



Community | Volunteering | Response |
Environment | Conservation | Sustainability
ACN 662 157 011 | ABN 21 662 157 011

Tuesday, 13 September 2022

The Hon. James Henry Griffin MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage

CC: info@environment.nsw.gov.au; monaro@parliament.nsw.gov.au;
bathurst@parliament.nsw.gov.au;

**RE: Horse cull in Kosciuszko National Park near Kiandra Historic Site
September 2022**

Dear Minister,

We recognise that all introduced species are a threat to biodiversity. Culling of introduced animal species is unfortunate yet necessary to control populations. We write to you not to disparage the humane culling or removal of introduced species, but to condemn validated reports of that the cull in question was poorly managed and executed. The facts are disturbing.

The wild horse cull took place several days ago around the Kiandra Historic Site. The horses appeared to be professionally shot under the directive of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. However, some horses were not humanely put down, including pregnant mares.

What is particularly disturbing was the methods utilised by authorities. Their complete disregard for public health, safety and visibility is beyond sensibilities. The horses were left to rot in the public eye only hundreds of metres from the road, one of our community members could smell the carcasses from the road and proceeded to investigate. Additionally, the carcasses have started attracting feral dogs and pigs, which along with goats, deer, foxes, rabbits and et al, we recognise as a greater threat to biodiversity. The destruction to our environment by all other introduced species is not openly discussed and disclosed by park bureaucrats in the public realm.

There is nothing 'pristine' left in this part of Kosciuszko National Park, in the background of the rotting horse carcasses are the skeletons of crown fire affected snow gum woodlands. The grassy plains are all that grow albeit riddled with weeds. The historic township of Kiandra was a small industrialised gold mining hub which destroyed hundreds of hectares of what was formerly pristine river and bog environments. Notwithstanding this, the Snowy and Snowy 2.0 infrastructure project. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of the national park decimated by the catastrophic 2003 and successive 2019-2020 bushfires.

We have a national park in complete ecological ruin due to decades of neglect and poor fire regimens. Politically driven and bias science has been used in the park for decades to substantiate current management plans and practices, yet we have seen continued destruction



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of the biosphere. The horses represent a very small part of the problems plaguing the biospheres of Kosciusko, it's time for you to disband the bureaucracy and bring liberal and scientific balance back into the service.

As an Indigenous organisation we call for more autonomy and freedom when it comes to the management of the land if authorities are incapable of keeping up with its management. For the sake of the environment and human life and property we must return to naturally regulated fire regimes which shaped Australia for millions of years continued by Indigenous Australians.

As a veteran volunteer fire fighter, I have personally risked my life to defend the environment and continue to do so also in my capacity with both organisations.

We cannot keep fighting against fires fanned by conditions that are against natural law and order, we are not alluding to climate change. Authorities are not keeping up with the natural order of things let alone with management to keep up with changing climates.

Yours sincerely,



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About Back to the Bush Australia

'Back to the Bush,' is an Indigenous-lead and backed decade-long non-profit social enterprise that actively focuses on raising grass-roots awareness of Australia's diverse environments and the conservation of the land, bush culture and heritage. Additionally, community philanthropy is core to the social enterprise strategy, which includes volunteering time and physical resources on the land. Back to the Bush also engages and promotes community issues on a grass-roots level and participates physically during natural disaster arrangements.



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