

DEER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - 2020-2025

Goals, Actions and Deliverables

Goal 1: The impacts of deer on key environmental, agricultural, and Aboriginal cultural heritage values and public safety are reduced.

Action	Deliverable	Lead agency	Partners	Commencement date	Indicative completion date
1.1 Prevent the establishment of new deer species and populations in Victoria	1.1.1 Review the classification of deer species not established in the wild in Victoria (e.g. Chital, Rusa, Wapiti, Sika and any hybrids) and investigate their transition to pest animals under the <i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i> .	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP); Parks Victoria	July 2021	December 2022
	1.1.2 Review the current regulatory framework that applies to the keeping and farming of all deer species in Victoria to ensure that risks relating to their escape and establishment are being effectively managed. The impact of any necessary changes on deer farmers and keepers will be considered as part of this review.	DJPR	DELWP; Parks Victoria	July 2021	December 2022
	1.1.3 Develop and publish education material to reinforce that the release and translocation of deer is illegal.	DELWP	Game Management Authority (GMA); hunting organisations.	Oct 2021	December 2021
1.2 Implement the deer management framework to guide Victorian Government and partner investment in deer control.	1.2.1 Implement the Deer Management Framework, including establishment of regional deer management partnership groups, deer advisory committee and development of Regional Plans.	DELWP	Parks Victoria; DJPR; Local Government; GMA; Traditional Owners; water authorities; VicRoads; Regional Roads Vic; Catchment Management	April 2021	Ongoing

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			Authorities (CMAs); conservation and community groups; hunting organisations; industry; farmers; research institutions; Deer Advisory Committee.		
	1.2.2 Communicate and promote use of regional plans.	DELWP	Parks Victoria, Local Government, industry.	After completion of plans – starting in 2021	Ongoing
	1.2.3 Use the Regional Plans to guide investment in deer control and other management measures.	DELWP; Parks Victoria.	Local Government; Traditional Owners; CMAs; community groups; DJPR; industry.	2021	Ongoing and as required once regional plans developed
1.3 Undertake strategic deer control	1.3.1 Invest in and undertake deer control and management activities as guided by the regional plans.	DELWP	Parks Victoria; water authorities; Local Government; Traditional Owners; CMAs; community groups; hunting organisations; industry; GMA; industry; PrimeSafe.	2021	Ongoing
1.4 Remove regulatory barriers to enable effective deer control	1.4.1 Enable public land managers to control deer as required without the need to obtain authorisation under the Wildlife Act.	DELWP.	Parks Victoria; DJPR; GMA; Melbourne Water; Local Government.	Apr 2021	February 2022

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1.5 Facilitate development of a commercial deer harvest industry to reduce deer densities.	1.5.1 Utilise wild deer carcasses for economic benefit. Work with commercial entities to: - facilitate commercial utilisation of wild deer from private and public land to reduce deer densities - improve utilisation of wild harvested carcasses from deer management programs, including pilot projects.	Public land managers	DELWP; Primesafe; DJPR.	Ongoing	Ongoing
1.6 Reduce public safety risks associated with deer	1.6.1 Identify hot spots for deer/vehicle accidents through the establishment of a collision register.	DELWP	Local Government; Vic Roads; community; insurance companies.	Jan 2022	December 2022
	1.6.2 In consultation with local government and Victoria Police, develop peri-urban/public place deer management guidelines for inclusion in the Standard Operating Procedure for the control of deer outlined in Goal 3.	DJPR	Parks Victoria; GMA; Local Government; Victoria Police; DELWP.	July 2021	December 2022

Goal 2: Enhance deer management through partnerships and community collaboration

Action	Deliverable	Lead agency	Partners	Commencement date	Indicative completion date
2.1 Provide leadership and coordination through strategic partnerships	2.1.1 Coordinate an annual forum for land managers and other key stakeholders involved in Regional Plans to share information regarding deer behaviour, distribution, abundance, effectiveness of control programs, impacts and management approaches to inform planning and control programs.	DELWP	DJPR; Arthur Rylah Institute; Parks Victoria; Local Government; community groups; GMA; CMAs.	Annually	Annual (ongoing)
2.2 Enhance Traditional Owner involvement in deer management	2.2.1 Engage with Traditional Owner groups to: - determine Aboriginal cultural and natural heritage values requiring protection from the impacts of deer - ensure the protection of Aboriginal cultural and natural heritage values are considered in the determination of priority locations for	DELWP; Traditional Owner groups.	Public land managers.	As part of Regional Plan development	Ongoing

