

Cumberland landholder newsletter

Wild dog management plan

The Cumberland LHPA is pleased to announce that initial steps have been taken to develop a Wild Dog Management Plan for A division (the southern portion of the former Maitland RLPB).

Under the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998 (RLP Act), wild dogs, including dingos, have been declared as a pest animal throughout NSW. All owners and occupiers of lands, both private and public, in NSW have a statutory obligation to continuously suppress and destroy wild dogs "...to the extent necessary to minimise the risk of the pest causing damage on any land".

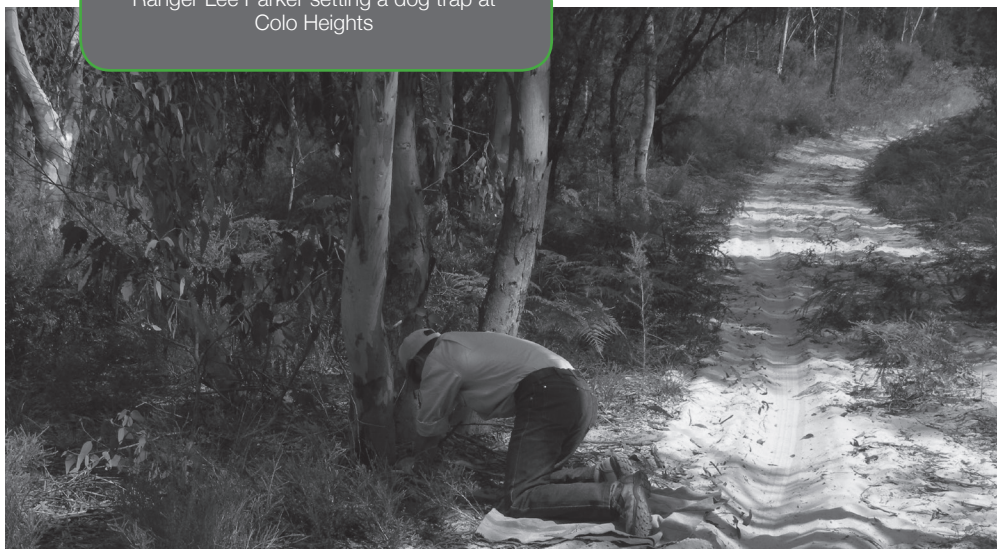
The aim of the new Wild Dog Management Plan is to manage the impact of wild dogs on livestock enterprises whilst ensuring the dingo is preserved within areas of Schedule 2 lands. This will be achieved through coordinated and cooperative management across all land tenures.

Objectives to achieve this aim are:-

- To minimise the level of livestock predation by wild dogs.
- To meet obligations under the RLP Act by developing a wild dog management plan to cover areas listed in Schedule 2 of the Pest Control Order for Wild Dogs and ensuring the conservation of dingo populations within those areas of public lands identified in Schedule 2 of this Pest Control Order.
- To establish a management framework and maintain a representative working group of private and public land managers to allow and ensure that wild dog management priorities are clear and reflected by the plan.
- To identify and implement the correct mix of best practice wild dog control techniques.
- To ensure that reliable monitoring data are available for the operation and evaluation of the plan.

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Ranger Lee Parker setting a dog trap at Colo Heights



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Ranger Charles Signorelli using a tracking device to locate collared feral goats in the Wollondilly River area.

National Arbovirus Management Program

The National Arbovirus Management Program (NAMP) is an on-farm disease surveillance program designed to monitor the spread of insect-transmitted diseases.

