

INQUIRY INTO DINGOES IN NATIONAL PARKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Dr Brad Purcell

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Submission to the NSW Legislative Council Animal Welfare Committee

21 July 2026

Inquiry into dingoes in national parks in New South Wales

2nd Submission by

Dr Brad Vincent Purcell

Credentials for submission

Doctorate:

[Order in the Pack: Ecology of *Canis lupus dingo* in the Southern Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Aea,](#)
University of Western Sydney (2010)

Monograph:

[Dingo CSIRO Australian Natural History Series](#) (2010)

International documentary:

[The real dingo](#) (2013) [The Real Dingo - Terra Mater Studios](#)

Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travel Fellowship

[To investigate methods to collaborate with livestock producers to manage wild dogs using non-lethal techniques](#)
(Botswana, England, Poland, United States of America). [2011](#)

Suzanne Stone's Wild Dog Management Tour 2013

ABC News [segment](#) 2012

Catalyst [segment](#) 2009

Impact of this research on dingo research:

An AI perspective

If you're referring to **Brad Purcell's dingo research**, its significance was that it helped shift the discussion about dingoes from being viewed solely as agricultural pests to being understood as an important ecological predator with a key role in Australian ecosystems. westernsydney +1

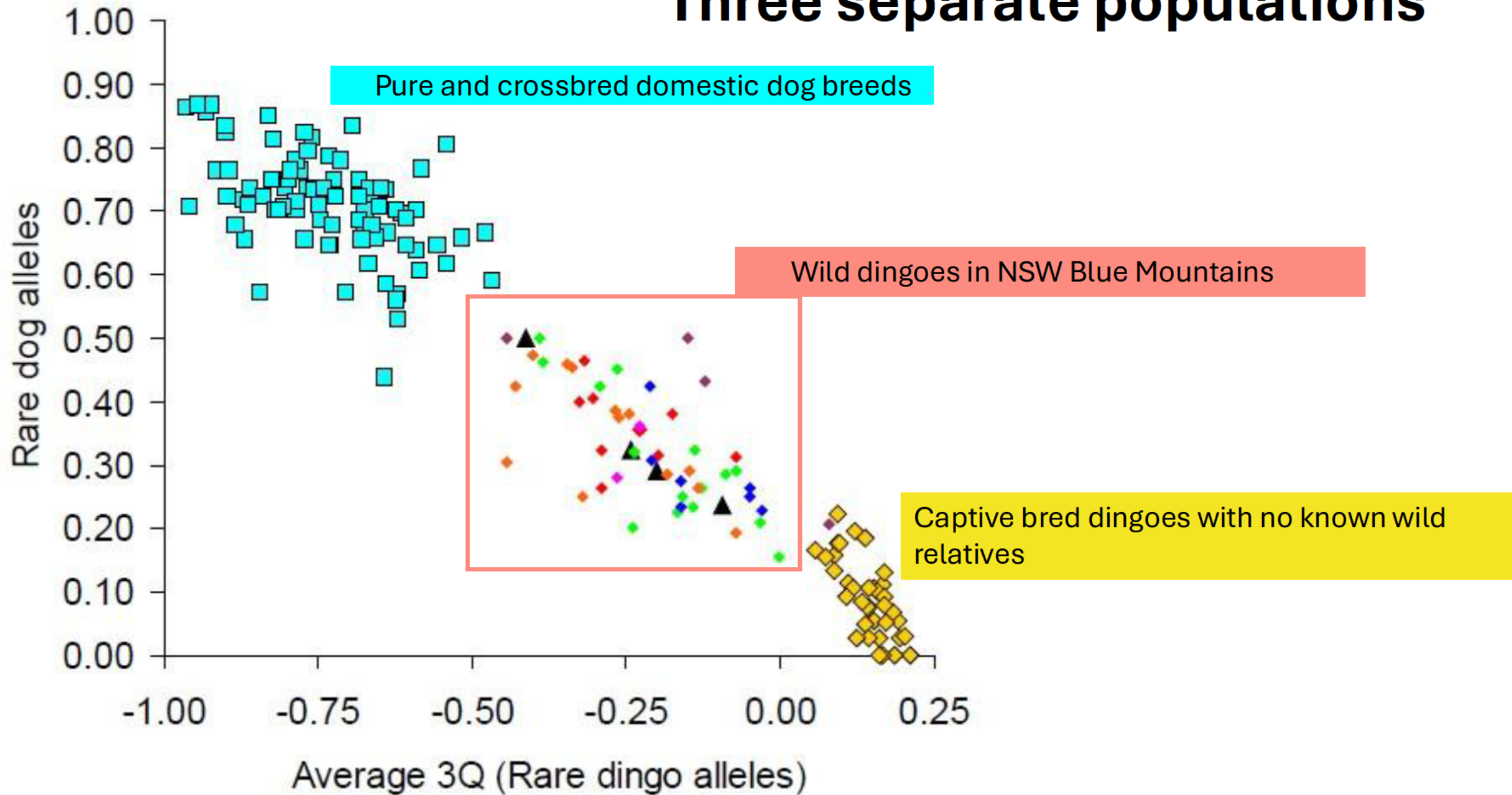
Key findings and contributions include:

