ADVOCACY PRIORITY

Pest animal management

Safeguarding agricultural productivity, regional communities and food security in East Gippsland and Victoria

March 2026

EAST GIPPSLAND
SHIRE COUNCIL

Pest animal management

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Pest animal management is critical to Victoria's economy and food security.
Pest animal populations are escalating across eastern Victoria, placing mounting pressure on agricultural productivity, regional livelihoods and community wellbeing. In East Gippsland, the impacts of deer, feral pigs and wild dogs are being felt most acutely by farming families, agribusinesses and rural towns already navigating compounding economic and environmental pressures.

The long-term viability of agriculture in eastern Victoria depends on an effective, coordinated and well-resourced approach to pest animal management. Without intervention at the scale required, the costs to farm productivity, regional employment, mental health and food security will continue to grow.

A balanced, evidence-based approach is needed. One that recognises the agricultural, economic and social impacts of pest animals, supports landholders across all tenures, and delivers practical, on-ground outcomes.

For our community, we are seeking:

- Maintenance of the dingo unprotection order and eastern buffer zone.
- Reinstatement or replacement of effective wild dog bounty program.
- Investment in consistent population monitoring and shared data systems.
- Assessment and consideration of economic and social impacts in policy and investment decisions.
- Expansion of feral pig control programs and identification of emerging hotspots.
- A coordinated, cross-border and cross-tenure management framework.
- Strategic, long-term state and national funding for pest animal control.
- Recognition of mental health impacts and support services for affected communities.
- Improved regulatory pathways to enable venison to enter the red meat supply chain.
- Alignment of pest animal management with national food security objectives.

Why pest animal management matters to Victoria

Agriculture underpins the economic and social fabric of East Gippsland. Pest animals directly undermine farm productivity through livestock predation, pasture loss, crop damage and rising operating costs. Indirectly, they erode confidence, deter investment and contribute to declining mental health across rural communities.

Eastern Victoria has experienced a rapid increase in pest animal numbers due to favourable seasonal conditions, post-fire landscape recovery, policy gaps and inconsistent cross-boarder management. These pressures are most evident along forest-farm interfaces and rugged terrain where control options are limited and reinvasion is common.

The result is a growing mismatch between the scale of the problem and the resources available to manage it.

The scale of the challenge

Deer, feral pigs, and wild dogs/dingoes are at the forefront of this crisis as their populations have the greatest potential to impact agriculture production. Each present unique challenges to landholders, agribusinesses, and rural communities. A well-resourced, strategic approach to pest animal management is now essential to protect the state's economic, agricultural and social interests.

Deer

Deer populations are densest across Gippsland and eastern Victoria (refer Figure 1), with Sambar and Fallow deer driving most agricultural impacts [1].

Farmers report:

- Severe pasture loss and grazing competition
- Damage to livestock through antler injuries and herd disruption
- Increased fencing, monitoring and veterinary costs
- Reduced carrying capacity and forced enterprise change

Figure 1. Deer distribution [2]

Deer distribution in the eastern half of Victorian (left panel). The terrain that these deer occupy is largely bushland and mountainous (right panel).

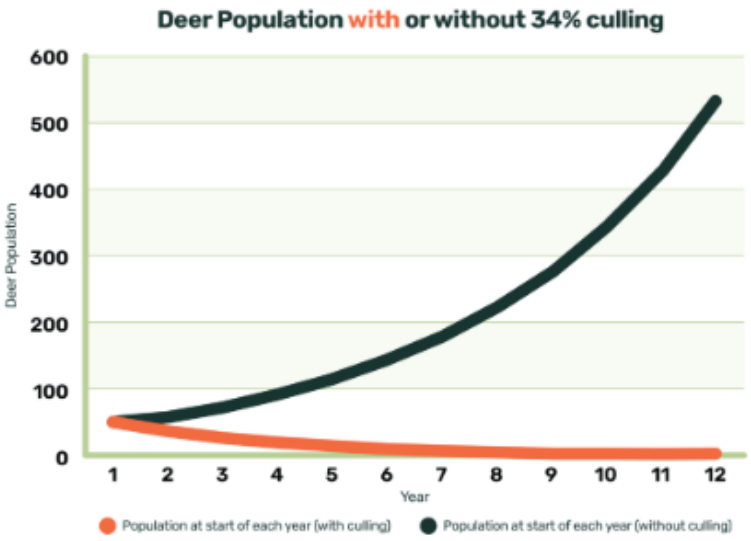
[1] Feral deer in Victoria - Invasive Species Council

[2] East Victoria Deer Control Plan 2023-2028

Without sustained control, deer populations can increase by more than 30 per cent per annum, requiring annual reductions of up to 40 per cent to stabilise numbers.

