

Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan **2018 - 2023**





Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan 2018-2023

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing in June 2018. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

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Minister's Foreword

I am pleased to announce the Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan. This plan is a vital community tool, as it provides a strategic regional approach to improving the coordination and delivery of on ground, nil tenure pest animal management activities for terrestrial vertebrate and freshwater aquatic pest species in NSW.

The Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan is an excellent example how local communities can work together to protect the environment, community and economy from the negative impacts of pest animals and to support positive outcomes for our landscapes and ensuring we maintain a bio-secure environment.

The Central Tablelands Regional Pest Animal Committee represents major land uses and relevant economic, environment and community representatives for each region. The committee delivers a collaborative approach to setting regional priorities and is integral to the ongoing effective delivery of pest animal management outcomes in the region.

This plan is a product of extensive collaboration and engagement across numerous stakeholders involved in pest animal management. It will continue to grow and evolve with the changing environment and is an excellent framework to contribute to the delivery of improved coordinated pest animal management in NSW.



The Hon. Niall Blair MLC
Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry



Executive Summary

The Central Tablelands region is located in central NSW and covers an area of approximately 31,365 km². It includes the major towns of Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Lithgow, Molong, Mudgee, Oberon and Orange and falls predominantly within Wiradjuri Aboriginal country. The region is home to over 156,000 residents.

The landscape and demographics of the central tablelands makes control of pest animals with large home ranges (wild dogs, feral pigs) difficult. The diversity of land use makes engagement of all land managers in any broad scale programs challenging and has resulted in a large number of individual programs rather than a coordinated approach.

There are a significant number of lifestyle and small “hobby” holdings that create some unique challenges in the management of pest animals including restrictions on control tools and lack of knowledge or desire to control some pest species. These issues present a significant risk to the future management and control of pest animals and are addressed in this plan.

Goals

The goals of the Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan (RSPAMP) are:

- Reduction of the impact of pest animals on the social, environmental and financial fabric of the Central Tablelands Region
- Improved community participation in biosecurity management across all land tenures
- Increased numbers of well trained and resourced people within the Central Tablelands Region.

The Central Tablelands RSPAMP is consistent with State plans and priorities as shown in Figure 1. The NSW Invasive Species Plan 2017–2021 supports the NSW Biosecurity Strategy 2013–2021 to help prevent new incursions, eliminate or contain existing populations and effectively manage already widespread invasive species.

The goals of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP are consistent with the Invasive Species Plan which adopts the following four goals (consistent with the broad objectives of the NSW Biosecurity Strategy):

- Goal 1: Exclude – prevent the establishment of new invasive species
- Goal 2: Eradicate or contain – eliminate, or prevent the spread of new invasive species
- Goal 3: Effectively manage – reduce the impacts of widespread invasive species
- Goal 4: Capacity building – ensure NSW has the ability and commitment to manage invasive species.

By identifying strategies and key deliverables under these goals, the Central Tablelands RSPAMP will help guide investment and resource allocation for managing the impacts of invasive species in New South Wales.

All stakeholders – government agencies, industry, landholders and members of the community – play a valuable role in confronting the challenges and achieving the goals and actions outlined in the Central Tablelands RSPAMP.

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Central Tablelands RSPAMP outlines how government, industry and the community can work together and share the responsibility to eradicate, contain or manage pest animals in terrestrial and freshwater aquatic environments across the region

- The economic impact of wild rabbits, carp, feral pigs, foxes, wild dogs, feral goats and introduced birds has been estimated at \$170 million in NSW. (*National Resources Commission Final Report, August 2016*)
- Under the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*, all community members have a general biosecurity duty to prevent, minimise or eliminate any biosecurity risk. The general biosecurity duty is a principle that can be used by the community, landholders, government and industry to implement best practice behaviours to achieve effective pest animal management.

1.2 Purpose of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP

The overall purpose of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP is to provide a framework to protect the environment, community and economy from the negative impacts of pest animals and support positive outcomes for biosecurity and sustainable landscapes. The Central Tablelands RSPAMP supports regional implementation of the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015* and NSW Biosecurity Strategy and is reflective of key aligning themes including:

- Improved community engagement in biosecurity management
- Improved identification, diagnostic, surveillance, reporting and tracing systems for pests, diseases and weeds
- Increased numbers of well trained and resourced people.

The Central Tablelands RSPAMP is one of eleven RSPAMPs across NSW. It presents a clear vision by identifying regional priorities for pest animal management and outlines how government agencies, community groups and individual landholders will share responsibility and work together across land tenures to prevent, eradicate, contain and manage the impacts of pest animals. RSPAMPs will provide guidance on how both public and private land managers can meet their general biosecurity duty and identify key commitments for pest animal management activities over the life of this plan.

1.3 What is considered a pest animal?

Under the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*, pest animals are not defined by species. Pest species can be considered as any species (other than native species) that present a biosecurity threat.

Whilst the *Act* does not define pest animals, there are specific activities that are permitted under the Biosecurity Order (Permitted Activities) that would otherwise be prohibited (such as keeping exotic animals in captivity).

It is the responsibility of individuals to ensure they discharge their general biosecurity duty to manage the biosecurity risks posed by pest animals. The *Biosecurity Regulation 2017* will outline mandatory measures for pest animal management in NSW. General control and management of pest animals outlined in this plan can be considered mechanisms for individuals to discharge their general biosecurity duty and landholders and community members should work with stakeholders identified for ongoing implementation of pest animal management practices.

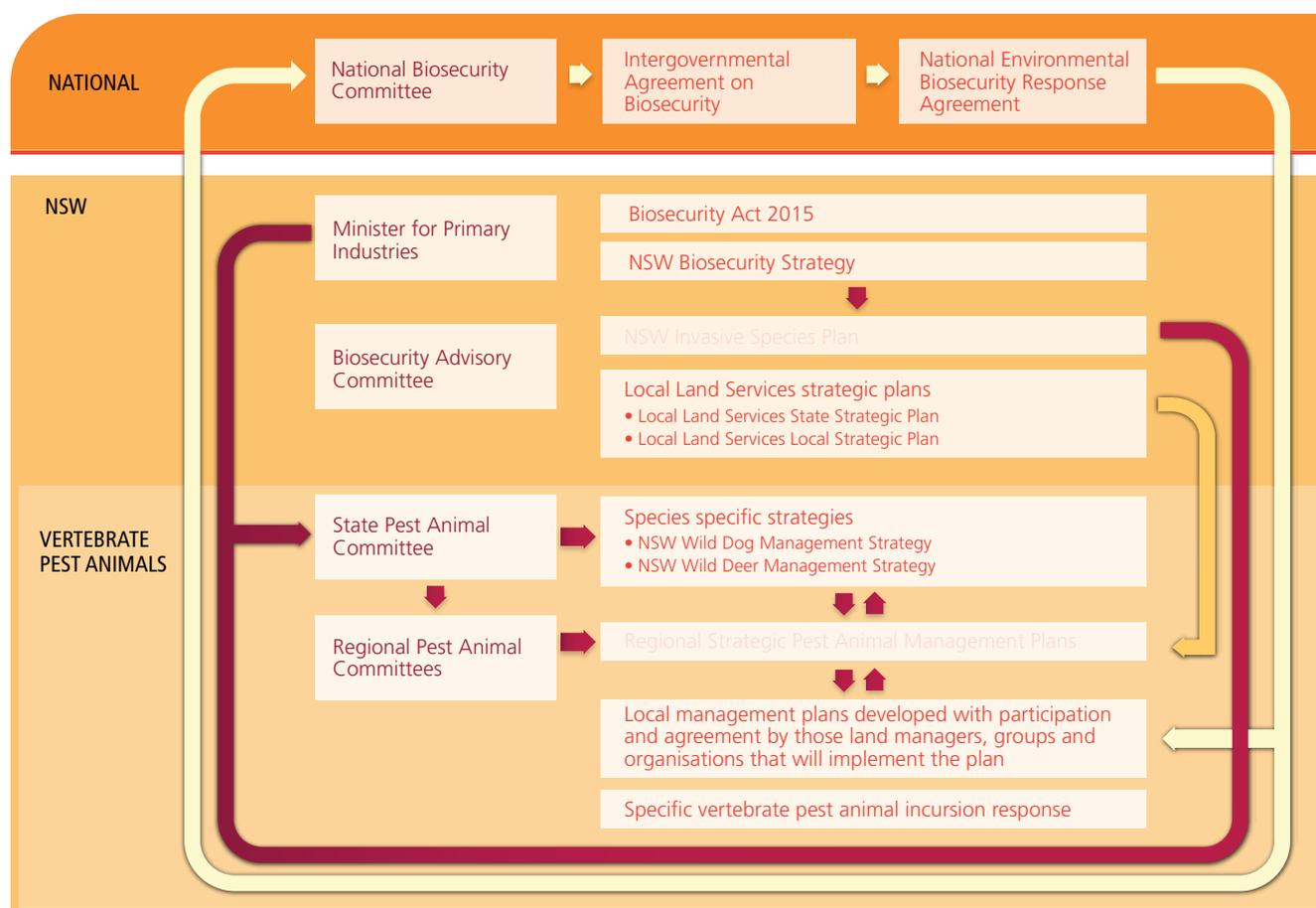
1.4 Managing native animals

Native species are protected by law in NSW and are not covered in this RSPAMP. Issues associated with managing the impacts of native species (such as kangaroos, emus, wombats and possums) should be addressed separately in consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service and having regard to the regulatory requirements of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Non-lethal methods may include exclusion netting, fencing, gating, and olfactory devices. Where it is necessary to use lethal methods such as shooting to destroy native animals because they are a threat to human safety, damaging property and/or causing economic hardship, the National Parks and Wildlife Service can issue a biodiversity conservation licence to harm protected native animals under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

For further information visit <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildlifelicences/OccupierLicences.htm>

1.5 Framework for pest animals

Figure 1. The NSW Biosecurity framework for pest animals in NSW



1.6 Roles and responsibilities

- Under the new *Biosecurity Act 2015* framework, biosecurity is a shared responsibility where government, industry and the people of NSW work together to protect the economy, environment and community from the impacts of pest animals
- Public, private and aboriginal land managers all have a shared and equal responsibility to eliminate and minimise biosecurity risks across land in NSW
- A key focus of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP is to encourage engagement and participation across all land tenures to enhance the participation and delivery of coordinated pest animal management activities for improved outcomes
- Local Land Services will play an important role in facilitating cross boundary pest management issues
- Government plays a key role in coordination and regulation for pest animal management under the legislative framework. NSW DPI has a lead role in managing terrestrial and freshwater aquatic pest incursions. Local Land Services supports the delivery of pest animal management activities and also has a regulatory role under the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*. This means Local Land Services will develop, implement and enforce pest animal management programs and activities which optimise compliance with the *Act*.

