

Wildlife Act Review

Submission Comment 237:

Contributor: Individual – Norie Neumark

Primary interests:

- Protection and conservation of wildlife and habitat
- Eco-tourism involving wildlife
- Hunting of wildlife

Comment

We have one of the worst records internationally for destruction of BIODIVERSITY and for causing EXTINCTION of native wildlife, despite the deep and important Indigenous knowledge about caring for country, which state laws and governance could and should recognise and follow. And at the same time there has been growing awareness of the SENTIENCE of native wildlife. These are broad COMMUNITY SENTIMENTS that have gained strength in the last couple of decades. One area where I have personally witnessed this is HUNTING for SPORT of native water birds that goes against changed COMMUNITY VALUES. Most Victorians are opposed to the shooting of native water birds for sport which has caused pain and suffering as well as resulting in risks of extinction. This includes REGIONAL Victorians whom I met and talked to when I went on the Duck rescue mission. They understand that carefully managed ECO-TOURISM would bring more people to their region and that it has been impossible to manage COMPLIANCE and ENFORCEMENT of the rules relating to duck-shooters-for sport -- hunters who not only shoot endangered species but are also careless about the land and thereby threaten HABITAT in general and biodiversity in particular. Furthermore, as TRADITIONAL OWNERS understand and have been telling us in relation to CARING FOR COUNTRY, you cannot separate issues out: protection of habitat is vital for protection of native wildlife. Recognition of their RIGHTS AND INTERESTS includes recognition of and respect for their knowledge about caring for country: protecting HABITAT and native wildlife from destruction by sport, for instance.

Finally, I remember the widely circulated images of kangaroos and koalas with fires raging through their habitat. There was massive community distress and concern for them and other native wildlife that suffered in those recent fires -- attesting to the widespread care and concern for native wildlife in our community.

Provided June 28/2021