



## Tasmanian Deer Advisory Committee Inc.

### Tasmanian Wild Fallow Deer Management Draft Plan 2021

#### MEDIA RELEASE

TDAC members have been actively consulting with both the hunting community and landowners and have attended all the Departments community consultation sessions.

We therefore wish to propose our alternatives and inclusions for your consideration:

#### **Proposed Zone 1 & 2 renamed as the 'Accepted Deer Range'**

*This area is formerly known as the 'traditional deer range' where deer are an accepted part of the landscape. TDAC aims to ensure that deer in the 'Accepted Deer Range' are continued to be managed as a valuable hunting resource whilst encouraging population control in line with Quality Deer Management principals such as focusing culling activities on female deer and control excess male deer under a property-based permit system. An increase in regulation and red tape is not required or encouraged.*

#### GOALS

**Male Deer Season** - 5 week/6 weekend season. Dated from Feb/March to April. One tag per licence

**Female Deer Season** - 15<sup>th</sup> March until 15<sup>th</sup> November. No tags and no quota

**Female Deer Crop Protection Permits** - 15<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> November. No tags and no quota

**Male Deer Crop Protection Permits** - Available throughout the year other than the rutting period and immediately prior to the declared buck season.

**Special Purposes Permit** - Versatile and adaptable deer control for property specific circumstances

#### ADVANTAGES

- Properties and hunting groups that have arrangements in place and have no desire or need to change can ensure the status quo remains
- 5 yearly crop protection permits are still available and managed as per current arrangements allowing harvest of antlerless deer 230 plus days per year
- Properties with current PBWMP can apply for a male deer crop protection permit and cull animals as required under current conditions. This allows a certain class of male deer to be harvested 365 days per year
- A change to current regulations or restrictions is not required
- SPP gives landowners the ability to protect high value crops at short notice to reduce the impact of travelling deer herds on cropping programs

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Special Purposes Permit in 'Accepted Deer Range':**

- SPP made available to quickly remove or reduce problem deer to an acceptable level
- SPP can be issued to both farming and forestry operations along with hunter groups that demonstrate a need to reduce deer numbers in a shorter time frame under a PBWMP
- SPP focus is purely on herd reduction and not trophy hunting
- SPP approvals granted over the phone by Game Services Tas. and a copy of the permit emailed to the landowner soon after
- SPP may include refined/relaxed conditions such as:
  - Modified harvest season for female deer (approval required from external stakeholders)
  - 10.5-month harvest season for adult male Deer (excluding rut period)
  - 12-month harvest season for immature male deer.
  - Expanded harvesting options (thermal locating devices, spotlight equipment etc.)
  - No tagging requirement for antlerless deer
  - Some commitment to collection of scientific data
- To ensure compliance and continuity between different permits:
  - Game licence required to undertake SPP culling programs
- To ensure that trophy quality males are harvested only during the declared game season:
  - Removal of antlers from the property where male deer are culled under SPP not allowed
  - If antler removal is deemed to be required, an SPP tag must be affixed
  - A copy of the SPP is the only requirement to transport male deer carcasses from the property for processing/consumption.

## **OUTCOMES**

- Gives farmers and landholders greater flexibility to manage deer numbers in 'real time'
- By not permitting the removal of antlers from properties, this resolves the hunter concerns relating to the killing of trophy bucks outside of the declared season with spotlights etc.
- An SPP will not interfere with other properties that do not want broadscale change
- Commitments already made around QDM will be maintained

### **Commercial Harvesting of Fallow Deer:**

- The TDAC will not support the commercial harvesting of wild Fallow Deer
- A commercial harvest would damage Tasmania's existing deer farming operations beyond repair
- Commercial harvesting would impact severely on the access opportunities recreational hunters that have worked so hard to secure, and may have a perverse outcome by impacting associated possum and wallaby control programs
- Tasmania is famous for its self-sustainable lifestyle. The opportunities for game licence holders to harvest wildlife under a PBWMP should be expanded and not reduced
- Tasmania's Fallow Deer herd is valued as an important resource for the 6000 Tasmanian recreational hunters who utilise the protein to sustain their families

## **Rename proposed Zone 3 to the 'Excluded Deer Range'**

*This area will encapsulate the various deer herds that are on the landscape because of translocations and deer farm escapees where eradication and/or extreme herd reduction is required.*

### **GOALS**

- Manage deer with the aim of total removal from the landscape
- Includes TWWHA and peri-urban areas
- Property-specific management and planning
- Harvest and culling restrictions reduced to aid in deer herd removal

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **Deer Range Project Officer:**

The Government appoint a 'Deer Range Project Officer' to specifically focus on:

- Community engagement and public relations to enable access to outlying deer herds
- Develop, undertake, and manage property specific culling plans
- Collate data by assessing spotlight surveys, animal sightings and take returns
- Deliver bi-monthly reports to stakeholders on herd reduction progress
- Engage volunteers from reputable organisations to undertake removal programs
- The officer will have experience in rural settings and a sound knowledge of hunting practices and techniques

#### **Hunting organisation engagement:**

Engage and interact with approved hunting organisations to assist the Department with:

- Training and accreditation for individuals or groups
- Manual labour for trapping and carcass removal
- Hunting tactics and strategic planning
- Ongoing management programs for the future
- A cost recovery system for individuals removing deer in this range would result in further utilisation of the resource, improved social licence and a reduction in overall costs

#### **Special Purposes Permit in 'Excluded Deer Range':**

- SPP made available to quickly remove or reduce problem deer to an acceptable level
- SPP can be issued to both farming and forestry operations along with hunter groups that demonstrate a need to reduce deer numbers in a shorter time frame under a PBWMP
- SPP focus is purely on herd reduction and not trophy hunting
- SPP approvals granted over the phone by Game Services Tas. and a copy of the permit emailed to the landowner soon after
- SPP may include refined/relaxed conditions such as:
  - Modified harvest season for female deer (approval required from external stakeholders)
  - 12-month harvest season for adult male Deer (no exclusion in rut period)
  - 12-month harvest season for immature male deer.
  - Expanded harvesting options (thermal locating devices, spotlight equipment etc.)

- No tagging requirement for antlerless deer
- Some commitment to collection of scientific data
  
- To ensure compliance and continuity between different permits:
  - Game licence required to undertake SPP culling programs
  
- SPP issued in 'Excluded Deer Range' will also allow for:
  - Harvesting of all age classes of male deer
  
- Tagging requirements still required for male deer to ensure continuity and compliance

*Signed*

*Andrew Winwood - TDAC Chairman*