

To the committee members of the legislative council inquiry into the wild Fallow Deer population in Tasmania

I have been a keen deer hunter for around 25 years, I have been an Australian Deer Association member for 12 years, and I currently serve on the executives as a local branch and a state branch secretary. I'm also a member of the Tasmanian Deer Advisory Committee (TDAC) as a property representative and a committee member. I am not representing either organization for this enquiry; these are my personal views in this submission.

Tasmania's wild Fallow Deer have been on Tasmanian soil since the early 1830's, a bit more than 30 years longer than our world renowned Brown Trout have been swimming in our waterways. Our Tasmanian wild deer, like our brown trout can never be categorized as a feral species. Except for a few isolated pockets of deer around the state, the deer in our traditional deer range and where they have spread to the extended deer range were released for a sporting purpose, they were introduced for the sole purpose to be hunted, and they did not escape from farm yard operations. The highly respected official body the World Organization of Animal Health uses the definition for wild animals as follows.

- Those animals that do not live under human supervision or control and do not have their phenotype selected by humans.
- Feral animals are those animals that do not live under human supervision or control but their phenotypes is(or has been) selected by humans

These points define our Tasmanian Fallow deer herd in the traditional and the extended deer range as wild not feral

Wild Fallow Deer have the same status as Brown Trout in Tasmania, partly protected and I strongly believe that this status should remain for the following reasons.

Our wild Fallow Deer are a valuable asset and like our Brown trout they are the purest form of their species in the world, also like our Brown trout they are disease free which is unique compared to Europe and the Americas, they fit in very well with Tasmania's clean green image. Our deer herd is admired by sportsman and woman of all walks in life, both from interstate and internationally. The Tasmanian wild Fallow deer herd is acknowledged to be the best managed deer herd in the world second only to the Whitetail deer of North America and one of most successful in quality terms. This status came about from the interaction of wildlife biologists from the U.S and concerned hunters from Tasmania and interstate, who developed the Tasmanian version of Quality Deer Management (QDM), which is the corner stone of Property Based Game Management Plans (PBGMP) in Tasmania. I know the principles of both QDM and PBGMP have been well explained by other likeminded hunters submitting submissions to this enquiry.

Deer hunting, like our Trout fishing is, part of our Tasmanian outdoor culture, especially so in the midlands and central highland regions of the state where the deer seasons are eagerly anticipated and have been anticipated by generations of families. The numbers of people who are taking up deer hunting are increasing with license sales in excess of 5,000, these people are a huge boost weekly to regional country towns inside and bordering the traditional deer range during the March

buck season and also the late Autumn and early winter second antlerless season, giving these towns a much needed boost to their economies in the slow months after the peak summer periods.

Property owners who have taken up PBGM's gain many benefits from the deer and the hunters who hunt their property under the PBGM principals. Property owners ask everything from doing the odd property maintenance jobs through to paying up to \$1,500 per hunter for the privilege of hunting for a trophy buck or meat deer on their land. In addition these hunters are controlling native browsing animals such as Bennett's and Rufous wallaby (Pademelon), Brushtail Possum and also helping to reduce excess deer numbers and Forester Kangaroo when needed under the crop protection permit system.

The majority of property owners don't mind a deer herd on their property as long as the numbers are kept to reasonable levels. Some property owners within the core deer range and outside of the core deer range don't want them at all and that's fine, it's their land and their business. There are plenty of legal avenues open to reduce the deer numbers to a level that they can live with through the Game Management Unit.

While keeping native grazing animal numbers down while hunting under their PBGM's, hunters are also out and about when other very destructive pest animals are around, namely feral cats. Feral cats are an ever present and increasing problem all over Tasmania and the numbers really get out of control when there are no hunters in the field. This has really hit home in many areas where conservation conservancies have bought former private forest companies that had previously been spotlighted regularly by shooters culling wallaby under crop protection permits. Feral Cats do most of their hunting at night, these conservancy's don't allow wallaby to be culled at all, the feral cats have a free reign and their numbers grow unhindered, they aren't getting culled incidentally by shooters in the field. This situation is very prominent around the Bronte Park area, in recent years feral cat numbers have increased alarmingly since the forestry operations have wound up.

