

Naomi Rakela

20 March 2014

Ms Lauren Mesiti  
Committee Clerk  
Public Administration Committee  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Perth WA 6000

Dear Ms Mesiti

**SUBMISSION – INQUIRY INTO RECREATIONAL HUNTING SYSTEMS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**Terms of Reference**

That the Council -

- (a) acknowledges the use in other States of regulated, licensed recreation hunting systems and the potential environmental contribution made in controlling pest animals on public lands, together with the possible economic, cultural and recreational benefits to the community; and
- (b) directs that -
  - (i) the Public Administration Committee inquire into the benefits or otherwise of a similar system being adopted in Western Australia and report back to the House by 4 December 2014; and
  - (ii) Hon Rick Mazza be co-opted as a member to the Public Administration Committee for the purposes of the foregoing inquiry.

**SUBMISSION**

I object to recreational hunting on public land and national parks in Western Australia for a number of reasons which are outlined below.

**RISKS TO HUMAN SAFETY AND OTHER ANIMALS**

Recreational hunting results in a risk to human safety as well as the risk to other animals including WA wildlife. Many non-target species are likely to be disturbed by shooters and this may impact upon species and breeding.

There have also been cases where hunters have accidentally shot fellow hunters. Refer to:

- Drunk hunter in court over accidental shooting of mate near Willow Tree (April 2013)  
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-04-22/4644480>
- Man accidentally shot during hunting trip (March 2013)  
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-03-25/man-accidentally-shot-during-hunting-trip/4592320>
- Teenage boys accidentally shot by hunter (April 2012)  
<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/national/teenage-boys-accidentally-shot-by-hunter/story-e6frg15u-1226315808221>
- Hunter accidentally shoots himself in chest (February 2012)  
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/hunter-accidentally-shoots-himself-hit-in-chest/story-e6freuzi-1226263238515>
- Duck Hunting Protester Accidentally Shot in The Face (March 2011)

<http://huntandshoot.com.au/articles/hunting-shooting-news/duck-hunting-protester-accidentally-shot-in-the-face/>

## **SCIENCE**

There is no scientific evidence that supports recreational shooting significantly impacts on so called "pest" or "feral" animals in the short or long term. There is also a conflict of interest in that shooters and hunters will want parks and public lands to remain well stocked with animals to hunt. Evidence suggests that people are illegally releasing domestic pigs into natural areas for recreational pig hunting. When there are no non-native animals left shooters will invariably want to kill other animals such as wildlife.

## **TRESPASS**

I regularly experience people trespassing on my land to shoot and kill (with guns and knives) animals. I have been threatened by trespassers on my own property. Trespassers have both driven and walked onto my property a number of times and on one occasion left a large hunting knife on my firebreak. They had dogs in armoured suits and told me it was their right to enter my private property to kill animals and that they were doing me a favour. These experiences have left me fearful and intimidated to walk on my own property.

Trespass has been associated with the allowance of hunting in the Eastern States and recently evidenced with the former head of the NSW Game Council being convicted for that and other charges "Game council boss convicted on hunting, gun charges" (14 November 2014)  
<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/game-council-boss-convicted-on-hunting-gun-charges-20140213-32nd9.html>

## **REGULATION AND MONITORING**

It is likely there will be no or little monitoring and regulation of hunting activities that occur. How does the Committee propose that this activity will be regulated and monitored? As a property owner backing onto a national park I find this highly unacceptable. Evidence suggests where recreational hunting has been allowed in the Eastern States shooters and hunters have regularly trespassed and shot animals on private land. (Four Corners)

Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW) already does not have the resources to monitor the vast area of land it is responsible for.

## **NOISE**

To listen to people shooting guns and killing animals is both noisy and distressing. I purchased a property to be at one with nature, not to be exposed to people shooting and hunting adjacent or on my property. I joined DPaW's Land for Wildlife program to ensure that wildlife had a safe haven. However with people trespassing via the adjacent national park I have not been able to provide a safe environment to these animals.

## **CONTRADICTS THE PURPOSE OF NATIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC LAND**

Allowing recreational shooting in National Parks is counter to the central aim of national parks, which is to provide protection to fauna and flora.

Allowing recreational shooting and hunting on public land and National Parks contradicts the aim of providing recreational opportunities for the general public. Many people go to national parks to observe wildlife. Other visitors come for peace and relaxation and a feeling of oneness with nature.

**INHUMANE**

It is unlikely animal welfare aspects will be properly adhered to. RSPCA records suggest the animals to be shot under this type of proposal have no assurances of a quick end.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The shooting and hunting lobby are primarily motivated by the thrill of the hunt and arguing that they need more opportunities than the many they already have.

The Hon Rick Mazza, being a member of the Shooters and Fishers Party, should not be an eligible member of this committee as he has a conflict of interest.

The elimination of "feral" or "pest" animals from public lands and national parks should not become a sport to be enjoyed.

I oppose any form of hunting on public land.

Yours faithfully

Naomi Rakela