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2-May-2016

ABA Press Release 2-May-2016

MANAGING WILD HORSES IN KOSCIUSZKO

NSW Environment Minister Mark Speakman invites community feedback on the Draft Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park, released on Sunday 1st May 2016 (closing 8th July 2016) on link: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/protectsnowies

The plan claims that wild horses will always be part Kosciuszko National Park's (KNP) cultural heritage, but then states it will reduce Wild Horse population from 6,000 to 600, or even 400. Our heritage Brumbies are already restricted to under half of KNP, which means people of differing views can already access KNP with, or without, Wild Horses.

The ABA put forward compelling evidence that there are significant, widespread areas of KNP that have both healthy ecologies and healthy Brumbies. While we accept that Brumbies should be excluded from specific high alpine areas, unless deer, pigs, goats, rabbits etc. are also excluded, culling Brumbies will just waste the tax payer's dollars.

Jill Pickering of the Australian Brumby Alliance said "It is insulting to infer that the Wild Horse community fails to value KNP's unique environmental – *when we do care.*" "Wild Horses, at managed, sustainable and *viable* levels help their environment" Jill explained, adding that many overseas conservation grazing programs use wild horses to increase biodiversity. Jill now calls on the NPWS "to protect the diverse interests of *all* Australian communities, not just the interests of some Australian communities".

The Hon. Mark Speakman seems to be discriminating against those Australians wanting to see Brumbies living wild by recommending such low Brumby numbers. Over 5,000 heritage Brumbies are needed to survive, e.g. the 2003 catastrophic fire which killed 64% of all KNP Brumbies. One wild fire will easily wipe out 600 Brumbies and result in the instant extinction of early settlement *living* history and the unique, genetically robust Wild Horses that have evolved for 200 years – being lost to future generations *for ever*.

I urge people to read the draft papers and write separately to the Hon. Mark Speakman, also Mike Baird, NSW Premier and urge their local member of parliament to prevent our Heritage Brumbies being managed to extinction. And to call for a robust population of 5,000 Brumbies to continue living (except for fragile KNP areas) in the many healthy ecologies they currently live in; for future Australian generations to see living wild.

For inquiries, contact Jill Pickering pickjill@hotmail.com, ring (03) 9428-4709 or visit our website www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au