

Feral Deer Eradication Program Landholder Access Agreement

Information for Participating Landholders

Limestone Coast Landscape Board

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board is providing practical support to landholders to increase the scale and intensity of feral deer shooting operations with the aim of eradicating feral deer from the region to protect agriculture and biodiversity and improve public safety.

Feral Deer Eradication Program

The Limestone Coast Landscape Board (LC Landscape Board) is committed to achieving feral deer eradication.

The Feral Deer Eradication Program (the Program) integrates aerial and ground shooting operations with monitoring, education and engagement, compliance and enforcement.

Under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act)*, landholders are required to eradicate feral deer on their property.

The Program is free to join and provides support to assist landholders to meet their legislative responsibilities.

The Program is funded by the Australian Government, the Government of South Australia and landscape levies.

Aerial and Ground Shooting

Eradicating feral deer is best achieved by land managers collaborating and implementing the most effective techniques at the largest possible scale and intensity. When planning aerial and ground shooting operations, the LC Landscape Board considers local terrain and individual landholder circumstances.

Integrating aerial and ground shooting operations will help to achieve landscape-scale eradication by using feral deer behaviour to the Programs advantage.

Aerial shooting of feral animals from a helicopter is an effective and efficient technique that can be used across a variety of habitat. Aerial shooting is also ideal in heavily vegetated, inaccessible areas during the day when deer are seeking cover. To maximise effectiveness and efficiency of aerial operations, the thermal assisted aerial culling technique is now being used where appropriate.

Ground shooting of feral deer by professional contractors utilising self-reloading firearms matched with suppressors and thermal assisted scopes can reduce noise and impact to livestock and target feral deer at night time when they are moving from native vegetation into open feeding areas.

Shooting operations are undertaken in accordance with National Codes of Practice (CoP) for the humane shooting of feral deer.

The LC Landscape Board seeks to increase participation in aerial and ground shooting operations by asking landholders from across the region to sign up to the Landholder Access Agreement.

Landholder Access Agreements

Participating landholders in the Feral Deer Eradication Program are required by the LC Landscape Board to sign a Landholder Access Agreement.

The Landholder Access Agreement:

1. Allows property access for accredited government staff and professional contractors engaged by the LC Landscape Board to undertake feral deer aerial or ground shooting, and/or monitoring activities.
2. Captures the relevant property information including the unique land parcel ID number, area of property approved and not approved for access, livestock to be moved and other requirements such as farm biosecurity.
3. Requires landholders to conduct follow up feral deer shooting to maximise the effectiveness of the Program.
4. Will expire on 30 June 2025 (2 years), unless terminated by the landholder or LC Landscape Board prior.

Information provided by landholders participating in the Program is confidential and participant or property details are not made publicly available. Property geographic information systems (GIS) spatial data layers are used for the purpose of the operations only.

The LC Landscape Board will contact property owners 4 weeks prior to shooting operations to confirm shooting dates and property information. Participating landholders will then be contacted via text messages at 72 hours and 24 hours prior to aerial shooting operations commencing. This will be landholders final opportunity to withdraw participation by contacting the number listed in the text message. The landholder will only be notified via the 72/24 hour text messages, not on specific days of operation.

Qualifications and Experience

Aerial and ground shooting operations are undertaken by accredited government staff and professional contractors engaged by the LC Landscape Board.

Aerial and ground shooting operations are conducted to ensure the humane shooting of feral animals in accordance with National CoP.

All government staff and professional contractors hold the applicable firearms licence category and/or Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) approvals to carry and discharge firearms on an aircraft.

Helicopter operators hold the applicable approvals from CASA to undertake aerial shooting operations. Helicopter pilots hold the required licences and permits, and have the appropriate skills and experience to undertake aerial shooting operations.

Any government staff participating in shooting operations undergo background assessment and professional contractors are engaged through appropriate procurement processes.

Feral Deer Eradication Program

Landholder Access Agreement for Participating Landholders

Insurance

All approved eradication operations are covered by LC Landscape Board under its insurance arrangements with the South Australian Government Financing Authority (SAFA).

Under this agreement, SAFA will meet the cost of any civil liability claim made against the LC Landscape Board. The cover amount is without limit. A letter confirming LC Landscape Board's insurance protection can be provided to landholders upon request.

All contractors engaged by the LC Landscape Board are verified as holding all appropriate insurance.

Recording

Recording of the location, number and species of deer shot is conducted using a GPS enabled data logger. For aerial shooting operations tracking data (track logs) are also recorded using GPS.

Property information provided by landholders is used to create digitised operational maps. This enables aircraft to use GPS to ensure they are operating within property boundaries and operational areas. All recorded data associated with the Program is used for the purpose of monitoring feral deer.

Participating Landholder Responsibilities

- Landholders who want to include their property in the shooting operations MUST complete and return the signed Landholder Access Agreement form either in hard copy or online.
- Landholders must, unless previously provided, supply a map of all participating properties, showing areas to be included in the Program.
- Landholders are requested to meet and discuss the details of their property access requirements, especially for ground shooting (i.e. farm biosecurity and site specific safety), with government staff and contractors.
- In the interests of public safety and avoiding unnecessary concern, it is a requirement that all landholders ensure that any tenants on, or visitors to, their properties are notified of the Program activities.
- Landholders taking part in the Program agree to undertake follow up feral deer eradication on their property.
- Landholders must read the 'Feral Deer Eradication Program, Landholder Access Agreement Information for Participating Landholders' prior to signing the Landholder Access Agreement.

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Disclaimer

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Park and Campground Closures

The South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service may close their parks during pest animal culling programs. Efforts will be made to notify landholders adjoining parks when shoot operations are occurring.

Please visit the National Parks and Wildlife Service website for the most up-to date area and campground closures at www.parks.sa.gov.au.

Project Partners

The LC Landscape Board undertakes its shooting operations in partnership with PIRSA and the Department for Environment and Water (DEW).

Please note dates and locations indicated are subject to change in collaboration with project partners. The FY25 operations will be published when scheduled.

Aerial shooting schedule for FY 2023-24

The following dates are scheduled for aerial shooting for the 2023-24 financial year. Please note these dates are published on the LC Landscape Board, Feral Deer Eradication Program site at www.engage.lclandscapesa.com.au/FDEP and are subject to change.

- **Session 1** - 1 - 15 August 2023 (Central Limestone Coast)
- **Session 2** - 11 - 15 September 2023 (Northern Limestone Coast)
- **Session 3** - 19 - 30 October 2023 (Northern Limestone Coast)
- **Session 4** - 8 -12 April 2024 (Northern Limestone Coast)
- **Session 5** - 28 April - 6 May 2024 (Central Limestone Coast)
- **Session 6** - 7 - 12 May 2024 (Northern Limestone Coast)
- **Session 7** - 13 - 24 May 2024 (Northern Limestone Coast)

Ground shooting schedule for FY 2023-24

Ground shooting is conducted predominantly in autumn however, professional contractors and dates are yet to be confirmed for 2023-24 financial year.

The LC Landscape Board will provide additional correspondence later this year to landholders who select ground shooting services.

Limestone Coast Landscape Board

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