

Raising the profile of feral deer management

Annelise Wiebkin

Ted Rowley



**National
Feral Deer
Action Plan**



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry**

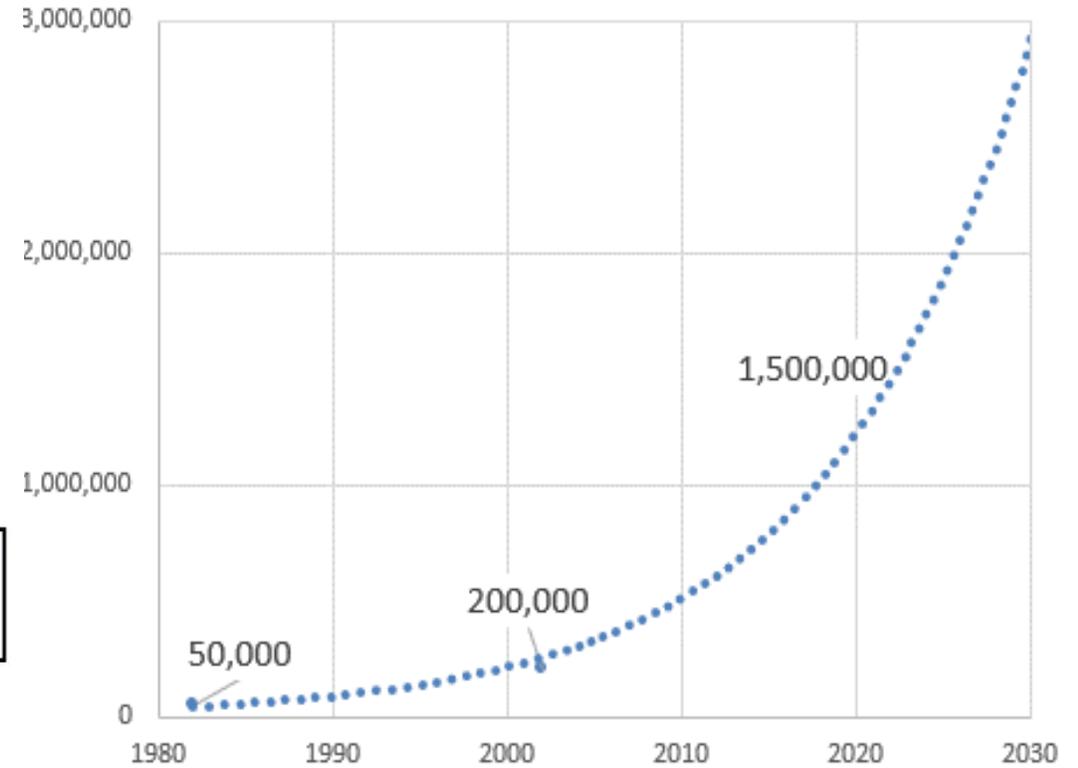
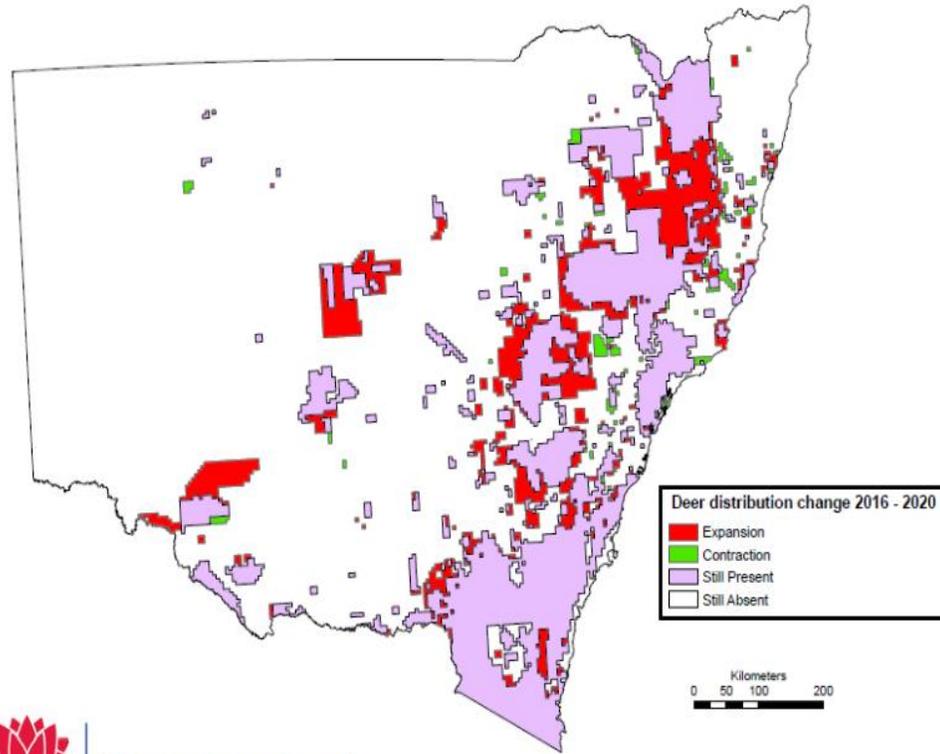