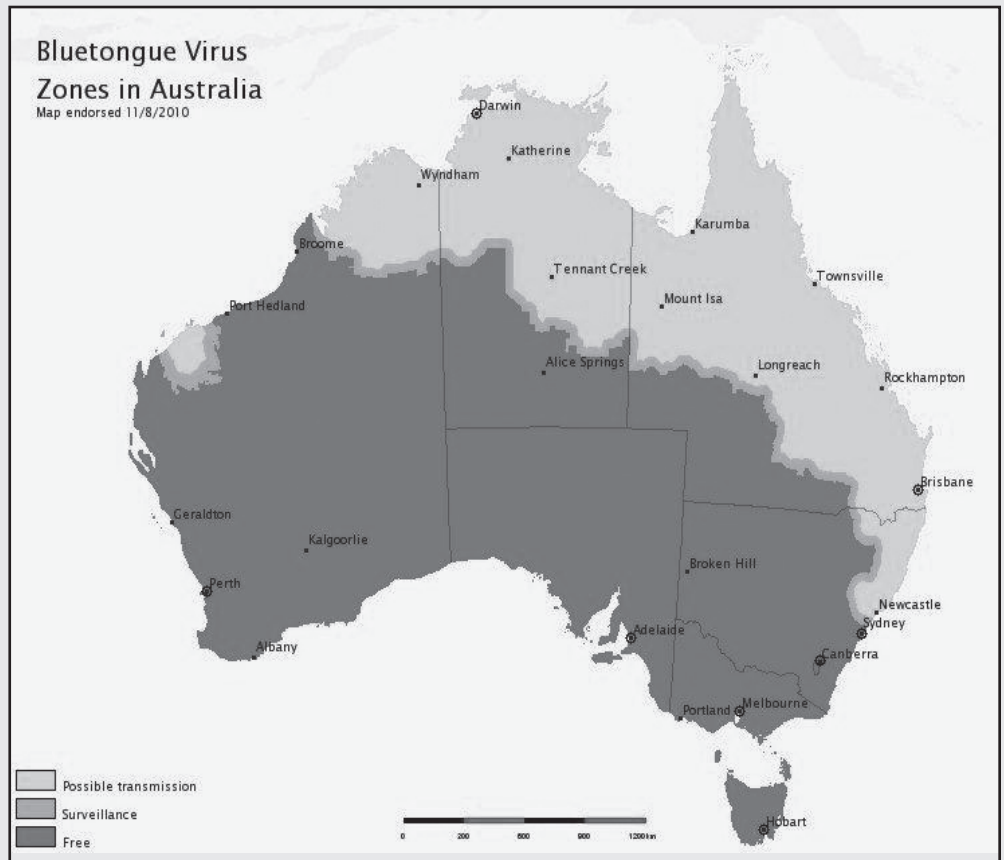
The most important of these is Bluetongue virus, which is spread by biting midges. Other viruses monitored by NAMP are Ephemeral Fever (3 day sickness) and Akabane virus, the cause of curly calf or dummy calf disease.

In years that suit the insect vectors, Bluetongue is capable of spreading as far south as the Hawkesbury River. While Bluetongue virus does not appear to cause any symptoms in cattle, it is of concern to some of our trading partners, who will not accept livestock from areas where Bluetongue virus has been detected in the previous two years (see map, right).

NAMP was set up to monitor the spread of Bluetongue virus and allow the export of livestock from areas that are unaffected.

Monitoring is done by regular blood testing of winter born calves through the following late spring to early winter virus transmission period to detect any spread of the virus.

Within the Cumberland LHPA, four sentinel herds have been established at Windsor, Camden, Moss Vale and Nowra to track the movements of arboviruses. Apart from the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) herd at Camden, these herds are tested by LHPA staff.



In 2010/11, at least 54 consignments of livestock were exported from this district to countries with a Bluetongue requirement.

None of these movements could have occurred without the work of LHPA staff and the NAMP program.

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- To promote community knowledge and understanding of the wild dog problem and their impacts and ensure skilled and effective participation in management activities across all land tenures.
- To minimise the threat wild dogs pose to remnant populations of threatened native fauna.

The Plan is designed to evolve as legislation, technologies and knowledge change allowing effective implementation.

It is hoped that through this and other Wild Dog Plans across NSW a balance can be achieved which delivers the expectations of all communities affected by either wild dogs and/or dingos.



Large scale lead poisoning clean-up in the Hunter

Over the last 11 months the Cumberland and Mid Coast LHPAs have been cleaning up a large scale lead poisoning problem in the Hunter.

The pipeline has 20km of lead joins and unfortunately lead fragments on the ground had been eaten by some cattle.

