

Wildlife Act Review

Submission Comment 47:

Contributor: Individual

Primary interests:

- Protection and conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Offences and penalties relating to wildlife
- Compliance and enforcement

Comment

Re: the Wildlife Act review. I believe the current Act is outdated, does not provide sufficient protection for native species, & does not deter illegal killing of protected species. Landowners, developers & farmers snub their nose at the Act as a current lack of prosecutions & appropriate penalties fail to deter illegal acts. My experience is Yarra Ranges landowners have no regard for ringtail possums when clearing properties. I find dead & orphaned possums after tree felling by neighbours. I asked Yarra Ranges Council to provide education on the Wildlife Act (add info to website) & incorporate the Act requirements into permit processes. The Council replied that ensuring compliance with the Wildlife Act is not their job. DELWP had no issue with the council's stance. Appalling public cases of native wildlife killings also demonstrate the current Act inadequacies. - Poisoning of 134 wedge-tailed eagles on a Tubbut property, East Gippsland. The protected species were deliberately killed from Oct 2016 - April 2018 using poisoned bait by the farm manager & landholder. Despite the manager being found guilty under the Act for illegal destruction of eagles, he was only fined \$2,500 & jailed for 14 days. This first custodial sentence for wildlife destruction under the Act was so inadequate for long term, wilful killing of huge numbers of an iconic protected species. This is not an isolated case. - More than 200 wedge-tailed eagles were killed on a property near Violet Town, n/e Victoria. Legal proceedings are ongoing but past outcomes do not inspire confidence justice will prevail. - Private land clearing causing koala deaths. In Feb 2020, the Conservation Regulator and DELWP investigated reports of injured & starving koalas on a private property near Cape Bridgewater, s/w Vic. Wildlife workers & vets assessed more than 200 koalas (43 had to be euthanised). The case is ongoing. I have no confidence in appropriate protections under the current Wildlife Act.

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