The following outlines the role of the Regional and State Pest Animal Committee in the delivery of the RSPAMP. For more information on key roles and responsibilities in pest animal management, please refer to the Invasive Species Plan 2018-2021.

State Pest Animal Committee

The State Pest Animal Committee (SPAC) is responsible for overseeing a consistent approach to the ongoing operation of Regional Pest Animal Committees (RPACs) and development of tenure neutral RSPAMPs across the State. SPAC oversee key policy and strategy documents to guide pest animal management outcomes across the state.

Regional Pest Animal Committees

Regional Pest Animal Committees (RPACs) facilitate tenure neutral strategic planning and coordination for priority pest animal management programs in each Local Land Services region. RPACs have an important role to play in the delivery of the RSPAMP through promoting land manager and general community involvement in detecting and reporting sightings of new or 'unusual' animals in the local area as well as managing established pest animals. RPACs play an important role in the ongoing periodic review and adaption of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP as required.



Photo: Joe Scanlan

1.7 Incursion management and alert species

We need to work together to ensure early detection and awareness of incursions and alert species are able to be managed swiftly and effectively. It is important the community remain vigilant and report any unusual sightings to ensure a rapid management response.

The *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015* guides effective management of pest animal incursions. Schedule 3 of the Act includes a prohibited dealings list, to specify the terrestrial vertebrates suitable for zoos and research facilities and species that are prohibited from being kept in NSW.

Land managers and community members play a role in reporting any unusual sightings of pest animals in the region.

CENTRAL TABLELANDS ALERT SPECIES

- American Corn Snake www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nia/american-corn-snake
- Hog Deer www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/vertebrate-pests/pest-animals-in-nsw/wild-deer/wild-deer
- Chital Deer www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/vertebrate-pests/pest-animals-in-nsw/wild-deer/wild-deer

Phone the Invasive Plants and Animals Enquiry Line: 1800 680 244



Far left: American Corn Snake
Above: Chital Deer
Left: Hog Deer (Brian Boyle)

The following mechanisms can be used to report unusual situations in the region:

- Complete the Report an unusual animal sighting form or
Phone: 1800 680 244
Email: invasive.species@dpi.nsw.gov.au
- Report pest animal species through feral scan: <https://www.feralscan.org.au>

For species that are yet to become widely established in NSW, the initial response to incursion reports is managed through consultation between NSW Department of Primary Industry, Local Land Services and Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH). Where species are widely established in NSW but have spread into a new region, Local Land Services and the RPAC will consider whether local eradication or containment should be attempted.

Important notes on the American corn snake

There has been a single sighting of a corn snake on the Newnes area north of Lithgow. It is not known if this is a single animal that has been released or if there is a population that has established in the area. In the absence of this information the management category is containment. This may be revised as further information becomes available.

It is illegal for individuals to possess an American corn snake in NSW without a permit. All sightings of corn snakes in the wild or kept as pets can be reported to NSW Department of Primary Industry via the contacts provided above or at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/forms/report-an-unusual-animal-sighting.

2. Guiding principles of pest animal management

The following principles should be considered and implemented by all community, industry, landholders and other stakeholders in pest animal management.

Be alert

Monitor and report sightings of any species you have not seen in your area before. Prevention and early intervention from the community is important to avoid the establishment of new pest animal species.

Work together and participate

Pest animal management is a shared responsibility between landholders, community, industry and government and requires a coordinated approach across a range of scales and land tenures.

Be committed

Effective pest animal management requires ongoing commitment by land managers, community, government and industry. Those that create the risks associated with pest species and those that benefit from the pest animal management outcomes should help to minimise impacts and contribute to the costs associated with management.

Stay up to date

Community, industry, government and landholders should stay up to date with new information to ensure that contemporary best practice pest animal management activities are employed to reduce pest animal impacts in a way that is as safe, effective, target specific and humane as possible.



Photo: Peter Tremain

3. Our region

The Central Tablelands region is located in central NSW and covers an area of approximately 31,365 km². It includes the major towns of Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Lithgow, Molong, Mudgee, Oberon and Orange and falls predominantly within Wiradjuri Aboriginal country. The region is home to over 156,000 residents.

The Central Tablelands is home to a diverse range of industries including the major retail centres and university cities of Bathurst and Orange, mining operations around Orange, Lithgow and Mudgee and tourism operations including significant wineries at Orange, Cowra and Mudgee.

The area has a number of natural resource assets such as national parks, culturally significant areas and is home to a vast range of native fauna and flora with some of these being listed as threatened or endangered.

Agriculturally, the region is highly diverse, adding to the complexity of natural resource management issues. Evenly spread summer and winter rainfall supports productive cropping systems with grazing the most significant land use followed by irrigated farming, broad acre crops and horticultural enterprises including areas of fruit and vegetable growing and viticulture. Approximately seven per cent of the Region's population is employed in agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

Identified challenges to pest management across the region include:

- The eastern boundary of conservation areas with steep, highly timbered and in some parts inaccessible terrain
- The foreshores of Lake Windamere, Lake Burrendong and Lake Wyangala
- High proportion of peri-urban land holdings with small acreages and absentee landholders.