- **Ecological role of dingoes:** Purcell's research showed that dingoes function as top predators and can influence prey populations and ecosystem processes, supporting arguments that they have an important ecological function. google +1
- **Dingo conservation:** His work in the Greater Blue Mountains examined whether resident populations should be conserved to maintain ecosystem function and preserve wild dingo populations. westernsydney
- **Use of new technology:** The studies incorporated GPS telemetry, camera traps, genetics, and movement analysis, providing much more detailed information about dingo behaviour, territory use, and social organisation than earlier research. google +1
- **Challenge to the idea of "pure" dingoes:** Purcell highlighted research suggesting that dingo genetic "purity" may be more complex than previously assumed and that purity can be partly a human-defined concept. google +1
- **Improved understanding of pack ecology:** His doctoral research documented dingo morphology, diet, activity patterns, relatedness, and spatial organisation, providing a comprehensive ecological picture of wild dingoes in a protected landscape. westernsydney

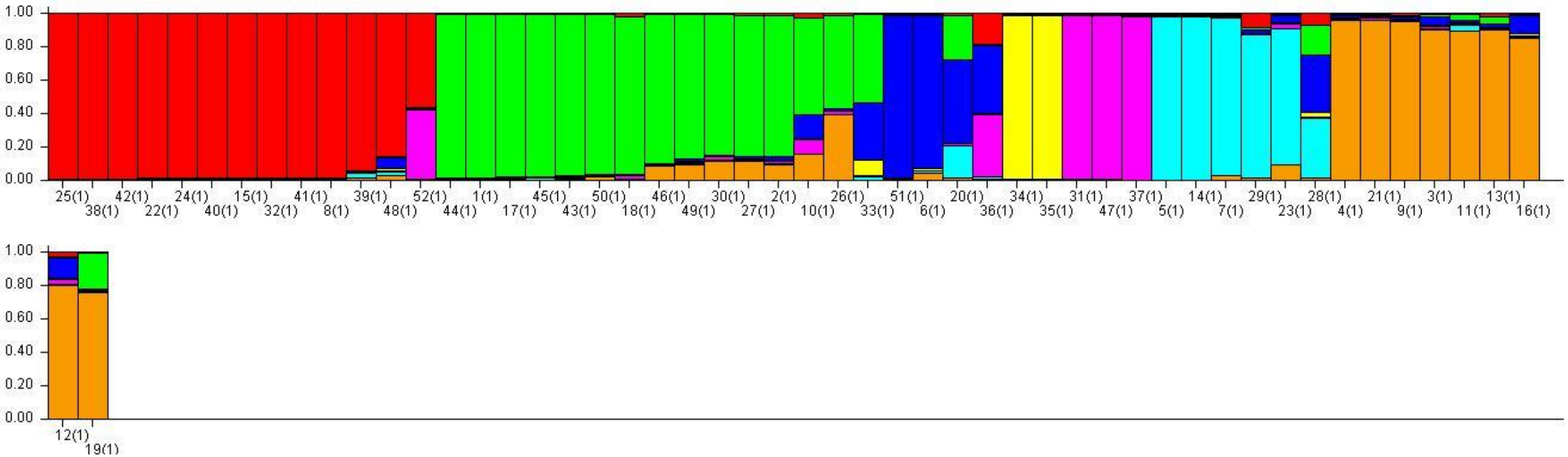
In summary, Purcell's work was significant because it provided scientific evidence that dingoes are not merely pests but potentially **keystone predators** whose conservation and management can have major consequences for Australian biodiversity and ecosystem health. westernsydney +2



