

Dear Ms Davies - firstly I would like to thank you for taking the time to reply to my concerns in relation to the new Flying Fox Management Strategy to be implemented shortly by the NSW Government and for giving me the opportunity to make comment in relation to this document.

My greatest concerns in relation to the flying foxes are the possible granting of licences to shoot flying foxes in rural and peri-urban areas. I attach for your reference copy of a document raised in 2008 entitled "Why NSW should ban the shooting of flying foxes". This is a very concise document endorsed by 58 conservation groups and I would refer you to Page 5 of the attached document which outlines the cruelty involved with shooting of the flying foxes. Also please refer to *Welfare reasons to ban shooting, pp 13-16* of the document. During the breeding season the shooting of the f/foxes would result not only in the death of the mother but also that of the baby flying fox (carried for 3 weeks after birth by the mother, then left in the camp area until independent of the mother). If the mother does not return after a night of foraging the baby left behind in the camp will have no way to survive, reducing the numbers of this vulnerable species even further. Having said that, it is pleasing to read that the breeding season is being taken into account in relation to camp dispersals.

Netting is the most effective way of protecting fruit crops and it is noted that funding of \$4 million is now available for the provision of netting for orchardists to protect their crops. Reference to the provision of netting in the attached document indicated that the application process at that time was cumbersome and complex (Page 21 under heading Alternative Methods of Crop Protection). This point should be taken into account when documentation is requested from the growers who are applying for funding for netting.

It is also hoped that the flying foxes will not be demonised in relation to the spread of disease to the human population just to justify the destruction of flying foxes. The public only need to be advised to not handle flying foxes and contact an organisation such as WIRES who have members able to handle the animals following vaccination against rabies. Flying foxes are listed as a vulnerable species and play an important role in pollination and seed dispersal of native plants and vegetation. It is imperative that the flying fox be protected from callus destruction for this reason.

Your sincerely,

Robyn Hittmann