Figure 2: Central Tablelands Local Land Services land use

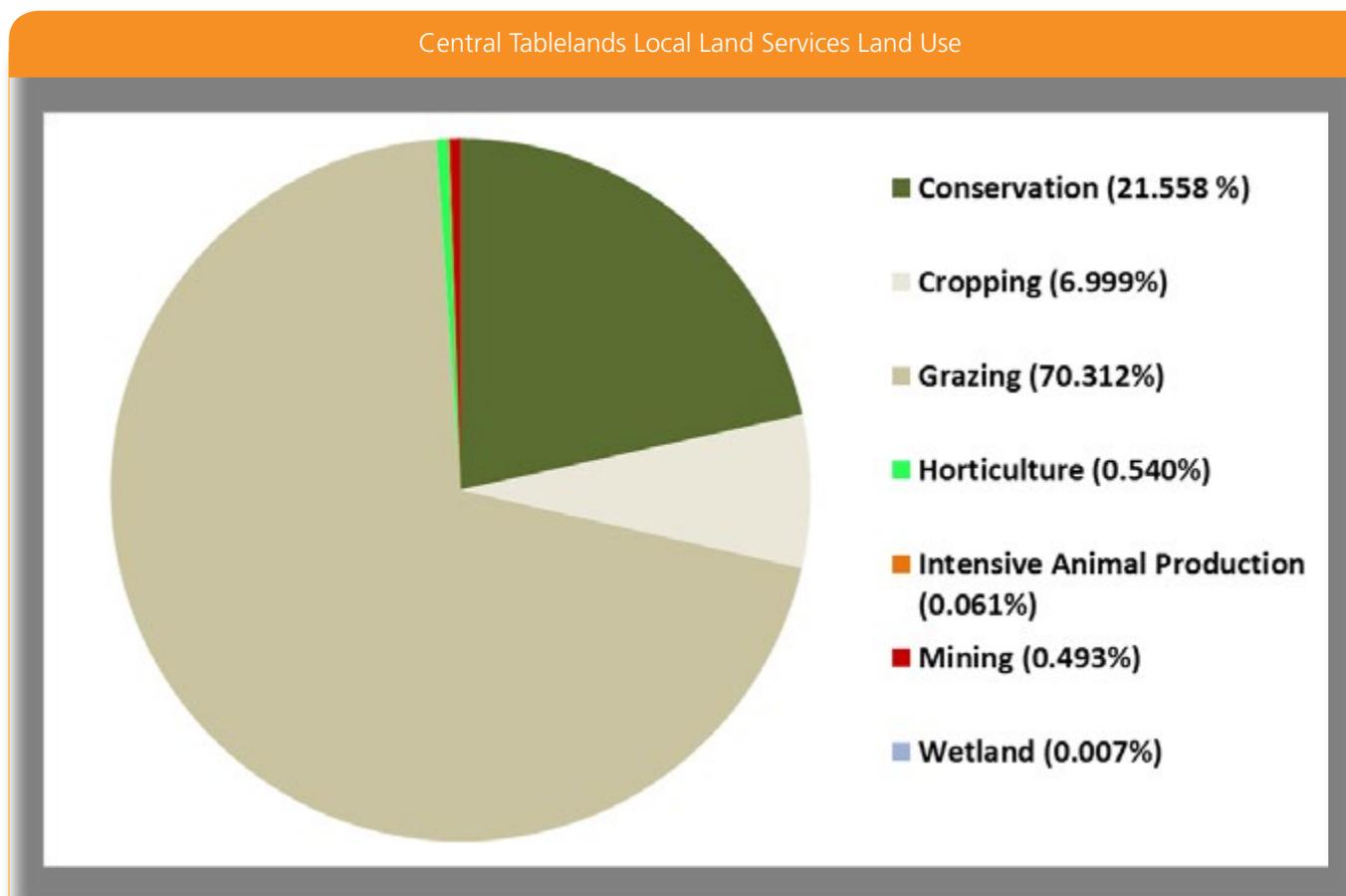
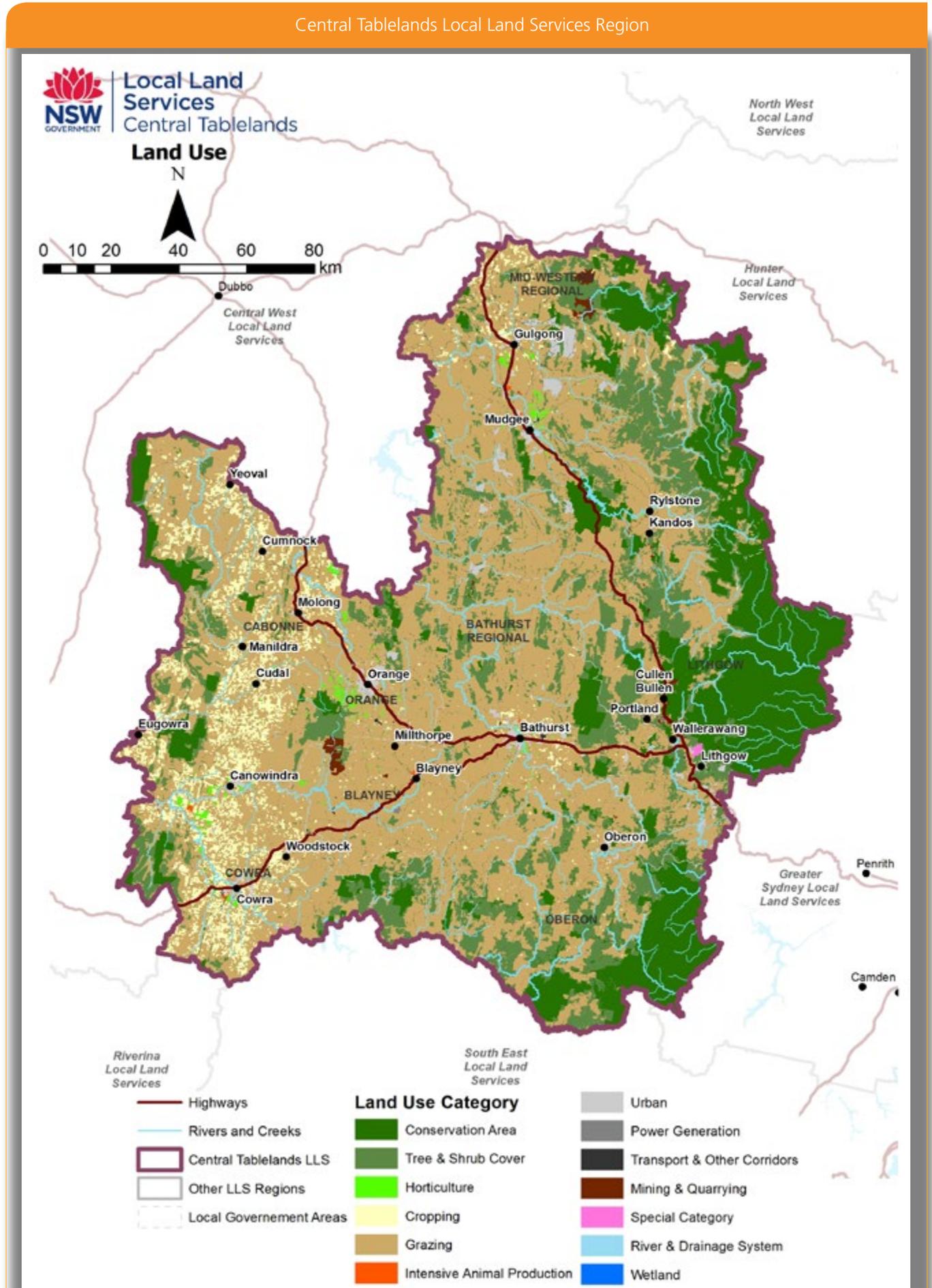


Figure 3: Central Tablelands Local Land Services region



4. Managing our pest animals

The following section details the management categories that should be used to minimise and mitigate the impact pest animals have on the community, environment and primary industries.

Pest animals in Central Tablelands region have been prioritised based on this framework.

Table 4.1 Framework for managing pest animals

Management Category	Overview
Prevention/Alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL: To prevent the pest animal species arriving and establishing in the Region causing adverse impacts on the environment, society and the economy. • RESPONSIBILITY: To understand and report any sightings of alert species.
Eradication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL: To permanently remove the species from the State or Region and to develop actions to prevent its re-establishment. • RESPONSIBILITY: To participate in coordinated programs and stay up to date with current information on pest animals in the region.
Containment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL: To prevent the spread of the pest animal species onto other parts of the State or Region. • RESPONSIBILITY: To participate in coordinated programs, stay up to date and apply best practice pest animal management practices.
Asset Based Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL: To reduce the impact of widespread pest animals on key assets with high economic, environmental and social value. • RESPONSIBILITY: To participate in coordinated programs, stay up to date and apply best practice pest animal management practices. Ensure practices are coordinated with the wider community.
Limited Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GOAL: Applies only to species that have a low to negligible risk in the region or for which further investigation is required on effective control techniques and strategies for management. • RESPONSIBILITY: Stay up to date with current information.



Photo: Tarnya Cox

5. Our priority pest species

Pest animals for Central Tablelands region have been prioritised based on the level of risk and feasibility of control assessed through prioritisation guidelines.

All land managers have a responsibility under the general biosecurity duty to manage wild dog populations on land under their care and control. To discharge their responsibility under the general biosecurity duty, land managers need to participate in coordinated control groups. Management activities must include both primary and supplementary control methods.

Where asset-based protection is indicated below, it refers to regional assets such as the livestock industry. At the operational or local plan level it may be appropriate to include containment as a management action. Where an area of the region is free from a pest species, new incursions of that pest species should be considered for eradication.

Local pest animal plans can be developed and implemented if broad scale coordinated management is required on any priority pest species identified in section 5.

The local plan will define appropriate control options for the target species and local environmental situation. The plan may also identify priority areas for pest management that are key to the successful outcomes of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP. These plans are stakeholder driven.

