

Ian Wood

The Panel

Engage Victoria

Dear Members,

As our population keeps expanding and changing rapidly our wildlife habits change. Water corridors for recreational fishing, wildlife- birds and animals need consideration now, well ahead of establishing new developments and animal reserves. Just like our Aboriginal communities have a say in cultural sites with town planners so should our new Wildlife Act.

Today Kangaroos are consolidating into areas and are becoming a major pest, culled less due to more lifestyle properties and restrictions of disposing, dangerous to human and devastating farmers pastures and fences, breeding conditions perfect-sustainability no problem. In drought, fire or extended dry periods review would be required as with all wildlife species.

May I suggest allowing extended use of registered professional, insured hunters currently supplying Victorian processors, which landowners can allow to enter lifestyle as well as broad acre properties to cull. Value adding to a resource just like rabbits previously.

Wild ducks are moving into the sheltered areas many of us have established- in large quantities, which led to bird flu in poultry industry- some 350000 birds destroyed last season, our chooks were tested negative but we were left in a position of are we safe or not. While setting a policy I cannot suggest how you cover wildlife and deceases they carry, spread, protection! This will need to be addressed if ducks are to be wildlife in our environment as we know today.

Wildlife plantations have been encouraged by Government, Landcare and Catchment Management Groups but only converting the converted. Once the other landowners see how Koalas, Echidnas, food of all types brings a variety of birds back into the area, along corridors from woodland to forest/ waterway to waterway for breeding and safe travel, stock shelter benefits and reducing bugs in pastures all out do the disadvantages of weeds and vermin.

To control vermin and protect our wildlife from these predators shooting/trapping by private groups with full insurance and work under strict OH&S rules are currently used in our area and should be encouraged to control all vermin throughout Victoria. Weed control would depend on your area.

Regarding gaps and inconsistencies in policy settings. In your previous Act 1975 litigation and Worksafe as we know today didn't exist, combining with new cultural heritage overlays, means wildlife observers/walkers, tourists, hunters could unintentionally go onto private/cultural land that adjoins waterways/parks, now due to our complex legislation changes. May I suggest leave this as one rule set in place in Act 1881-1389 land permanently reserved from sale on 280 waterways with 20-30 meters crown land corridor outside of this have cultural/heritage land with signage. Keep it simple so we all know the rules! No special sections, wildlife is for all conservationists of the future. Parks and National Parks rules are set in place for access tracks, hunting permitted wildlife, let them stay and if your scope needs opening up, do so as this is public land for all.

While it is just about impossible to catch many of the guilty people who release unwanted wildlife into areas such as pigs, dogs, cats, deer, etc into our landscape for future hunting or native bird/animal raiders your penalties fines/jail will not deter them as greed is their motivation.

Thank you for allowing me to give my opinion on this,

Kind regards,

Ian Wood