



Wild Horse Management Plan Review

DRAFT Online Engagement Report - 21 July to 14 December 2014

Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of the Preliminary Online Engagement supporting the review of the Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park.

Bluegrass Consulting - March 2015

Table of Contents

1. Overview	4
Rationale for online engagement	4
Participation Summary	5
Quantitative Summary	6
Qualitative Summary	7
2. Key Findings	8
3. Recommendations for the next engagement phase	11
4. Engaging Content	12
Content Development	13
Content Implementation	15
5. Participation	19
Community Growth	20
Community Demographics	21
Key Community Contributors and Dynamics	23
Managing the community	24
6. Analysis Methodology	25
7. Quantitative Consultation Outcomes	26
Discussion Forum Quantitative Analysis	27
Key Discussion Focus Areas	27
Key Discussion Topics	29
8. Qualitative Consultation Outcomes (by Discussion Forum)	31
8.1 Forum 1 – Where have you see Wild Horses?	32
8.2 Forum 2 – How is a National Park different from a paddock?	34
8.3 Forum 3 – Have you adopted a wild horse?	36
8.4 Forum 4 – Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?	38
8.5 Forum 5 – Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?	40
8.6 Forum 6 – What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?	42
8.7 Forum 7 – What is more important to consider? The estimated population of wild horses, the impact of wild horses, or both?	44
8.8 Forum 8 – It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park.	46
8.9 Forum 9 – Have you read the recent article by the Guardian? Do you agree or disagree?	48
8.10 Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?	50
8.11 Forum 11 – Do introduced species compete with native animals for food and shelter?	52
8.12 Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park?	54
8.13 Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?	56

8.14 Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horse be and why?	58
8.15 Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article in The Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?.....	60
8.16 Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses?	62
8.17 Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?	64
8.18 Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?.....	66
8.19 Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?	68
8.20 Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?	70
8.21 Forum 21– How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review?	73
8.22 Forum 22 –What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?	75
8.23 Forum 23– What do you think of roping and brumby running as a control method?	78
8.24 Forum 24–What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option?	80
8.25 Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?	82
8.26 Forum 26 – What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?	84
8.27 Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?	86
8.28 Forum 28 – What is your preferred control method and why?	89
8.29 Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?	91
8.30 Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?.....	93
8.31 Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?	95
8.32 Forum 32 – In the discussion on wild horse management, who do you most agree with and why?	97
9. Key Insights	99
9.1 Purpose and importance of National Parks?	100
9.2 Community value and experience of wild horses	102
9.3. The need for a plan of management for wild horses	104
9.4 Impacts of wild horses and their population and distribution	106
9.5 Wild horse management methods – General	108
9.6 Trapping and euthanasia at trap site	110
9.7 Fertility control.....	111
9.8 Fencing	112
9.9 Culling – aerial and ground	113
9.10 Live capture and removal methods	114
9.11 Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation	115
9.12 Community consultation and Involvement	117
10. Appendix.....	118
11. Glossary	121

1. Overview

Rationale for online engagement

Approximately every five years a review is undertaken to gather community and expert input and to examine the effectiveness of the Wild Horse Management Plan (the Plan). There are two distinct phases to the consultation - preliminary consultation which gathers input to inform the redrafting of the Plan followed by a period of consultation on the actual redrafted Plan, which is then placed on public display.

The last review occurred in 2008 and since that time the online and social media landscape has emerged as an essential consideration for any community engagement. Therefore developing a valuable and credible approach to online engagement was a critical part of the overall community engagement approach.

The preliminary engagement needed to be distinct from previous engagements to review the Wild Horse Management Plan (the Plan) and the online environment was ideal for unpacking complex information with the community given the 24/7 accessibility and how it enables interaction.

Broadly the engagement online site, its functions and contents presented a viable and credible alternative to other social media platforms and was positioned to manage and moderate a wide range of interest and awareness levels. An additional purpose was to ensure that accurate information was presented and relied on in discussions by the participants given the contentious nature of the topics raised.

Critically, rather than just presenting sections of the existing plan and asking the community to discuss, consideration was taken to prepare the engagement as a long conversation that took its lead from four key themes (values, impacts and threats, management, and involvement or current situation) which helped to contextualize the Plan within the broader purpose of NPWS. To reflect that purpose, the tagline 'Protecting the Snowies' was chosen.

The primary function of the site was supporting the conversation and this was supported through the 32 discussion forums, which were rolled out over 152 days.

If no or limited online engagement had been pursued, the Wild Horse Management Plan would have been debated and people informed largely by an unmanaged online space like Facebook.

Participation Summary

The site helped to raise awareness, inform and engage the 23,763 visits (includes repeat visitors), of which 23,456 opted not to register or participate in the discussion forums. However 18,286 (78%) visited the discussion forums to 'listen in' or view the conversation.

By just visiting 'Protecting the Snowies', 19,675 unique visitors became **aware** of the wild horse management plan. Of these visitors 6552 shifted from aware to **informed** when they undertook some action to learn more about the management plan by downloading a document, watching a video, reading the questions and answers or other materials. And 589 became **engaged** and active by contributing to a forum by providing a comment, agreeing or disagreeing with a comment, by completing the survey or by submitting a story.

23,763 visitors
19,675 aware
6552 informed
589 engaged
18,286 discussion forum visits

Visitors to the site generated 46,814 unique page views and key media reports spiked visitor interest around 26 July (the Canberra Times), 20 August (The Guardian) and 23 September (The Conversation). If broader promotion had been allowed either through advertising or proactive media engagement more people may have been involved with the online engagement.

Notably, when the 21st century town hall meeting was arranged for 29 November 2014 and the invitation process was underway there was an upswing in visitors to the site. This activity spiked in the days after the 21st century town hall meeting from 30 November to 5 December 2014 where the number of unique visitors reached 3000 in this period, with 54

people registering as participants and joining the conversation. However there was limited time remaining for the online engagement for the contribution of new participants to gain momentum. This may have been avoided had the 21st century town hall meeting been held earlier as initially planned.

Overall there were 307 registered users or 1.3% of total visitors. Furthermore the majority of the active participants were 'pro horse' with the top three contributors providing a combined 478 comments (32.8% of all 1453 comments). The 'pro horse' cohort was consistently present throughout the 152 days of the online consultation and active in all discussion forums. There was an 'environmentalist' presence amongst the contributors, however this was confined to specific forums and limited to a handful of participants.

Quantitative Summary

The quantitative analysis reveals three key discussion areas, six topics and the following key opinions for consideration when redrafting the existing plan. Note: Many of the individual 1453 comments were lengthy and related to several areas of the existing plan. As a result of attributing a singular comment to several areas of the plan, the total number of comments for analysis is 2026:

Key Discussion area	Key Topics	Key Opinions Expressed
40% of 2026 comments related to Why Kosciuszko National Park is important	Historical overview of horses in the Snowy Mountains	• Wild horses are part of our heritage • Wild horses should be protected • Glut of ex-racehorses on the market makes it difficult to find homes for wild horses removed • Majority of stories submitted were related to experiences of wild horses or the adoption of a wild horse
	Impacts of horses	• There is not enough scientific evidence of the damage caused by wild horses and regeneration of sensitive areas
	Horse population and distribution	• Wild horses should not be in the upper alpine areas of the National Park • Provide more fencing in sensitive areas • Validity of the population figures • Mismanagement of the park/other impacts from feral animals, mountain bikes and development
36% of 2026 comments related to Horse Management Methods	Culling – Aerial and Ground	• Rehoming efforts are hampered by glut of ex-racehorses • Fertility control is the preferred method of controlling population
	Live capture and removal methods	• Aerial and ground culling perceived as inhumane • Providing the cost benefit analysis of other potential methods of control
14% of 2026 comments related to Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation	Monitoring the humaneness of capture and removal programs	• Agreement that any approach to controlling wild horses must be undertaken humanely • There is not enough scientific evidence of the damage caused by wild horses and regeneration of sensitive areas

Qualitative Summary

The qualitative analysis reveals that of the 32 discussion forums 14 were dominated by 'pro horse' advocates, 11 by 'environmentalist' advocates and 7 were balanced with even contribution from both perspectives.

Pro horse Forums	Balanced Forums	Environmentalist Forums
• Have you adopted a wild horse? • Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing? • Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies? • Are there parts of the National Park that should be kept completely free from wild horses? • What legacy should we leave for future generations? • What does humane treatment mean to you? • Have you read the recent article on The Conversation? • Do we need a horse sanctuary? • What do you think of roping and brumby running as a control method? • How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Review? • What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses? • Do wild horses compete with native animals for food and shelter? • What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management? • What is your preferred control method and why?	• How is a National Park different from a paddock? • Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you? • What is more important to consider? The estimated population of wild horses, the impact of wild horses or both? • How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horse? • What happened is we do nothing? Is this a real option? • What is most important when considering control methods? • What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan? • In the discussion on wild horse management, whom do you most agree with?	• Where have you seen wild horses? • What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park? • It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse? • Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? • Where have you seen impacts of wild horses? • What do wild horses mean to you? • Why do we need National Parks? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses are, and why?

2. Key Findings

The online engagement was a fairly balanced conversation with a 'pro horse' leaning given that:

- Of the 1453 comments, 7255 were voted as 4071 (57%) in agreement of a comment and 3184 (43%) in disagreement of a comment.
- Qualitative analysis indicates that of the 32 discussion forums 14 were dominated by 'pro horse' advocates, 11 by 'environmentalist' advocates and 7 were balanced with even contribution from both perspectives.

In examining both the quantitative indicators and the qualitative aspects of the online engagement the key findings against the engagement themes emerge:

Voting on all comments:

57% agreed
43% disagreed

Value

Most participants value the Snowy Mountains as a National Park, but for different reasons, with many valuing the wild horses as part of the heritage or iconic attraction of the Snowy Mountains.

- 40% of all comments related to why Kosciuszko National Park is important
- Two of the top five most visited forums examined the importance of the Snowy Mountains and wild horses

Impact and Threats

A majority of participants acknowledge that there is a challenge or problem in managing wild horses.

- Of the 2026 comments, 308 related to the impacts of horses and 317 related to the distribution of the population.
- One of the top five most visited forums was *'Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? What do you agree or disagree with?'* This forum examined the wild horse situation as presented by a credible independent media outlet. It resulted in a mixed reaction although there was an indication that the wild horse problem was real.
- In the forum *'Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?'* the validity of the estimated population numbers was challenged often. Also challenged were the impacts of wild horses as presented in video and photos as being the result of other introduced species or compared to other management impacts from visitors and development.
- In the forum *'What is more important to consider? The estimated population of wild horses, the impact of wild horses or both?'* managing the impact of wild horses on sensitive areas emerged as more important consideration to estimating the population.

- The impacts of wild horses was further discussed in *'Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found impacts of wild horses?'* as well as *'How is a National Park different from a paddock?'* where there was agreement that wild horses should not be in the upper alpine areas of the National Park, something noted as a recent occurrence.

Management

- Nearly half of the discussion was focused on management methods and monitoring of management methods, with 36% of all comments related to horse management methods and 14% of all comments related to monitoring, repair and evaluation.

There is recognition that the current management techniques aren't that effective or the best outcome for the majority of wild horses

- Of the 2026 comments, 213 related to the passive removal of wild horses, 38 to the future of removed horses and 75 on the evaluation of current management methods.
- One of the top five most visited forums was *'Have you adopted a wild horse?'* where discussion moved to what happens to horses that can't find homes. It was acknowledged that the rehoming efforts are hampered by the glut of ex racehorses on the market and that capture and removal rates have varied over time as horses adapt to traps in their territory.
- In the forum *'It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse.'* It was acknowledged that the current technique is costly if the majority of wild horses are not rehomed but are sent to abattoirs.

Participants want more effective solutions but in a balanced way that manages environmental impact and humane treatment of wild horses and they want more evidence of the effectiveness the solutions, particularly of regeneration

- Of the 2026 comments, 93 related to fencing, 17 to exclusion zones and feeder areas and 68 to the monitoring of environmental impacts and 134 comments related to humane treatment.
- The most visited forum was *'Should we fence wild horses from sensitive areas?'* where the discussion explored this approach as an alternative to aerial or ground culling, as complimentary to ongoing passive trapping and acceptable to both pro horse and environmentalist if adequate scientific indicators and monitors are in place to indicate improvements or regeneration.
- Participants struggled with aerial and ground culling as a management technique on the grounds that it was inhumane and they preferred the option of fencing introduced species from sensitive areas. 310 of the 2026 comments related to aerial and ground culling and in the forum *'What is your preferred control method?'* participants again indicated a preference for fencing.
- While not a management method, the forum *'Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?'* indicated that participants wanted the wellbeing of wild horses managed and the idea of a sanctuary had broad appeal.
- In the forum *'Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses?'* there was agreement that horses should not be in the upper alpine areas of the National Park, which many anecdotally indicated was a recent occurrence.