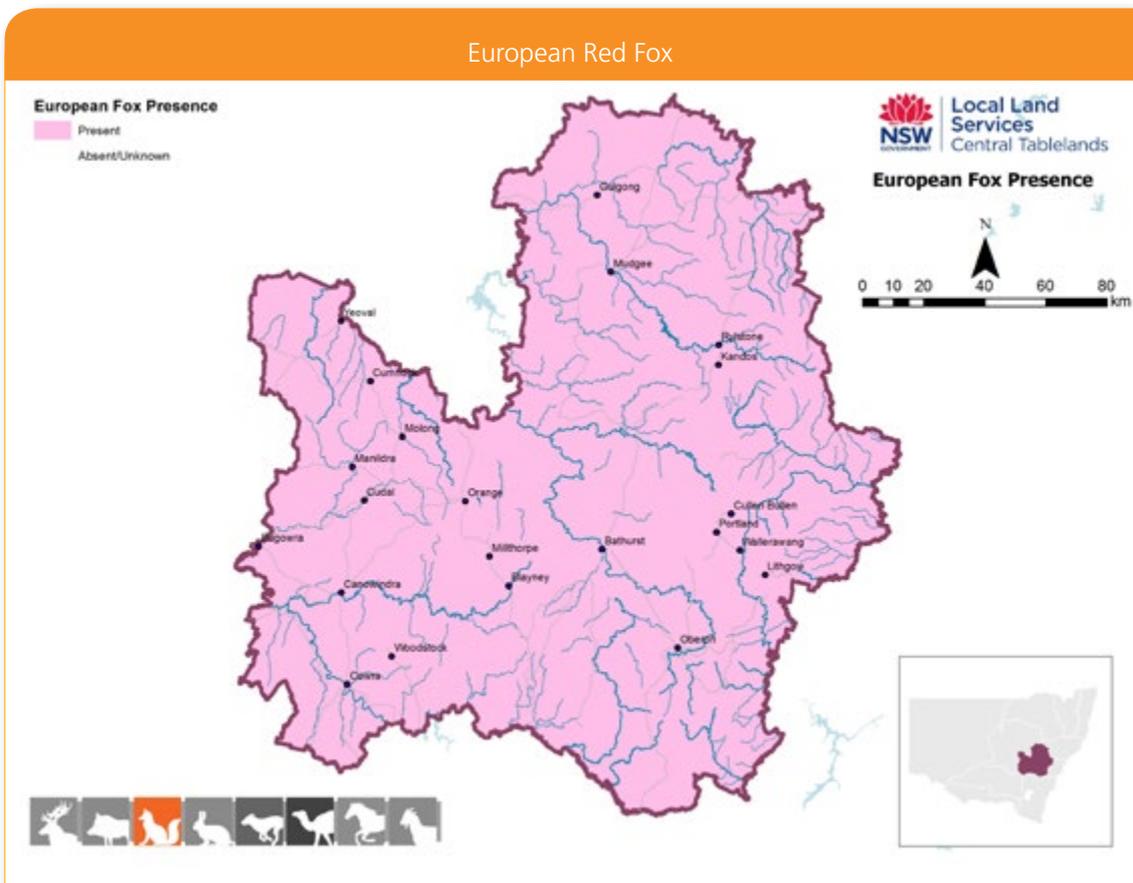
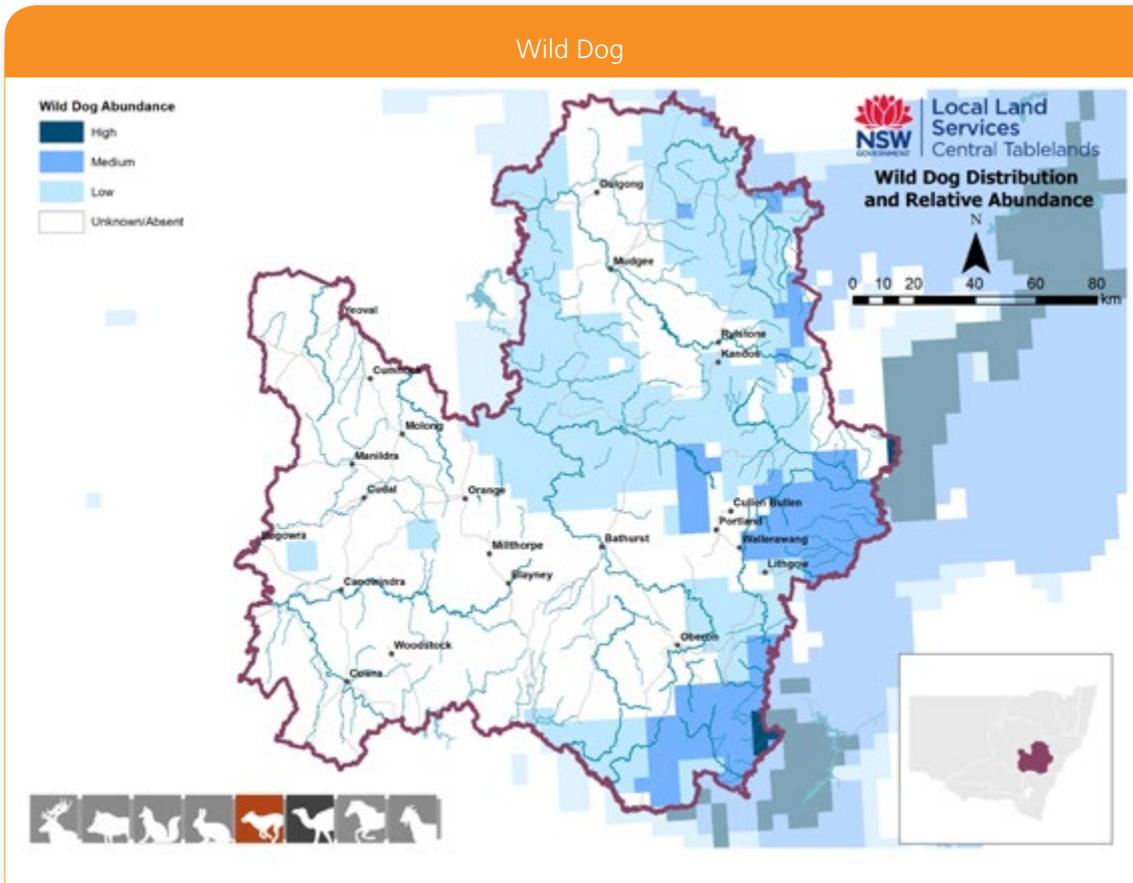
Priority species listed below have been categorised into management categories and further strategies and actions are detailed.

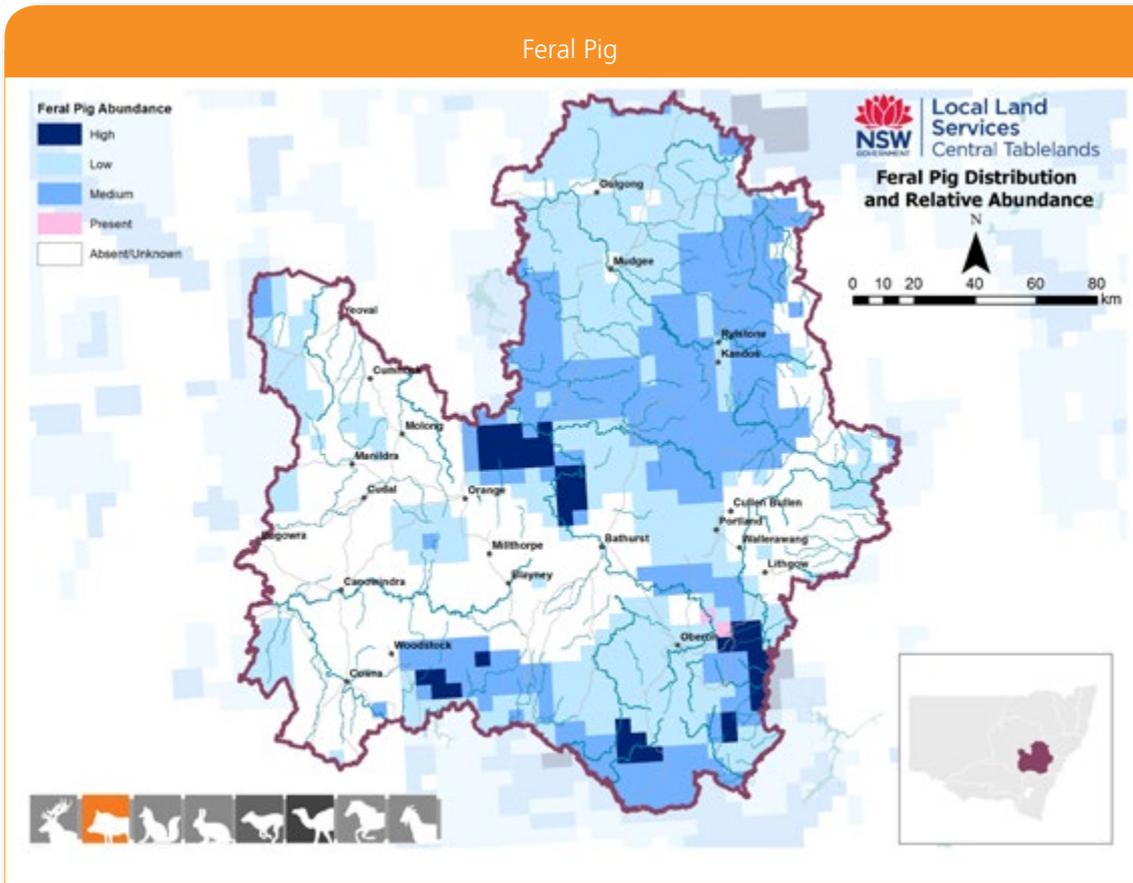
Priority Pest Species

The priority pest species for the Central Tablelands region are:

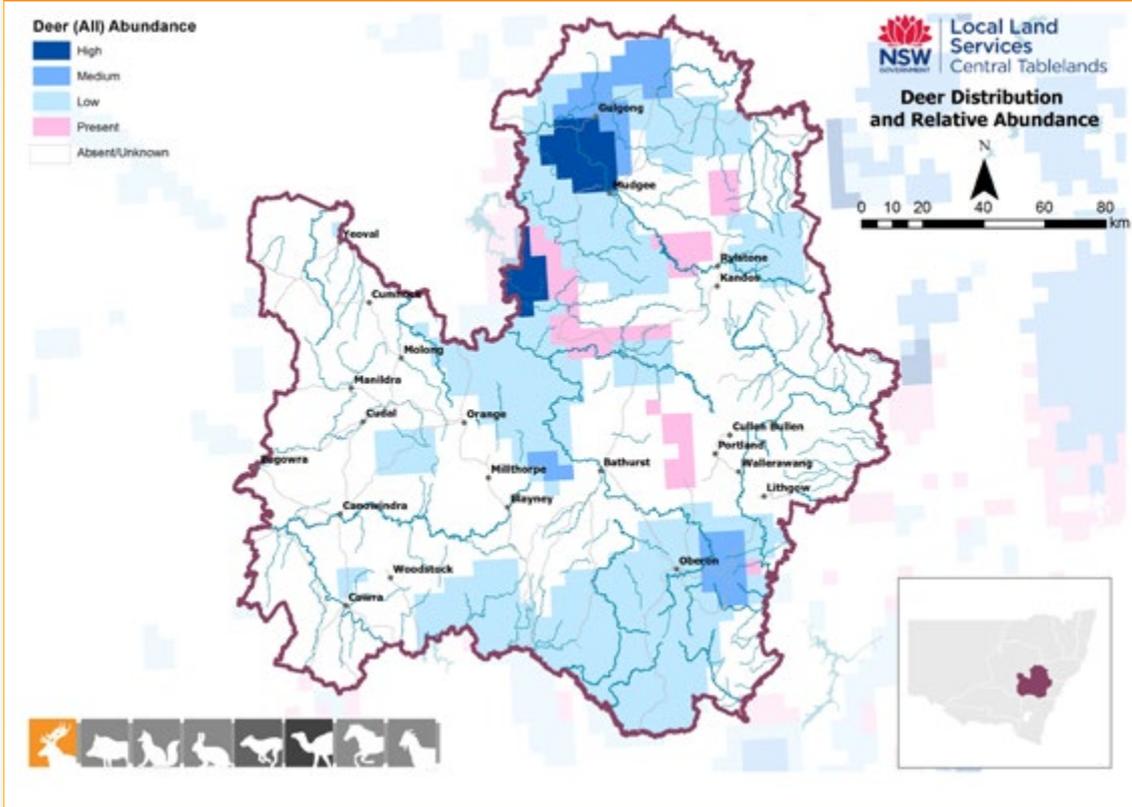
- Wild dog
- European red fox
- Feral pig
- Wild rabbit
- Feral goat
- Feral cat
- Wild deer present in the region
(Red, Rusa, Fallow and Sambar)
- European starling
- Indian myna
- Carp

The pest animal distribution maps in this plan are based on state-wide data compiled in 2016. The maps are at a coarse scale and provide general guidance only about pest animal distribution. A key priority for future implementation of this plan will be to improve reporting of pest animals to refine regional information collected on pest animal distribution and relative abundance. Improved information on distribution and abundance will better guide management and investment and assess effectiveness.

