



**NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service**

# **Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**

**Draft Amending Plan**



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# Summary

This is a draft amending plan under Part 2 of the *Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018*. It details proposed amendments to the *Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan 2021* (the plan), which was prepared and adopted under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act.

Section 11 of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act provides that the Minister for Environment and Heritage may direct the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment (Secretary)<sup>i</sup>, to prepare a draft amending plan to make amendments to an adopted plan. Section 11 also provides for consultation requirements that apply to a draft amending plan, including public exhibition and providing a copy to the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council (Advisory Council) and the Heritage Council of NSW (Heritage Council).

The Minister must consider any representations made under Part 2 of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act by the Secretary, Advisory Council, Heritage Council and any other person (or, in the latter case, a summary of those representations) before adopting a draft amending plan. If the Minister adopts an amending plan (with or without alterations), the amended plan must be carried out and given effect to by the Secretary.

The proposed amendments to the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan are to:

- identify that adjustments will be made to information about consultation to take account of the current amendment process (**Executive Summary and section 2 of the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**)
- update information on the size of the wild horse population, based on the most recent population survey (**section 5 of the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**)
- reference the national standard operating procedure for the aerial shooting of feral horses (**section 6.1 of the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**)
- include aerial shooting in the list of control methods available for use in controlling wild horses in the park (**section 6.2 of the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan**)
- make minor amendments to align with the above.

## Matters considered

This draft amending plan:

- takes into account the object of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act, being to recognise the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within parts of Kosciuszko National Park and to protect that heritage
- considers the heritage value of sustainable wild horse populations within identified parts of the park, and how that heritage value will be protected while ensuring other environmental values of the park (including values identified in the plan of management for the park) are also maintained, as identified in the adopted Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan
- takes into account the objects of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and the matters that are required (by section 72AA of that Act) to be taken into consideration in the preparation of a plan of management, as addressed in Appendix A of the adopted Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan.

Consistent with the requirements of Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), and section 6 of the adopted Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan, all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment by reason of undertaking activities associated with the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan if it is amended as proposed, will be taken into account before implementation of the relevant wild horse control actions in the park or parts of the park.

As required by section 7 of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act, the Advisory Council and Heritage Council will be invited to make submissions on the draft amending plan.

The Kosciuszko Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel, constituted under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act, will also be invited to provide advice on the draft amending plan.

Development of the draft amending plan has been informed by a wide range of information, including scientific research, community views and commentary, population surveys, environmental research and monitoring, evaluations of the implementation of the adopted Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan, and review and assessment of wild horse management issues completed over time.

# Have your say

We want to know what you think about this draft amending plan. To give us feedback, please send a written representation via:



the online form or online survey at: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildhorses](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/wildhorses)



email to: [npws.submissions@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:npws.submissions@environment.nsw.gov.au)



post to: The Project Team, Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan, National Parks and Wildlife Service, PO Box 472, Tumut NSW 2720.

## What happens to your feedback?

- Step 1: At the close of the public exhibition period, all representations are considered and a summary representations report prepared.
- Step 2: The draft amending plan, any representations on the draft by the Secretary, public submissions and a summary of submissions, and any advice from the Advisory Council, Heritage Council and Kosciuszko Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel are provided to the Minister.
- Step 3: The Minister considers the draft amending plan and the information provided in Step 2 above, and decides whether to adopt the draft amending plan under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act.

## Your privacy

Your representation on the draft amending plan may include personal information. The Department of Planning and Environment complies with the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, which regulates the collection, storage, quality, use and disclosure of personal information. For details, see our privacy statement.

Information that identifies you may be gathered when you use our website or send us an email. If you indicate in your written representation that you object to your representation being made public, we will ask you before releasing your representation in response to any access applications under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

# Draft amendment

This draft amending plan proposes to remove certain existing text in the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan and replace with updated content, and add new content not currently in the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan. The proposed changes should be read in conjunction with the adopted plan, which is available on the department's website.

Proposed amendments to the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan are described below.

## Amendment 1. Executive summary

### Amendments to the plan

**Plan reference: page 2, first paragraph after first 2 dot points**

**Replace:**

Preparation of the plan has been informed by advice from the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel established under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act. Advice from the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Scientific Advisory Panel has also been considered, as has information from Aboriginal stakeholders and a range of relevant sources.

**With:**

[text about consultation will be adjusted following completion of the proposed amendment process]

**Reason:**

To highlight that information about consultation will be adjusted to take account of the current amendment process.

## Amendment 2. Matters considered

### Amendments to the plan

**Plan reference: page 3, second last paragraph**

**Replace:**

The plan has been prepared after considering advice from the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel constituted under the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act. Relevant advice provided by the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Scientific Advisory Panel has also been considered.

**With:**

[text about consultation will be adjusted following completion of the proposed amendment process]

**Reason:**

To highlight that information about consultation will be adjusted to take account of the current amendment process.

