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PRESS RELEASE

Reply to *“Impacts of feral horses in the Australian Alps and evidence-based solutions 2018”*

This paper, by Professor D. Driscoll and 25 scientists, and recently printed by The Ecological Society of Australia (whose president is also Prof. Don Driscoll) is a compilation of abstracts from the *Kosciuszko Science Conference (2018)*; designed to keep alive the conference’s theme to ‘educate’ the public on why aerial culling is humane and vital to ‘Save Kosciuszko’.

Conference attendees were urged to “go out and teach” the public to accept aerial culling, convince them that Brumbies are not descended from mountain grazing leases for the army and to deny the Brumby’s pivotal role in Australian social heritage. Since the Conference, a stream of new research items have been embraced by media, even though they are only a rearrangement of the 2018 conference abstracts. How can a paper presumably peer reviewed have such inaccuracies and claim to be evidence based with so little evidence?

Miss Jill Pickering, President of the Australian Brumby Alliance, an organisation that lobbies for the recognition, management, preservation and welfare of Australian Wild Horses said “the truly ‘evidence-based solution is to urge the NSW government to implement the NSW Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018 because it is designed to strike a sustainable, viable balance for national park heritage Brumbies and their national park heritage environment”.



Victorian Alpine Brumby meets VicAlps Deer

We are all frustrated said Jill at reading such emotive, biased views and saddened such lacklustre science is promoted. If I, a non-scientist, highlight faults in these papers, my views are ignored. For example, Driscoll et al state *“These impacts are not confounded by effects of deer and accumulate over time, even when only a small number of feral horses (~100) are present”* (Tolsma 2018). There is no valid evidence to support this statement. Also, the Tolsma 2018 study was conducted in the **same area** that Parks Victoria had just authorised deer shoots. Just how were deer and horse impacts separated?

The ABA shares Professor Driscoll’s concern that if horse numbers remain un-managed, over time the population becomes harder to manage humanely, but why waste everyone’s time promoting aerial culling when we have a new NSW Brumby Act designed to provide a viable and realistic balance of healthy Heritage Brumbies in their healthy environments in future.

Authorised by Jill Pickering 0400-558-772, President, Australian Brumby Alliance 4-Feb-19