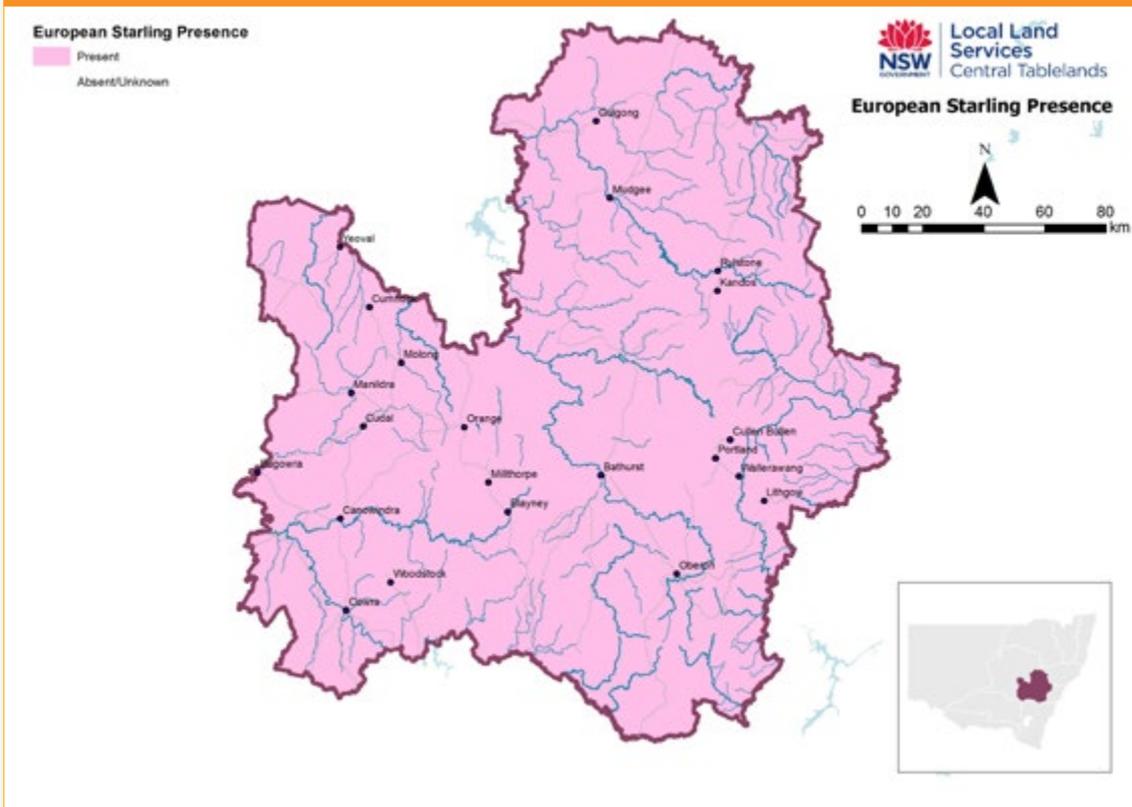


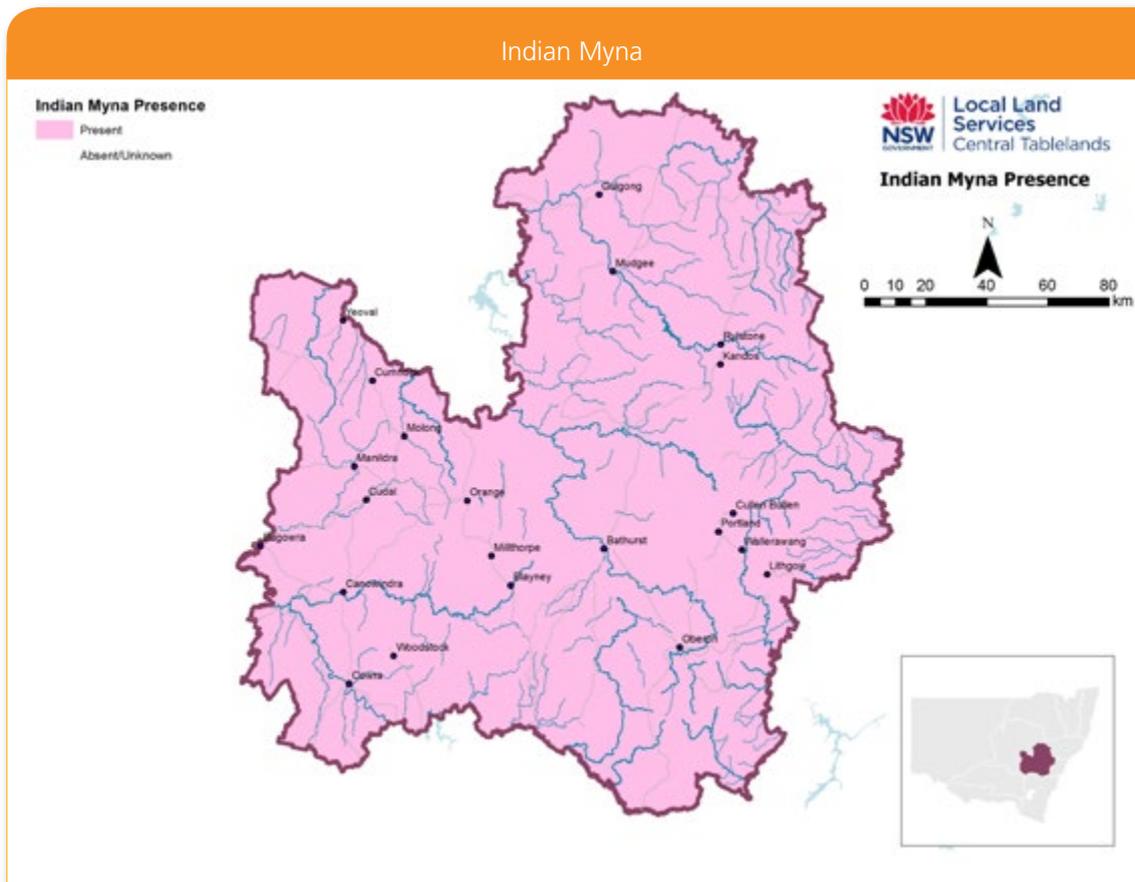


Wild Deer



European Starling





The pest animal distribution maps in this plan are based on statewide data compiled in 2016. The maps are at a coarse scale and provide general guidance only about pest animal distribution. A key priority for future implementation of this plan will be to improve reporting of pest animals to refine regional information collected on pest animal distribution and relative abundance. Improved information on distribution and abundance will better guide management and investment and assess effectiveness. .

Management objectives for priority pest species.

Common Name	Management Category	Section in Plan	Objective
 <p>Wild dog</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.1	<p>Reduce the impact of wild dogs on key assets.</p> <p>Increase numbers of landholders participating and area of land involved in broad scale control programs in areas known to have wild dog presence.</p> <p>Increase awareness of wild dog impacts and management strategies.</p> <p>Management groups established in any areas with identified wild dog presence or adjoining areas with the aim to containing the spread.</p>
 <p>European red fox</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.2	<p>Increase area of land involved in broad scale control programs</p> <p>Increase numbers of landholders participating in broad scale control programs.</p> <p>Increase awareness of European red fox impacts and management strategies.</p> <p>European red fox management groups established where key assets significantly impacted.</p>
 <p>Feral pig</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.3	<p>Decrease the area of land impacted and degree of impacts by feral pigs.</p> <p>Determine the biosecurity threat posed to livestock and zoonotic diseases.</p> <p>Increase awareness of feral pig impacts and management strategies.</p>
 <p>Wild rabbit</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.4	<p>Reduce the impacts of wild rabbits on key assets.</p> <p>Increase numbers of landholders participating in coordinated broad scale control programs.</p> <p>Increase awareness of rabbit impacts and management strategies.</p>
 <p>Feral goat</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.5	<p>Decrease the area of land impacted by feral goats.</p> <p>Increase participation in feral goat control.</p> <p>Reduce the environmental impacts caused by feral goats.</p> <p>Increase awareness of feral goat impacts and management strategies.</p> <p>Management groups established when agricultural or environmental impacts increase.</p>
 <p>Feral cat</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.6	<p>Increase awareness of cat impacts and management strategies.</p>
 <p>Deer (present in the region)</p>	Asset Based Protection	5.7	<p>Reduce the impact of wild deer on key assets.</p> <p>Increase numbers of landholders participating in broad scale control programs.</p> <p>Increase awareness of wild deer impacts and management strategies.</p> <p>Management groups established by landholders in any areas significantly impacted by wild deer.</p>

European starling	Asset Based Protection	5.8	Increase awareness of European starling impacts and management strategies.
Indian myna	Asset Based Protection	5.9	Increase awareness of Indian myna impacts and management strategies. Increase participation in management programs.
Carp	Asset Based Protection	5.10	Implement the national carp control plan.