Three separate populations

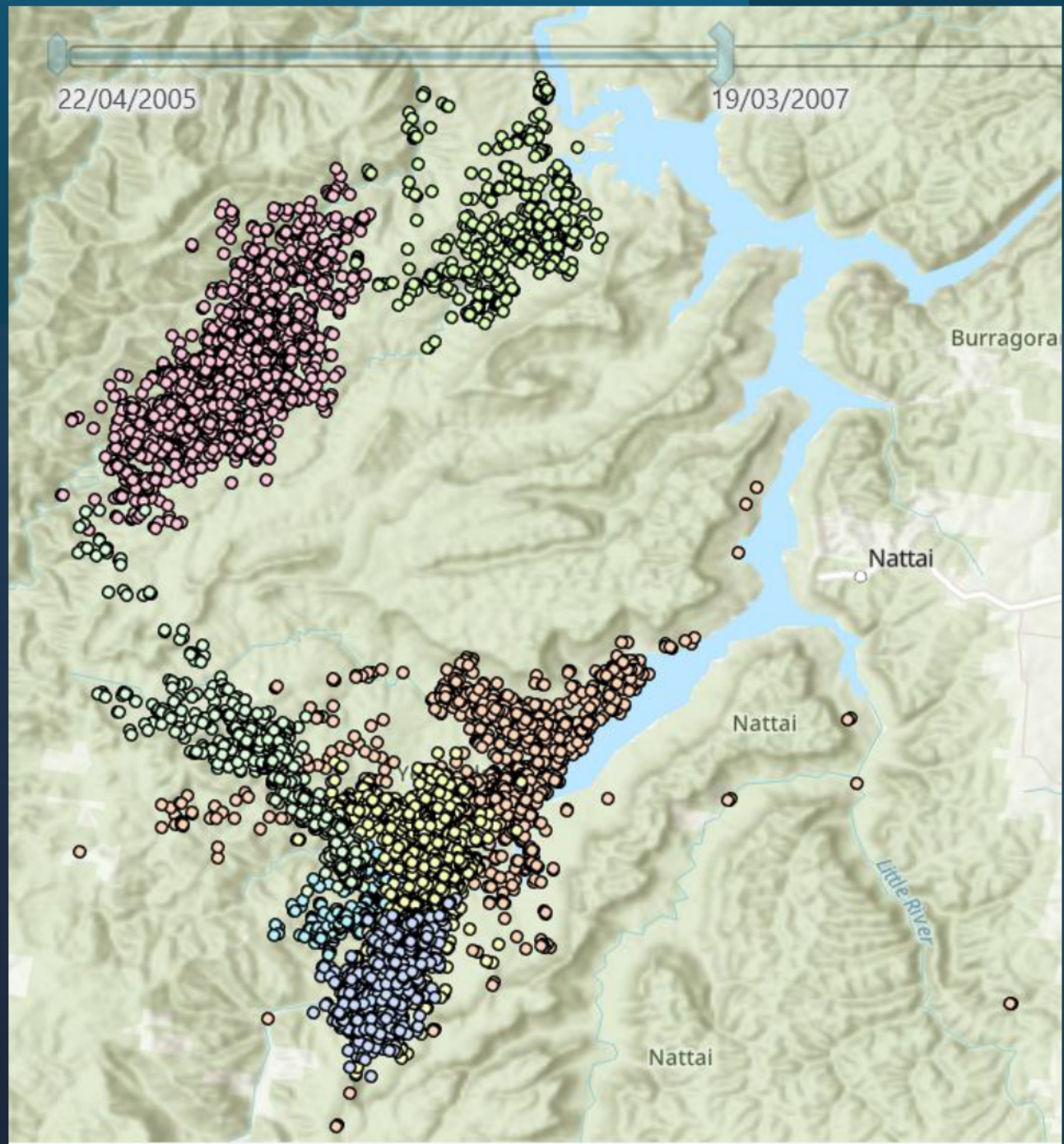


Genetic population structure showing eight separate packs, also showing admixture between packs



