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Submission:

Pest Levy for Wild Dog Management – LLS Review

The core responsibilities of the LHPA are in the areas of animal health, pest animal and insect control and travelling stock reserves. Or that is how it is supposed to happen. In recent years, despite RLPB rates increasing, the service provided in regards to wild dog control has deteriorated substantially. Wild dogs are an increasing problem and will continue to be unless there is some substantial increase in funding and co-ordinated wild dog control programs across the whole state of NSW. Funding for wild dog control has been limited to date as it is not deemed a major issue. Wild dog numbers are increasing and due to their mobility they can move into livestock areas and create an incredible amount of damage in a relatively short period of time. Also, the introduction of a wild dog levy will create a situation where all landholders are subject to the same costs as opposed to the current situation where is incredibly one-sided.

In our area, eastern escarpment of Northern Tablelands, we are subject to constant wild dog attacks on our livestock. We have wild dog fencing which needs to be maintained, at our cost, on a regular basis. So we maintain a dog proof fence at our own cost, which provides a barrier and protects other landholders livestock, west of our property; our livestock are killed, bitten and maimed by wild dogs (again our cost) and to add insult to injury we are then asked to contribute to the local wild dog aerial baiting program as our local LHPA does not have enough funds to complete this task. This is incredibly frustrating and totally unfair. Not only do we have to experience wild dog attacks on our livestock and the subsequent loss of livestock, we also have to then contribute more money and time for the baiting program to be completed. Whereas, a landholder who is situated 20 kms west experiences virtually no wild dog attacks and don't lose livestock plus they do not contribute any extra to wild dog control programs.

With the aerial baiting program in this area, majority is completed by helicopter. If LLS was not able to pay for the helicopter to place baits in these areas, which are quite remote and access by vehicle is limited, the efficacy of the baiting program would be affected greatly. If this was to cease then subsequently wild dog numbers would undoubtedly reach epidemic proportions and cause the abolition of livestock production in this area at the least.

Hence, the introduction of a wild dog levy is critical to controlling the ever increasing problem of wild dogs within this state.