Photo: C. Somerset

5.1 Species - Wild dog

Wild dogs include feral dogs and dingoes, which interbreed. Wild dogs kill and injure domestic stock and a wide range of native animals. Attacks on livestock can have significant financial and emotional impacts on landholders.

The primary focus of wild dog management is reducing the negative impacts of wild dogs on livestock across the region. The NSW Wild Dog Management Strategy 2017-2021, promotes a balance between managing wild dogs in areas where they have negative impacts and preserving the ecological role of dingoes.

Wild dogs impact across approximately half of the Central Tablelands Local Land Services region. In addition to the area indicated on the map there have been sightings west of Molong and south west of Orange in the later part of 2017.

Wild dog management plans should be landholder driven, developed to ensure recognised best practice control techniques and build on previous control programs established in the region.

A focus on strategic rather than reactive control, increased accuracy of reporting and increased interaction between land managers is critical. All priority areas identified within the wild dog management plan are integral to effective broad scale control.

Responses to predation and activity (e.g. sightings, howling, tracks) by land managers will be determined by the extent to which the problem can be defined and effective control options implemented. Landholder reporting of all sightings and stock loss is imperative.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impact of wild dogs on key assets Increase numbers of landholders participating and area of land involved in broad scale control programs in areas known to have wild dog presence	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Livestock (e.g. sheep, goats, calves, disease spread)	Ongoing strategic integrated control Ongoing coordination of groups	Public land managers, Private landholder groups, Individual landholders, Researchers	Spring Autumn Reactive
Management groups established in any areas with identified wild dog presence or adjoining areas with the aim to containing the spread.	New groups	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Livestock (e.g. sheep, goats, calves, disease spread)	Ongoing improvement in community participation in key areas	Public land managers, Private landholder groups, Individual landholders, Researchers	Year round

Increase awareness of wild dog impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local Land Services Government agencies Landholders	Year round
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Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from wild dog activity.

Land managers within high priority sites linked to wild dog impacts are expected to participate in strategic wild dog programs.

Control methods for wild dogs include baiting (ground and aerial application), trapping, shooting and exclusion fencing. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged. The reporting of wild dog management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.



5.2 Species - European red fox

European red foxes have been identified as having impacts on the environment and agriculture. European red foxes are nationally listed as a key threatening process to our wildlife and to threatened species in the region. They attack smaller livestock (e.g. lambs, poultry), pose a disease risk (hydatids) and spread weeds. European red foxes effectively occupy the entire region and extend well into urban areas scavenging for food.

There are European red fox baiting groups established by landholders across the region with the focus of reducing the impacts of foxes on livestock. There are also targeted programs to reduce their impacts on biodiversity. Long term landscape scale programs are needed to reduce European red fox numbers below critical thresholds to effectively protect threatened species.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts on agricultural production and the environment Increase participation in group control programs	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Livestock (e.g. sheep, goats, poultry, disease spread) Threatened species	Coordinated broad scale integrated control Individual integrated control Increase awareness of European red fox impacts and management strategies Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, website	Local Land Services, Public land managers, Private land manager groups,	Year round



Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from European red fox activity. To achieve this, the regional plan aims to improve participation and grow awareness of the environmental and economic impacts of European red foxes on the landscape.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic fox control on their land to protect assets on their land and adjoining lands.

Control methods for European red foxes include baiting, trapping, shooting, exclusion fencing and harbour destruction. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

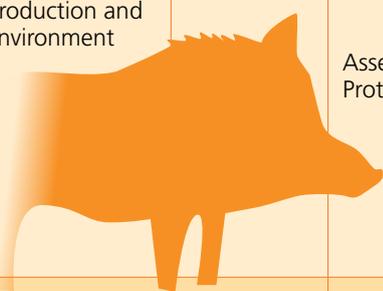
The reporting of European red fox management activity or impacts via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.3 Species - Feral pig

Feral pigs are a significant environmental and agricultural pest. They cause damage to the environment through wallowing, rooting for food, selective feeding and destroy crops and pasture, as well as habitat for native plants and animals. They also prey on a wide range of native animals including frogs, reptiles, birds and small mammals and also prey on young lambs.

Feral pigs create significant soil disturbance, altering drainage, increasing turbidity and sedimentation and greatly assisting the spread of weeds. Pigs can also carry disease and parasites that affect stock and pose a disease risk to humans (brucellosis). They are a major potential host of a number of exotic diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease.

Feral pigs occupy the majority of the region and most land uses. The primary focus of feral pig management in the region has been reactive to protect assets by individual landholders. More strategic co-ordinated control of feral pig numbers on a broad scale will assist addressing impacts before they have become problematic.



Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of feral pigs on agricultural production and environment	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Livestock (e.g. Lambs, disease spread), pastures, crops, water quality, infrastructure Threatened species and ecological communities	Coordinated broad scale integrated control Individual integrated control	Local Land Services Public land managers Private landholders	Year round
Determine the biosecurity threat posed to livestock and zoonotic diseases	Disease surveillance	Asset Based Protection		Sample collection from trapped feral pigs 7-11/2018 & 7-11/2022	Local Land Services Private and public land managers	7-11/2018 & 7-11/2022
Increase awareness of feral pig impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local Land Services Government agencies Landholders	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from feral pig activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic feral pig control on their land to protect assets on their land and adjoining lands.

Control methods for feral pigs include baiting, trapping, shooting and exclusion fencing. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of feral pig management activity or impacts via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.4 Species - Wild rabbit

Rabbits occupy the entire region except heavily forested natural areas. Rabbits have the potential to have a major impact on grazing, native flora, horticultural industries and gardens in the region. Rabbits are a key threatening process for flora species within the region.

Rabbits occupy a wide range of habitats, including native and modified grasslands, woodlands and urban environments. While numbers have been controlled with the calicivirus and myxomatosis, numbers can achieve high densities in some agricultural and suburban areas.

The primary focus for management of this species is a long-term reduction in rabbit numbers through coordinated integrated programs with harbour destruction as a key component where possible.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of wild rabbits on agriculture and the environment	Group based asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agricultural production (Cropping, Grazing)			Year round
	Individual asset protection					
Increase numbers of landholders participating in coordinated broad scale control programs	Group based control – Region wide	Asset Based Protection	Horticulture Viticulture Threatened species and ecological communities Community (Parks, Gardens, Community areas)	Strategic integrated programs Coordination of groups	Local Land Services Public land managers Private landholders	Year round
Increase awareness of rabbit impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	Improve community ability to detect, understand behaviours and manage rabbit incursions	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local Land Services Government agencies Landholders	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from rabbit activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic rabbit control on their land to protect assets on their land and adjoining lands.

Control methods for wild rabbits include baiting, biological control, harbour destruction, trapping, shooting and exclusion fencing. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

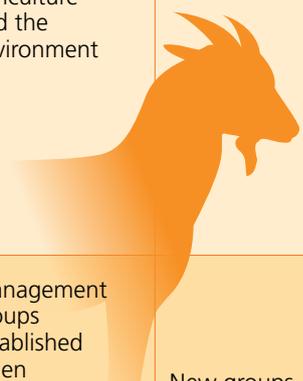
The reporting of wild rabbit management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.5 Species - Feral goat

Feral goats are a major agricultural and environmental pest, but also a commercial resource, providing income to farmers who muster them for sale. Feral goats compete with livestock and some native animals for pasture; contribute to land degradation through grazing and browsing and impact on biodiversity by damaging the vegetation and competing with native animals. Land managers need to understand the relationship between the density of feral goats and the damage they cause so that they can determine how to maximise the benefits compared to the costs of management. Damage by feral goats is most obvious in dry seasons.

At present the management of feral goats in the region is primarily through commercial harvesting (mustering and selling). Given this is a market-driven practice, landholders need to consider traditional trapping and shooting as effective and efficient management options.

Management of feral goats on public lands is necessary from time to time to reduce impacts on threatened species (such as Brush Tailed Rock wallaby and orchids). Isolated populations on public lands are to be removed entirely wherever possible and where mustering is supported on public lands, removal is to be complete. Where mustering is not practical on public lands, aerial shooting will be considered.



Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impact of feral goats on agriculture and the environment	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Pastures, Crops, Infrastructure Threatened species and ecological communities	Strategic and reactive integrated programs	Local Land Services Public land managers Private landholders	Year round
Management groups established when agricultural or environmental impacts increase	New groups	Asset Based Protection		Community meetings	Local Land Services Private and public landholders	Year round
Increase awareness of feral goat impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local Land Services Government agencies Landholders	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from feral goat activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic feral goat control on their land to protect assets on their land and adjoining lands.

Control methods for feral goats include trapping, shooting, mustering and exclusion fencing. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of feral goat management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.6 Species - Feral cat

Cats are a major threat to our wildlife in terms of predation and disease transmission. They are able to colonise a wide range of habitats, eat a wide range of prey, and can survive with limited access to water. They are a recognised threat to threatened species in the region. Cats can also pose a disease transmission threat to humans (toxoplasmosis, sarcosporidiosis) and commercial farming.

Feral cats occupy the entire region, but their density is not well known. They also extend well into regional towns and built up areas. At present control options for cats are limited and this means that broad-scale and landscape level control is both expensive and limited in effectiveness. A range of strategies and improved controlled methods (in development) are needed for meaningful management of cats in the region.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
 Minimise cat impacts on key assets	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - Livestock (e.g. poultry) Native wildlife Threatened species	Ongoing strategic integrated control Involvement in new cat control technology, research and trials	Local Land Services Public land managers Private landholders Researchers	Year round
Increase awareness of cat impacts and promote responsible pet ownership	Capacity building	NA	Improve community ability to understand behaviours and impacts on native species	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local Land Services Local government RSPCA Community	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

Land managers are encouraged to participate in research or trials in feral cat management.