Involvement

Participants also want to be involved in the management of wild horses or the monitoring of the impacts of wild horses in the National Park

- The forum '*How could community be more involved in the management or monitoring of the impacts of wild horses?*' the discussion called for a combined effort of science, research and coordinated community groups gathering data. However this forum received just 14 comments.
- There were several comments from participants seeking to be involved with NPWS in the management and monitoring of wild horses in the National Park. Community involvement could be explored further as new technologies would present a range of opportunities for visitors, locals and interest groups to gather in-field data or images.

3. Recommendations for the next engagement phase

When the Plan is redrafted taking in the inputs from the range of engagement and consultation activities it will be placed on public display and further consultation input will be sought. This period of preliminary engagement has derived some insights into how the online engagement could be improved in the next phase:

Platform

The use of the platform should be extended for the next phase but a distinction made between the previous conversation threads, either by archiving or by replicating the site and referring back to the archived 'Protecting the Snowies' site.

Content

The tagline of 'Protecting the Snowies' should be dropped or changed to narrow the focus to the new draft Plan. The conversation should continue through the discussion forums but with more user-generated content to drive discussions such as blogs. A new engagement frame, aligned to new or unclear aspects of the new draft Plan should be developed. Content should be developed regularly and aligned to the wider engagement activities in a way that enables the online engagement to capitalise on the content of these related engagements. The infographic can be utilised beyond this engagement as a tool to contextualise the Plan as it will be relevant till the review of the next Plan in 2020.

Participation

Establish a connection with registered and active participants as the online engagement is developed and use pulse surveys to 'check in' on how the engagement is proceeding.

More engagement with advocacy groups should be undertaken to encourage higher levels of online participation.

Seek to attract visitors and interest in the online engagement by engaging proactively with credible media outlets and key bloggers and by profiling the engagement through social media accounts associated with NPWS and Office of Environment and Heritage.

Improve integration with other engagement activities by ensuring more adequate time to utilise content from engagement activities in the online space and as well as time for input from the online community. Better integration with other engagement activities would help drive visitor numbers, increase general awareness and improve online participation from the general public as opposed to those with distinct views and vested interest in the Plan, as this would assist in balancing the online discussion.

"Over the course of this consultation period I have been more involved than I ever thought I would be. Originally my goal was to get on here and say a few things about how amazing Brumbies are, dispel a few myths about them, call for more research and promote the work that the HVBA does. What I have actually done is become so invested in this process that my husband has needed to repeatedly remind me that I am putting in more time per week with this than I would a full time job." HVBA Vice President 14/11/14

Forum 21 – How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review?

4. Engaging Content

The online consultation and associated resources were prepared to manage a wide range of interest and awareness levels. The site, its functions and contents, presented a viable and credible alternative to social media like Facebook, which would have been a limited and unmanaged online space for debate and raising awareness about the Wild Horse Management Plan.

Platform

The location for the online conversation was www.environment.nsw.gov/protectsnowies. This utilised Engagement HQ software to enable online discussion forums, submission of stories, online surveys, and links to additional information like fact sheets or research reports, and presentation of an image gallery. It was linked to a separate site that presented an infographic charting the growth of wild horses over time and their impact on the landscape. The platform was housed with the Office of Environment and Heritage website alongside several concurrent consultation activities for the portfolio.

Content

There were three strategic parts to the development of content and all were geared towards making the online engagement sustainable over 152 days as well as fresh and engaging. These included development of a tagline, making the discussion more of a conversation and designing an engagement frame that would guide the development of content and ensure it was relevant to the review of the Wild Horse Management Plan.

Developing a tagline

It was important to develop a tagline for the online engagement to assist in contextualising the wild horse management plan within the broader purpose of NPWS. To utilise the colloquial reference for the location of the Kosciuszko National Park the tagline 'Protecting the Snowies' was chosen.

Rather than just present sections of the existing plan and ask the online community to discuss, action was taken to prepare the engagement as a long conversation.

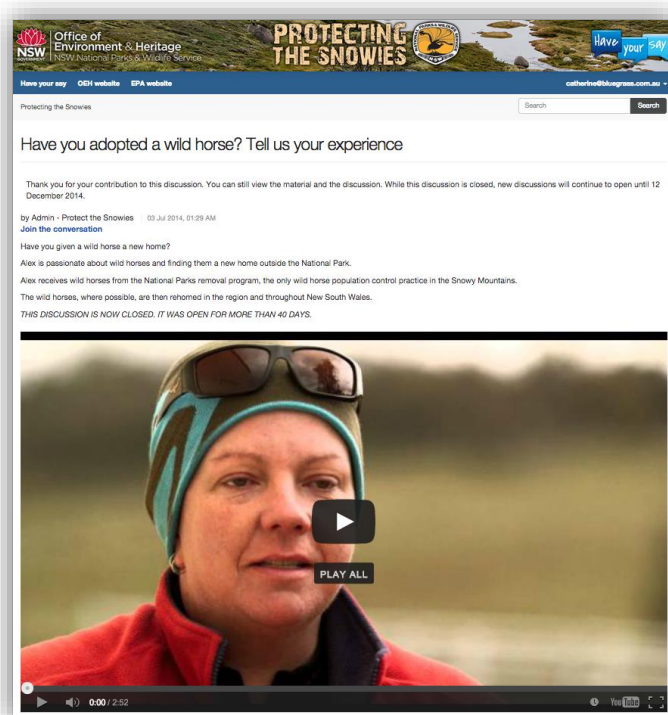
Making it more a conversation

Rather than just present sections of the existing plan and ask the online community to discuss these aspects, action was taken to prepare the engagement/consultation as a long conversation with several points/moments of interest. Content was developed which would pose a question, present evidence or engage a participant with a personal story or perspective through video. By taking the 'conversation' approach, related content was able to be drawn in from credible news sources when it was timely and topical.

Determining the engagement frame

The Wild Horse Management Plan was distilled into four key themes. These formed the narrative for the conversation and underpinned the development of the content to help inform and inspire participation in the discussions.

By establishing broad themes, it would enable each content element and in particular the discussion forums and any inputs that it attracted to be linked back to the existing plan and thereby inform the redrafting efforts. (See Table 1 – Themes and Related Discussion Forums)



Content Development

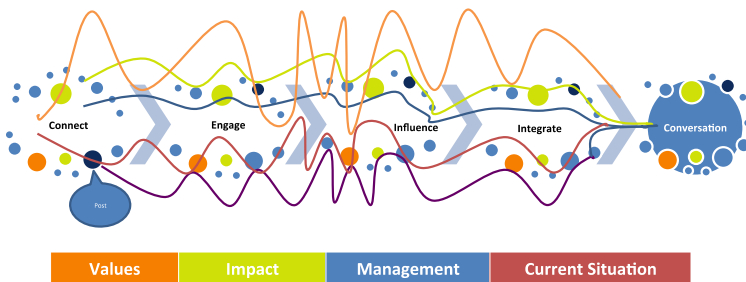
The content was developed either by NPWS, supplied by independent researchers or drawn from credible news sites. It included statistics, photos, video, opinions, research reports, information sheets, questions and answers and other key related documents. The validity of content was often challenged by pro horse advocates as was the choice of material, which was perceived as being biased.

Additionally the site supported features such as the infographic that detailed the story of the Snowy Mountains and the Wild Horses and presented the opportunity for participants to submit their own stories and pictures. It also integrated with other engagement activities by providing an online opportunity to undertake the survey or submit the Kitchen Table Discussion Guide.

In the primary function area of the engagement site, the discussion forums and content was used to inspire and attract a range of contributors to a particular conversation thread. A discussion forum would typically include a question, present evidence, opinion or experience via a video or photographs, link to additional resources and present a timeframe for the conversation to take place.

Table 1 – Themes and Related Discussion Forums		
Themes	Definition	Related Forums
		- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? Do you agree or disagree? - Have you read the recent article on the Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?
Values	Examining the aspects that make a National Park worthy of protection.	- How is a National Park different from a paddock? - Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you? - What do wild horses mean to you?
Management	Different management approaches for threats and impacts as well as the effectiveness of such measures.	- Have you adopted a wild horse? - What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park? - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove wild horses from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less? - What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why? - What does humane treatment mean to you? - Do we need a wild horse sanctuary? - What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses? - What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why? - What do you think of roping and 'brumby' running as a control method? - What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management? - What is your preferred control method? - What other things to do thing NPWS should consider in the review of the plan? Have you learnt anything you didn't already know? - Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Impact & Threats	Outlining the range of threats and impacts to the National Park.	- Where have you seen wild horses? - Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing? - Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found no impacts of wild horses? - Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? - What happens if we do nothing? Is it really an option? - Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free from wild horses?
Current Situation	Evidence the current challenge for the next five years.	- What is more important to consider – the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses or both? - What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations? - In the discussion on wild horse management who do you most agree with and why?

Building the conversation



Conversation themes that build the full picture of the discussion on Protecting the Snowies by building an online community around credible content.

Content Implementation

There was a measured roll out of content around each of the themes over the 152 days of the online engagement to manage reactions carefully and keep the engagement focused. Initially it was important that participants were engaged through broad discussion forums before the more confronting content around control methods was put forward for discussion.

In this sense the roll out of the conversation followed the initial strategic design by building upon the themes of *values* and the current *management* techniques in the first few weeks and then *threats and impacts* and the *current situation* in the latter weeks. This helped to ground participants in the purpose of the plan rather than immediately distract and derail the consultation efforts by focusing on contentious management methods upfront. *Building the conversation* reflects the strategic roll out of the themes as set out in the initial strategy.

The following table outlines the evolution of the conversation by indicating when each discussion forum was launched, the timing of email updates encouraging participation and influence of credible media reports which referred unique visitors to the site.

Table 2 Content Implementation Timeline

Date	Activity	Content	Conversation Theme	Views	Comments
21 July	Launch	Online engagement launch			
21 July	Forum Topic 1	Where have you seen wild horses?	Impact	390	12
21 July	Forum Topic 2	How is a National Park different from a paddock?	Values	205	3
21 July	Forum Topic 3	Have you adopted a wild horse?	Management	1034	70

Wild Horse Management Plan Review- Online Engagement Quantitative Report
21 July to 14 December 2014

Date	Activity	Content	Conversation Theme	Views	Comments
21 July	Forum Topic 4	Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?	Values	2222	92
24 July	Forum Topic 5	Are the numbers of wild horse in the Snowy Mountains really growing?	Impact and Threats	531	27
26 July	Media Report	Wild horses should be culled (The Canberra Times)			
27 July	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
August	Infographic Launch	The story of the Snowy Mountains and wild horses released	ALL		
8 August	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
15 August	Forum Topic 6	What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?	Management	596	37
15 August	Forum Topic 7	What is more important to consider – the estimates of population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses or both?	Current situation	816	95
20 August	Media Report	The Guardian: The battle for Australia brumbies			
20 August	Forum Topic 8	It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?	Management	1015	71
21 August	Forum Topic 9	Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? Do you agree or disagree?	ALL	2108	45
21 August	Forum Topic 10	Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?	Current Situation	656	111
22 August	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
27 August	Forum Topic 11	Do you agree or disagree that introduced species compete with native animals for food and shelter?	Impacts and Threats	359	29
3 September	Forum Topic 12	Where have you seen the impacts of Wild Horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found no impacts of wild horses?	Impact and Threats	1165	19
9 September	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
16 September	Forum Topic 13	What do wild horses mean to you?	Values	851	79

Wild Horse Management Plan Review- Online Engagement Quantitative Report
21 July to 14 December 2014

Date	Activity	Content	Conversation Theme	Views	Comments
16 September	Forum Topic 14	What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horse is and why?	Management	337	69
23 September	Media Report	The Conversation: the grim story of the Snowy Mountain brumbies			
23 September	Forum Topic 15	Have you read the recent article on the Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?	Current Situation	296	47
29 September	Forum Topic 16	How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses?	Management	221	14
29 September	Forum Topic 17	Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?	Impact and threats	7232	129
October	Survey	Online survey released	ALL		
October	Stories	People can now submit their stories through the site	ALL		
3 October	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
13 October	Forum Topic 18	What does humane treatment mean to you?	Management	452	105
22 October	Forum Topic 19	What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?	Impact and Threats	426	83
30 October	Forum Topic (Forum combined)	Have you completed the online survey?		177	9
30 October	Forum Topic 20	Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?	Management	318	71
November	Discussion Guide	Kitchen Table Discussion Guide released online			
4 November	Forum Topic 21	How have you been involved in the review?	Current situation	82	9
11 November	Forum Topic 22	What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?	Management	259	64
11 November	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
20 November	Forum Topic 23	What do you think of roping and 'brumby' running as a control method?	Management	242	27
20 November	Forum Topic 24	What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option?	Impact and Threats	123	23
20 November	Media Report	Wild Magazine: Feral horses in the high country			

Wild Horse Management Plan Review- Online Engagement Quantitative Report
21 July to 14 December 2014

Date	Activity	Content	Conversation Theme	Views	Comments
29 November	Key Engagement Activity	21st Century Town Hall			
30 November	Forum Topic 25	Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?	Impact and Threats/ Management	111	25
30 November	Forum Topic 26	What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?	Management	127	14
30 November	Forum Topic 27	What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?	Management	233	71
30 November	Forum Topic 28	What is your preferred control method and why?	Management	186	31
30 November	Forum Topic 29	What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan? Have you learnt anything about the issue you didn't already know?	Management	111	29
30 November	Forum Topic 30	Why do we need to have National Parks?	Values	81	13
30 November	Forum Topic 31	Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?	Management	180	27
30 November	Forum Topic 32	In the discussion on wild horse management who do you most agree with and why?	Values	54	5
3 December	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
9 December	Email Update	Have you joined the conversation?			
14 December	Closes	Online engagement closes			

5. Participation

With the content in place four key steps were taken to encourage participation in the online engagement.