Hunter presence on private property is also beneficial to property security while there are people around that are supposed to be, it ensures those that aren't are kept away. Property owners get these valuable services for free allowing them to concentrate on running their core business. Any future strategies such as de-regulating the herd or commercializing will destroy this state of harmony between property owners, hunters and the regional community as well as the quality of the deer herd that has been built up over the last two to three decades.

I believe Fallow deer don't belong in the World Heritage Areas and management practices should reflect this principle. I do believe though that environmental impacts of Fallow deer, are insignificant compared to the huge number of Bennett's and Rufous Wallaby in many areas of the World Heritage Area (W.H.A) and reserves such as the Central Highlands Conservation Area(C.H.C.A) and many other nature reserves in and around the deer range. I have personally witnessed evidence of kerosene bushes and other native shrubs being ring barked by high numbers of Wallaby on central highland marshes when the marshes have been covered with water during the wetter winter and spring months. The Wallaby can't feed on the inundated native grasses so they turn to foraging what they can, surely an indication that wallaby numbers have exceeded the carry capacity of the area? Fallow Deer are known as a "Park Deer" in England and Europe because they much prefer open improved pastures, they are browsers and don't forage well. There are deer in some areas of the W.H.A and certainly the C.H.C.A but their numbers are low when compared to improved pastures on

private properties and can easily be controlled with a Balloted hunting system. Balloted hunting is currently conducted on several selected C.H.C.A land blocks for the 6 weekend buck season but there needs to be more areas made available and the hunting should also include the second antlerless season. This brings us to another management option. To help in reducing deer numbers in these more sensitive areas and other public land such as Forestry Tasmania land, the second antlerless season I believe, needs to be lengthened. The T.D.A.C recently put forward 6 proposals for changes to the Buck and antlerless deer seasons in Tasmania, one of these proposals was to extend the second antlerless season to coincide with the antlerless culling period which ends at the end of October, the Tasmanian Farmers and Grazers association (TFGA) didn't agree with the proposal, so the proposal wasn't implemented. I believe this was a bad decision and can only be a negative.

There are several commercial deer farms in Tasmania that survived the failed venison farming "Fad" that evolved in the 1990's. Surely these operators can supply any operation that aims to supply or utilize Venison for small gourmet venison market. These operations survived the Deer farming "Fad" failure, they must be exceptional operations! The quality control is already in place with the few deer farms that have remained viable. Venison quality, age and the sex of the animal is far easier to choose from in a purpose designed farm paddock during day light hours than out in run country under a spotlight? Many other factors will come into play if commercial shooting was to be implemented instead of PBGMP's just a few are noted here

- Commercial operators aren't likely to pay a premium price for animals; it's a job to them not a recreation. Property owners will miss out monetary wise.
- Commercial shooters aren't likely to waste time culling Wallaby and Possum while trying to maximize their tally of deer, other methods namely poisoning using 1080 would have to become a factor again
- Will not carry out property maintenance
- Will very much so be restricted by property conditions, such as wet paddocks, inclement weather or rough ground
- If conditions are conducive to efficient shooting they will just move onto a "better property"
- Commercial operators aren't likely to keep records of sightings of other wild life and numbers observed, numbers of does compared to bucks seen, fetus weights or body measurements of animals taken. This information is logged by hunters operating under PBGMP's which provide valuable information for deer herd management practices.
- Commercial shooting will be very much demand driven
- Commercial shooters won't offer the stability, security and ownership that a stable group of hunters operating under a PBGMP provide to a property owner.