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	deer control in the development of regional plans.				
	2.2.2 Engage Traditional Owners in strategic deer management, including assessment, monitoring, planning and management.	Public land managers; DELWP; Traditional Owner groups.	DJPR; GMA	As part of Regional Plan development and implementation	Ongoing
2.3 Encourage hunters and commercial harvesters to contribute to strategic and cost-effective deer management	2.3.1 Provide advice to hunters on how they can effectively contribute to reducing deer densities.	DELWP; Parks Victoria; hunting organisations.	GMA	Through regional planning, DELWP website June 2021 and as opportunities arise.	Ongoing
	2.3.2 Provide advice to private and public land managers on the options available to them to control deer on their land, including cost-effective options such as engaging commercial deer harvesters or farm assistance programs run by hunting organisations. <i>(this action is embedded within 3.3.1)</i>	DELWP	DJPR; GMA; industry; hunting organisations	2022	December 2022
	2.3.3 Support opportunities to increase the involvement of recreational hunters in control programs on public land.	Public land managers	DELWP; Parks Victoria; GMA; DJPR; hunting organisations	Ongoing and as part of regional plan delivery	Ongoing
2.4 Ensure a consistent and collaborative approach across state borders	2.4.1 Work with NSW and SA to ensure a consistent, landscape approach to deer management is adopted across borders.	DELWP; Parks Victoria	Public land managers; Plantation managers; Local Government; DJPR	As part of regional plan development	Ongoing

Goal 3: Increase awareness, understanding and capacity to manage deer

Action	Deliverable	Lead agency	Partners	Commencement Date	Indicative completion date
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3.1 Improve knowledge of current deer distribution	3.1.1 Undertake a deer distribution and abundance survey in Victoria on all present species.	DELWP	Arthur Rylah Institute; GMA; Parks Victoria	2024	December 2024
3.2 Enhance knowledge and best practice management of deer	3.2.1 Initiate and support research opportunities that progress implementation of the strategy. Priority research themes include the establishment of deer density targets to protect key assets, further information on deer distribution and abundance, management efficacy, humane control measures, monitoring and disease risk and cost. Refer to Appendix E in Victorian Deer Control Strategy for a list of current research needs.	DELWP	Research institutions; GMA; DJPR.	As opportunity presents; as part of regional plan development/deer control program	As opportunity presents; as part of regional plan development/deer control program
	3.2.2 Through research and trials, improve the efficiency of existing deer management and investigate new management or control methods ensuring consideration of animal welfare impacts.	DELWP; GMA; DJPR; public land managers	Research institutions.	As opportunities arise and through regional plans/deer control program	As opportunity presents; as part of regional plan development/deer control program
	3.2.3 Quantify the environmental, social and economic impacts of deer in Victoria.	DELWP	Research institutions; land managers; Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences.	As opportunity presents.	As opportunity presents.
	3.2.4 Develop a Standard Operating Procedure and Code of Practice for the control of deer to assist land managers.	DJPR	Parks Victoria; GMA; DELWP; other jurisdictions; hunting organisations; Local Government; Victoria Police; private land managers; industry.	July 2021.	December 2022.

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	<p>3.2.5 Encourage the community to contribute to improving our knowledge of deer by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reporting deer sightings - reporting car accidents and other public safety issues via the reporting tool discussed under Goal 1. - being involved in community forums and sessions for informing the Deer Management Framework. 	<p>DELWP; Local Government; Parks Victoria.</p>	<p>CMAs; VicRoads; Victoria Police; GMA; DJPR; Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (PestSmart); Victorian Deer Control Community Network.</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p>
<p>3.3 Increase understanding of the legal framework for deer control and management options</p>	<p>3.3.1 Develop a deer management information pack, for all stakeholders, explaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why deer management is necessary (deer impacts) - the legislative framework for deer management (including landowner/manager legal requirements and animal welfare requirements) in plain English - options and opportunities for managing deer - best practice standards and codes of practice for humane destruction of deer. 	<p>DELWP.</p>	<p>DJPR; hunting organisations; GMA; Parks Victoria; Local Government; CMAs.</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>June 2022</p>
<p>3.4 Partner with other jurisdictions to share knowledge, co-invest in research and build capacity</p>	<p>3.4.1 Work with other states to share knowledge about deer management and control, improve practices, co-invest in research and develop cooperative management strategies across borders.</p>	<p>DELWP; Parks Victoria; DJPR; Arthur Rylah Institute; GMA.</p>	<p>National Deer Coordinator.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>3.5 Ensure monitoring and evaluation outcomes continue to inform management</p>	<p>3.5.1 Develop and implement a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework for deer management effectiveness, value and success.</p>	<p>DELWP</p>	<p>Parks Victoria; Arthur Rylah Institute</p>	<p>April 2021</p>	<p>March 2022</p>