1. Connecting – by regularly sending updates to interested stakeholders and linking them directly to ‘Protecting the Snowies’ and the discussion forums

- Regular emails were sent to registered participants and following each email there was a spike in visits and an increased activity on the site.

2. Engage – encouraging stakeholders to engage online and share within their networks

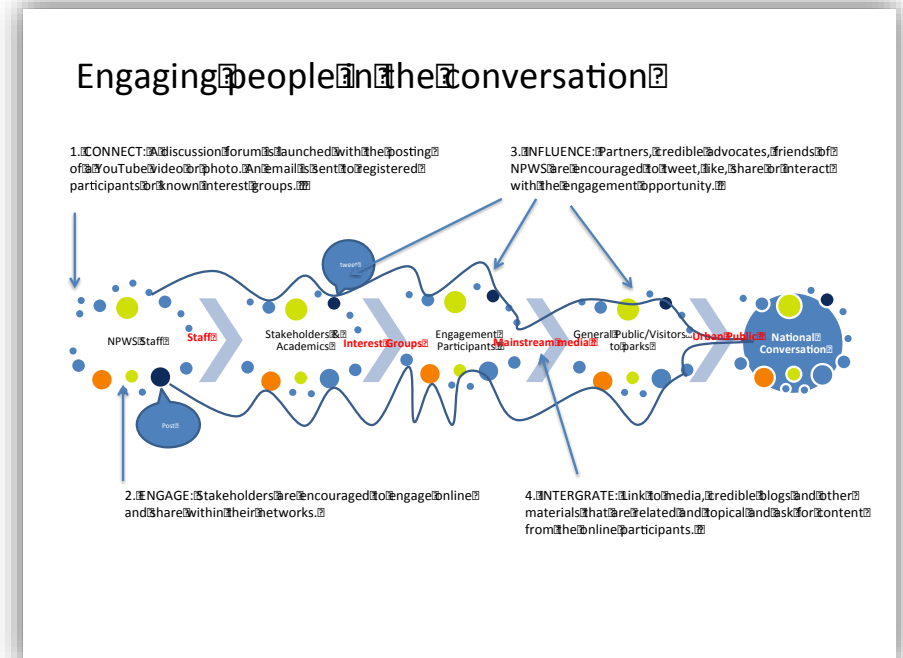
- This could have been more effective had there been more proactive involvement from the Minister to publicly encourage participation from the spectrum of views on the wild horse issue. As a result there were limited referrals to the site through Facebook and blogs, and direct emails from stakeholders was organic rather than from NPWS promotion.
- Motivated stakeholders took the initiative to email and use social media to encourage people and their networks to join the conversation. However this was largely an action by ‘pro-horse’ stakeholders.

3. Influence – actively work with partners and advocates to promote the opportunity, including the media

- There were a number of credible high profile news stories that contained links to the engagement platform and reported on the current review process. However given the Ministerial and departmental reluctance to promote the consultation these media reports were developed by media outlets with limited assistance from NPWS.
- In addition, the 21st Century Town Hall was originally scheduled earlier in the year and this event was to be a key face-to-face engagement activity from which to build momentum and drive online participation. However the 21st Century Town Hall was postponed until late November (the original end date for the online engagement) requiring an extension of the online engagement and leaving limited time to benefit from new content and the spike in visitors to the engagement site.

4. Integrate – linking to credible content such as blogs and news reports

- A number of credible news articles became worthy forum topics to explore aspects of the plan.



Community Growth

The online conversation spanned nearly five months from Monday 21 July 2014 to Sunday 14 December 2014 and attracted over 20,000 visits and the direct active participation of 1.3% of visitors or 307 registered participants.

Initially 50 stakeholders with a registered interest in the Plan were invited to join the online conversation via email. Regular invitations were sent to the growing number of registered participants and these invitations always created a surge in new and returning visitors to the site.

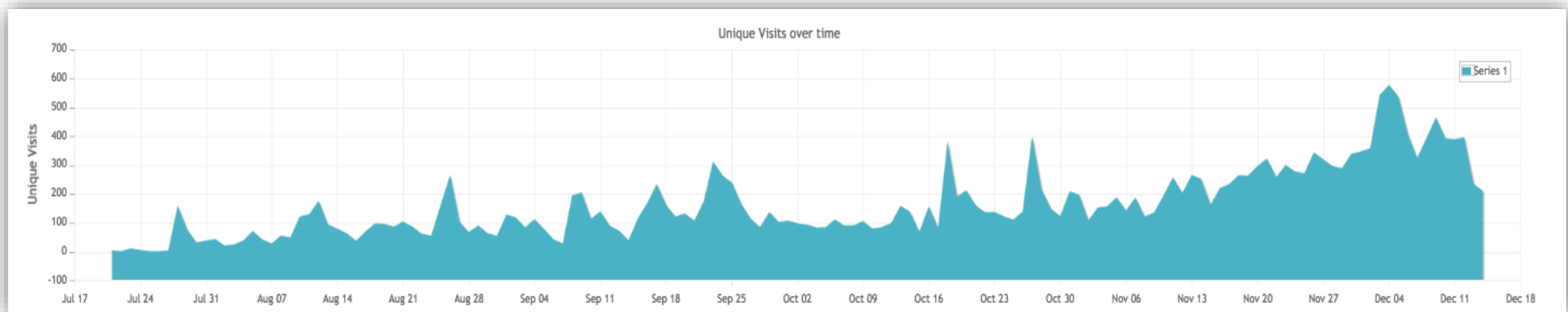


Table 3 – Community growth over time (21 July to 14 December 2014)

	Site Visits	Unique Page Views	Registrations
Total	23,763	46,814	307
November/December	12548	25067	96
October	4372	7252	30
September	4037	7898	87
August	2490	5823	71
July	316	774	23



Key media reports spiked interest around 26 July (the Canberra Times), 20 August (The Guardian) and 23 September (The Conversation) and the ABC Radio at several points. These reports included links or referrals to the site.

As an engagement draws to a close there is typically a last minute interest as people seek to have input. However the staging of the 21st Century Town Hall influenced the last 21 days of the online engagement.

Notably, when the postponed 21st Century Town Hall was finally in place for 29 November 2014 and invitations were underway there was an upswing in visitors to the site. This activity spiked in the days after the 21st Century Town Hall from 30 November to 5 December 2014 where the number of unique visitors reached 3000 in this period, with 54 people registering as participants and joining the conversation. However there was limited time remaining for the online engagement for the contribution of new participants to gain momentum. This momentum may have been achieved if the 21st Century Town Hall has been held earlier as initially planned. Additionally a number of content elements were drawn from the 21st Century Town Hall and only released afterwards, leaving just 14 days for this content to be utilised as part of the discussion forums.

Community Demographics

307 registered participants, who represent 1.3% of the total visitors to the site, were required to answer four standard questions from the Office of Environment and Heritage as part of their registration process. The first question was a location question, which was not defined by a postcode or compulsory to answer and thus only a handful of participants entered valid data.

The questions around *'Which of the following best describes you?'* and *'What areas interest you?'* can give some insight into the socio profile of participants on the site and in the forums. (See *Chart 1: Which of the following best describes you?* and *Chart 2: What areas interest you?*)

The majority identified as members of the public, with a small cohort indicating 'land manager or owner'. In terms of the question *'What area interest you?'* there was a clear indication that the Wild horse management plan was what had brought people to the site.

Chart1: Which of the following best describes you?

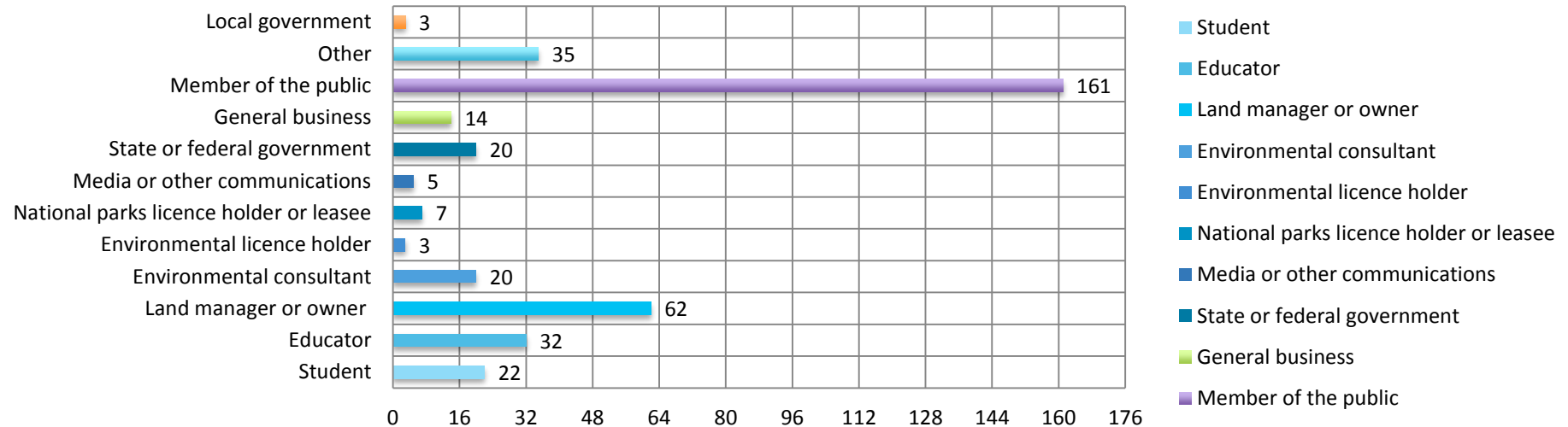
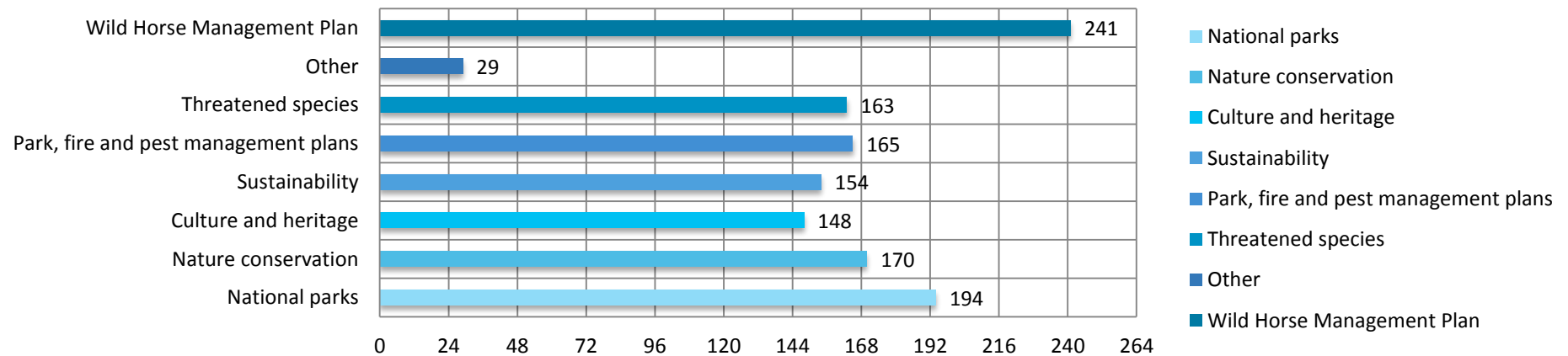


Chart 2: What areas interest you?