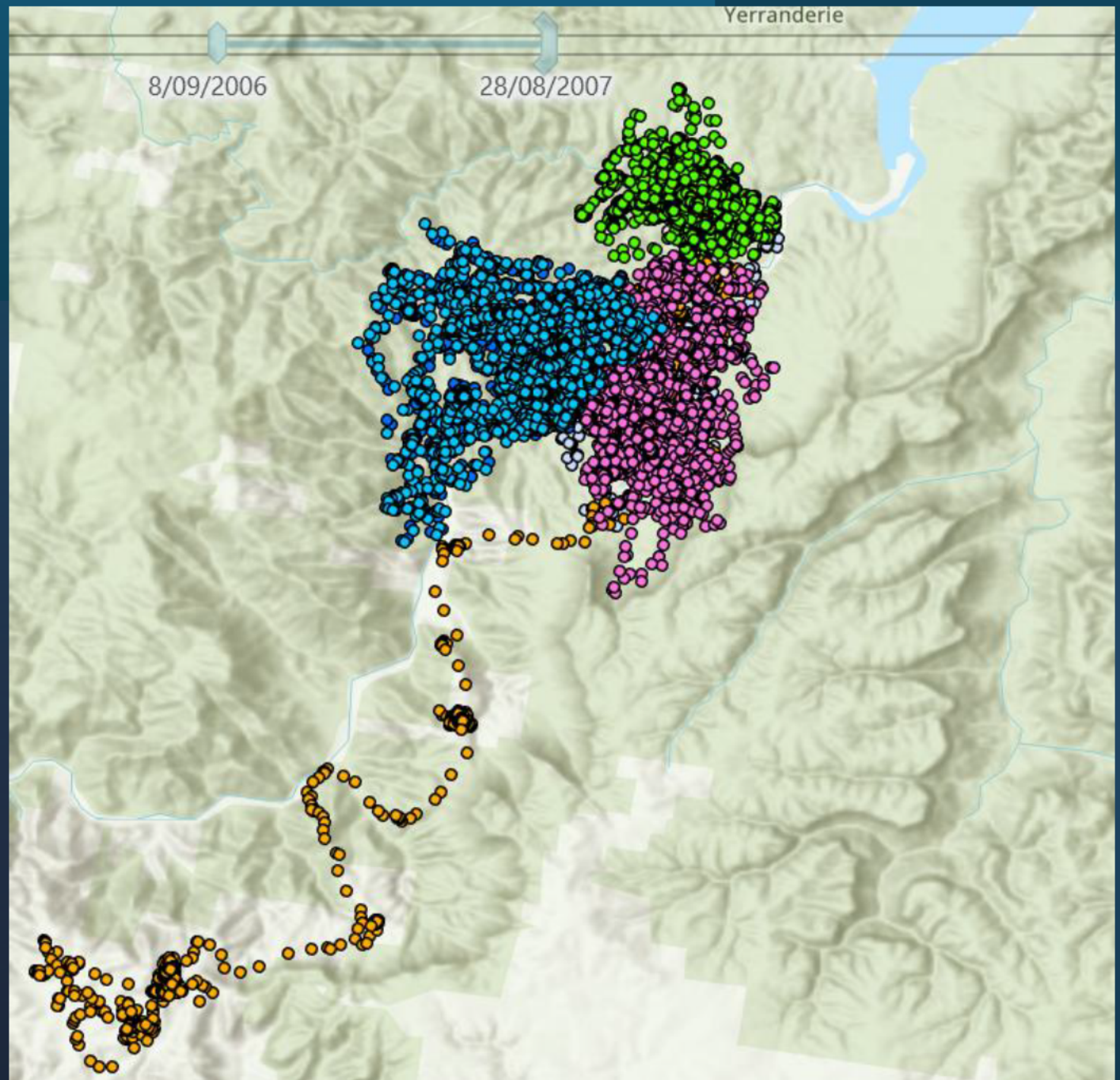
**Daily GPS locations of
seven dingoes
inside the National Park,
during 2005 and 2006**