While deer remain classified as game species in Victoria, their overabundance has created significant agricultural and economic impacts that require stronger policy alignment and coordinated management responses.

Figure 2 (right). Deer Population Growth [1]



*Assumptions of the graphed model
50% population is female (at beginning)
80% of the females are adult
80% of the adult females reproduce 1 fawn
50% fawns each year are female
cull rate is 34% and natural 6% attrition
assume 50% female and 50% males culled

Feral pigs

Feral pig populations have expanded rapidly in East Gippsland, particularly following the 2019–20 bushfires, with new sightings in previously unaffected areas. Impacts include:

- Destruction of crops, pasture and wetlands
- Predation on livestock and native species
- Soil disturbance and erosion
- Heightened biosecurity risks, including African swine fever

Current control programs demonstrate success where adequately resourced, but community feedback indicates coverage and funding remain insufficient to keep pace with spread and reinvasion.

In relation to the density estimates for feral pigs, Victoria does not yet have a statewide, peer-reviewed pig-specific density survey, however ARI notes that densities of up to 20 pigs/km² have been recorded in parts of eastern Victoria where food and water are abundant [3].

Wild dogs and dingoes

Wild dogs continue to impose substantial costs on livestock producers through predation, stress and enterprise abandonment. Populations have expanded across the eastern NSW–Victorian border, with increased livestock attacks reported in regions previously considered lower risk (refer Figure 3).

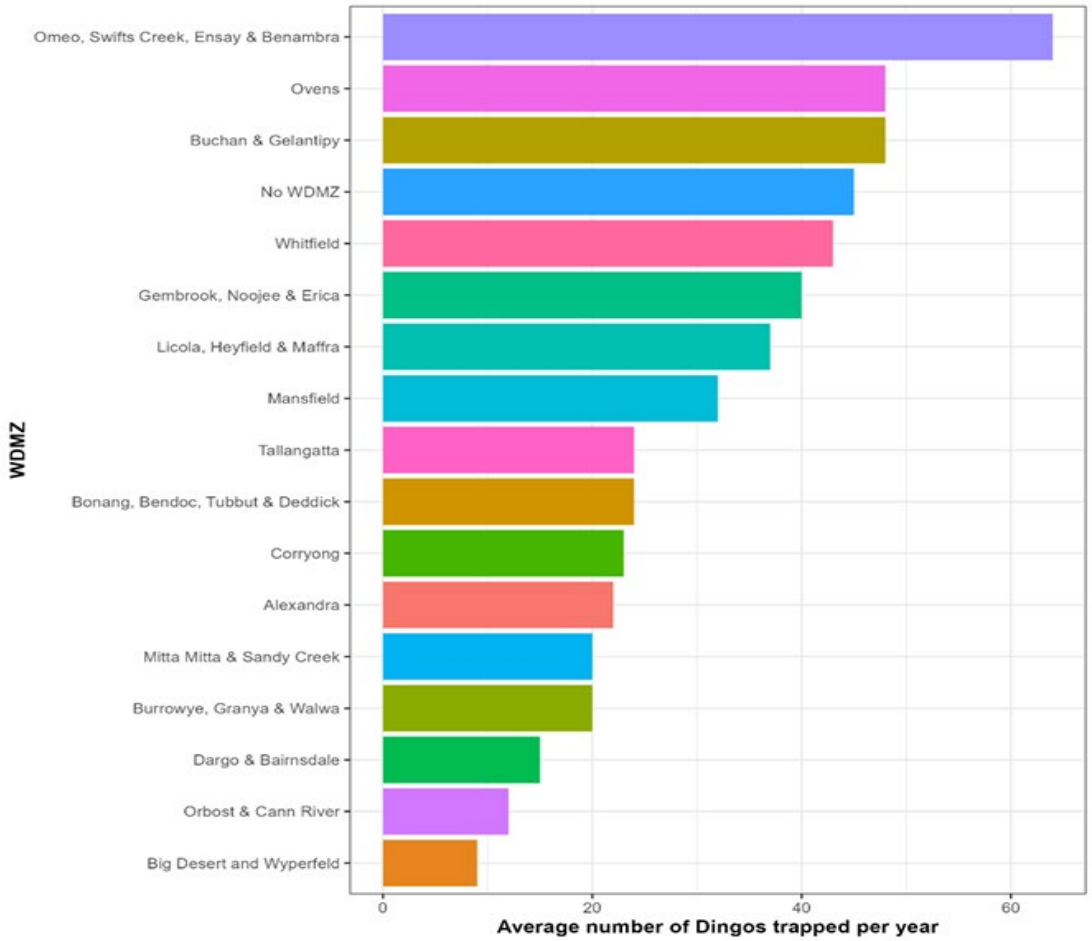
[3] Pig (feral or wild) | Established pest animal species | Pest animals | Biosecurity | Agriculture Victoria