Key Community Contributors and Dynamics

In each discussion forum registered participants could comment on the topic, respond to other comments or undertake a voting action in agreement or disagreement of comments that had been posted.

Of the 307 registered participants, 157 were active participants who both commented and voted throughout the forums while 18,286 visitors (78% of all visitors) to the site 'listened in' on the conversation by reviewing discussion forums.



The three top participants contributed 33.9% of all 1453 comments received across the 32 discussion forums.

The key participants commenting were:

1. Peter_Mcc (166 comments) – Environmentalist
2. Bio-Brumby (164 comments) – Pro horse
3. Donna (159 comments) – Pro horse
4. Themba (155 comments) – Pro horse
5. HBVA Vice President (117 comments) – Pro horse

To establish the key contributors, comments, votes, stories and Q&As are combined and referred to as 'actions'. With this metric, the five key contributors as identified by their screen names and their positions on the spectrum as pro horse or environmentalist were:

1. Perplexed (1298 actions) – Environmentalist
2. Donna (1213 actions) – Pro horse
3. Bio-Brumby (1129 actions) – Pro horse
4. Themba (955 actions) – Pro horse
5. Khankhan (601 actions) – Environmentalist

The majority of the active participants were 'pro horse', and the top three commenters contributing a combined 489 comments (33.9% of all 1453 comments). The 'pro horse' cohort was consistently present throughout the 152 days of the online consultation and active in all discussion forums. There was an 'environmentalist' presence amongst the commenters however this was contained to specific forums and limited to a handful of contributors.

Managing the community

The online conversation enabled interactive and spontaneous communication from participants geared around key topics and just like other forms of engagement, rules of etiquette applied. These ensured that reactions remained respectful and lightly moderated. Moderation guidelines were available and referenced often in forums. Moderation and participation rules kept the interactions on topic and respectful and ensured the online engagement remained credible and valuable in providing useful input for the review of the Plan.

It should be noted that under the social media guidelines of the OEH, Departmental and NPWS staff were permitted to participate in the online engagement.

6. Analysis Methodology

The analysis focuses on quantitative and qualitative data available from the Engagement HQ, the online engagement platform used for 'Protecting the Snowies'.

Quantitative Measures	Qualitative Measures
Broad statistics were available to present the level and growth of engagement, including the number of: • unique visitors • page views • registered users • total comments The comments could be tagged against the section and subsection of the existing Wild Horse Management Plan, which could then quantify the number of comments: • by section of the plan • by subsection of the plan Voting buttons in agreement or disagreement of posted comments could quantify: • agreement/disagreement overall • agreement/disagreement by section Limited demographic data was available and therefore no cross tabulation or detailed analysis could be undertaken by location. Each discussion forum tracked data on the number of views and comments of material and more detailed analysis of each forum reveals the qualitative sentiments.	The discussion forums presented rich qualitative threads, including: • insights, stories, opinions and perspectives • links submitted by participants Each discussion forum was reviewed to determine: • The main discussion topics • Key contributors by forum • Whether the discussion was dominated by 'pro-horse' or 'environmentalist' or was balanced Analysis Note: - Many of the individual 1453 comments were lengthy and related to several areas of the existing plan. As a result of attributing a singular comment to several areas of the plan, the total number of comments for analysis is 2026. - While 33 discussion forums were opened, one was combined with another and thus 32 discussion forums is used as the key statistics
Representation	
The quantitative data sets have been represented in a bar graph and in some cases an additional supporting table has been provided to outline the relevant raw data. In representing the qualitative data, each forum has been assessed and reviewed with the key points and comments drawn out where there was agreement or disagreement.	

7. Quantitative Consultation Outcomes

The engagement site, supported by a suite of additional resources, helped to raise awareness and inform the 23,763 visitors to the site. Of these 23,456 opted not to register or participate in the discussion forums. Visitors to the site generated 46,814 unique page views throughout the site.

The primary focus of the 152 days of online engagement was the 32 discussion forums, which sought to explore and discuss sections of the existing management plan with registered users.

Rather than just present sections of the existing plan and ask the online community to discuss, content was developed which would pose a question, present evidence or critically engage a participant with a personal story or perspective through video.

In each discussion forum the 307 registered participants could comment on the topic, respond to other comments or undertake a voting action in agreement or disagreement with comments that had been posted. Many comments indicated participants contested the validity of material and information provided on the site.

Of the 23,456 visitors to the whole site, 18,286 (78%) visited the discussion forums. Of the 307 registered participants (1.3% of total visitors) 157 (0.7% of total visitors) made the 1453 comments in the discussion forums. (See Table 6. Forum Activity). Of the 157 active participants who both commented and voted throughout the forums the majority were 'pro horse', and the top three contributors providing a combined 489 comments (33.9% of all comments).

The 307 registered participants did cast 7255 votes in agreement or disagreement with the 1453 comments – with 4071 (57%) in agreement and 3184 (43%) in disagreement of comments made as part of all 32 discussions.

Note: Moderator comments and actions have been extracted from the data set.



152 days
32 discussion forums
23,763 total visits
46,814 unique page views
19675 unique visits
4088 repeat visits
7255 votes
307 registered participants

Discussion Forum Quantitative Analysis

Each comment was tagged with the main section and subsections of the management plan to which it related, so as to link the engagement input to the redrafting of the existing plan. Many of the 1453 comments were lengthy and related to several areas of the existing plan. As a result of attributing a singular comment to several areas of the plan, the total number of comments for analysis is 2026.

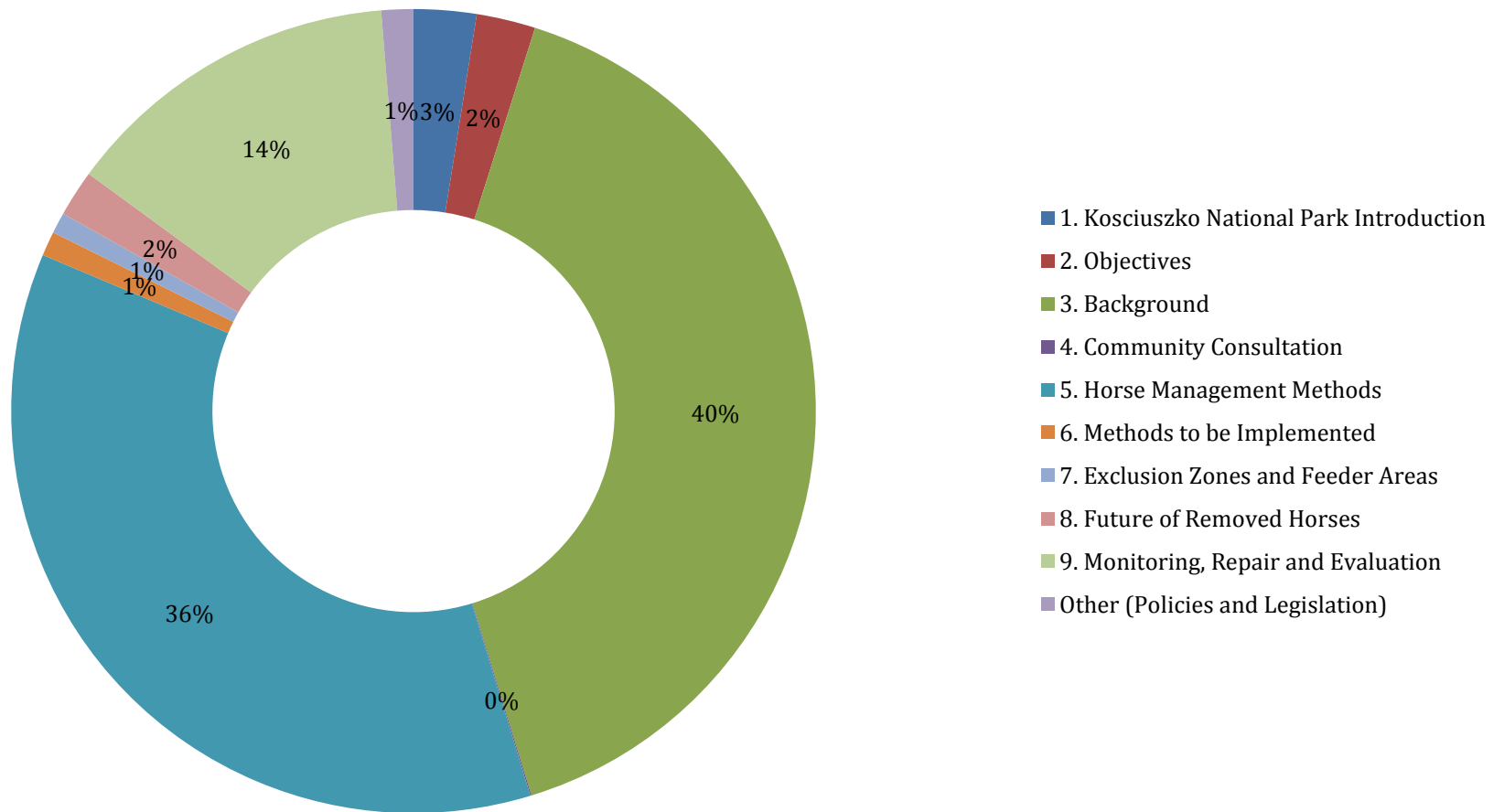
Key Discussion Focus Areas

Table 4: Total Comments by Main Section of Existing Plan and represented in *Chart 3: Total Comments by Main Section of Existing Plan* there are three dominant links to the existing plan, with:

1. 40% of comments related to 3. Why Kosciuszko National Park is important
2. 36% of comments related to 5. Horse Management Methods
3. 14% of comments related to 9. Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation

Table 4 – Total Comments by Main Section of Existing Plan	Comments
1. Kosciuszko National Park Introduction	51
2. Objectives	48
3. Background	818
4. Community Consultation	1
5. Horse Management Methods	730
6. Methods to be Implemented	20
7. Exclusion Zones and Feeder Areas	17
8. Future of Removed Horses	38
9. Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation	277
Other (Policies and Legislation)	26
	2026

Comments by Main Section of Current Plan



Key Discussion Topics

Table 5: Total Comments by Sub Section of Existing Plan indicates that of the three dominant links to the existing plan, there were six key discussion points:

- 40% of comments related to **3. Background**
 - Historical overview of horses in the Snowy Mountains
 - Impacts of horses
 - Horse population and distribution
- 36% of comments related to **5. Horse Management Methods**
 - Culling – Aerial and Ground
 - Live capture and removal methods
- 14% of comments related to **9. Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation**
 - Monitoring the humaneness of capture and removal programs

Table 5 – Comments by Sub Section of Existing Plan	Comments
1. Kosciuszko National Park Introduction	0
1.1 Kosciuszko National Park	0
1.2 Horses in Kosciuszko National Park	11
1.3 Why we need a horse management plan	39
1.4 How the plan was prepared	1
2. Objectives	48
3. Background	0
3.1 Why Kosciuszko National Park is important	31
3.2 Historical overview of horses in the Snowy Mountains	150
3.3 Impacts of Horses	308
3.4 Horse Biology	12
3.5 Horse population and distribution	317
4. Community Consultation	0

4.1 Who did we talk to about horse management issues?	1
4.2 KNP Horse Management Community Steering Group	0
4.3 Where to from here?	0
5. Horse Management Methods	0
5.1 Immobilisation using tranquillisers delivered by a dart rifle	14
5.2 Fertility control	100
5.3 Fencing	93
5.4 Culling –Aerial and Ground	310
5.5 Live capture and removal methods	213
6. Methods to Be Implemented	20
7. Exclusion Zones and Feeder Areas	17
8. Future of Removed Horses	38
9. Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation	0
9.1 Monitoring and repairing the environmental impacts of removal programs	68
9.2 Evaluating the capture and removal programs	75
9.3 Monitoring the humaneness of capture and removal programs	134
10. Policies and Actions	1
11. Legislative Framework	25
	2026

8. Qualitative Consultation Outcomes (by Discussion Forum)

The primary focal point of the online engagement was the 32 discussion forums on the site that were rolled out over the 152 days and which received 1453 comments (Attachment B Total Comments). In each discussion forum the 307 registered participants could present their personal views on the topic, respond to other comments or undertake a voting action in agreement or disagreement with comments posted.