No dingoes left the park



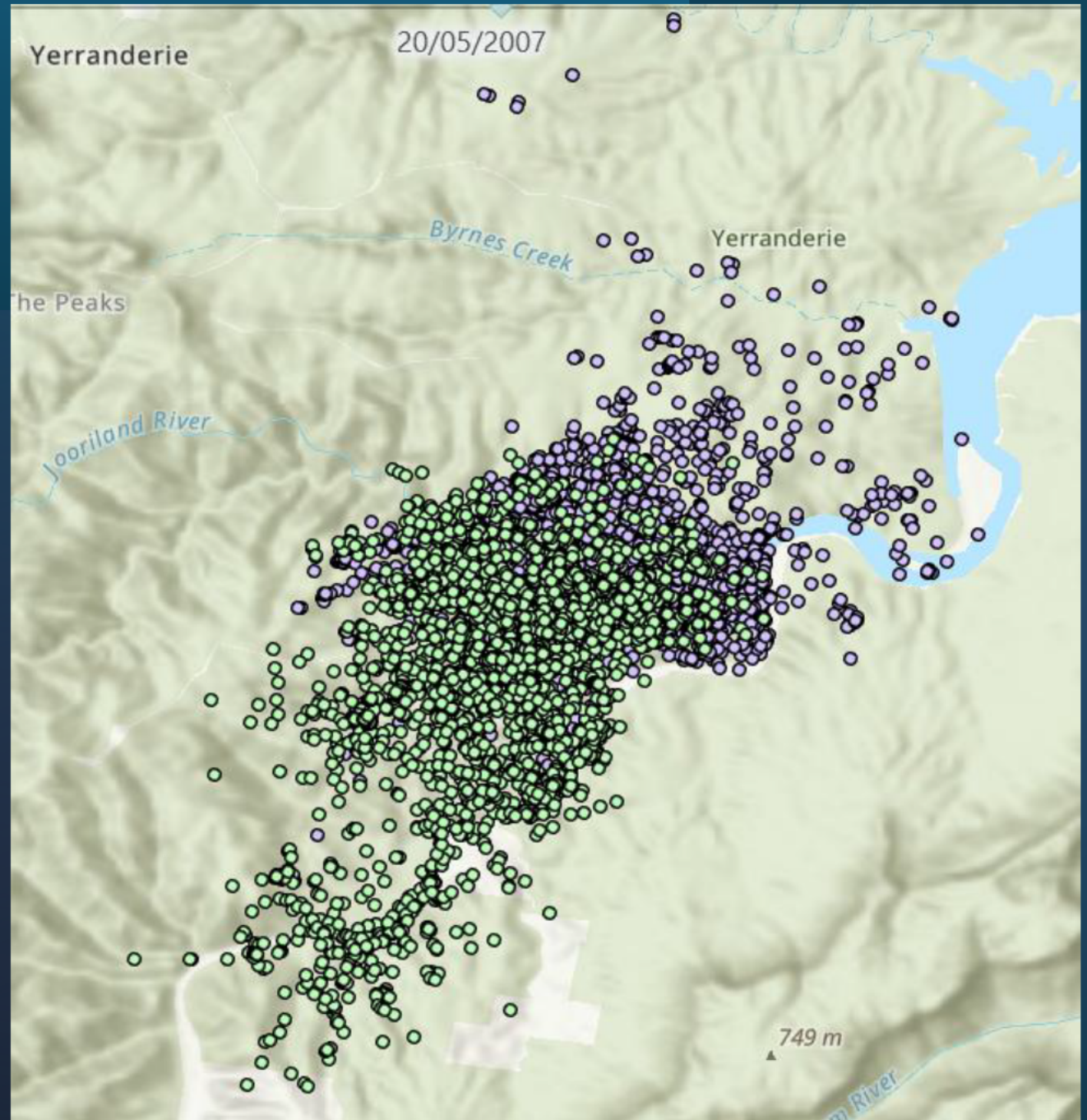
**GPS locations every 10-
minutes of five dingoes
inside the National Park,
2007 breeding season**

1 adult male left the park



GPS locations of two adult female dingoes from 2007-2010

Neither dingo left the park





A black-and-tan dingo standing over a recent swamp wallaby kill. Swamp wallabies are consumed most during the whelping season.