Scientific and land-manager evidence indicates these trends are being driven by post-fire habitat changes, which have created dense recovery vegetation favourable to wild dogs, alongside policy and governance gaps arising from inconsistent management across land tenures and jurisdictions[4][5].

The removal of the wild dog bounty and restrictions on control tools have reduced landholders' ability to respond effectively, particularly in high-risk zones along public–private land boundaries.

The social and mental health impacts of repeated stock losses are profound and often under-recognised, contributing to long-term stress, anxiety and community decline.

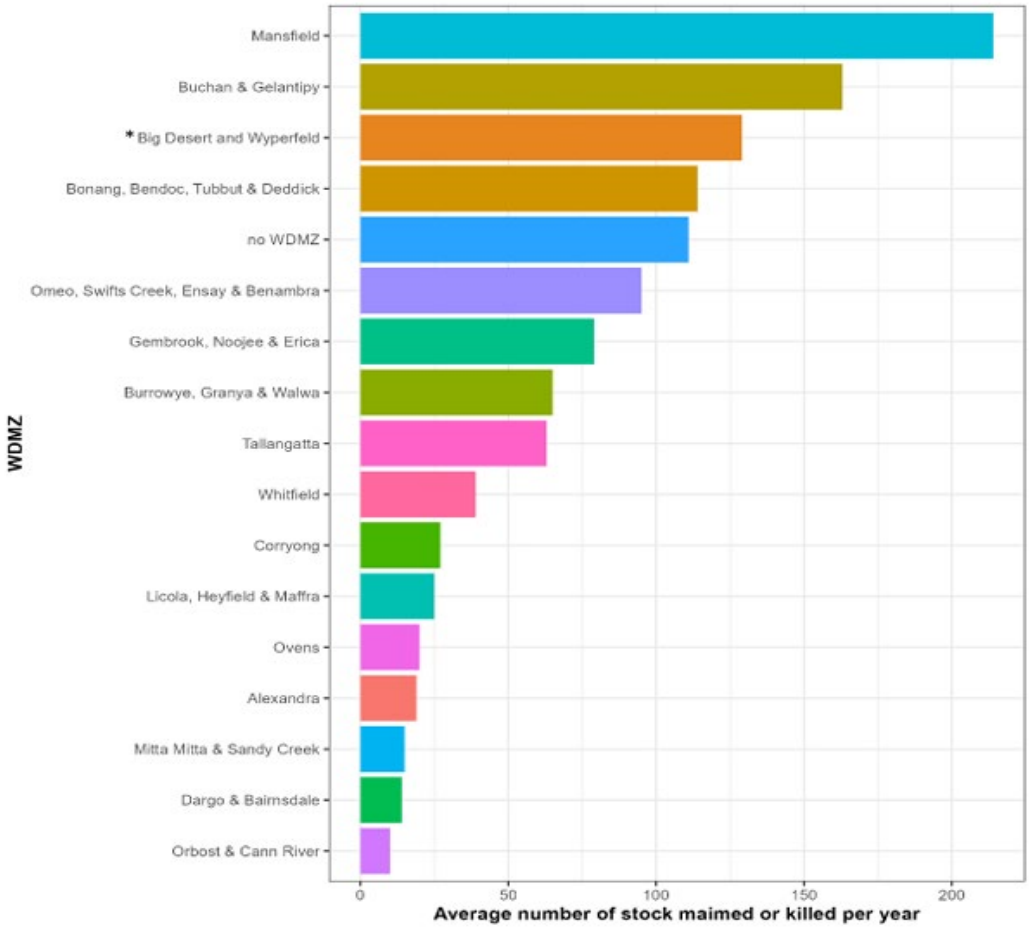
Figure 3. Dingo trapping program



The average number of dingoes removed by the wild dog trapping program each year for each wild dog management zone between 2013/14 and 2022/23[6]