The discussion forums presented rich insights into the personal views of contributors, who shared personal stories, their opinions and perspectives as well as studies and related web links. There were distinct areas of focus as each discussion forum evolved and often a small number of contributors drove the discussion.

A number of forums were kept open for comment for the majority of the 152 days and continued to attract interest in both views of the comments and fresh perspectives from newer registered participants. Some forums attracted more 'pro horse' advocates namely '*Have you adopted a wild horse?*' and '*Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?*' while others had a strong 'environmentalist' presence such as '*Where have you seen wild horses?*' and '*Have you read the recent article on the Conversation?*' *What do you agree with or disagree with?* Overall of the 32 discussion forums 14 were dominated by 'pro horse' advocates, 11 by 'environmentalist' advocates and 7 were balanced with even contribution from both perspectives.

Of 32 forums, 'pro horse' advocates dominated 14, a further 11 by 'environmentalist' advocates and 7 were balanced with an even contribution from both perspectives.

There were 18,286 visits to discussion forums in total with the most popular forums by views/visits being:

Forum Topic	Views	Pro horse/Balanced/ Environmentalist
Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?	7232	Balanced
Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?	2222	Balanced
Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?	2108	Environmentalism
Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience	1034	Pro horse
What do wild horses mean to you?	851	Pro horse

8.1 Forum 1 – Where have you see Wild Horses?

Forum 01	Where have you seen Wild Horses?
Forum Text	Chris Hayward is an adventurer who this year undertook an expedition from Sea to Source to Summit - starting at the mouth of the Murray River and paddling upstream to Hume (Weir), where he left his kayak and then continued on foot through to the Corryong and Khancoban following the upper Murray and Indi Rivers to its Source at Cowombat Flat, then followed the Australian Alps Walking Track to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko. He talks here about seeing wild horses and their impacts on the National Park.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Chris Hayward, Adventurer
Views	390
Contributor Comments	8
Length of time open	32 days
Link to Plan	3.5 Horse population and distribution
Top 2 Contributors	Conservationist Walkin Free
Main discussion topics	Where horses have been seen. Impact/damage caused by horses. Length of time horses have been in the Park.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

“Walking around the head of the Snowy River there’s...
dung fouling up the river so as to make water purification
necessary.” *Walkin Free 10/8/14*

Forum 1- Where have you seen wild horses?

“The brumbies have lived in the mountains for nearly 180
years, and include cattle for over 100 years also. How many
native species (plant or animal) have become extinct in this
time because of them? NONE!” *Heritage 7/10/14*

Forum 1- Where have you seen wild horses?

“Huge piles of stallion markers everywhere around
Tantangra Dam.” *Conservationist 10/8/14*

Forum 1- Where have you seen wild horses?

8.2 Forum 2 – How is a National Park different from a paddock?

Forum 02	How is a National Park different from a paddock?
Forum Text	Dr Linda Broome, a wildlife ecologist, shares her point of view why managing threats and impacts to our National Parks are so important. National Parks are public assets that are protected under legislation. The Snowy Mountains are home to animals and plants that occur nowhere else on earth.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Linda Broome, the wildlife ecologist and her love of horses.
Views	205
Contributor Comments	2
Length of time open	30 days
Link to Plan	1.5 Why we need a horse management plan.
Top 2 Contributors	Walkin Free S Smith
Main discussion topics	Impact/damage caused by horses.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced.
Links to any material provided in forum	None
Key Quotes	

Opinions expressed

“If you go up to the head waters of the snowy River the damage to the river is very obvious. It does look reminiscent of a paddock in a lot of places, dung everywhere and the waters edge looking boggy and torn up.” *Walkin Free 10/8/14*

Forum 2- How is a National Park different from a paddock?

“... the Wild Horse moves through its environment, spelling naturally areas it has grazed, allowing regeneration a freshening of the wild pastures, grasses, waterholes. They do not graze heavily destroying root systems, their hoof prints fade with the next storms rainfall.” *S Smith 8/10/14 Forum 2- How is a National Park different from a paddock?*

8.3 Forum 3 – Have you adopted a wild horse?

Forum 03	Have you adopted a wild horse?
Forum Text	Have you given a wild horse a new home? Alex is passionate about wild horses and finding them a new home outside the National Park. Alex receives wild horses from the National Parks removal program, the only wild horse population control practice in the Snowy Mountains. The wild horses, where possible, are then rehomed in the region and throughout New South Wales.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Alexandra Brown on rehoming wild horses.
Views	1034
Contributor Comments	65
Length of time open	40+ days
Link to Plan	5.5 Live capture and removal methods.
Top 3 Contributors	Interested Observer (12 comments) Mountain Man (7 comments) HVBA Vice President (5 comments)
Main discussion topics	Stories of wild horses re-homed by contributors Number of wild horses in National Parks Effectiveness of current management methods
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro Brumby
Links to any material provided in forum	None
Key Quotes	

Opinions expressed

"I am lucky to have had the opportunity to have homed two brumbies from the VBA. These horses are "unique" to Australia, they are, in my eyes part of Australia like the roo, koala, wombat etc: they are part of this, harsh and unique country we call Australia." *Bettina Kappen 3/11/14*

Forum 3- Have you adopted a wild horse?

"I find brumbies to be the best of the best of horses. They are hardy, loyal, tough, excellent doers, and will create the bonds I am looking for so much easily, due I imagine to their upbringing by other horses in a proper herd environment away from significant human interaction."

Mistygal01 9/9/14

Forum31- Have you adopted a wild horse?

Passive trapping is not reducing numbers in the park. The population is still increasing. That's why parks are looking at how they can manage the problem. *Interested Observer*

1/11/14

Forum 3 – Have you adopted a wild horse?

"There is an obligation and due diligence to all Australians to protect our heritage and the brumby is part of this, of course this is not to be at the cost of the environment, so the challenge comes in finding a balance. Heritage horses stem from lines that served us when we needed it most and it is important to protect them." *Enviro 23/10/14*

Forum 3 – Have you adopted a wild horse?

8.4 Forum 4 – Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?

Forum 04	Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you
Forum Text	Did you know the Snowy Mountains attract more than 2 million visitors every year? Are you one of them and what brings you to the National Park? Richard grew up in the city but has been captivated by the Snowy Mountains. He shares his story on the people he has met, the landscape he has seen and why the Snowy Mountains are a special place for all Australians.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Richard Snashall, documentary maker
Views	2222
Contributor Comments	92
Length of time open	40+ days
Link to Plan	3.1 Why KNP is important
Top 3 Contributors	Bio-brumby (16) Bush lover (12) Donna (9)
Main discussion topics	Conservation of Nature vs. Conservation of Cultural Value Current management methods. Number of horses in the Park. Other causes of environmental damage.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced, with a louder pro-brumby voice (i.e. the pro-brumby supporters commented in greater numbers)
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/non-surgical-sterilisation/4768258 http://outdoorvets.com/2011/06/25/overview-on-the-logistics-and-the-technique-used-for-the-sterilization-of-8-stallions-of-the-wild-horses-group-from-letea/ http://forum.prisonplanet.com/index.php?topic=226658.0 http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/ABA-Info-Sheet-Fertility-Control.pdf http://forums.ski.com.au/xf/threads/brumbies-knp-management-plan-review.67466/

Opinions expressed

“...once the numbers are known, try and decide on a number that does no more harm than skiers and bush fires. Work with the horse people to keep the numbers down humanely - there are probably heaps of people who would volunteer for this.” *Adrian 11/9/14*

Forum 4- Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?

“I would add further that in assessing the effect of any animal, a holistic approach is needed. Vegetation composition is only one aspect. Other issues would include vegetation quality, water quality, effect on native animals, fish and insects, erosion, soil composition, and so on.” *Bush Lover 29/8/14*

Forum 4 – Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?

“A sustainable population of horses in the park may be possible, but this needs to be sustainable from a 'conservation of natural heritage' perspective, as well as sustainable in terms of economic viability to maintain that 'sustainable population'.” *Interested Observer 11/11/14*

Forum 4 – Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?

8.5 Forum 5 – Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?

Forum 05	Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?
Forum Text	Colin de Pagter flies the Snowy Mountains and the Australian Alps everyday - for tourism, for bushfires, for search and rescue, for aerial survey work - his eyes have seen the landscape over the past ten years and he shares his story about the environment and the wild horses.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Colin de Pagter, helicopter pilot
Views	531
Contributor Comments	18
Length of time open	30+ days
Link to Plan	3.5 Horse population and distribution
Top 2 Contributors	Brumby Voice (2) Peppercorn Pete (2)
Main discussion topics	Current number of horses in the Park Other threats to the environment. Humane management of feral animals. Credibility of Colin de Pagter.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

“The Snowy Brumby is a national icon and is part of our living heritage. After nearly 180 years the ecosystem has co-evolved with the Brumby.” *Brumby Voice 6/8/14*

Forum5- Are the numbers of wild horses really growing?

“I would appreciate an explanation of the assertion by NPWS that brumbies are causing damage great enough to justify the consideration of aerial culling as a potential control method.” *Donna 9/8/14*

Forum5- Are the numbers of wild horses really growing?

“At Broken Dam, in early 2014, a horse knocked over a satellite dish belonging to a caravan parked in the camp ground. In late 2013, horses came stampeding within about 20 metres of our tents at 9.30pm.” *Jindygal 10/8/14*

Forum5- Are the numbers of wild horses really growing?

8.6 Forum 6 – What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?

Forum 06	What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?
Forum Text	The only management approach to wild horses in the National Park is to remove them and where possible rehome them with the help of organisations like BrumbiesRUS. Local and experienced horse handlers work with NPWS to remove wild horses from the National Park. Here Matt steps through the process of physically removing wild horses from the National Parks.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Matt Alexander, wild horse handler
Views	596
Contributor Comments	32
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	5.5 Live capture and removal methods
Top 3 Contributors	Icefest (4) Bushlover (4) Skifree/Lachlan/Horses4discourses (3 each)
Main discussion topics	Rehoming vs.. aerial culling Heritage value of wild horses Management of other wild non-native animals
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/3782799?uid=3737536&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104609427663

Opinions expressed

"Horses are killing alpine ecosystems, and certainly don't subscribe to any 'do no harm' doctrine. They are neither a natural nor sustainable part of the alpine ecosystem."

Lachlan 20/8/14

Forum 6- What do you think about how wild horses are removed from a National Park?

"Removing horses using the current methods have failed to protect our National Park. At best, a few hundreds are removed each year, but the natural rate of increase is probably adding more than 1000 each year." *Trampled 17/8/14*

Forum 6- What do you think about how wild horses are removed from a National Park?

"I like the thought of this and I admire the people who do it and I hope it's helping, but I'm not sold on this method of horse management." *The longer we wait 20/8/14*

Forum 6- What do you think about how wild horses are removed from a National Park?

"The removal of all feral animals should be as cost and time efficient and effective a possible and if that involves the sort of proven numbers control operations that have been used for buffalo, camels, goats and horses in NT and SA so be it." *Skifree 15/8/14*

Forum 6- What do you think about how wild horses are removed from a National Park?

8.7 Forum 7 – What is more important to consider? The estimated population of wild horses, the impact of wild horses, or both?

Forum 07	What is more important to consider? The estimated population of wild horses, the impact of wild horses, or both?
Forum Text	NPWS draws together a range of evidence and seeks independent advice from animal welfare experts, wildlife ecologists, animal behavioural scientists and experienced horse handlers to develop and review the wild horse management plan. Dr Michelle Dawson, using scientific methods applied to species throughout the world, has studied the wild horses in the Snowy Mountains for over ten years.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Michelle Dawson, wildlife ecologist
Views	816
Contributor Comments	88
Length of time open	30 days
Link to Plan	3.5 Horse population and distribution 3.3 Impacts of horses
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (20) Protectparks (12) Themba (9)
Main discussion topics	Heritage value of horses. Impact/damage caused by horses.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced.
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.wild-horses-namibia.com/origin.htm http://snowybrumby.com/2014/09/09/brumby-factual-count-dismisses-greenies-fiction/ http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL1945-47No21.pdf

Opinions expressed

"It's heartbreaking to see the trashing of our beautiful mountains and the further endangering of endangered species like the iconic corroboree frog." *Jindygal 17/8/14*

Forum 7- What is more important to consider? The estimated population, the impact of wild horses or both?

"The key issue is that feral animals (and exotic plants) are altering the natural environment and its balance." *Cjmb 5/9/14*

Forum 7- What is more important to consider? The estimated population, the impact of wild horses or both?