All the benefits that go with the various PBGMP's would dissolve for the landowner if the commercial shooting option was taken up. The two are never likely to co-exist on the same property. As has been stated previously PBGMP's are based on the property hunting groups conducting various tasks, paying a nominated fee and culling grazing animals for the privilege of having the chance to harvest a quality buck during the buck season or having regular access to meat animals during the antlerless seasons. Hunting groups aren't likely to hang around if a commercial shooting operation is operating on their hunting property when the quality of the deer herd diminishes.

We have a very successful system in place to manage deer numbers in Tasmania but it certainly needs to be dynamic and proactive for all stakeholders. We have to look at new options for the increasing number of hunters who are getting into deer hunting. Many private properties are "tied up" by hunter groups making it very difficult for new comers to gain access to prime hunting areas. We need to be making more areas of the C.H.C.A, nature reserves and parts of the W.H.A. available to these hunters as well as encouraging private land owners to allow easier access through their properties to adjoining public land.

Give hunters hunting in fringe areas, or harder to hunt forestry areas the extended 2nd antlerless season to the end of October to help "fill" their tags. The extended season will also reduce the number of cull tags that need to be issued and reduce the work load for the G.M.U

Sound suppressors or moderators need to be looked into for use in Tasmania. Sound suppressors fitted to rifles are legal and used very effectively in the United Kingdom and New Zealand for culling work against large herds of Deer and pest animals such as feral Goats. The loud report of a high powered rifle will immediately alarm and disperse mobs of animals, reducing the chance of harvesting more than one animal at a time from a mob. The reduced report of a suppressed rifle is less alarming for deer and they are more likely to stand around looking for the cause of the sound enabling several animals to be harvested from a mob feeding on a crop or under a pivot irrigator. Suppressed rifles are also beneficial for hunting on smaller acreages that have a population of deer, as people on neighboring properties would be less alarmed by a much quieter rifle report. There would be benefits for quieter rifle reports in the W.H.A. as well.

I believe that hunting deer with Archery tackle also needs to be investigated for hunting Fallow deer in Tasmania. Bow hunting for deer is legal in every other state except for Tasmania. In the United States and Canada bow hunting is massive, there are separate Archery seasons for all of their deer species in North America. Having a bow season in Tasmania would encourage more hunters into the field, there is a small but growing population of bow hunters in Tasmania but they are only allowed to hunt non game and nonnative species (Rabbits & Hares). There have been calls for a future Bow season, I think it needs to happen and it will open up more options for hunters and property owners. Small acreages and sensitive natural areas would be ideal for Archery Tackle, bow hunting by nature is stealthy, no rifle report and very little disturbance to surroundings, some property owners may be more open to letting hunters on their land if only Archery tackle was used. Of course encouraging more hunters into regional areas has a flow on effect to small communities as well. Being able to bow hunt would give our deer herd a higher profile to dedicated mainland archers too, encouraging

more hunters to visit the state. There would have to be certain measures in place to measure competency and to set draw weights minimums etc. if Archery tackle though, if it was to become reality.

In conclusion I'd like to say that Tasmania's wild Fallow deer, like our Brown Trout are Tasmanian icons of the midlands and highlands areas. The deer are a valuable resource for regional areas, hunters and farmers and real asset when managed properly. Yes deer do need their populations reduced at times and they shouldn't be in sensitive areas such as the W.H.A. or outside of the traditional deer range. There are plenty of avenues in place to counteract any problem through the G.M.U and with the culling tag system. There is also the very handy and cheap option of the recreational hunter who is only too willing to gain an area to hunt or to hunt longer for the opportunity to fill their freezer with venison or put a nice set of antlers on the wall.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views and opinions for this enquiry

Regards

Shane Broadby

Bellerive, Tasmania

Allison Waddington

From: Shane Broadby <shane.broadby@bigpond.com>
Sent: Thursday, 30 June 2016 5:03 AM
To: DEER
Subject: Legislative Council Fallow Deer population inquiry
Attachments: Fallow Deer Enquiry.doc; ATT00001.txt

Please see attached my submission to the Legislative Council inquiry into the wild Fallow Deer population in Tasmania
Regards Shane Broadby Bellerive, Tasmania