

**Hunter Regional Pest Animal Committee**

**9 May 2018**

**Communique**

The Hunter Regional Pest Animal Committee met to review the feedback from the public exhibition of the draft Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan in May. The draft Plan was the subject of three public meetings in Gloucester, Scone and Tocal and a targeted consultation meeting with the Aboriginal community. There were 38 submissions online along with those comments received at public meetings making a total of 128 individual points that were considered through the public consultation process. The Committee thanks all those that took the time to comment on the plan, your input will make for a better Plan.

The final draft of the Plan has been provided for consideration to the State LLS team and from there will go to the Ministers office for his consideration. If all goes to plan this will mean that the Plan will be released on 1 July 2018.

On the LLS operations front there has been wide spread release of the rabbit virus RHDV over 30 sites across the region. There has been a 65% knockdown so far in the monitoring with more monitoring still happening. Wild dog ground baiting is currently underway with up to 18,000 baits on private land. The aerial baiting program is rolling out on May 14 and 15 with 29,000 baits over two coordinated programs with NPWS. There has been noted success with professional wild dog controllers operating in concert with the ground baiting in Manning Great Lakes area and in the Upper Hunter 2 x 30 day blocks of professional controllers have resulted in a very successful program

All members of the committee reported back on high levels of activity on pest control in the last few months. Of particular note was the changes that the drought seem to be having on dog harbouring behaviour, but recent rain along the coast has led to more sightings.

The committee will meet again on 4 July