"The reality here is that we have a feral, introduced species running rampant through our National Parks largely unchecked, and if it were a less emotional species (like the rabbits who are being shot, poisoned) we would be doing a lot more to control the damage caused." *Taleb 5/9/14*

Forum 7- What is more important to consider? The estimated population, the impact of wild horses or both?

"...ecosystems adapt and find a new equilibrium and it may well prove that if all brumbies were removed from the Park that the area would be adversely affected in ways that we cannot foresee." *Mistygal01 8/9/14*

Forum 7- What is more important to consider? The estimated population, the impact of wild horses or both?

8.8 Forum 8 – It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park.

Forum 08	It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?
Forum Text	Since 2002 only 2600 wild horses have been removed from the National Park at a total cost of more than \$2.8 million. These costs include planning, ongoing engagement with the community, and the purchase of equipment like vehicles and yards as well as ongoing operation costs.
Forum Stimuli	Photo still
Views	1015
Contributor Comments	54
Length of time open	30+ days (Opened twice during consultation)
Link to Plan	5.5 Live capture and removal methods
Top 3 Contributors	Bio-brumby (12) Peter_mcc (7) Themba (6)
Main discussion topics	Number of horses being re-homed Effectiveness of current methods. Debate on costs/accuracy of report Management of other introduced species
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/aerial-culling-of-8000-feral-pigs-20090706-daij.html http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-30/aerial-cull-of-horses-to-take-place-in-the-kimberley/5057208 http://www.horsedeals.com.au/index.php?p=event&e=11696-Concerns-for-wild-horses

Opinions expressed

“Where animal welfare is concerned I believe it is worth it. If it is decided that spending the money to passively remove the wild horses is too expensive, etc I believe that society as a whole needs to take a long look at itself.”

Themba 23/8/14

Forum 8 - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?

“I think spending quite a lot of money to humanely remove horses so the majority of them can be killed anyway is a pointless waste of money.” *Bushwalker 23/11/14*

Forum 8 - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?

“Fertility control is viable on groups under 200. Depending on vaccine type, costs are \$3-\$35, last for 1-4 years and delivered by injection or dart gun. Fertility control has been used in the USA for over 30 years with great success.”

Bio-brumby 23/8/14

Forum 8 - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?

“From a cruelty, efficiency and economic perspective, aerial culling may not be perfect, but it is the best we can do at present to preserve the natural qualities of Kosciusko NP.” *Bush lover 21/8/14*

Forum 8 - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?

8.9 Forum 9 – Have you read the recent article by the Guardian? Do you agree or disagree?

Forum 09	Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? Do you agree or disagree?
Forum Text	Gabrielle Chan from The Guardian takes a comprehensive look at management of wild horses in Australia's high country. The battle over Australia's brumbies (External link) She starts: It's been a hard winter for Australia's wild horses. But things may be about to get much worse for these totemic animals. Their swelling numbers are damaging the continent's precious alpine ranges ...
Forum Stimuli	Photo still
Views	2108
Contributor Comments	44
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	3.1 Why KNP is important 1.2 Horses in KNP 5.0 Horse Management Methods
Top 3 Contributors	Bush Lover (8) Themba (8) Happy Jack/Donna (3 each)
Main discussion topics	Contribution of brumbies to reducing fuel load. Balanced or unbalanced nature of the article. Management of and damage by other introduced species. Aerial culling.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally dominated.
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/files/fireplan/ebrrpd_whrrm_plan/Appendix D - Fuel Treatment Techniques.pdf http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr249 http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/files/fireplan/ebrrpd_whrrm_plan/3-WHASummary.pdf https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/72157640126733276/ http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-13/animal-welfare-horse-culling/4873726 http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-30/aerial-cull-of-horses-to-take-place-in-the-kimberley/5057208

Opinions expressed

“Whether it is humane or not, aerial culling is highly effective and (in a relative sense) very cost effective. I would love to see NPWS be able to reintroduce aerial culling of a range of feral animals, horses included.” *Jrw 30/8/14*

Forum 9- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?

“I strongly want to protect our environment there is far too much habitat destroyed with development and it pushes all our wildlife closer and closer to extinction which saddens me deeply.” *WenMc 27/8/14* *Forum 9- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?*

“While it is sad to hear of animals starving to death we have to realise that this is a fact of life and animals do starve to death in the wild. This is the way that the fittest survive to continue the species. “Personally, I believe that if the Brumbies must be culled then they should be culled quickly and painlessly in the park. I also believe these animals have a place in the environment and deserve to be there.” *Themba 23/8/14*

Forum 9- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?

8.10 Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

Forum 10	Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?
Forum Text	We hope you have been enjoying the opportunity to participate in discussions related to the management of wild horses in Kosciuszko National Park. It has been great to hear from so many people. Do you have a topic you would like to discuss? Nominate your topic below or vote for a topic you would like to discuss. We will continue to open topics for discussion until 30 November and these topics will remain open for at least 10 days. We thank you for your contributions to the conversation.
Forum Stimuli	Photo still – Richard Snashall
Views	656
Contributor Comments	108
Length of time open	128 days
Link to Plan	5.2 Fertility Control
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (23) HVBA Vice President (13) Donna/Bio-brumby (12 each)
Main discussion topics	Impact of humans on the national park. Positive impacts of wild horses. Aerial culling and what happens to carcasses Comparison of impacts by horses and other non-native species. The Waler vs.. the brumby Number of horses in KNP Motivation of NPWS Relationship between horses and weeds
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated.
Links to any material provided in forum	http://articles.latimes.com/2006/jan/20/local/me-horseweeds20 http://www.cal-ipc.org/symposia/archive/pdf/2006/EDQuinn.pdf http://www.aerc.org/EnduranceNews_West_Weed_Study.pdf http://www.bavequest.info/static/pdf/manure.pdf http://www.eurowildlife.org/news/wild-horses-are-returning-to-the-heart-of-europe/ http://watchdocumentary.org/watch/wild-horses-return-to-china-video_a407dd484.html http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/cambridgeshire/4555365.stm https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/

Opinions expressed

"I would suggest that more effort needs to be focused on the biodiversity the brumby is aiding by spreading the seeds of many native flora." *RKR 28/10/14*

Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

"I don't know anyone who is blaming horses 'for everything that is wrong with the park'. Its just that horses are having a significant and rapidly increasing impact." *Mbidgee 28/9/14*

Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

"I know that one of the management options on the table is aerial mustering, this would mean that a larger number of horses were trapped at one time, so to ensure as many of these were rehomed as possible, there would need to be some changes to how we, as rescue organisations, operate." *HVBA Vice President 12/9/14*

Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

"The value and possible benefits the wild horses provide to their environment (I am referring to removal NOT re-introduction). There needs to be a study conducted on what positive impacts the horses may have on their environment." *Themba 5/9/14*

Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

"I think it's imperative and crucial to the success of this consultation and the development of any future management plan that a discussion on the proven impacts of the horses is included." *Donna 1/9/14*

Forum 10 – Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?

8.11 Forum 11 – Do introduced species compete with native animals for food and shelter?

Forum Title	Do you agree or disagree that introduced species compete with native animals for food and shelter
Forum Text	National Parks Ranger Rob Gibbs steps us through the impacts of wild horses on the habitat of the broad-toothed rat. What do you think about the impact of wild horses?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Ranger Rob Gibbs, Impact on habitat
Views	359
Contributor Comments	26
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	3.3 Impacts of horses
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (6) Bio-brumby (4) Mbidgee/Happy Jack/Chantelle (3 each)
Main discussion topics	Diets of animals in national parks Impact of introduction/removal of animals Need for research Weeds History of the Park Night Parrot
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentalist dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/hot-topics/alpine-grazing-does-it-reduce-blazing http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/pmst/index.html http://dro.deakin.edu.au/eserv/DU:30007265/adams-managingferalhorses-2007.pdf

Opinions expressed

"How can we condemn one species for being destructive to the environment in order to survive, when all we as humans have done is play a destructive role in our ecosystem and environment? the only difference is we have the consciousness to know the implications of our actions which we ignorantly ignore." - *Chantelle 9/9/14*

Forum 11 – Do introduced species compete with native species for food and shelter?

"What we are seeing here is the destruction of unique ecosystems by introduced pests. Be they pigs, deer, root-rot fungus or horses - they are not really "evolution" – more "revolution". - *Peter_Mcc 9/9/14*

Forum 11 – Do introduced species compete with native species for food and shelter?

"Yes obviously introduced species compete with natives for space and food, that's what species do when they co-exist within an environment." *HVBA Vice President 1/9/14*

Forum 11 – Do introduced species compete with native species for food and shelter?

8.12 Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park?

Forum 12	Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found no impacts of wild horses?
Forum Text	Chris Hayward is an adventurer who this year undertook an expedition from Sea to Source to Summit - starting at the mouth of the Murray River and paddling upstream to Hume (Weir), where he left his kayak and then continued on foot through to the Corryong and Khancoban following the upper Murray and Indi Rivers to its Source at Cowombat Flat, then followed the Australian Alps Walking Track to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko. He talks here about seeing wild horses and their impacts on the National Park.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Chris Hayward, the adventurer
Views	1165
Contributor Comments	19
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	3.3 Impacts of Horses 3.5 Horse population and distribution
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (23) HVBA Vice President (13) Donna/Bio-brumby (12 each)
Main discussion topics	Impact of humans on the national park. Impact and behaviour of horses Aerial culling Causes of environmental damage.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentalist dominated.
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

"I have seen extensive damage in the Long Plain area. Significantly, the deep tracks cut by the horses represent a danger to walkers, as well as damage to the environment." *Zelig 12/9/14*

Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses? Is there anywhere where you have found no impacts?

"There must be a significant impact on the vegetation given the increasing number of animals across the Park area."

JBD 5/9/14 Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses? Is there anywhere where you have found no impacts?

"The damage caused by horses in southern parts of the Park is immense, especially to wet areas. In particular the Murray (Indi) source area between The Pilot and Cowombat Flat has been devastated." *Doc 9/9/14*

Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses? Is there anywhere where you have found no impacts?

"Of further concern is the spread of horses into parts of the park where they were not in before." *Khankhan 14/9/14* Forum 12 – Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses? Is there anywhere where you have found no impacts?

8.13 Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

Forum 13	What do wild horses mean to you?
Forum Text	HVBA Vice President suggested this topic through our open forum calling for topics of interest . When only a few hundred wild horses roamed the mountains they were immortalised by Banjo Paterson in 'The Man from Snowy River'. Today the wild horses mean different things to different people. What do they mean to you? With thanks to the Guardian Australia, Peter Cochran shares what the wild horses mean to him and the men and women of the high country.
Forum Stimuli	Video – The Guardian – the fact is brumbies are here to stay.
Views	851
Contributor Comments	76
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	1.2 Horses in KNP
Top 3 Contributors	Mountain Man (12) Jrw/Sierra (6 each) Natives_rule (5)
Main discussion topics	Cultural/historical significance of wild horses Aerial culling Current control methods Role of NPWS
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentalist dominated.
Links to any material provided in forum	http://laptop.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/publications/pubs/hor002-aerial-shooting-feral-horses.pdf http://www.feral.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/HOR002_aerial_shooting.pdf http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/574128/Information-Sheet-2-Environmental-Impact-of-Wild-Horses.pdf http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/574127/Information-Sheet-1-Wild-Horse-Ecology.pdf http://invasives.org.au/feral-animal-control/80000-feral-horses-for-australian-alps/ http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/mar/03/dartmoor-ponies-contraceptive-jab-devon

Opinions expressed

"We are the custodians of our native flora and fauna, we've introduced pests and we therefore have a responsibility to control them and their damage." *Antony 24/9/14*

Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

"Wild horses are no more part of our folklore heritage and culture than the tens of thousands of wild camels that roam central Australia wreaking huge environmental damage, nor the tens of thousands of goats munching their way through inland areas, nor the water buffalo causing huge damage in Arnhem Land." *Zelig 23/9/14*

Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

"We had been custodians of our mountains for 150 years when it became a National Park and then look what happened. Effective culling should be implemented alright but I think that it is a 2 legged species that needs to be the target." *Mountain Man 27/9/14*

Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

"Brumbies may have been a part of our heritage, and so continue to elicit an emotional connection, but our heritage also includes rabbits, foxes, women as second-class citizens, destruction of aboriginal heritage and people... Heritage is not an excuse for hanging onto what is wrong." *Nicki Munro 23/9/14*

Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

"I am of the opinion that it would be a shame if the horses were eradicated from the parks altogether...they are a part of our culture and folklore, and they are a tourist attraction." *Sue 23/9/14*

Forum 13 – What do wild horses mean to you?

