

COALITION OF ANIMAL PROTECTORS

PRESS RELEASE - KANGAROO FERTILITY CONTROL TRIAL

The ACT environment Minister Simon Corbell has announced the commencement this year of field trials of kangaroo fertility drug.

The Coalition of Animal Protectors (CAP), which helped successfully hinder the killing of eastern grey kangaroos on some Canberra reserves during last year's government cull, believes that fertility control could be the final nail in the coffin of a species already threatened by vast scale culling, hunting for meat and skins, habitat loss and fragmentation, climate change, and road deaths.

Spokesperson Robyn Soxsmith explains, "All the evidence shows this species to be in severe and steep decline."

In relation to the three recent ACAT hearings which have permitted the slaughter to go ahead, Ms Soxsmith responds, "All three of these hearings clearly demonstrated the woeful science that is being used to support the culling of kangaroos on ACAT reserves. The fact that the ACAT itself has ignored all the evidence and supported the government is irrelevant. The evidence presented at these hearings is now a matter of public record."

CAP's concern is not only for the extinction of the kangaroos. "Kangaroos are such a critical element of Australian ecosystems, their disappearance will be the "tip of iceberg" causing a cascade of extinctions among other native animals."

Ms Soxsmith points to the health of populations of rare or threatened native reptiles in the nearby Queanbeyan Nature Reserve where kangaroos have never been culled (published in recent NSW government study), in contrast to the decline of these same species in the culled reserves of the Canberra Nature Park.

To conclude, Ms Soxsmith asks two questions:

1. Is the use of a fertility control drug simply a cynical ploy by the ACT Government to finally facilitate the extinction of kangaroos from Canberra's Nature's Reserves; and
2. Will Canberrans be prepared to accept the extinction of indigenous wildlife from their Nature Reserves.

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