**Government
of South Australia**
Department of Primary
Industries and Regions



**CENTRE FOR
INVASIVE SPECIES SOLUTIONS**

A growing problem



Recorded Sightings of Wild Deer in Victoria





Photo of wild deer pushing under fence, by Luke Woodford provided by Centre for Invasive Species Solutions

National Feral Deer Action Plan

2023-28

Why work at the big scale?

- Raise the profile & awareness
- Share successes & best practice
- Promote innovation & research
- Build national strategy
- Support local & state plans, leaders & champions



www.feraldeerplan.org.au

Aims of Plan



Actively suppress large populations



Prevent new populations through early detection and incursion response



Focus on:
sites of conservation and cultural significance, and peri-urban areas



How do we reduce deer numbers?

- Coordinated efforts across many neighbours (~80% land)
- Use tools that can remove 35-50% of deer each year
- For priority areas with big impacts, start with a 'knock-down'
- For areas with new incursions, get onto deer early
- Co-develop a strategy that communities can sustain long-term

But



Why do we need coordinated control deer don't stay put



Why is coordinated control hard?

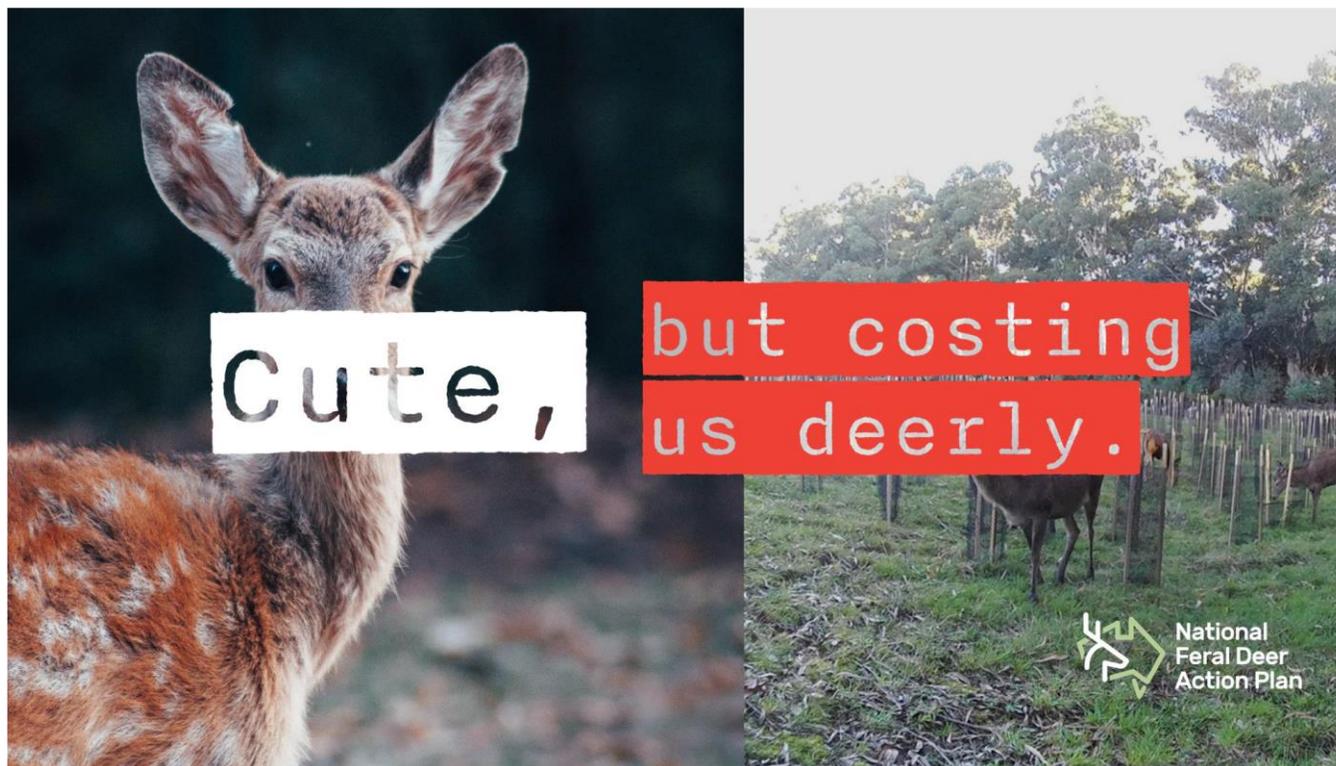
- Problem too big (or too small)
- See problem as someone else's
- I don't trust you
- Don't have skills/licences/knowledge
- Have other priorities
- Animal is too cute
- No idea we had deer
- Want a few around for meat
- It will attract illegal shooting



