



PO Box 3276
Victoria Gardens
Richmond, Vic 3121

Phone : (03) 9428 4709

info@australianbrumbyalliance.org.au

www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au

ABN : 90784718191

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MEDIA RELEASE

Brumbies in the Australian Alps contribute to National Heritage Values

The Australian Brumby Alliance (ABA) took Parks Victoria (PV) to court to prevent PV eradicating all Bogong High Plains Brumbies, and significantly lowering the Eastern Alpine populations, due to their heritage connection to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity (EPBC) National Heritage Values.

In summary the Judge;

- Accepted that the continuing presence of Brumbies in the Australian Alps contributes to the National Heritage Values relating to the pioneering history of the high country
- Found that Brumbies are one physical reminder of the historic activities and, in that sense, contribute to the social connection of the pastoral community to the Australian Alps
- Ultimately held that because there would still be a **significant** population of Brumbies in the Eastern Alps the action would not have a significant impact on the National Heritage value.

The Judge's Reasons for Judgement 8 May 2020 ABA-v-PV VID 1569 of 2018 included;

- Brumbies in the Australian Alps provide a link to and evidence of Australia's transhumant grazing and pastoral history. (Judgement s238)
- The action will not remove all brumbies from the Australian Alps. The Action will remove all brumbies from the Bogong High Plains and about half the population from the Eastern Alps. It follows that a population of Brumbies will remain in at least the Victorian Alps section of the Australian Alps. (Judgement s240)
- Parks Victoria agreed that Brumbies in the Australian Alps have cultural heritage significance, (but) the omission of express reference to brumbies in the Listing indicated that they are not significant attributes of the listed National Heritage values. (Judgement s144)
- Having regard to the foregoing factors, on balance I, (O'Bryan) do not consider the proposed Action is likely to have a *significant* impact on this National Heritage value. While there will be *some* impact by reason of the connection of the brumbies to the myths, stories and legends of the Australian Alps with which communities have a connection, the retention of a significant population of brumbies in the Eastern Alps has the result that the Action cannot be regarded as significant. (Judgement s255)

Therefore;

The continuing presence of Brumbies in the Australian Alps contributes to the National Heritage Values relating to the pioneering history of the high country. *But PV can do as they like!!* We must strengthen the **historic significance** that each Victorian Brumby population represents, *before* they are eradicated, in order to reach the threshold of significance for National Heritage Values listing.

Authorised by Australian Brumby Alliance 10th June 2020 – Contact: 0400-558-772