Control methods for feral cats include trapping and shooting. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of feral cat management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.7 Species - Wild deer (Red, Rusa, Fallow, Sambar)

Fallow deer are a small deer species that tends to herd and stay closer to more open areas. They are the most widespread deer species in the region. All populations are likely to have originated from escaped or released animals from deer farms within the region.

Red deer are a large deer species that tends to herd and stay closer to more open areas. They are mainly in the southern and eastern parts of the region. All populations are likely to have originated from escaped or released animals from deer farms within or adjoining the region.

Rusa deer are a medium sized deer species that tends to herd and stay closer to more open areas and seminocturnal. There is an isolated population along the Macquarie River. This population originated from an introduction in the 1940s. The social and cultural value of the Rusa population is not known and the spread since its introduction is negligible. Eradication programs may take this into account in the allocation of resources.

Sambar deer is the largest deer species in Australia with males being loners and females in small groups up to five animals. They live mainly in heavily timbered areas. There is a known population east of Oberon but given their wary

and shy behaviour are likely to be more widely spread. Sambar has been spreading from an original population in eastern Victoria.

All deer species compete with livestock for pastures, can significantly impact on crops and have environmental impacts on shrubs and trees. All deer species because of their semi nocturnal habits and tendency to become disorientated in bright lights are a significant collision risk on roads. Mature males can become aggressive around the breeding season.

Control is limited to shooting which makes effective management of herd based species very difficult. Fencing can be used to exclude deer from assets but doesn't affect populations. The focus of land managers is on asset protection.



Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impact of wild deer on agriculture and environment	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture - (Crops, pastures, infrastructure) Threatened species and ecological communities Community impacts (Vehicle accidents)	Strategic integrated programs Coordination of groups in any areas significantly impacted	NSW DPI Local Land Services Public land managers Private landholders	Year round
Increase awareness of wild deer impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	DPI Local Land Services Government agencies Landholders	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from wild deer activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic wild deer control on their land to protect assets on their land and adjoining lands.

Shooting remains the only control tool for wild deer. Exclusion fencing can be used to protect assets. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of wild deer management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.8 Species - European starling

European starlings are adapted to a variety of habitats and are one of the most common species in lowland suburban and cleared agricultural areas of the south-east Australia. European starlings are generally sedentary but commonly make small regional movements according to food availability, particularly in cultivated and cleared agricultural areas with water availability very important.

Preferred night roosts are introduced plants with dense foliage including Africa boxthorn, hawthorn, willows, pines or concealed cavities in human structures. Damage to infrastructure is commonly reported, particularly the fouling of roof cavities with faecal matter and with nesting material. Environmental impacts, particularly the usurping of nest hollows is potentially serious for some native species.

European starlings cause significant damage to horticultural industries, particularly cherries, grapes, blueberries, olives, stone fruits, apples, pears and a range of vegetable crops. Fruit damage can start up to six weeks before harvest but increases in severity during ripening. European starlings also take grain from feedlots, storage areas, piggeries, dairies and poultry farms. European starlings also cause a biosecurity risk with possible spread of diseases, especially for intensive industries, and spread of weeds through seed dispersal.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of European starlings on agriculture and public infrastructure	Asset protection	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture – Viticulture, Horticulture Public infrastructure	Strategic integrated programs	Local government, private landholders	Year round
Increase awareness of European starling impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	NA	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local government Government agencies Landholders NSW DPI	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from European starling activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic European starling control on their land to protect assets on their land.

Control methods for European starlings include trapping, shooting, netting and scare guns. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of European starling management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.9 Species - Indian myna

This species is sedentary. No seasonal movements and only localised dispersal patterns are evident in Australia. Density is therefore highest after the young leave the nest between December and March and lowest during the early stages of breeding in the following season. Intermittent juvenile or adult dispersal can occur along main roads and railways and may become more frequent as populations increase. The most effective time for coordinated control is when young are dispersing.

Indian mynas are highly adaptable omnivorous scavengers and feed on a variety of food scraps, fruits, vegetables, grains, seeds, flowers, nectar, young birds, eggs and invertebrates and their larvae. Indian mynas can cause considerable damage to ripening fruit, particularly grapes.

Indian mynas are regularly observed to usurp nests and hollows, kill the young and destroy the eggs of native bird species. Indian mynas are territorial and impact on other bird species breeding and feeding patterns.

Objective	Program name/area	Management category	Assets (where relevant)	Activities	Participants	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of Indian myna on agriculture, public infrastructure and the environment	Awareness program	Asset Based Protection	Agriculture – Viticulture, Horticulture Public infrastructure Competition with native birds	Strategic integrated programs	Local government, private landholders	Year round
Increase awareness of Indian myna impacts and management strategies	Capacity building	Asset Based Protection	NA	Disseminate information via field days, social media, e-newsletters, websites	Local government Government agencies Landholders NSW DPI	Year round

Expectations and control options for land managers

It is the expectation of land managers to be able to operate their business without significant impacts from Indian myna activity.

Land managers are expected to undertake strategic Indian myna control to protect assets on their land.

Control methods for Indian mynas include trapping, shooting, netting and scare guns. Participation in research into new management options is encouraged.

The reporting of Indian myna management activity via Feral Scan is also encouraged.

5.10 Species - Carp

Common carp are a major environmental pest that have impacted on a wide range of native species and have added to turbidity in many catchments. Once confined to the Murray Darling basin Common carp have since been introduced to many coastal catchments in NSW and now occur in every major catchment in the region.

Almost all fish species are difficult to control once established, but species specific biological controls offer some hope in controlling widespread aquatic pest species, in the same way that the calicivirus has had a big impact on rabbit numbers.

The strategy and focus of management for carp in the region will be to support any Commonwealth or NSW government biological control programs.

6. Measuring success and continuous improvement

The development and monitoring toward key performance indicators (KPIs) is a critical component of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP. Monitoring indicators provides information needed to:

- identify priorities for immediate and future management planning
- evaluate previous or current programs (including both control and community engagement activities)
- improve understanding and knowledge about pest animal densities, current and potential range and their current and potential impacts
- raise community awareness of current and potential problems and opportunities for prevention and control.

6.1 Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) have been set to ensure practices are effective and achieving outcomes. These are focused at a regional scale to ensure the implementation of programs deliver effective outcomes for the pest animals outlined in the Central Tablelands RSPAMP. State-wide objectives and metrics for key species and goals will be formulated over the next 12 months to ensure a collaboration of regional planning efforts. These state-wide objectives will align with overarching goals and objectives set across plans and will be informed by overarching plans such as the NSW Invasive Species plan and NSW Biosecurity Strategy.

The KPIs set in the Central Tablelands RSPAMP will be monitored and reviewed annually to ensure targeted progress on key programs and pest animals. This section will address how monitoring and evaluation of the KPIs will take place and to review the Central Tablelands RSPAMP for continuous improvement.

6.1.1 State-wide KPIs

Providing a coherent story about the impact of the RSPAMPs across the State will require a coordinated Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework. This will focus regional MERI programs to targeted evaluations on important outcomes which will be able to be aggregated to a State level to provide information on progress on pest animal density and distribution and its impact on economic, social and environmental issues.

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Develop consistent state-wide pest animal data metrics	Metrics are developed and RPACs are reporting on the metrics in a consistent manner	Implemented by July 2019
Develop a consistent MERI process for RSPAMPs	MERI process established to guide monitoring and management of pest animals in NSW for oversight by SPAC	Implemented by July 2019

6.2.1 Species KPIs

Wild dog

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Minimise the impact of wild dogs on key assets	Reports of stock losses	Quarterly
Increase numbers of landholders participating and area of land involved in broad scale control programs in areas known to have wild dog presence	Number of land managers in local wild dog plan areas participating in baiting programs	Annually
Management groups established in any areas with identified wild dog presence or adjoining areas with the aim to containing the spread	Management groups formed when wild dogs are identified in an area	Within four months of confirmation of presence

European red fox

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of foxes on agricultural production and the environment	Increase area of land involved in broad scale control programs	December 2021
Increase participation in group control programs	Increased number of landholders undertaking baiting programs	Annually

Feral pig

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of feral pigs on agricultural production and environment	Area of land where feral pig baiting is implemented	January annually
Determine the biosecurity threat posed to livestock and zoonotic diseases	Number of feral pig post mortem tests from across region, 2018 & 2022	Dec 2018 & Dec 2022

Wild rabbit

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Reduce the impacts of wild rabbits on key assets	Increased number of landholders undertaking baiting programs	January annually
Increase numbers of landholders participating in coordinated broad scale control programs	Increase in land area being baited in rabbit control programs	January annually

Feral goat

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Reduce the impacts of feral goats on individual identified assets	Number of goats controlled within Nangar, Goobang National Parks (PWIS)	July annually

Feral cat

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Increase awareness of cat impacts and promote responsible pet ownership	OEH, Local government, Local Land Services promote feral and domestic cat impacts at three local events	January annually

Wild deer (Fallow, Red, Rusa, Sambar)

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Minimise the impact of wild deer on agriculture and environment	Local wild deer plans in place where significant impacts reported	June 2020
Increase awareness of wild deer impacts and management strategies	Increased number of reports from community on activity	December 2021

European starling

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Minimise the impacts of European starlings on agriculture and public infrastructure	Reduced reports of damage to viticulture from 3 indicator sites	June annually

Indian myna

Objective	Indicator	Timeframe
Reduce the impacts of Indian mynas on agricultural, environmental and community assets	Reduced reports of damage to horticulture from 3 indicator sites	June annually

6.2 Measuring performance

Reporting will occur on an annual basis based on the KPIs identified in the Central Tablelands RSPAMP. A formal monitoring, evaluation, reporting and investigation process will be implemented by July 2019 to improve regional and state-wide collaboration and reporting on pest animal indicators across NSW.