Redefining the Dingo

BY BRAD PURCELL

New research from one of the first ever dingo conservation areas reveal that simple appraisals of colouration and genetics do not adequately measure the "purity" of a dingo population.

For the past two centuries, Australian dingoes (*Canis lupus dingo*) have been persecuted as a pest. They have been blamed for killing livestock and involved in a national murder trial. Some have been shot, some have been poisoned and others have had their movements restricted by the longest fence in the world. Dingo pups have been pulled from their dens and used for experiments in pens, and adults have been exported around the world for zoological exhibitions.

for dingoes. This declaration was based on anecdotal evidence that these protected areas may have been refuge for populations of "pure" dingoes, and that some areas were large enough for dingoes to maintain a functional role as the top order terrestrial predator.

Four years later we initiated a research project in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, one of the 209 designated dingo conservation zones. Our aims were to investigate if the dingoes were the

implied that pure dingoes could be identified by the shape of their skull, their genetics, and one of three coat colours: tan (sandy/ginger), black-and-tan, or white.

Descriptors for dingo purity, however, are often unrelated to each other. For instance, a genetically pure dingo is not always the classic tan dingo colour, and regardless of the "pure" genes, the animal would be classed as a hybrid. Conversely, dingoes with pure skull measurements and pure coat colour are not always genetically pure and are therefore classed as hybrids. This obviously makes conservation goals difficult for conservationists to moderate, and at first added a new complexity to the dingo study in the Blue Mountains.

Genetic purity had originally been defined using captive-bred dingo populations, and the genetic tests performed are actually more precise for identifying relatedness within or between populations.

We conducted two separate genetic investigations to counteract any biases from each genetic test. One investigation assessed purity and the other assessed relatedness.

Using purity criteria, the most genetically pure dingo in this study had the same colouration as a German shepherd, and the most pure-looking dingo consisted of less than 50% "pure" dingo genes. In fact, none of the genetic purity data were consistent with purity estimates using skull measurements or coat colour.

Using the second genetic test, the most genetically pure dingo and the most pure-looking dingo were genetically related. Further analysis then showed that most of the genetically related individuals were captured in topographically defined areas, and that they had similar phenotypic traits. One pack was predominantly the classic tan dingo colour. Another pack was



