Guideline for the management of wild dogs
(Canis familiaris or canis lupus familiaris or canis lupus dingo)

Purpose and scope

This guideline has been prepared under section 15 of the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002 (Qld) to support successful management of wild dogs, declared as Class 2 pests. It sets out an objective, and statutory and non-statutory actions which are consistent with the eight principles of pest management listed in section 9 of the Act.

Operational objective

- To destroy wild dogs in areas protected by physical and chemical barriers.
- To prevent wild dog movement into protected areas.
- To reduce wild dog numbers in other situations, particularly where they have or could have significant economic, environmental, or social impacts.

Operational actions

1. Integration
   - Incorporate wild dog management into related planning and management programs.

2. Public awareness
   - Raise public awareness of the impacts of wild dogs, and the techniques and strategies for their management.
   - Ensure the public is aware that it is illegal to keep dingoes (s. 41).

3. Commitment
   - Enforce compliance when landowners do not take reasonable steps to control wild dogs (s. 78 or s. 95).

4. Consultation and partnership
   - Build working partnerships between key stakeholders to generate a holistic approach to wild dog management and a sense of community ownership of the problem.

5. Planning
   - Refer to the Queensland Wild Dog Management Strategy for additional guidance.
   - To promote state wide acceptance and implementation of nil tenure planning.
   - Establish a network of linked local wild dog committees to lead planning and control activities.
   - Map the extremities of wild dog infestations.
   - Ensure that wild dog management plans are consistent with plans in neighbouring areas.
   - Secure adequate resources (i.e. time, funds and personnel) to carry out the actions in this guideline.
6. Prevention

- Encourage responsible pet ownership so that domestic dogs do not add to the wild dog population, or create impacts on livestock, the environment, or neighbourhood areas.
- Promote a high level of control of wild dogs in protected areas.
- Maintain the barrier and check fences in wild dog-proof condition.

7. Best practice

- Collate and distribute wild dog best practice information to land managers.
- Follow best practice when managing wild dogs. All stakeholders should give consideration to animal welfare and non-target risks as part of their control programs.
- Carry out the control actions of trapping, baiting, shooting and exclusion on land where wild dogs are causing negative impacts. On land that is not in an urban district, (under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990) actions on domestic dogs that attack stock can be taken under section 95 of the Act.

8. Improvement

- Conduct research in support of the use of 1080 in wild dog management programs.
- Liaise with other agencies on the development of alternative toxins for wild dogs.
- Conduct research on potential off-target impacts of wild dog baiting programs.
- Research on wild dog ecology for improved management.

Background

A domestic dog is a dog, other than a dingo, that is fed and kept by humans. Wild dogs are non-domestic dogs, including dingoes and dingo hybrids. They are present throughout the state and kill, harass or maim sheep and cattle, domestic pets, native wildlife and other domestic animals. In semi-urban areas wild dogs may threaten human safety.

The Queensland Wild Dog Management Strategy sets the strategic direction for the management of wild dogs in the state. This guideline is consistent with, and supports, that strategy. The strategy requires that wild dogs do not adversely impact on the activities of rural and urban communities, and that the dingo is conserved as a higher order predator.

The desired outcomes of the strategy are to:

- High level of control of wild dogs inside the WDBF.
- Effective control of wild dogs outside the WDBF.
- Reduction of wild dog impacts in the coastal, peri-urban and rural residential management zone.
- The community is informed and committed and has available the most current control methods and management techniques.
- Conservation of dingo populations in Queensland.

The ecological role of wild dogs and dingoes is not fully understood, but observational and modelling studies indicate that dingoes may protect some smaller native species by reducing the density or changing the behaviour of smaller predators such as foxes and cats (trophic regulation).

However, there is debate over the interrelationship between these predators particularly due to the lack of experimental evidence, and further assessment of the ecological role of the wild dogs in a range of environments is needed.

The Wild Dog Barrier Fence is maintained by Biosecurity Queensland with funding provided by the state government, and local governments within the protected area. It provides protection for the majority of Queensland's sheep industry in the southern part of the state. Check fences are maintained by local governments in Southern Queensland and also provide protection for the sheep industry.
Guideline

The use of 1080 poison is the most effective technique when utilised annually in a coordinated manner. Domestic dogs deliberately abandoned or inadequately managed as strays often add to the wild dog problem, particularly in near-urban areas, but increasingly in rural areas. These animals also need to be managed in order to reduce the overall impacts of wild dogs.

Responsibility

Landowners: participation in coordinated control, destruction and control of wild dogs.
Local governments: compliance, surveillance, local planning, mapping, and raising awareness; maintenance of wild dog check fences; and promoting responsible pet ownership.
Animal welfare organisations: promoting responsible pet ownership.
DAFF: statewide planning, mapping, coordination, raising awareness, and research; maintenance of the Wild Dog Barrier Fence.

References

Land Protection Act available at www.legislation.qld.gov.au
Wild dog control fact sheet available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au
Dingoes in Queensland fact sheet www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au
Predation of livestock fact sheet available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au
Wild dog facts available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au
Sodium fluoroacetate fact sheet available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

Maps


The maps are updated as new information becomes available, and the latest maps must be accessed from the website.

Date of approval: August 2011