

31 August 2012

Ms Sally Barnes
Chief Executive
Office of Environment & Heritage
PO BOX A290
Sydney South NSW 1232

Dear Sally,

NSW KANGAROO MANAGEMENT - PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE S121 & S123 OCCUPIER LICENCE APPLICATIONS

Thank you for Kate Wilson's letter ED 12/576 dated 14 August 2012 that responded to our recommendation to make a limited change to the S121 and S123 Occupier License Application process. I regret the NSW Wildlife Council (NWC) is disappointed with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) response and it seems the benefits of the proposal may not have been fully considered.

I note the OEH response states "I understand that the NSW Wildlife Council is concerned about the exposure of sick and injured kangaroos, that have been rehabilitated and are ready for release, to harm from non-commercial and commercial kangaroo shooting." This is indeed the case, but it is but one element of the NWC proposal. It is worrying that OEH appears unable to support the complete process of rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing native wildlife back into the wild in a safer manner.

It is not agreed that introducing the need to consult neighbouring landowners would 'significantly delay the decision making process' or introduce unnecessary red tape. The changes sought are the same in-principle rules that apply to many other government activities whereby affected stakeholders in a community are consulted. An application to cull is not acted upon by OEH until it is formally submitted. If the outcome of a neighbouring landowner consultation is provided (contact details and agree/disagree), then government officials are better placed to make a decision and indeed check the veracity of an applicant's claims of 'asset damage'. It is not understood why OEH would not wish to improve the quality assurance and compliance of the current application process, which is open to abuse.

I reflect on the NSW Government State Plan (*NSW 2021*) strategies "to improve people's lives by protecting natural environment and building a strong sense of community" and "return planning powers to the community and give people a say in decisions that affect them." The NWC proposal accords with this strategy.

NSW Wildlife Council

'Achieving optimal outcomes for Australian Wildlife'

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Given the above, it is requested that OEH reconsider the NWC proposal and the positive measures that flow from it in terms of identifying safe areas for the release of rehabilitated animals; ensuring applicants seeking to cull wildlife are honest; improving overall compliance and quality assurance; and satisfying government direction to improve community involvement in activities that affect them.

I would be happy to discuss this matter with you.

Yours sincerely

Audrey Koosmen
Chair, NSW Wildlife Council
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