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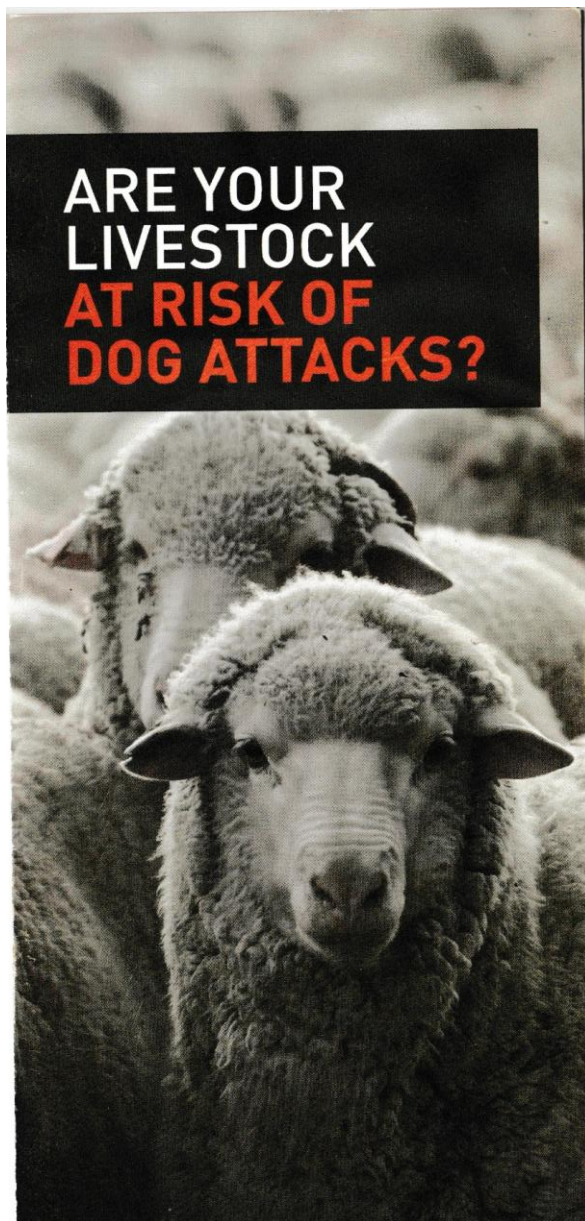
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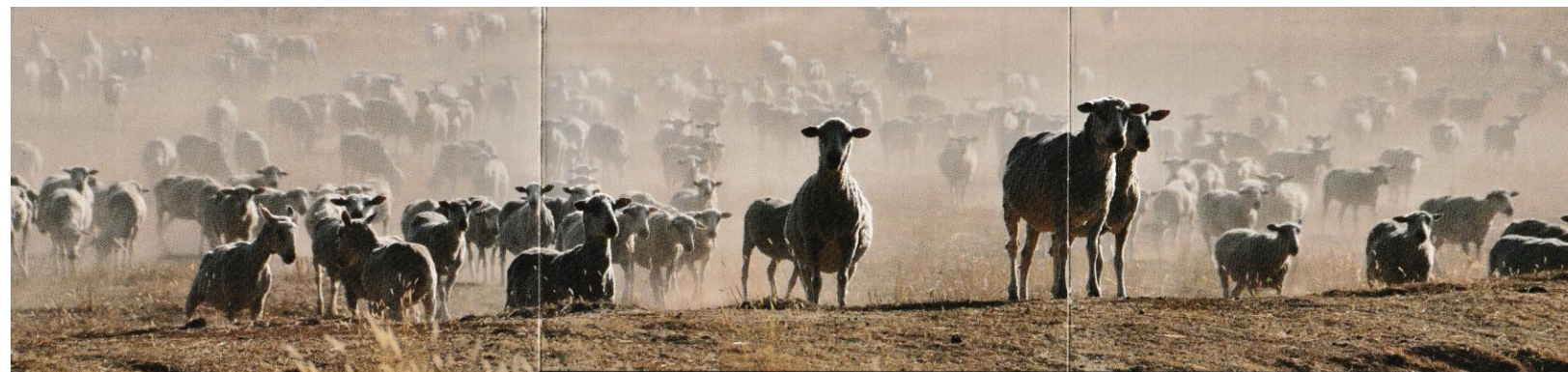
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Resource Type: Journal Article



2013 crowdfunded community engagement tour with Suzanne Stone (USA wolf coexistence expert)



Suzanne Stone's Wild Dog Management Tour

Dingoes can have significant financial and emotional impacts on graziers, and may in some cases threaten the viability of some farms. Often dingoes are culled to reduce predation pressure, but research has shown lethal control may exacerbate predation on livestock. By fracturing packs, lethal control leads to increased breeding and immigration rates, higher densities, loss of territorial boundaries, and a juvenile-skewed demographic. Non-lethal approaches, particularly the use of guardian dogs, are proving to be more effective both in Australia and the USA.

The Defenders of Wildlife (DoW), USA, Wood River Proactive Wolf Project has shown wolves and livestock can coexist, with benefits to biodiversity. Suzanne Stone oversees DoW programs for wolf management in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. She has managed large carnivores since 1988, including serving as a member of the Yellowstone wolf reintroduction team. Suzanne Stone facilitates wildlife conflict resolution & non-lethal management techniques.

Local dingo expert Brad Purcell and Suzanne are facilitating workshops around the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area with the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority to show how non-lethal management tools can reduce livestock predation. In their role as apex predators, dingoes maintain landscape productivity and are fundamental to the long-term viability of the Australian pastoral industry.

NON-LETHAL MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

COME ALONG TO ONE OF THESE FREE EVENTS TO SAVE YOUR LIVESTOCK FROM DINGO PREDATION!