Hunter Water has been working with the LHPA to clean up this problem, completing soil testing along the pipeline and fencing off most of the pipeline so cattle do not have access to the lead source.

In the Cumberland LHPA, 16 properties bordering the pipeline were placed under an "Undertaking", preventing animals to be sold without

blood testing them first - to date we have tested 641 cattle and made 50 property visits in total to these properties.

We have traced all cattle movements off these properties over the last 12 months. Other LHPAs have assisted with testing cattle that have moved into their areas.

By cleaning up this lead poisoning issue in the Hunter, the LHPA has helped protect the human food chain from lead residues in the meat and saved the meat export industry from potential devastation.

An example of a pipe with lead fragments which pose a danger to the cattle and meat export industry



Integrated approach to rabbit control

Rabbit numbers have increased dramatically under favourable conditions these last few months.

With the exceptional spring behind us, it is time to start preparing for rabbit poisoning programs in the later part of summer when pasture dries off.

However, as effective rabbit control requires an integrated approach, much can be done before the end of summer to compliment control efforts.

A vital component of integrated rabbit control is harbour destruction and/or modification.

Noxious weeds such as blackberry, lantana and african boxthorn are commonly used by rabbits as harbour. Control of these weeds is most effective during the warm summer months with a suitable herbicide whilst they are actively growing.

Getting rid of weeds and lanatana also opens up the canopy and exposes rabbits to risks of predation whilst any burrows that may have been hidden underneath are able to be accessed more easily for treatment.

The next step is to look at items around the farm, particularly stacks of building and fencing materials. These should be elevated off ground in order

to create sufficient space to deter rabbits from using the underside as a place to hide. Farm buildings and shipping containers can also be rabbit-proofed by laying sheets of mesh around the perimeter to deter rabbits from digging under.

Biological control is another tool in the integrated process and in terms of the endemic biological control agents, Calicivirus has been active and has taken a toll on susceptible populations (around 50%).

As daily temperatures warm and conditions dry out, it is unlikely that this trend will continue. Myxomatosis may become active during this period.

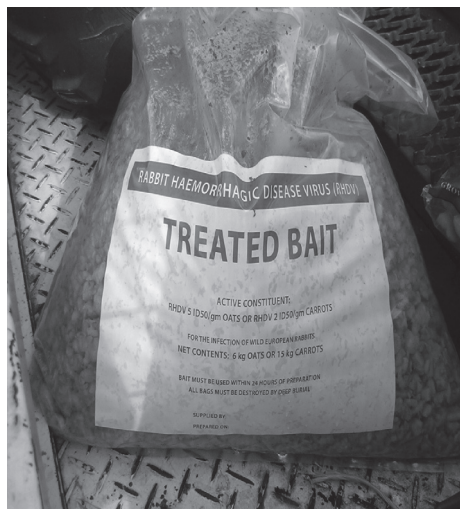
Given that we cannot rely on biological control to take care of our rabbit problems, the only alternative and effective control option requires the use of pesticides which achieve a fast reduction in numbers (at least 90% if done correctly). Poisoning can be carried out at any time but is best conducted during times when the pasture is not so lush ie, late summer or during the winter months.

Poisoned carrot can be obtained from your local ranger and it is preferable that you contact them before commencing your program so that you are given the best advice on how to achieve maximum control.

Current legislation dictates that the end user of a pesticide must have received formal training in the use and storage of pesticides. It is illegal for LHPA rangers to supply poisons to persons who are not qualified to use them.

Training courses are conducted by LHPA rangers at various venues around the district.

Please contact either the Camden (4655 9165) or Maitland (4932 8866) office to register an expression of interest.



LHPA review update

A message from Tim Johnston, LHPA State Management Council Acting CEO

As our ratepayers would be aware, the Livestock Health and Pest Authorities (LHPA) went under a Ministerial Review throughout the second part of 2011.

The review was announced in July by Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, and was a result of a pre-election promise by the NSW government to conduct a full-scale review of the new LHPA model which came into operation in 2009.

The LHPA welcomed the review, seeing it as a good opportunity to build on the 2009 reforms, improve efficiency and plan for the future.

