

14/01/16

Re Hastings River Mouse

I wish to make comments on the proposed amendment of the Priorities Action Statement, specifically in relation to the landscape managed Hastings River Mouse.

My comments are made as a person with a good scientific understanding of this species, and as the owner and manager for over 30 years of land containing the most southern population of the Hastings River Mouse in Australia, and located near Mt Royal in the Hunter Valley. I therefore have a direct interest in the proposed changes to the Priorities Action Statement.

It would be useful to provide adequate information to inform the proposed amended action strategy for the Hastings River Mouse, including an outline of what actions have been completed under the existing recovery plan and Priorities Action Statement, and what these actions have achieved.

After reviewing the proposed amended action strategy, I have the following comments:

1. Specific management guidelines for landowners and managers are required rather than the generic statements included in the actions. In particular, this includes targeted field survey guidelines.
2. It is not clear what the difference between the area and site scale is, as many of the actions are applicable at both scales.
3. Some of the actions may differ across the species range, and are not applicable to the southern population in the Mt Royal Area. Where this is the case, it should be specified.
4. Consideration should be given to identification of key management sites for this species which would include Mt Royal National Park and the Callicoma Hill property which has continuing records of the occurrence of the Hastings River Mouse over about 20 years.
5. The strategy should provide for funding support to landowners such as ourselves to undertake the targeted survey and monitoring work proposed in Action numbers 2, 6 & 7. We have previously proposed to National Parks and Wildlife Service that ongoing Hastings River Mouse monitoring in response to habitat management be undertaken on our property, and funding be provided to support this.

Can you confirm by return email that you have received this submission? Please contact me if you have any queries, or wish to discuss the proposals.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Martin Fallding