How do we appeal to different motivations?



Awareness campaigns



To address misconceptions:

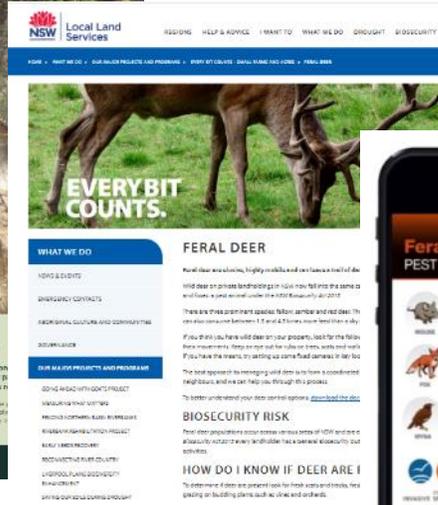
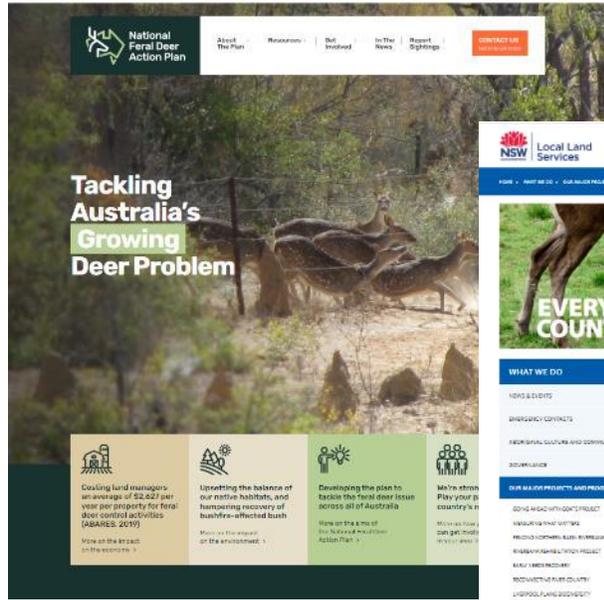
- Bambi effect
- That deer are native
- Deer numbers are not or will not become a problem



Landholder stories – videos



Webpages



Economic analyses & guides

Courses



Cape Liptrap – community led (Vic)



Limestone Coast – region led (SA)

- 478 000 ha, 136 properties (17% of region)
- Aerial and ground shooting
- Awareness, engagement & farm compliance



Photo: HeliSurveys, Wildlife Resources.



Feral Deer Eradication Program

Eradicating feral deer from the Limestone Coast

+ Follow

Home / Feral Deer Eradication Program

Since the introduction of feral deer into the Limestone Coast the impact on primary production, community and the environment is increasing.

Through its Feral Deer Eradication Program (the program) the Limestone Coast Landscape Board (LCB) is committed to eradicating feral deer from the Limestone Coast.

