 and never has any of the generations seen the dog activity as there is right now, and the years leading up too.”



Lamb at "Monolon" Station, White Cliffs.



Lamb at "Monolon" Station, White Cliffs

7. Recommendations to the Inquiry

Based on my experience, the well known and discussed effects through out the agriculture industry in Western NSW, and the scientific evidence, including the work of Dr Peter Fleming and analyses of common misconceptions about dingo “rewilding”, I respectfully recommend that the Inquiry:

1. Affirm the necessity of active wild dog control in and around National Parks

- Recognise that maintaining viable sheep and lamb production adjacent to parks is not compatible with uncontrolled dingo/wild dog populations.
- Reject any blanket move to cease or substantially reduce wild dog control in parks where they border or lie within dispersal range of grazing lands.

2. Mandate genuine, cross-tenure wild dog management plans

- Require NPWS, Local Land Services, Forestry, local councils and private landholders to participate in joint, documented wild dog management plans, based on best available science (including Fleming et al.).
- Plans should specify minimum baiting frequency, control methods, monitoring and reporting, with particular attention to park boundaries and nearby grazing districts.

3. Prioritise coordinated 1080 baiting and other integrated control measures

- Endorse the continued use of 1080 baiting as the most effective, practical broad-scale tool in remote and rugged areas, as consistently supported by Fleming’s work.
- Complement baiting with trapping, shooting and, where feasible, exclusion fencing, in a strategic, integrated framework.

4. Base policy on a realistic understanding of dingo hybridisation

- Acknowledge that in eastern NSW most wild dogs are hybrids and that, from a stock loss and welfare perspective, this distinction is irrelevant.
- Avoid policies that seek to “protect” dingoes in a way that ignores the hybrid reality and the practical impact on agriculture near parks.

5. Ensure meaningful consultation with adjoining and nearby landholders

- Require NPWS and other agencies to formally consult and communicate with neighbouring producers before any significant change in dingo/wild dog management within parks or other public lands.
- Provide accessible processes for landholders to report dog activity and receive timely, effective responses.

6. Support research, monitoring and extension

- Continue funding independent research (building on Fleming’s work and the recent literature on misconceptions about dingo reintroduction) to refine best-practice

control, understand population dynamics, and quantify economic, social and animal welfare impacts.

- Ensure the findings are communicated clearly to both policymakers and landholders, and that they are used to test, rather than assume, claims about ecological benefits of increased dingo numbers.

7. Recognise the social licence and welfare responsibilities of government

- Acknowledge that allowing preventable predation on domestic livestock, arising from management choices in public lands, is not consistent with modern animal welfare expectations.
- Recognise the mental health stress on landholders who are forced to accept repeated, avoidable losses because of policy decisions outside their control, and factor this into cost-benefit assessments.
- That primary producers are reimbursed all cost involved in Dingo/Wild Dog losses if they become protected in Parkes. This includes all veterinary costs. In the case of deceased animals, the initial cost of deceased animal/animals will be reimbursed, the cumulative losses due to stress from predation to be fully reimbursed.
- That if a park protects Dingoes that they must be fenced with Dog proof fencing and maintained at the cost of NPWS.

8. Conclusion

I am not opposed to conservation of Dingos or to National Parks. I accept that Dingoes are part of the Australian landscape. However, as Dr Peter Fleming's work and recent scientific reviews have consistently shown, unmanaged or poorly managed wild dog populations cause severe and unnecessary damage to livestock industries and rural communities. Claims that dingoes can be safely "re-introduced" or protected near sheep country for biodiversity benefits are often based on misconceptions and context-dependent ecological arguments that do not justify shifting the burden onto primary producers.

As a primary producer living within dispersal range of a National Park, I ask the Committee to:

- Recognise the clear scientific evidence of the impacts of wild dogs on livestock and the effectiveness of coordinated control;
- Ensure that National Parks and other public lands do not function as uncontrolled refuges for wild dogs that then disperse onto neighbouring farms; and
- Recommend policies that balance conservation objectives with the basic right of farmers to protect their stock, livelihood and wellbeing.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Jillian Prince

Note on References (for the Committee's use)

You may wish to attach or cite in more detail:

- Fleming, P.J.S. et al. (2001). *Managing the Impacts of Dingoes and Other Wild Dogs*. Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra.
- Allen, L.R. & Fleming, P.J.S. (2004). "Review of Canid Management in Australia for the Protection of Livestock and Wildlife – Potential Application to Coyote Management." *Sheep & Goat Research Journal*.
- Fleming, P.J.S. et al. (2012, 2014). NSW DPI / Invasive Animals CRC publications on wild dog ecology and management.
- Nimmo, D.G. et al. (2020). *The myths of reintroducing dingoes to control feral animals*. *Global Ecology and Conservation* (as summarised via ScienceDirect), which outlines common misconceptions regarding dingo reintroduction and control of feral animals.