[4] National Wild Dog Action Plan – Wild Dog Management in Australia
[5] Invasive species - DAFF
[6] wild-dog-program-summaries.pdf

Figure 4. Average stock loss as a result of predation



The average number of stock (sheep, cattle, goats and other livestock) confirmed as maimed or killed as a result of predation each year within each wild dog management zone between 2013/14 and 2022/23[7]

Economic, agriculture and social impacts

Pest animals impose both direct and indirect costs:

- Lost livestock and reduced production
- Rising fencing, labour and monitoring expenses
- Exit from agricultural enterprises
- Flow-on impacts to local businesses and employment
- Declining community resilience and wellbeing

National estimates place the cost of invasive species to the Australian economy at more than $24 billion annually[8], with pest animals among the most damaging contributors. These costs are disproportionately borne by regional communities.

[7] wild-dog-program-summaries.pdf

[8] Detailed assessment of the reported economic costs of invasive species in Australia

Farmers report increasing attacks on livestock, with lambs, calves, alpacas, and working dogs all affected. The financial burden of fencing, monitoring, and treating injured animals is growing, and some producers have been forced to leave the industry altogether.

The mental health consequences are severe, with daily uncertainty and trauma affecting not only individual wellbeing but also the broader resilience of rural communities. Declining local businesses and workforce numbers are further evidence of the far-reaching consequences of inadequate pest animal management.

The Taking Control: A National Approach to Pest Animals states that much of the evidence received referred not only to the economic impact of pest animals, but also the social consequences of having to deal with them on a day-to-day basis. These consequences are wide-ranging and include stress and family breakdown, problems associated with financial difficulty, lifestyle changes and unemployment.

Some of these problems were described by the State Council for the RLPB of New South Wales, in its submission:

> *"Impacts that also need to be taken into account, but you can't place an economic price on are social aspects on the affected landholder – not just the cost of control in terms of materials and time of labour, but the emotional stress associated with survival in their chosen industry, fear and anguish, frustration, the loss of productive land, the sleepless nights wondering when the next attack will happen, family and community breakdown, loss of self-esteem or face in the community etc."*

Policy and management context

Government policy settings play a decisive role in pest animal management outcomes. The scale of the pest animal challenge in eastern Victoria is significant, involving multiple species that require place-based, coordinated responses across public and private land.

Nationally, the *Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017–2027* [9] provides a high-level framework, but delivery relies heavily on state policy alignment, resourcing and implementation.

In practice, fragmented responsibilities, variable tools across tenures, and short-term funding cycles have limited the effectiveness of control efforts in high-impact regions such as East Gippsland.

Victoria's approach seeks to balance agricultural protection, biodiversity conservation and animal welfare, but current arrangements have constrained landholder capacity to respond at the scale required. Community feedback consistently indicates that population growth is outpacing control effort, particularly in rugged landscapes and along forest–farm interfaces where reinvasion is common and access is limited.

[9] Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017-2027

Key species settings and policy gaps

Wild dogs
Wild dog management in Victoria is guided by the *National Wild Dog Action Plan*[10], which supports an integrated toolkit including baiting, trapping, shooting, fencing and guardian animals.

In eastern Victoria, the extension of the dingo unprotection order to January 2028 enables control on private land and within a limited public-land buffer. The removal of the wild dog bounty and restrictions on lethal control on public land have reduced available tools, placing greater pressure on landholders and local programs.

Remote terrain further limits the effectiveness of ground-based control, highlighting the need for additional investment, improved monitoring and stronger cross-tenure coordination.

Deer
Deer management sits at the intersection of wildlife and pest management policy. In Victoria, deer remain legally classified as game species, reflecting recreational, cultural and economic values. At the same time, there is growing evidence of overabundance and expanding impacts on agriculture, biodiversity and public safety.

While regulated recreational hunting contributes to population pressure, it is insufficient to manage impacts at a landscape scale. Effective deer management does not require removing game status, but does require clearer policy alignment, stronger coordination, expanded use of professional control, and a sharper focus on impact-based outcomes.

Feral pigs
Feral pig control programs in Victoria demonstrate that coordinated, technology-enabled approaches can be effective where adequately resourced. However, community feedback indicates that current investment and coverage are insufficient to address the speed and scale of population expansion.