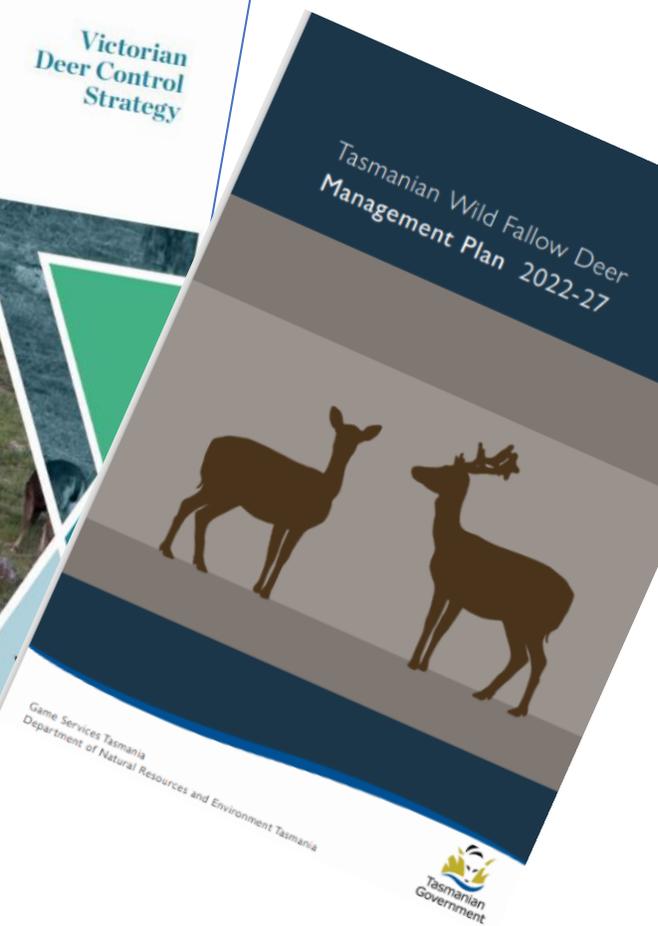
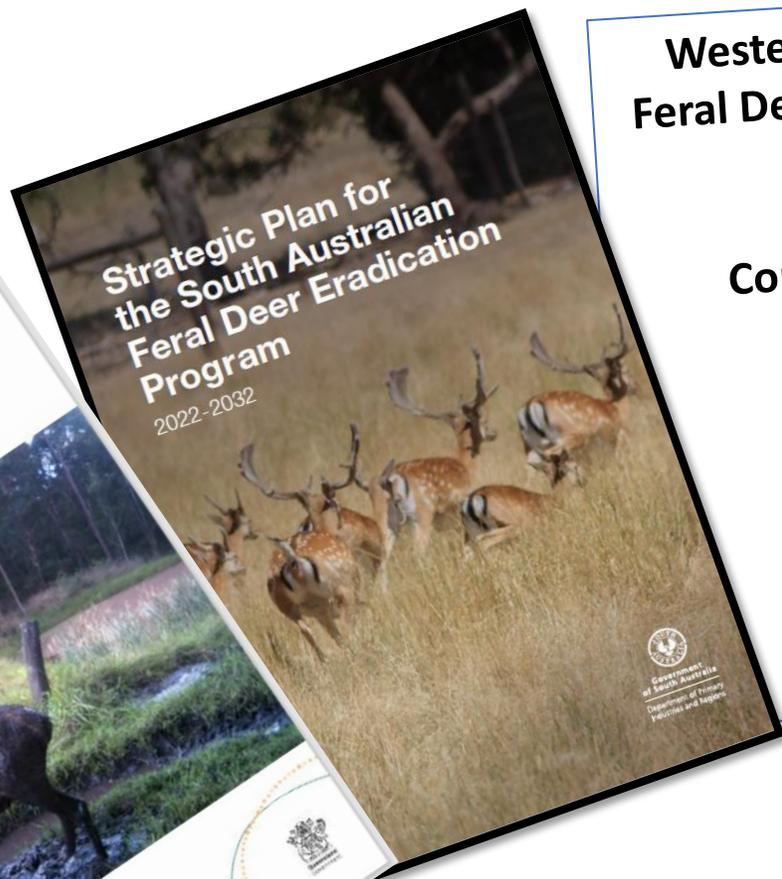
The program, which aligns with National and State Feral Deer Strategies, integrates aerial and ground monitoring, compliance and enforcement. The program is free to join and can help landholders meet their obligations to eradicate feral deer from their properties under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019.

Together we can eradicate feral deer from the Limestone Coast.

Join the Feral Deer Eradication Program

Sign up your property to participate in the Feral Deer Eradication Program, and we will be in contact when an operation is in your area.

State led plans & programs



Words from the frontline - What's working?

- A champion to build relationships (phone, site visits, landholder BBQs)
- Good governance & co-developed plans
- Don't start until you have access to 80% land
- Use tools that meet 35% targets
- Use sensitive, tailored social media
- Seek to influence naïve audiences
- Celebrate community successes



A big challenge – where deer haven't yet established

"They are not yet a problem" "I've never seen any"

- Prioritise areas where we don't want populations
- Treat feral deer as incursion species
- Tell stories from impacted landholders
- Encourage united collaborative approach by all
- Be serious and realistic about incursion response
- Carrots, sticks and social pressure

