

# Media release

September 2, 2015



## Wilsons Prom conservation trial targets wild deer

Increasing wild deer populations in Wilsons Promontory National Park have been threatening the habitat in the park and removing food sources from other animals.

Hog deer have stripped the park's trees and shrubs, which include endangered and vulnerable plant species, contributed to soil erosion and overgrazed the grasslands, while competing with emus, kangaroos, wombats and wallabies.

In an effort to halt the damage, Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria), Australian Deer Association and Parks Victoria carried out a trial program last week aimed at managing deer numbers.

"Over three days last month we had 15 volunteers from SSAA (Vic) and ADA carrying out ethical on-the-ground shooting," said SSAA (Vic) Pest Management Co-ordinator Rhys Coote.

"We harvested 42 hog deer, no animals were wounded and no animals were lost, so Parks Victoria was very happy with the marksmanship and the professionalism of our team."

Early reports suggest the deer were in poor condition due to over population and limited food supply.

Australian Deer Association Deer Management Committee Chair Steve Garlick said recreational hunters proved they were professional, skilled, dedicated and up to the task of wildlife management, even in the most complex of circumstances.

"This is the fifth location in Victoria we've conducted one of these trials, including Dandenong Ranges National Park, Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve, Warramate Hills Nature Conservation Reserve and the Alpine National Park. It was fantastic to see all these organisations collaborating for a shared environmental objective."

The shooters involved in the program underwent a training accreditation course that involved marksmanship, ethics, navigation, and shot placement, along with carrying the correct permits.

Parks Victoria's acting chief executive Chris Rose said the agency would review the trial outcomes.

"I'd like to thank all the participants, including the ADA, SSAA (Vic), Game Management Authority, Department of Economic Development Jobs Transport and Resources, Museum Victoria, and La Trobe University and look forward to continuing to build on these partnerships," he said.

**ENDS:** 320 words

### NOTES FOR EDITOR

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