Biosecurity risks, including the potential spread of serious livestock diseases, add urgency to the need for sustained, landscape-scale control supported by landholders, Traditional Owners and government agencies.

Why this matters

Across all species, comparisons with other jurisdictions highlight that stronger cross-tenure duties, longer-term funding certainty and clearer accountability deliver more consistent outcomes.

Without policy settings that match the scale of the problem, pest animal impacts will continue to undermine agricultural productivity, regional economies and community wellbeing in eastern Victoria.

[10] National Wild Dog Action Plan – Wild Dog Management in Australia

What's missing: coordination, scale and certainty

Despite multiple programs and strategies, current approaches remain fragmented:

- Inconsistent obligations across land tenures
- Limited cross-border coordination with NSW
- Short-term funding cycles that undermine continuity
- Insufficient transparency in monitoring and reporting
- Gaps between policy intent and on-ground outcomes

Communities consistently report that control efforts are not keeping pace with population growth.

What we're asking for

1. Stronger, coordinated governance

- A cross-tenure, nil-tenure approach in high-risk zones
- Formalised cross-border operational alignment with NSW
- Clear roles, responsibilities and accountability across agencies

2. Sustainable funding and incentives

- Long-term investment aligned with population growth rates
- Replacement of blunt bounty systems with targeted, outcome-based incentives
- Support for professional and accredited control operators

3. Better data and transparency

- Standardised population monitoring and public reporting
- Shared dashboards on stock losses, control effort and outcomes
- Integration of local knowledge into planning

4. Value-adding and innovation

- Regulatory reform to enable venison processing and market access
- Support for regional food and agribusiness opportunities
- Investment in technology-enabled monitoring and control

5. Recognition of social and mental health impacts

- Dedicated mental health support for affected communities
- Inclusion of wellbeing indicators in program evaluation

Pest animal management is an economic and community issue

Effective pest animal management is not only an environmental responsibility — it is fundamental to agricultural viability, food security and the future of regional Victoria.

East Gippsland's farming communities are ready to work with government, industry and neighbours across borders. What is needed now is policy stability, adequate resourcing and coordinated action at the scale the problem demands.

More information

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Appendix A: Landholder impact statements

This appendix provides anonymised, on-the-ground quantitative examples supplied by landholders in East Gippsland to illustrate the scale and lived impact of pest animal pressures. These examples are not exhaustive but are representative of impacts reported across the region.

Wild dogs

Great Alpine Road, Sarsfield (175 ha)

"Wild dogs have forced me out of sheep entirely. We were losing 20–30 lambs some nights to one or sometimes two packs. On top of that, I've got 200 kangaroos hammering the pasture, which keeps a big food source right on my boundary for the dogs. Every night there are also 40–60 deer pouring out of the bush on three sides, eating everything in sight. Between the dogs, roos and deer there's nothing left worth farming for sheep. The constant attacks and worry were crushing mentally, so I had to destock ewes and switch to cattle – a decision that cost me tens of thousands and destroyed my sheep enterprise."

Deer

Old Bindi Road, Bindi

Based on conservative estimates a farmer from Bindi prepared for a recent meeting, more than 100 sambar deer have been removed from the 43-hectare farm over the past 12 months.
At an estimated 5 DSE per animal, this equates to an additional grazing pressure of over 500 DSE on the property. Given the enterprise currently runs 160 breeding ewes, this unmanaged wildlife pressure effectively results in the loss of approximately 100–125 sheep worth of productive capacity (assuming 2–3 DSE per ewe), leading to a significant reduction in primary production.
These impacts are largely driven by the property's proximity to state forest and are further exacerbated by high numbers of kangaroos and fallow deer moving across boundaries. This example highlights the scale of production losses being experienced within our district in the High Country due to just one unmanaged feral species.

Mount Lookout Road, Mount Taylor (120Ha)

"We regularly see 10 deer in a mob but there are a lot more living in the hills around us. Two wild dogs work our place constantly. Between the deer eating us out of pasture and the dogs waiting for any food opportunity it makes farming very difficult."

Woorrara Road, Glenaladale (95Ha)

"Every single night we have 10–15 deer grazing the paddocks. Four or five wild dogs come in and out regularly – we find kills most weeks. It's reached the point where we're seriously questioning how long we can keep farming here."

Echo Bend, Glenaladale (120Ha)

"Forty-plus deer every night without fail, plus regular wild dog incursions (we don't know exact numbers because they're in and out so fast). The deer alone destroy thousands of dollars of pasture and crop each year, it is a constant worry."

