



Department of
Primary Industries

Deer in the headlights...or a clear way forward for wild deer management policy and planning in NSW?

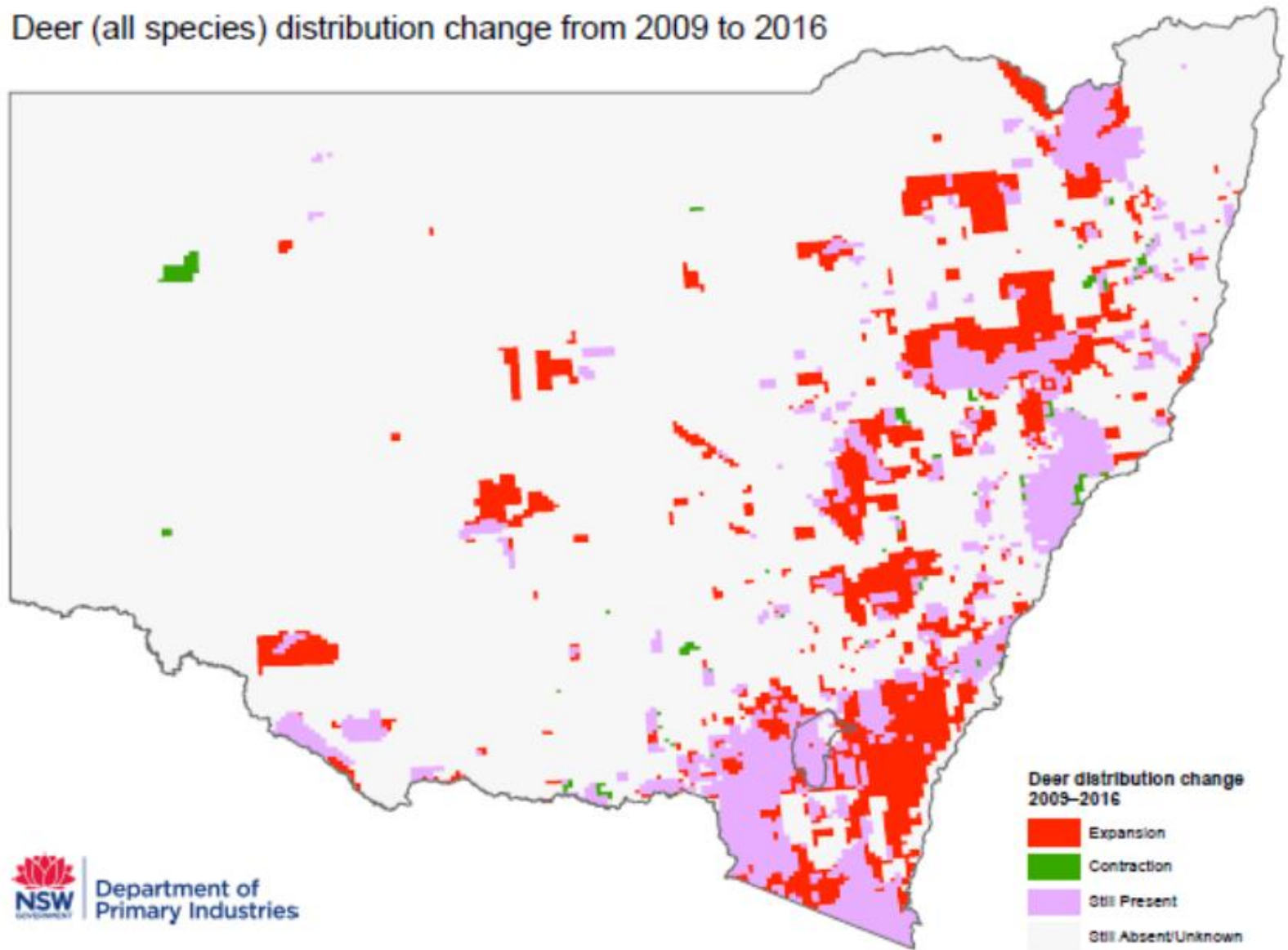
Quentin Hart

What's the issue?

- Wild deer (fallow, sambar, red, rusa, chital, hog) increasing in distribution and density in NSW
- Complaints about presence and impacts of deer increasing
- Diverse views about the 'problem' and solutions



