

Western Landcare NSW Inc.

ABN 92 914 689 860

Goodwood Station | White Cliffs NSW 2836

louise@westernlandcarensw.com.au

www.westernlandcarensw.com.au



Border Fence Maintenance Submission
NSW Department of Industry
GPO Box 5477
Sydney
NSW 2001

16 July 2018

Border Fence Maintenance Regulation Submission

To Whom it May Concern

Firstly, I would like to extend some thanks to the Department of Industry for including Western Landcare as a stakeholder for submissions. As you would be aware, our membership covers approximately 75% of the Western Region and the biggest concern conveyed by our members currently is wild dog management.

After reading the *Proposed Border Fence Maintenance Regulation 2018* & the *Border Fence Maintenance Regulation 2018 Regulatory Impact Statement*, Western Landcare NSW feel that Option 3: remake the 2009 Regulation with amendment is the best fit for our members. We feel that increasing the maximum rate that can be levied on landholders will most definitely generate a sound net benefit to the community and farming businesses alike. Although this option will provide the BFM Board with a buffer to allow sufficient financial resources to maintain the fence over the coming years, we also believe it would allow for more new fence to be erected each year which is paramount to keeping on top of the wild dog incursion faced by communities in the Western Region.

Western Landcare NSW does not feel that the Border fence in its current state is strong enough to withstand significant wild dog pressure. Both photographic and anecdotal evidence show that some of the older fence erected consistently has holes appearing in it on a regular basis. This is not to say that the BFM Board are not proactive enough, but that maintenance problems (and thus wild dog) incursions) appear to be common, whereby if more new fencing was erected each year this pest management issue has the potential to be lessened over a much shorter period of time.

Currently, landholders in the Western Region contribute an exponential amount of time and resources to the cost of managing wild dogs. They undertake wild dog management through aerial and ground baiting, trapping (personal and professional) and shooting. Replacing more than 20km of fence per year will obviously cost more per hectare for landholders, however if this means that parts of the current fence are replaced with newer and stronger materials at a much quicker pace, then ultimately landholders' private wild dog management costs will be reduced in the long term.

Western Landcare NSW concedes that the Western Region is currently experiencing drought conditions which equates to reduced stock numbers, pressure on livestock prices, as well as the productivity and profitability of livestock enterprises. This will mean that some landholders would be adverse to a rate increase of a maximum 6c/ha. Currently, anecdotal evidence from members of Western Landcare NSW is telling us that the dry time that we are experiencing has had no effect on reducing dog numbers in the region. This has been put down to the ever increasing number of kangaroos traversing the landscape looking for feed and the fact that dogs on this side of the border fence have plenty to eat. For those landholders that are affected every day by wild dogs – both physically with the time and financial resources for control as well as psychologically just thinking about the latter, a rate increase of up to 6c/ha would potentially be welcomed if it means more new fence each year and better maintenance of the existing fence as this, in turn will potentially reduce landholder costs 'on property' over a longer period of time.

This type of funding and proactive wild dog control shows that the NSW government is sincere in its aims to effectively maintain the Border Fence whilst being mindful of the people and communities within the Western Region.

Thankyou once again for including Western Landcare NSW in the submission process. We hope that the information/feedback we have provided in this document is thought provoking and sparks more well rounded discussion.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Louise Turner", is displayed on a light-colored rectangular background.

Louise Turner
Executive Officer
Western Landcare NSW
M: 0448 220 336
E: louise@westernlandcarensw.com.au