8.14 Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horse be and why?

Forum Title	What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be?
Forum Text	The current Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park (External link) has been in place since 2008. Should the existing objectives stay in place? Should there be new ones? Tom Bagnat from NPWS outlines the purposes of the plan and activities currently in place.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Tom Bagnat – Protecting the Snowy Mountains
Views	337
Contributor Comments	69
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	3. Objectives
Top 3 Contributors	Youngconservationist (29) Donna/Bio-brumby (11 each) Themba (5)
Main discussion topics	Management of current horse numbers Humane removal of horses vs. cost Exclusion zones/Feeder areas Nature conservation vs. cultural conservation
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentalist dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.acera.unimelb.edu.au/materials/brochures/SDM-AustraliasPestAnimals.pdf http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/3782799?uid=3737536&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21104609427663

Opinions expressed

"I strongly support removal of horses from Kosciusko and other national parks because of the damage they are doing to native vegetation..." *Nan 27/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

"The act makes a point of conserving both nature and cultural values; therefore we need to retain a reasonable balance of Brumby heritage in the environment they have co-existed with for over 200 years. For my spiritual uplifting, solace and pleasure, our National Parks represent a wild, untamed environment that Brumbies are very much a part of." *Bio-brumby 26/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

"National Parks are under legal obligation to protect natural heritage." *Youngconservationist 26/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

"The goal of the program needs to acknowledge the past history, agree on sustainable numbers and let the mountain horseman access lands to manage their horses how they always did. Through true horsemanship skill and bush craft." *Bandicoot 18/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

"Exclusion from sensitive areas, sustainable numbers determined by science and research in traditional areas." *Adrian P 18/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

"It is important to establish the required population number before assessing the method of control to ensure that the control/management methods used are effective. This will include assessing how to increase the number of horses removed/destroyed, given the population is growing despite NPWS efforts to manage it." *Nf74 16/9/14*

Forum 14 – What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?

8.15 Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article in The Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?

Forum Title	Have you read the recent article in The Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?
Forum Text	This article appeared on The Conversation (External link) and has been shared widely through the media in the following 24 hours. The reaction to the article includes a follow up piece with the academics and Peter Cochran in the Sydney Morning Herald (External link) As an article that is widely public and one that is related to the management of wild horses in the National Park – what do you think about it? Note that NPWS does not endorse or defend the The Conversation article but presents it as a perspective in the discussion about the management of wild horses in the National Park. Don Driscoll and Sam Banks from the Australian National University share their recent experience in the Snowy Mountains. (External link) They write: When you think of horses in the Australian high country, you might imagine noble brumbies galloping out from snow gums across grassy peaks, tails and manes trailing like streamers. But on a recent trip to the Snowy Mountains in Kosciuszko National Park we made a grim discovery about these denizens of the Australian psyche.
Forum Stimuli	Photo still
Views	296
Contributor Comments	39
Length of time open	10 days
Link to Plan	3.5 Horse Population and Distribution 5 Horse Management Methods
Top 3 Contributors	Natives_rule (10) Donna (8) HVBA Vice President (4)
Main discussion topics	Reliability of report Horse behaviours Feral horse biology Aerial culling vs. fencing
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/574128/Information-Sheet-2-Environmental-Impact-of-Wild-Horses.pdf http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/574146/Background-Paper-1-Wild-horse-ecology-and-environmental-impacts.pdf http://books.google.com.au/books?id=XXjAAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA200&dq=effects+of+horses+on+alpine+ecosystems&hl=en&sa=X&ei=SoMjVMLRFs-B8gWQ84CgAw&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=effects%20of%20horses%20on%20alpine%20ecosystems&f=false http://appliedecology.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/2012_Dawson-Hone-Aust-Ecol-feral-horses.pdf

Opinions expressed

"The Brumby is a classified breed in Australia and can be entered into its own breed classes at shows just like an Australian Stock Horse, or a Welsh Pony or any other breed of horse." *HVBA Vice President 25/9/14*

Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article on The Conversation?

"I find myself in agreement with much of the criticism of this report and am particularly perturbed by its tabloid style."

Free range cat 26/9/14

Forum 14 – Have you read the recent article on The Conversation?

"...if there is the chance of erecting or repairing pre-existing inadequate fences to meet multiple objectives for some "blocks" of land it could be utilised for feral animal management too."

Granth 25/9/14

Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article on the Conversation?

"Emotions are always considered to be an unnecessary inconvenience to those who wish to ignore them, however they are part and parcel of this discussion and always will be I believe." *Donna 25/9/14*

Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article on The Conversation?

"This is possibly the most ridiculous, laughable attempt to ply the public with over dramatised unfounded hysteria I have ever witnessed and I find it appalling that this forum is being used to validate it in any way." *Donna 24/9/14*

Forum 15 – Have you read the recent article on The Conversation?

8.16 Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses?

Forum Title	How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses?
Forum Text	It was proposed in the existing plan that NPWS establish partnerships with Universities and interest groups to do long term monitoring of erosion, population, habitat, grazing trails, weed transmission and the impacts on threatened species (see page 28). Could we do this? Could we look to local people and regular visitors to the park to provide images or log information about key locations using a smart phone application? What ideas could help monitor or measure the impacts?
Forum Stimuli	Photo still – Dr Michelle Dawson
Views	221
Contributor Comments	14
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Top 2 Contributors	Youngconservationist (3) Peter_mcc/Themba (2 each)
Main discussion topics	Funding Credibility of public input Methods of community input
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced
Links to any material provided in forum	None.

Opinions expressed

"Another non-technological option could also be maybe a notebook or clipboard with a drawn-up table in mountain huts where people could write down/report on brumby numbers and their condition based on where they have hiked from." *Jen 6/10/14*

Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring or managing the impacts of wild horses?

"A combination of more well paid research scientists with community participation such as Landcare would probably work reasonably well and engage interested people in understanding the nature of catchment science and threats to catchment quality." *Populations 4/10/14*

Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring or managing the impacts of wild horses?

"We want trained scientists and ecologists to input on the debate based on evidence not emotion." *Youngconservationist 29/9/14*

Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring or managing the impacts of wild horses?

"Lets put it back on those who want the horses gone to actually prove that they are causing all this apparent damage and hence need all of KNP resources to be funneled that way immediately. On the other hand, let those of us that want the horses to stay become more responsible for their management." *HVBA Vice President 29/9/14*

Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring or managing the impacts of wild horses?

"It would be very easy for those opposing the horses to inundate NPWS with pictures and data that is swayed towards their agenda of total removal of the horses." *Themba 29/9/14*

Forum 16 – How could the community be more involved in monitoring or managing the impacts of wild horses?

8.17 Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

Forum Title	Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?
Forum Text	Fencing is one mitigation activity proposed in the current wild horse management plan (see page 18). How effective do you think this could be? And where should we look to place fencing in the National Park?
Forum Stimuli	Video – wild horses wallowing in the Snowy Mountains
Views	7232
Contributor Comments	118
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	5.3 Fencing
Top 3 Contributors	Themba (17) Donna (16) Youngconservationist/Peter_mcc (15 each)
Main discussion topics	Cost of fencing Exclusion zones Areas appropriate for fencing. Biodiversity/Carrying capacity of the national park Aerial culling/carcasses Fertility control
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally focused
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/9cc1f452-9121-44e1-aa88-80939c14d404/files/draft-recovery-plan-alpine-sphagnum-bogs.pdf http://www.news.com.au/technology/environment/bring-elephants-to-australia-says-professor-and-rhinos-and-komodo-dragons/story-e6frflp0-1226259580764 https://www.flickr.com/photos/nswnationalparks/sets/72157641716347183/ https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/72157640126733276/detail/

"When horses were excluded from an area for 5 years, the biodiversity of that area decreased, the abundance of invasive species increased." *HVBA Vice President 27/11/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

"Fencing provides the best of both worlds, it is the most humane option available for the horses, and it will save the environment quickest of all because it completely excludes the horses from the area, something no other management tool offers." *HVBA Vice President 2/12/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

"Both the Victorians and NPWS have many fenced exclusion plots in the Alpine NP, and KNP. They clearly show major differences with grasses, sedges, waterways, gentle surface water movement, shrubbery, frogs croaking, insect activity, etc. when inside the exclusion plot, compared with the area outside of the exclusion plot (pugging, rapid run-off, erosion, no grasses, mud, wallows, and no frogs)." *Khankhan 6/12/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

"On existing fire trails access would be required for Rural Fire Service, Police, SES, Snowy Hydro, not to mention NPWS - and these would be large and costly gates." *Khankhan 13/10/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

"Fencing comes with a different set of problems reducing the movement of kangaroos and wombats for example in the northern end of KNP and without underpasses for animals on the highways (another set of problems) that will create more deaths for native animals." *Populations 4/10/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

"I have been to Cowombat Flat where parts of the flat are fenced off from horse grazing. The difference between grazed and unglazed area is most encouraging. Admittedly it is not possible to fence most areas, but at least it will provide a baseline for comparison purpose." *Pslambe 4/10/14*

Forum 17 – Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

8.18 Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

Forum Title	What does humane treatment mean to you?	
Forum Text	Animal welfare and humane treatment is a key consideration in any method of control for introduced animals like wild horses. The RSPCA are involved in the control program to ensure control and removal processes complies with animal welfare Codes of Practice. (See Page 29 section 9.3 Monitoring of humaneness in the Wild Horse Management Plan (External link) Here the RSPCA outlines how humane treatment applies to the practices within the Wild Horse Management Plan.	
Forum Stimuli	Video – RSPCA Chief Inspector David O’Shannessy	
Views	452	
Contributor Comments	104	
Length of time open	14 days	
Link to Plan	5. Horse Management Methods	
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (44) Donna (28) Bio-brumby (14)	
Main discussion topics	Perception of different standards for different animals Guy Fawkes cull Aerial culling Passive Trapping	
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated	
Links to any material provided in forum	http://snowybrumby.com/guy-fawkes-brumby-slaughter/ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raD1Gq2ly2U&feature=youtu.be http://www.kbrhorse.net/news/brumby05.html http://forum.cyberhorse.com.au/forums/showthread.php?1619-Brumbies-Small-Win http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/about/about-brumbies/new-south-wales/ http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/4723832 http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/alps-brumby-cull/5290198 http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/aba-disappointed-by-rspca-support-for-aerial-culling/ http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-27/shooting-brumbies-in-national-parks/5267898 http://horsezone.com.au/news/brumby-aerial-culling-proposal-shocks-vic-government-and-rspca-supporters-4141/ http://www.iflscience.com/plants-and-animals/invaders-drove-lizards-evolve-stickier-feet-just-10-years http://www.feral.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/horse-trapping-worksheet.pdf http://www.feral.org.au/animal-welfare/humaneness-assessment/horse/ http://www.feral.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/horse-trapping-worksheet.pdf	

Opinions expressed

"Aerial shooting works (and is apparently humane) for deer, pigs and goats in the same country - why would horses be any different?" *Interested Observer 29/10/14*

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

"To me, humane treatment (in the area of managing animals) means not causing (nearly all) the animals any more harm or stress than is reasonably required to achieve the desired outcome (be that culling or removal or something else)."

Peter_mcc 15/10/14

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

"To me humane treatment of animals means give them all the chances that can be afforded for a pleasant life, but anything done to disturb them must be quickly and painlessly." *The longer we wait 16/10/14*

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

"As I've mentioned before, the use of aerial culling should be an option only under a specific set of circumstances, and they do not include shooting mid foaling season in an area where follow up to ensure a swift death is not possible." *Donna 18/10/14*

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

"For an animal to be treated humanly, it means that during its life, it lives free of fear, pain and stress, and during its death, it has the same experience, free of fear, pain and stress."

HVBA Vice President 19/10/14

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

"To me, humane treatment means treating all animals with respect regardless of whether they have been labelled feral or not. It means minimising stress and not causing injury to the animal." *Themba 14/10/14*

Forum 18 – What does humane treatment mean to you?