Improved intelligence on key pest animals will lead to more efficient management tools and outcomes.

6.3 Plan review

A mid-term review of the Central Tablelands RSPAMP will be undertaken at year three (2021) and a full review will be undertaken nearing the end of the five-year term for this plan (2023).



Photo: Andrew Cooke

7. The Biosecurity Act

The *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015* is a new piece of legislation that allows improved management of biosecurity risks in NSW to enable landholders, community, industry and government effectively manage and respond to biosecurity incursions and risks.

A fundamental principle of the *Act* is that biosecurity is everyone’s responsibility. All land managers, regardless of whether on private or public land, have the same responsibilities. Likewise, the general community have a role to play in reducing risks through their activities and as ‘eyes and ears’ on the lookout for any potential new risks. A general biosecurity duty under the *Act* requires that anyone who knows or ought to reasonably know about a biosecurity risk has a duty to prevent, eliminate or minimise that risk as far as reasonably practicable.

The *Act* includes a number of mechanisms (regulatory tools) that can be used to manage biosecurity risks such as pest animals in NSW. Landholders, industry and community should be familiar with these tools and what they require of them in their daily practices.

Further information in the NSW Biosecurity legislation can be found at the NSW DPI website - <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/biosecurity-legislation>

Figure 4: Regulatory tools of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

Regulatory tools: NSW Biosecurity Act 2015

Biosecurity Regulation 2017 Biosecurity Regulation (NLIS) 2017 Biosecurity Order (Permitted Activities) 2017



General Biosecurity Duty: Managing the impact and spread of pest animals.
E.g. You are discharging your GBD if you are implementing an on-farm biosecurity plan

Biosecurity Management Tools

PROHIBITED MATTER	Listed in Schedule 2 of the Act. It is an offence to deal with prohibited matter. If a person becomes aware of, or suspects the presence of prohibited matter they have a duty to prevent, eliminate or minimise the risk or potential risk it may cause E.g. Hendra Virus, Foot and mouth Disease, Avian Influenza
CONTROL ORDER	Can be made by the Minister or delegate to establish a control zone, establish measures in connection with a control zone to prevent, eliminate minimise and manage a biosecurity impact. e.g. Disposal of contaminated stock to prevent entering the food chain
PROHIBITED DEALING	A dealing with biosecurity matter described in Schedule 3 of the Act. e.g. Non indigenous animals such as African Pygmy Hedgehog
BIOSECURITY ZONES	A zone established to a premises, specified area or part of the state to prevent, eliminate, minimise or manage a biosecurity risk or impact. Generally used where longer term management is required. e.g. Phylloxera Exclusion Zone in Riverina
BIOSECURITY DIRECTIONS: GENERAL	Issued by an authorised officer to the general public or class of persons e.g. at a sale yard
BIOSECURITY DIRECTIONS: INDIVIDUAL	Issued to a single person by an authorised officer, either orally (followed up in writing within 7 days) or by notice in writing. e.g. A direction to a landholder to implement Foot rot program
BIOSECURITY UNDERTAKINGS	A negotiated set of actions agreed to by an individual and accepted by an authorised officer. Both parties are signatories

8. Further information

Plan to manage biosecurity risks

The Central Tablelands RSPAMP can be used by landholders and community members to understand manage and mitigate risks associated pest animal management in the region.

Organisations may choose to apply for funding/allocate resources to support strategic pest animal projects.

The activities outlined in the Central Tablelands RSPAMP can be used by relevant landholders and community members in the area as guidelines for discharging their general biosecurity duty to improve pest animal management. Pest animal requirements under the Biosecurity Order Permitted Activities, which is updated from time to time, should also be considered by landholders and the general community.

Use the Central Tablelands RSPAMP as a guide to mitigate your risks in your on-farm biosecurity plan to ensure you are effectively managing pest animals in the most effective and efficient manner.

Educate yourself

While the Central Tablelands RSPAMP sets a benchmark for integrated pest animal management across the region, there are a number of alternative mechanisms that can be used to meet individual general biosecurity duty and individuals are encouraged to utilise the following resources as well as contact their Local Land Services office for further information.

Resources:

- Local Land Services
- Office of Environment and Heritage (National Parks and Wildlife)
- Department of Primary Industries
- PestSmart Connect
- FeralScan.

Monitor your environment

- Be aware of changes in the landscape around you
- Report anything unusual. If you become aware of unusual animals in the wrong place or illegal activities such as the movement, keeping, breeding and sale of controlled category nonindigenous animals, report it as soon as possible
- Discuss ongoing monitoring programs and techniques with Local Land Services
- Ensure you keep up to date with any government and industry changes.

Comply

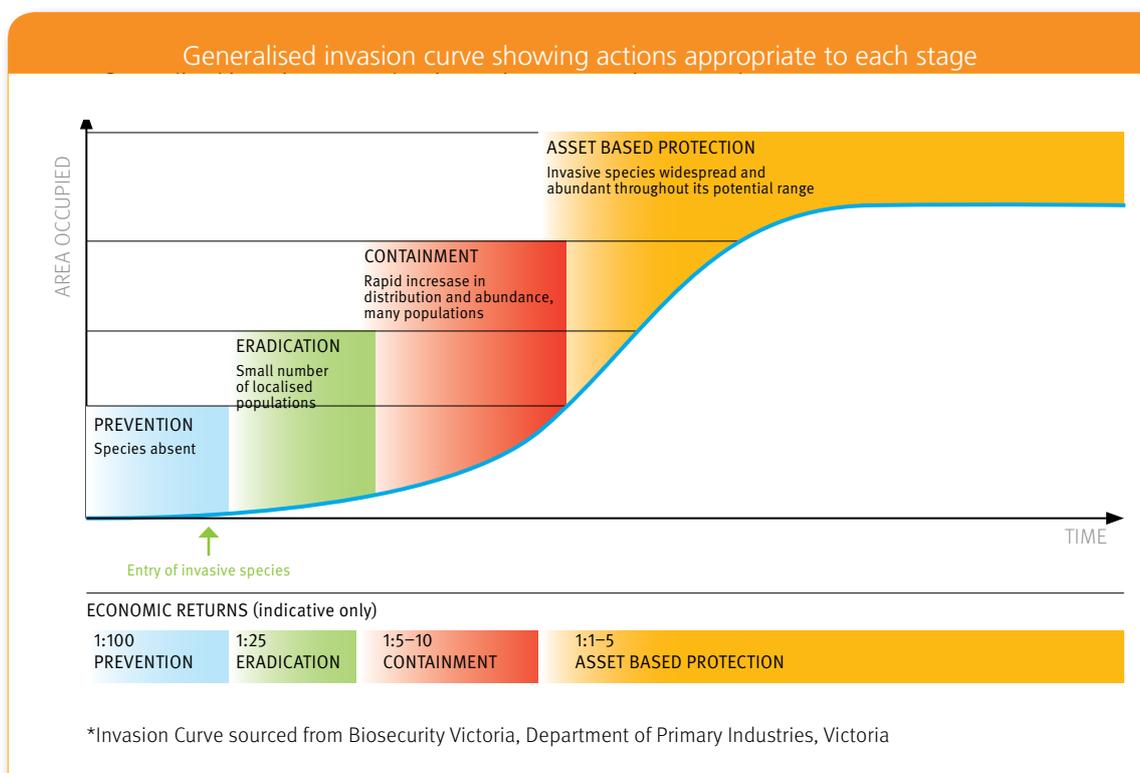
- Ensure you meet the requirements set out in both your on-farm biosecurity plan and any other on farm biosecurity plans for properties you deal with
- Ensure you are aware of and comply with specific legislation for pest animals.

Appendix 1: Prioritisation Process

Public and private land managers have limited resources to manage pest animals and it is therefore important to prioritise activities. Important considerations for prioritisation are:

- It is generally more cost-effective to prevent the establishment of pest animals into new areas through prevention and early intervention (eradication or containment of small isolated populations) than to have to fund ongoing management of established species (see Figure 5)
- For established species, resources should focus on managing the pest animals and areas where there is the greatest impact on a valued 'asset' (e.g. protecting an endangered native animal from fox predation or a sheep production area from wild dogs) – this is known as 'Asset-based Protection'
- The feasibility of management needs to be considered and this will depend on the availability of approved cost-effective control techniques and any biogeographic limitations (e.g. difficult terrain or potential impact of control techniques on non-target species).

Figure 5: The 'Invasion Curve', showing the importance of allocating resources to prevent the establishment of new pests. (Agriculture Victoria)



In developing lists of priority pest animals and management areas, RPAMPs have considered the South Australian Pest Animal Risk Management Guide and prioritisation tool:

http://pir.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/254222/SA_pest_animal_risk_assessment_guide_Sept2010.pdf

The South Australian prioritisation tool accounts for pest animal impacts and the feasibility of effectively reducing those impacts and allocates management of particular pest animals in particular areas into one of four categories: Limited Action, Asset-based Protection, Containment or Eradication.

'Limited Action' will be the likely management approach for introduced species that aren't considered to have a significant impact in a particular area and/or for which there is currently a lack of effective management options.

There are 64 terrestrial and freshwater aquatic exotic vertebrates that have established wild populations in NSW however, many of these will fall into the 'Limited Action' category and the focus of RPAMPs will be on a much smaller list of high priority pest impacts.

'Eradication' or 'Containment' are generally only realistic management options for new incursions and small isolated populations of species where this is a good selection of control techniques available.