## **Amendment 3. Updated population size information**

### **Section 5 Protecting wild horse heritage values while maintaining other environmental values**

**Plan reference: page 8, first paragraph under the heading ‘Wild horse impacts’**

**Replace:**

As of November 2020, there were an estimated 14,380 wild horses in the park, with the 95% confidence interval for the estimate being 8798–22,555 wild horses (Cairns 2020).

**With:**

As of November 2022, there were an estimated 18,814 wild horses in the park, with the 95% confidence interval for the estimate being 14,501–23,535 wild horses (Cairns 2022).

**Reason:**

To update information about the wild horse population.

## **Amendment 4. National standard operating procedure**

### **Section 6.1 Animal welfare**

**Plan reference: page 18, third dot point, under the heading ‘Commonwealth’**

**Replace:**

- *Model Code of Practice Humane Control of Feral Horses* (Sharp & Saunders 2014) and associated standard operating procedures:
  - HOR001 – Ground shooting of feral horses (Sharp 2011a)
  - HOR003 – Mustering of feral horses (Sharp 2011b)

**With:**

- *Model Code of Practice Humane Control of Feral Horses* (Sharp & Saunders 2014) and associated standard operating procedures:
  - HOR001 – Ground shooting of feral horses (Sharp 2011a)
  - HOR002 – Aerial shooting of feral horses (Sharp 2011d)
  - HOR003 – Mustering of feral horses (Sharp 2011b)

**Reason:**

To include reference to the national standard operating procedure for aerial shooting of feral horses.



## Amendment 5. Wild horse control methods

### Section 6.2 Capture and control methods that are available for use in the park

**Plan reference: page 20, in the table titled ‘Control methods’, in the row for ‘Ground shooting’**

**Replace:**

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Ground shooting	For use in areas of the park which have been closed to ensure safe implementation of ground shooting.
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**With:**

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Ground shooting	For use in any area of the park.
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**Reason:**

To clarify the example application for when ground shooting may be used.

**Plan reference: page 20, in the table titled ‘Control methods’, after the row for ‘Ground shooting’ and before the row for ‘Reproductive control’**

**Add:**

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Aerial shooting	For use in any area of the park.
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**Reason:**

To include aerial shooting as one of the available control methods in the plan.

**Plan reference: pages 20–21, under and including the heading ‘Aerial shooting’**

**Delete:**

**Aerial shooting**

Animal welfare assessments advise that, if undertaken in accordance with best practice, aerial shooting can have the lowest negative animal welfare impacts of all lethal control methods (Kosciuszko Wild Horse Scientific Advisory Panel 2020; ITRG 2015).

However, there is a significant risk that the implementation of an aerial shooting program will result in a loss of the social licence to remove wild horses from the national park. In addition, government policy since 2000 has been not to undertake aerial shooting of horses in national parks. Taking these factors into account, this plan does not provide for aerial shooting.

**Reason:**

The text is no longer required as aerial shooting will be included in the table of control methods (see amendment above).

## Amendment 6. Minor amendments

### Section 8 Community and stakeholder involvement

**Plan reference: page 22, third paragraph under the heading ‘Community and stakeholder involvement’**

**Replace:**

In recognition of the importance of having a range of different perspectives about wild horse management, implementation of the plan will also be informed by advice from time to time from a wild horse advisory body comprising both community representatives and scientific experts. The wild horse advisory body members will be appointed as soon as practicable after the adoption of the final plan.

**With:**

In recognition of the importance of having a range of different perspectives about wild horse management, implementation of the plan will also be informed by advice from time to time from a wild horse advisory body comprising both community representatives and scientific experts.

**Reason:**

To reflect that the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Community Advisory Panel has been appointed.

## References

### Amendments to the plan

**Plan reference: page 22, second reference source under the heading ‘References’**

**Replace:**

Cairns S 2020, *The results of a survey of the wild horse populations in the Kosciuszko National Park, October-November 2020*. G.E and S.C. Cairns Consulting Pty. Ltd. Armidale. <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/kosciuszko-national-park-wild-horse-populations-survey-2020>

**With:**

Cairns S 2022, *A survey of the wild horse population in Kosciuszko National Park, November 2022*. <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Pests-and-weeds/Kosciuszko-wild-horses/kosciuszko-national-park-wild-horse-population-survey-2022.pdf>

**Plan reference: page 23, in alphabetical order under the heading ‘References’**

**Add:**

Evaluation of the implementation of the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan (2021) 2022. <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Pests-and-weeds/Kosciuszko-wild-horses/kosciuszko-national-park-wild-horse-heritage-plan-2021-evaluation-report.pdf>

**Plan reference: page 24, in alphabetical order under the heading 'References'**

**Add:**

Sharp T 2011d. *Standard Operating Procedure HOR002: Aerial shooting of feral horses*. Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre.

**Reason:**

To provide updated references to relevant supporting documents.

## More information

- [2021 Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan](#)
- [Privacy and security](#)

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<sup>i</sup> The Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment is the 'Chief Executive' for the purposes of the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act.