Deer (all species) distribution change from 2009 to 2016



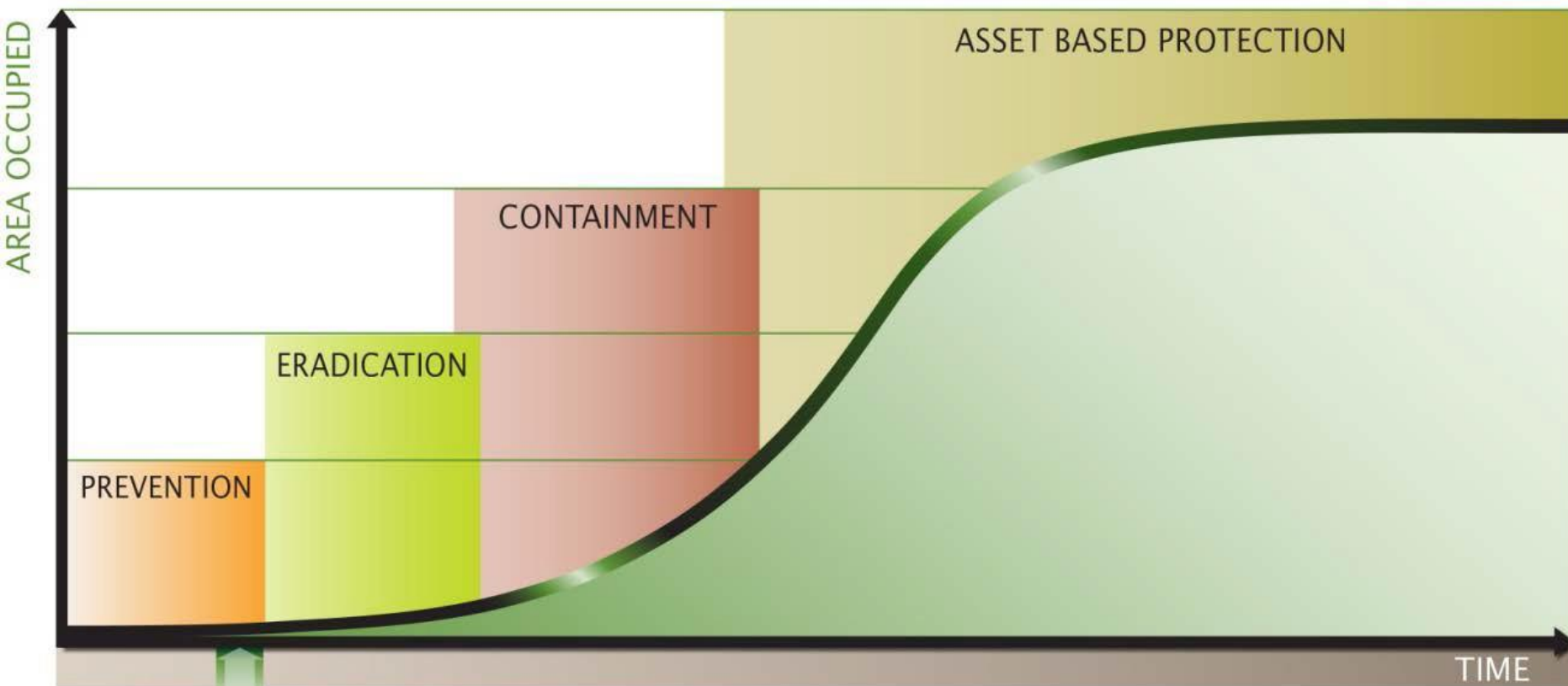
How is the issue different to some other established vertebrate pest management issues?


- Multiple species of wild deer
- In the mid(?) stage of trajectory of increasing distribution and density
- Have allowed populations to get to this level but have an opportunity to reduce rate of increase from here



GENERALISED INVASION CURVE SHOWING ACTIONS APPROPRIATE TO EACH STAGE

Version 2.0: 24 JUL 2013



Species absent	 Entry of invasive species	Small number of localised populations	Rapid increase in distribution and abundance, many populations	Invasive species widespread and abundant throughout its potential range
----------------	--	---	---	--


ECONOMIC RETURNS (INDICATIVE ONLY)



How is the issue different to some other established vertebrate pest management issues?

- Not just a landholder and state government issue – is becoming a significant local government and road safety issue
- Hunter, deer farmer and commercial use perspectives
- Further work to be done on defining impacts...but some impacts are indisputable
- Need to improve suite of control tools for cost-effective population knockdown and maintenance on all land tenures – can we achieve adequate intensity of control?

Wild dog management

- Distribution and density not changing rapidly at state scale
 - Good range of control techniques
 - Agricultural impacts are very obvious and are regular prompts for proactive and reactive management
 - Management planning and reporting is relatively structured and well embedded throughout NSW
 - Relatively high level of agreement about general management approach
- 

Wild deer management in NSW

- NSW 'Wild Deer Management Strategy'
 - Mapping of distribution and density
 - Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plans
 - General Biosecurity Duty
 - Suspension of Game and Feral Animal Control Act regulations
 - Links to national research program to define densities, impacts and develop new control and monitoring techniques
- 

Wild deer management in other States


- Victorian 'Deer Management Strategy' (draft)
- Qld 'Feral Deer Management Strategy 2013-2018'



Wild deer strategies

- Standard content includes:
 - ❖ Leadership/coordination
 - ❖ Prevention of new species introduction and new populations of existing species (stronger in Qld strategy)
 - ❖ Community awareness
 - ❖ Need for improved monitoring and management techniques and approaches

Vic 'Deer Management Strategy'

- Game classification approach – not proposing pest classification due to legal requirement this would impose on land owners
 - Considerable focus on hunting opportunity and involvement in programs
 - Wants to investigate more commercial harvest, including carcass removal from control operations
 - Proposed deer management zones (prevention, eradication, containment, asset-based protection, resource management)
- 

Qld 'Feral Deer Management Strategy'

- Deer formally classified as pests
- Focus of strategy is greater coordination of control to reduce impacts
- Very brief mention of benefits of deer



Where to from here in NSW?

- RSPAMPs linked to GBD is the main game
- Needs to be supported by improved monitoring and management approaches and community awareness
- “Cure” is currently problematic for wild deer, so need a major focus on prevention (deer keeping, translocations, natural spread)
- Must involve hunting interests in the process: pest management and hunting objectives do not have to be mutually exclusive.