Independent consultant Terry Ryan was commissioned to undertake the review in August. As part of the review process, Mr Ryan called for public submissions, and over 400 were received from individuals and organisations.

A series of public meetings were also

held throughout NSW in October and November. On this point, we received some criticism that we did not communicate effectively to our ratepayers that these meetings were being held. I would like to explain that these community consultations were organised and promoted by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) as part of the review process, they were not organised by LHPA.

At the time of printing this newsletter, we were still awaiting the final report from Terry Ryan, which was expected to be submitted to the Minister in late December 2011.

In the meantime, it has been "business as usual" at the 14 LHPAs throughout the state, as our vets, rangers and customer services officers continue to be available to assist you in addressing all of your livestock health, pest animal and stock identification needs.

Contact Us

Camden (district main office)
61 John Street, CAMDEN NSW 2570
Ph 02 4655 9165 Fax 4655 3054

Maitland
52 Kyle St, RUTHERFORD NSW 2320
Ph 02 4932 8866 Fax 4932 5706

General Manager
Greg Wood Ph 0418 424 591

Senior District Vet
Keith Hart Ph 0408 409 391

Senior Ranger
Geoff Mills Ph 0418 210 681

Email Enquiries
admin.cumberland@lhpa.org.au

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RATES NOTICE

The **general rate** consists of a base charge and an amount payable on the notional carrying capacity of your property*. This funds pest animal programs, TSR management and local administration and service delivery.

The **animal health rate** consists of a base charge and an amount payable on your notional carrying capacity*. This funds locally delivered livestock health programs and is payable if you told us on your annual land and stock return that you had at least 50 stock units on your property OR if you did not return your land and stock form by the due date.

The **pest insect special purpose rate** is collected for NSW DPI to cover the cost of plague locust control campaigns. LHPAs do not retain these funds. The pest insect rate includes a flat contribution per rate notice, plus a cents per stock units amount.

The **meat industry levy** is collected for the NSW Food Authority. LHPAs do not retain these funds.

The **Stock Movement Permit** is issued for routine movements of stock between two holdings occupied by the permit holder.

RURAL LANDS PROTECTION ACT 1998 Section 63



2012 RATE NOTICE

TAX INVOICE ABN 12XXXXXX
Livestock Health and Pest Authority
Guns Gully Rd, GUNS GULLY, NSW

JOHN CITIZEN
PO BOX XXXX
GUNS GULLY NSW XXXX

Reference No: 12XXXXXX
Date of Issue: 27 January 2012
Payment Due Date: 29 February 2012

Holding Name: J Citizen
Holding Address: Guns Gully
Associated Holdings: N/A

Area of Land (hectares): 61.75 Notional Carrying Capacity: 546 Notional Intensive Carrying Capacity: 546

| Particulars of Rates and Charges | | Units | Cents per Unit |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------|----------------|
| RATES - GENERAL | BASE CHARGE \$65.14+ | 546 | 19.900 |
| RATES - ANIMAL HEALTH | BASE CHARGE \$28.50+ | 546 | 12.540 |
| SPECIAL PURPOSE RATE | | | |
| - PEST INSECTS | BASE CHARGE \$16.00+ | 546 | 3.666 |
| MEAT INDUSTRY LEVY | BASE CHARGE \$ 5.00+ | 546 | 0.600 |
| STOCK MOVEMENT PERMIT RENEWAL | \$22.00 | | |

All rates and charges are exempt from GST under Division 81 of the Goods and Services Tax Act 1999 unless otherwise indicated.

The Meat Industry Levy is a statutory levy collected on behalf of the NSW Food Authority. The Pest Insect Special Purpose Rate is collected for NSW DPI to cover the cost of plague locust control campaigns.

NOTE: The rates and charges amounts shown left are indicative only. Actual amounts will vary according to where you live.

*The **notional carrying capacity** is an estimate, worked out by the local authority, of the number of stock a property would normally carry in an average year if used solely for livestock purposes and is based on stock units per hectare.

The **base charge** is a uniform charge within an authority, similar to a 'flag fall' in a taxi.