Friday Creek Road, Glenaladale (100Ha)

"At least 20 deer on the place most nights and 3–4 wild dogs running as a pack. We're losing the battle and the stress of it is enormous."

Appendix B: Victorian policy management in Gippsland

Wild dogs

Dingo management in eastern Victoria (incl. Gippsland): Victoria has extended the dingo unprotection order in the east to 1 January 2028, allowing lethal and non-lethal control on private land and within a 3km buffer on public land (the latter only by trained DEECA staff/contractors).
Bounty for wild dogs discontinued; fox bounty continues. Dingoes remain protected in the state's north-west due to extinction risk.
The Government is also funding non-lethal measures and monitoring and has reframed the Wild Dog Management Program into a broader Vertebrate Species Management Program.
[agriculture.vic.gov.au], https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/livestock-health-and-welfare/livestock-predation-management/livestock-predation-management-in-the-rest-of-victoria [premier.vic.gov.au]

Deer

Deer management in Victoria (incl. Gippsland): Victoria runs a large, state-funded deer control program implementing the Victorian Deer Control Strategy with aerial and ground culling across hundreds of thousands of hectares, including in eastern parks (e.g., Alpine, Snowy River, Croajingolong), with periodic closures during aerials.
Focus is on biodiversity protection, water catchments, and peri-urban safety.
[environment.vic.gov.au], [vdccn.org.au], [4wdvictoria.org.au], [miragenews.com]

Both measures were created to **"balance conservation and livestock protection",** with **$2 m** being committed for nonlethal trials/monitoring; wild dog work folded into a **broadened vertebrate program.** [premier.vic.gov.au].

Main policy contrasts between states

NSW applies a wild dog framework balancing dingo conservation and impact reduction, with explicit "general biosecurity duty" on all landholders, and no special deer protection (de-listed as game on private land) to ease deer control. [dpi.nsw.gov.au], [nsw.gov.au], [environment.nsw.gov.au].
Contrast:
NSW's **general biosecurity duty** creates a clearer obligation on all tenures to act; **park agencies run control programs inside reserves** under published policy, whereas Vic's buffer limits who can act on public land adjacent to farms. [environment.nsw.gov.au].

Queensland uses a nil-tenure, shared-responsibility model under the Biosecurity Act 2014 with local biosecurity plans, multiple control tools (bait, trap, shoot, fencing, guardians) and dingoes protected inside national parks but declared invasive otherwise. [business.qld.gov.au].
Contrast:
Queensland **statute-backed local biosecurity plans** and **nil tenure model** arguably provide **stronger, continuous landscape coordination** than Victoria's current mixed settings in the east/north-west. [business.qld.gov.au).

South Australia has shifted to eradication of deer under *Landscape SA Act*, with intensive aerial thermal culling and a 10-year eradication plan; it mandates destruction of deer on private land

and shows large modelled net benefits to the community. [pir.sa.gov.au], [sevice.com.au].
Contrast: South Australia **eradication posture** is firmer than Victoria's **impact reduction strategy, and mandated private land destruction** goes beyond Vic's current mix of incentives and operations. [pir.sa.gov.au], [environment.vic.gov.au]

Western Australia combines a large-scale barrier fence program with declared pest status for wild dogs and regionally funded Recognised Biosecurity Groups to coordinate ongoing control (baiting, trapping, shooting). [dpird.wa.gov.au], [dpird.wa.gov.au], [cwba.org.au]
Contrast:
WA heavy **infrastructure (barrier fence)** investment **plus RBG funding model** provide **structural risk reduction** for producers—tools not presently mirrored in Victoria.
[dpird.wa.gov.au]

New Zealand is intensifying predator policy, adding feral cats to Predator Free 2050 (Nov 2025); deer are managed to protect native ecosystems but also carry "valued introduced species" status, yielding a more co-management approach (DOC + Game Animal Council), not eradication.
Contrast:
New Zealand's **dual-value** stance leads to **site-prioritised control**, not statewide eradication—closer to Victoria's **impact-based** approach than SA's eradication push. [doc.govt.nz]