DAY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	ACTIVITY
Tue	12-11-13	17:30-20:00	Guthrie Theatre, University of Technology, Level 3, Building 6, UTS City Campus	Public seminar with THINK Compassionate Conservation To register visit: www.alumni.uts.edu.au/wolves-and-dingoes
Wed	13-11-13	19:30-21:30	The Conservation Hut, Fletcher St, Wentworth Falls	Public seminar with Blue Mountains Conservation Society To register visit: www.bmwhi.org.au/wp/?cat=73
Thu	14-11-13	10:00-12:00	Glen Alice Hall, Glen Alice Rd, Glen Alice	Seminar and landholder workshop - BBQ lunch To register visit: www.bmwhi.org.au/wp/?cat=73
Fri	15-11-13	10:00-12:00	Hartley Hall, Cnr Mid-Hartley Rd and Great Western Highway	Seminar and landholder workshop - BBQ lunch To register visit: www.bmwhi.org.au/wp/?cat=73

FOR REGISTRATIONS OR IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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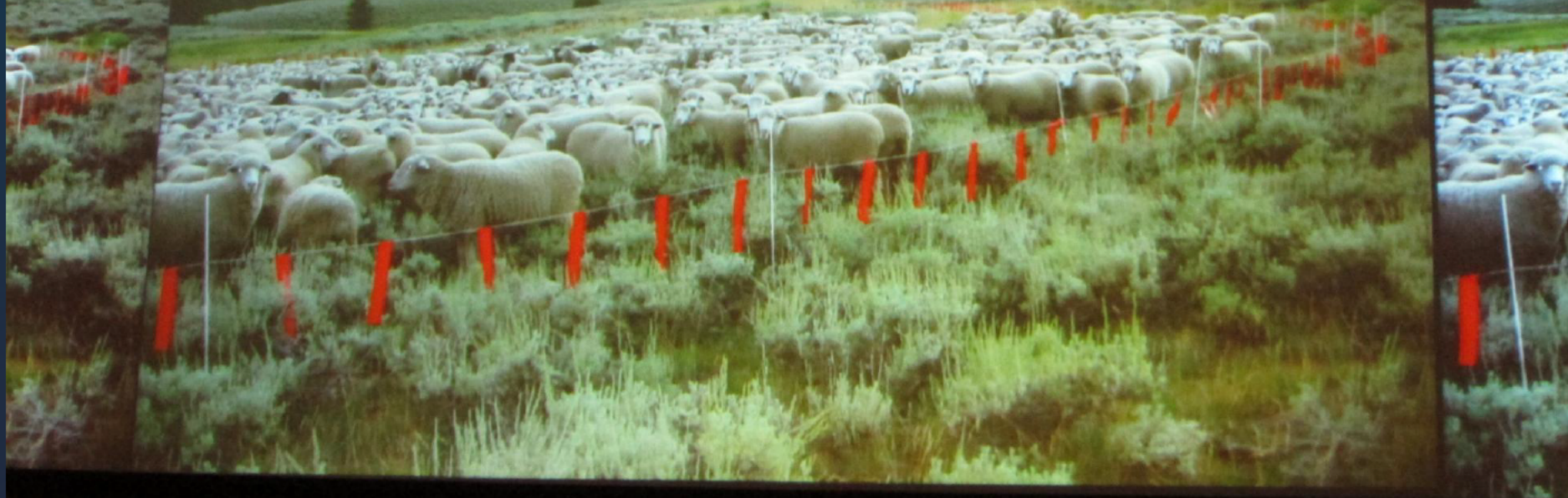
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**Why
coexistence?**

**How should we,
can we, do it??**



We found turbofladry night
corrals very effective in
protecting sheep at night in
wolf den areas



We
c
pr

Engaging with the community on their land



Engaging with the community on their land



Reintroducing wolves in the American West



Suzanne Asha Stone
Western Wolf Conservationist
Email: ssone@defenders.org



Slow road, but after 15 years many of the challenges identified in Dingo are gaining support.

We need to manage some propaganda, recently termed as:

Myths, Furphies and Red Herrings Associated With Dingo Ecology and Management

Benjamin L. Allen^{1,2} 

¹Ecosure Pty Ltd, Bowen Hills, Queensland, Australia | ²Centre for African Conservation Ecology, Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha, South Africa

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