Deer Control Program – Question and Answers
Dandenong Ranges National Park, Yellingbo NCR and Warramate Hills NCR

Why are you culling deer in the Dandenong Ranges?

Sambar and Fallow Deer are having a negative impact on the native vegetation, fauna, creeks and macro and micro-invertebrates. As an introduced species, hard hoofed browsing deer can have detrimental impact on the park environment and has caused issues including habitat degradation, competition for food with native wildlife, degrading fragile vegetation, soil disturbances, erosion and compaction.

How many deer will be culled?

It is difficult to say how many deer will be culled as they are highly mobile and adaptable animals and difficult to shoot. The permit issued allows for up to 220 deer to be removed from the parks over the next 12 months.

How will the deer be killed or removed from the park?

Deer will be shot humanely by skilled, authorised and trained accredited shooters in accordance with prevention of cruelty to animal legislation. All carcasses will be removed from the park/reserve within 24 hours of conclusion of shooting.

Have you considered other methods of dealing with deer issues instead of shooting, such as relocation?

Yes. Co-ordinated ground shooting has proven to be the only effective method of deer control. Deer suffer great rates of capture-related mortality shortly after relocation.

Will the parks be closed during deer control operations?

Yes. The parks will be closed for public safety during deer control operations.

When will the Deer Control operations occur?

The program will be conducted over the next 12 months and is expected to become ongoing depending on monitoring results. Spotlight shooting will occur at night and stalking during daylight hours will be the main control techniques. There will be no shooting on weekends, public holidays or during school holiday periods.
Can members of the public who have gun licences get involved in the culling program?

No. Parks Victoria has contracted the Australian Deer Association and Sporting Shooters Association of Australia to carry out animal control. Only authorised shooters with an Authority to Control Wildlife permit are permitted to participate with Parks Victoria approvals.

Will local residents hear gun shots?

Yes it is possible some local residents may hear gun fire during the deer control program operations.

Will the Deer Control Program be conducted on total fire ban days or ‘code red’ days?

No. It is not safe for volunteers or staff to be conducting deer control programs during total fire bans or code red days. Parks Victoria staff will also be on standby for bush fire response.

Deer are on my private property. Can you come and get the deer on my land?

The ADA and SSAA have skilled and competent volunteers who can assist neighbours in assessing their properties and deer control.

Where can I get more information about the deer control program?

Information including maps is available on the Parks Victoria website www.parks.vic.gov.au or by calling Parks Victoria on 13 1963.