Dimension	Gippsland/VIC	NSW	QLD	SA	WA	NZ
Predator legal status	Dingoes **unprotected in east** (to 1 Jan 2028) on **private + 3 km public-land buffer (DEECA-led)**; **protected** in north-west	"Wild dogs" incl. dingoes; **biosecurity duty** on all occupiers; NPWS controls in parks while preserving dingoes where risks are low	Wild dogs **restricted invasive**; **landholder duty**; dingoes protected in **national parks** with neighbour policy	Wild dogs managed under state policies (not core contrast here)	**Declared pest**; heavy use of **State Barrier Fence** and RBGs	Countrywide predator strategy (PF2050) now **includes feral cats**; deer/pigs/goats handled via DOC & GAC
Deer policy	**Strategy + program**; **aerial + ground** control; **park closures** when needed	**De-listed as game on private land**; biosecurity duty; testing **new tools**; aerial operations where feasible	(Deer not central to QLD comparison here; local programs vary)	**Eradication program** with **thermal aerial culling**; **mandatory destruction**	(Feral herbivores primarily managed under RBGs; fence reduces reinvasion)	**Impact-reduction** (not eradication); deer co-managed as **valued introduced species**
Bounty/incentives	**Wild dog bounty ended**; fox bounty continues (temporary uplift)	No bounty; **local group planning** and biosecurity duty drive action	No bounty; **local plans** + grants and coordination	No bounty; **state eradication funding** + obligations	No bounty; **Declared Pest Rate** co-funds programs	No bounty; **national + regional funds** for priority control
Landscape coordination	**Buffer-based** public-land control led by DEECA; **programmatic deer control**	**Wild Dog Management Groups** & plans across tenures	**Nil-tenure programs** + **local biosecurity plans** under statute	**Whole-of-state eradication plan (deer)**; landscape thermal operations	**State Barrier Fence** + **RBGs**	**DOC site-prioritisation**, **Game Animal Council** co-management

Appendix C: Management and control programs - current initiatives and gaps

A range of management and control programs are currently in place across Victoria. Statewide, landscape-scale control is being led by Parks Victoria and DEECA, covering 27,000km² and employing a mix of bait stations, trapping, exclusion fencing, and surveillance. Technology-driven monitoring, including camera traps, drones, and GPS tracking, is being used to improve detection and response.

Community and Traditional Owner involvement is a feature of many programs, with organisations such as the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Moogji Aboriginal Council playing key roles.

The private sector also provides support through contractors and Landcare groups. However, there remain significant gaps in coverage, coordination, and resourcing, and many communities feel that current efforts are not keeping pace with the scale of the problem.

Deer management and control

Current approaches to deer management on farms in Victoria primarily rely on shooting with the aid of spotlights and aerial shooting, either themselves or in agreement with recreational or professional shooters. Some farmers have successfully reduced damage by installing deer-proof fencing, highlighting the importance of physical exclusion in certain contexts.

To better understand the impacts of deer, a rapid assessment method was developed to measure antler rubbing by Sambar Deer on Pinus radiata, and spotlight surveys are recommended as the most effective way to determine the extent of competition between deer and livestock for pasture as noted in the Peri-urban Deer Control Plan 2021-2026.

The Australia Deer Association's management framework is grounded in decades of research and practical programs. Key contributions include the Bunyip Sambar Project, which provided wild behavioural and ecological insights for sustainable sambar management; the Blond Bay Hog Deer Project, which proved the effectiveness of collaborative management between government, hunters, and landholders; and the long running Sunday Island hog deer program supporting conservation, genetics, and sustainable harvest since the 1960s.
Together, these projects demonstrate that science-led management, regulated hunting, habitat stewardship, and long-term monitoring deliver balanced environmental, social, and economic outcomes while maintaining animal welfare [austdeer.com.au], [austdeer.com.au], [austdeer.com.au], [sundayisland.net]

It seems that the population of particular deer species continues to grow despite the suite of current control activities. As described on page 4 of this document, Sambar deer would require to be culled by 40% per annum to achieve population control.

Professional shooters in East Gippsland have positive outcomes in terms of deer control. These shooters need a Commercial Wildlife Licence and an Authority to Control Wildlife. Commercial shooters can take harvested wild deer to a game meat processing facility licensed by PrimeSafe. From these facilities, game enters the food chain and contributes to Australia's

economy including export trade.

East Gippsland Shire Council proposes that the Victorian Government investigates providing incentives to professional deer shooters to motivate greater harvesting thereby more rapidly achieving deer control. Another possible policy to evaluate is adding a per head bonus payment on top of any commercial payment made for deer carcases delivered to and accepted by a game meat processing facility licensed by PrimeSafe.

One consideration is the opportunity to value add to the deer solution in completing a cost value analysis for a venison business in Gippsland or Victoria. Findings from the East Gippsland Food Cluster - A discussion paper to consider agrifood growth opportunities (2018) indicated that there is a need for further detailed analysis to inform future decision-making and changes to the Victorian legislation (Wildlife Act) and regulatory environment (PrimeSafe) About the project – Towards a next generation food manufacturing hub for Gippsland.

Feral pig management and control

Effective management of feral pigs in Victoria is essential to protect both agricultural and environmental values. The primary objective is to minimise, and where possible eliminate, the damage caused by feral pigs to communities, pastures, crops, livestock and threatened ecological vegetation. This includes not only direct predation and destruction but also the broader impacts on agricultural productivity and the integrity of sensitive ecosystems.

A collaborative approach is central to success. Ongoing engagement with private landholders is vital for identifying areas of concern and sharing information about feral pig activity, with tools such as Feral Scan supporting community-based monitoring and response and needs to be promoted for greater uptake.

Biosecurity remains a critical concern, with efforts focused on preventing or containing the spread of diseases such as African swine fever, brucellosis, pseudorabies, and tularaemia, all of which pose significant threats to agricultural industries, including pork production.

Importantly, Traditional Owner groups, including the Moogji Aboriginal Council, are actively involved in control activities and surveys, reflecting a commitment to inclusive, partnership-based management.

In East Gippsland, a comprehensive suite of management and control programs is underway. The statewide landscape-scale control programme, led by Parks Victoria and DELWP, covers 27,000km² across eastern Victoria and employs a range of techniques including HOGGONE bait stations, trapping, exclusion fencing, and surveillance, with a focus on protecting threatened ecological communities, pastures, and livestock. [feralpigs.com.au]

Technology-driven monitoring, such as camera traps, thermal drones, GPS tracking (including “Judas pig” collars), and eDNA testing in water catchments, is enhancing detection and response capabilities [4wdvictoria.org.au].

Community and Traditional Owner involvement is a hallmark of these efforts, with organisations such as the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and Moogji Aboriginal Council playing key roles in collaborative partnerships that span public and private land. The private sector also contributes significantly, with contractors providing services such as trapping,

remote camera monitoring, night shooting, and sodium nitrate baiting, and offering support to landholders and Landcare groups [https://www.gtweedmanagement.com.au/solutions/vermin-control/], [Feral Pigs Control Victoria | Expert Trapping, Baiting & Shooting].

Together, these initiatives represent a coordinated and adaptive response to the complex challenge of feral pig management. Council is asking for continued investment in partnership, technology, and targeted action essential to safeguard Victoria's agricultural, environmental, and community assets.

Wild dog management and control

Effective management of wild dog and dingo populations is a critical component of land management in eastern Victoria, with far-reaching implications for the protection of farming businesses and the wellbeing of rural communities Media Release: Clarity needed on wild dog management strategies.

While camera traps have proven useful for monitoring deer, their placement in bogs, wallows, and gullies does not align with the movement patterns or preferred habitats of dingoes and wild dogs. This underscores the need for species-specific monitoring strategies to ensure accurate population estimates and effective control measures.

The consequences of inadequate wild dog control extend well beyond the direct economic losses experienced by individual farmers. Livestock predation not only reduces farm income but also contributes to ongoing stress and uncertainty for farming families. Given that agriculture forms the backbone of many regional communities, threats to farm viability have a ripple effect, undermining local economies and the social fabric of rural areas, as noted above.

Council recognises that the voice of the community must be central in shaping wild dog management strategies. Ongoing government investment in targeted, evidence-based control measures is essential to safeguard livelihoods, support community resilience, and ensure that decisions reflect the lived experience of those most affected.

By prioritising effective wild dog management, government and stakeholders can help secure the future of Victoria's agricultural sector and the communities that depend on it.

A strong example of community-led engagement can be seen in Mansfield Shire, which organised a wild dog management meeting in September 2025 with key players including landholders, government agencies and the National Wild Dog Management Coordinator. The collaborative forum provided an invaluable opportunity for government representatives to gain a deeper understanding of local concerns, explore potential pathways forward, and discuss the realities of resource capacity on the ground. Actions were identified that focused on data collection, reporting, and advocacy. Council coordinates canid predation conversation

This demonstrated the value of open dialogue and partnership in shaping effective, locally responsive wild dog management strategies. Such initiatives highlight the importance of genuine engagement and the need for government to listen to and work alongside those most affected by pest animal impacts.