8.19 Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

Forum Title	What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?
Forum Text	A student recently approached us from Jindabyne Central School about her intention to do her forthcoming speech for the 2014 Rostrum public speaking competition on the issue of wild horse management in Kosciuszko National Park. As Molly states in her speech, it is a topic generating significant interest in her local area.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Molly's Rostrum Speech
Views	426
Contributor Comments	80
Length of time open	15 days
Link to Plan	1.3 Why we need a horse management plan
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (44) Donna (28) Bio-brumby (14)
Main discussion topics	Appropriateness of use of the video Loss of habitat/impact of horses on environment Aerial culling Positive effects by horses on the environment Petition Horse numbers
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/9cc1f452-9121-44e1-aa88-80939c14d404/files/draft-recovery-plan-alpine-sphagnum-bogs.pdf http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/threatened-species-and-communities/flora-and-fauna-guarantee-act-1988/ffg-listed-taxa-communities-and-potentially-threatening-processes http://www.rewildingeurope.com/publications/rewilding-horses-in-europe http://www.isfoundation.com/news/youth/horses-majestic-animals-helping-our-environment https://www.change.org/p/national-parks-and-wildlife-service-stop-the-slaughter-and-eradication-of-the-snowy-mountains-brumby-and-reinstate-access-for-horse-riders-to-all-areas-of-the-kosciuszko-national-park?recruiter=166139834&utm_campaign=mailto_link&utm_medium=email&utm_source=share_petition

Opinions expressed

"When people say that the horses are killing the frogs and use that, in isolation of other causes, as a reason the horses should be removed from the park it simply makes no sense. People are contributing to a greater extent than the horses to the decline of the frogs" *Themba 29/10/14*

Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

"Contrary to what has been stated many times on these forums, it is not just the "brumby lovers" or even the "horse lovers" who disagree with shooting as a control method or the total removal of the horses but people who simply believe it is wrong and a very shortsighted view not taking into account what the negative results of such actions will be in the future." *Themba 27/10/14*

Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

"The legacy that we should leave for future generations is to maintain the humane treatment of all animals while maintaining the environment within those capabilities." *Sharlone 27/10/14*

Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

"Parks as far as I see have used a legitimate work by a local student that in most reasonable peoples view would be regarded as a balanced assessment of the dilemma that faces them about horses, in presenting views from both sides in a short 3 minute speech." *Perplexed 24/10/14*

Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

"The legacy I'd like to see is the number of feral animals in the park (dogs/pigs/goats/deer/horses/etc) being reduced to a point where they do little further damage." *Peter_mcc 31/10/14*

Forum 19 – What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?

8.20 Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

Forum Title	Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?
Forum Text	The idea of a wild horse sanctuary has been proposed throughout this review of the Wild Horse Management Plan. To explore this further, could a wild horse sanctuary exist in the National Park? How could it be funded and operated? What benefits and considerations might a sanctuary present for the management of wild horses?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Colin de Pagter – a rare environment
Views	318
Contributor Comments	71
Length of time open	14 days
Link to Plan	7. Exclusion Zones & Feeder Areas
Top 3 Contributors	Themba/Bio-brumby (14 each) Peter_mcc (11) Interestedobserver (9)
Main discussion topics	Park as a sanctuary Aerial culling/fertility control Study tours of NPs/wild horses Native vs. introduced species Control by humans/dogs Evidence/population of wild horses Illegal release of horses DNA testing What is a sustainable number? Benefits of horses re climate change through conservation grazing.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/4723832 https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/72157640131136784/ http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bushtelegraph/4723832 http://books.google.com.au/books?id=19fHPtD3TNgC&pg=PA119&pg=PA119&dq=humaneness+of+pzp+for+pigs&source=bl&ots=bvZCMellf3&sig=xtRDv-wRbobNgLvYcJZZEGbxW9w&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gL1eVLDZOYaxmwWkkYHoDA&ved=0CC0Q6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=humaneness%20of%20pzp%20for%20pigs&f=false http://www.sccpzp.org/wp-content/uploads/PZPspecc.pdf

Opinions expressed

"Horses don't provide any benefits to natural heritage in Australia. Drainage of bogs and waterways doesn't help in the face of fires or climate change, and selective grazing of palatable species, enabling the proliferation of less palatable species that burn hotter and harder, doesn't help either. They are both likely to result in increased fire frequency and intensity." *Interestedobserver 10/11/14*

Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

"KNP isn't really a horse sanctuary as it is not there for their well being - they are considered an introduced animal for which the ultimate goal should be elimination (as it is for feral deer, dogs, goats and pigs)." *Peter_mcc 31/10/14*

Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

"My reply to what is a sustainable number is the number at which if exceeded, leaves lasting, as opposed to seasonally recovered, damage limits." *Bio-brumby 6/11/14*

Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

"Actually the word "sanctuary" refers to a place of refuge or protection. In animal terms it refers to "a reservation where animals or birds are sheltered for breeding purposes and may not be hunted or trapped". *Themba 1/11/14*

Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

"The National Park is not intended as a sanctuary for any non native species. (despite how many times people say it is)." *Happy Jack 1/11/14*

Forum 20 – Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?

Opinions expressed

"I think a wild horse sanctuary on a farm somewhere not in a National Park would be appropriate." *Jrw 1/11/14*

Forum 20- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?

"I would have to answer that I believe KNP to be the horses rightful sanctuary, it is only the area they inhabit and proven impacts we should be discussing." *Donna 30/10/14*

Forum 20- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?

"While it is sad to hear of animals starving to death we have to realise that this is a fact of life and animals do starve to death in the wild. This is the way that the fittest survive to continue the species. "Personally, I believe that if the Brumbies must be culled then they should be culled quickly and painlessly in the park. I also believe these animals have a place in the environment and deserve to be there." *Themba 23/8/14*

Forum 20- Have you read the recent article by The Guardian?

8.21 Forum 21– How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review?

Forum Title	How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review
Forum Text	There are lots of ways to get involved and contribute to the review and redrafting of the Wild Horse Management Plan. Now you can download or complete online the (External link) Kitchen Table Discussion Guide (External link) – It's a way to have a guided conversation about the Wild Horse Management Plan at home, in your office, in your community group or classroom and then provide this feedback to the review process.
Forum Stimuli	Photo still – KTDG
Views	82
Contributor Comments	7
Length of time open	30+ days
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Top 2 Contributors	HVBA Vice President (3) Donna (2)
Main discussion topics	Involvement on forums Consultation with Indigenous communities
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://hvba.com.au/uploads/Position_Statement_on_the_Management_of_Wild_Horses_in_the_Kosciusko_National_Park.pdf

Opinions expressed

“Over the course of this consultation period I have been more involved than I ever thought I would be. Originally my goal was to get on here and say a few things about how amazing Brumbies are, dispel a few myths about them, call for more research and promote the work that the HVBA does. What I have actually done is become so invested in this process that my husband has needed to repeatedly remind me that I am putting in more time per week with this than I would a full time job.” *HVBA Vice President 14/11/14*

Forum 21 –How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review ?

“In fact there are many Indigenous communities around Australia who feel the brumbies are sacred much like the local snowy mountain community.” *Mountain Man 3/12/14*

Forum 21 –How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review ?

8.22 Forum 22 –What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

Forum Title	What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?
Forum Text	Despite the best efforts of NPWS and rehoming groups like the Victorian Brumby Association, Hunter Valley Brumby Association and Brumbies R Us that have assisted with the rehoming program, only about 30-40% of the wild horses each year find a new home outside of the National Park. Can you suggest ways that the rehoming rate can be improved?
Forum Stimuli	Photo still – Alexandra Brown
Views	259
Contributor Comments	61
Length of time open	30 days
Link to Plan	5.5 Live capture and removal methods 8. Future of removed horses
Top 3 Contributors	Donna (16) Themba (12) HVBA Vice President (10)
Main discussion topics	Racing industry Cultural significance of horses Definition of “feral” Reducing numbers of other feral species Brumby as a breed Harvesting wild horses Sustainable population numbers Release of horses Unborn foals
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://kb.rspca.org.au/What-is-horse-wastage-in-the-racehorse-industry_235.html http://questequinewelfare.org/attachments/article/53/Flyer.%20Excess%20Breeding.pdf

Opinions expressed

"I absolutely agree that the release of horses is a problem, its not so much the genetic uniqueness that bothers me more that the brumbies get a bad enough rap as it is for having an ever increasing population without people ignorantly adding to that by dumping their unwanted horses in there" *HVBA Vice President 18/11/14*

Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

"I think sustainable needs to be sustainable environmentally - i.e. a minimal number of horses causing impacts, and that population growth even if at high rates can be easily prevented; sustainable economically - not spending \$600 000 on trapping programs that don't prevent population increases; and sustainable from a re-homing perspective - the number of horses needing removal should not exceed the capacity of rehoming groups genetically sustainable - issues from inbreeding are avoided." *Interestedobserver 3/12/14* Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

"If you remove one stallion, he will be easily replaced by another, but if you remove a mare, you also remove all the offspring that she was going to have across her life." *HVBA Vice President 16/11/14*

Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

Opinions expressed

"I also suggest increased support to reputable rehoming groups in the form of financial aid, help with publicising the horses availability and credibility as fantastic children's horses or a 'first timers' best friend, increased liaison with the local community regarding their involvement and/or programs aimed at securing homes locally, employment of experienced handler/s and the creation of a facility with the dual role of enabling individuals to access horses more easily whilst ensuring the horses are basically handled before sale." *Donna 13/11/14*

Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

"I am all for rehoming horses, that's my point. But I think the rehoming rate is hard to improve upon due to the glut of horses on the market from breeders, traders, and I hope the racing industry but I don't know how they manage the non performers." *The longer we wait 13/11/14*

Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

"With the creation of Brumby classes at regional shows this has also increased the interest of the general horse population in owning their own "part of Australian history" and should, in time, create a larger demand for the horses in the domestic scene." *Themba 11/11/14*

Forum 22 – What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?

8.23 Forum 23– What do you think of roping and brumby running as a control method?

Forum Title	What do you think of roping and brumby running as a control method?
Forum Text	A historical approach to controlling wild horses in the Snowy Mountains was roping and brumby running – whereby wild horses are pursued on horseback and caught via roping. The practice is currently illegal in NSW national parks as it is regarded to be high risk to both horses and riders and inhumane. What are your views about Is this as a legitimate control method?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Mike Braysher on the challenges managing National Parks
Views	242
Contributor Comments	25
Length of time open	21 days
Link to Plan	5. Horse management methods
Top 3 Contributors	HVBA Vice President (9) Themba/Interested Observer (5 each) The Longer we Wait (4)
Main discussion topics	Reasons for running (historically) Examples of running Crossbow hunting Use of dogs to catch horses Difference between brumby running as control method and as sport
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/609075/Submissions_61-70.pdf

Opinions expressed

"Now lets look at another aspect of brumby running, the foals that often get split away from their herd. If the mother is the horse that is roped, now this foal has absolutely no chance, it will starve to death, and this starvation is much worse than the death itself, it would be better if they were going to leave it to die anyway, the runners could at least have done it the courtesy of shooting it, but they were too busy trying to catch the mare to even notice that the foal fell down." *HVBA Vice President 27/11/14*

Forum 23 – What do you think of roping or brumby running as a control method?

"If this method is seen as inhumane to horses and a risk to riders... it has no place as a control method." *Mbidgee 21/11/14*

Forum 23 – What do you think of roping or brumby running as a control method?

"I have seen a lot of good kids horses come from brumbies that have been caught by roping." *Pepper 27/11/14*

Forum 23 – What do you think of roping or brumby running as a control method?

"My experience with "running" is that a few locals do cut out young foals for their own use from time to time... but it is very limited." *Happy Jack 25/11/14*

Forum 23 – What do you think of roping or brumby running as a control method?

"I know of three of my neighbours from different properties who currently do this to provide horses for themselves, family and friends." *Themba 25/11/14*

Forum 23 – What do you think of roping or brumby running as a control method?

8.24 Forum 24–What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option?

Forum Title	What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option
Forum Text	Should we stop all attempts to control the wild horse population? And if we do opt to do nothing, what could happen?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Linda Broome on regenerating national parks
Views	123
Contributor Comments	23
Length of time open	22 days
Link to Plan	9. Monitor, repair and evaluation
Top 3 Contributors	Skifree (6) Bio-brumby (5) Themba (3)
Main discussion topics	Research Weeds Impacts of horses Mining and logging in national parks.
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced.
Links to any material provided in forum	None.

Opinions expressed

“For me however to do nothing is to be abandoning our as a society obligations to try to protect native species and ecosystems that are found nowhere else in the world.”

Perplexed 28/11/14

Forum 24 – What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option?

“The only benefit I can think of would be the opportunity to conduct real research on the situation 'as is', which would give us a much better understanding of the horses place in the park, their true impacts and any unknown benefits.” *Donna 28/11/14*

Forum 24 – What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real

“Doing nothing has got to considered at best foolish if we want the Park to have any meaning for the native flora, fauna and ecosystem. Doing nothing means we do not care at all that the native flora, fauna and ecosystem of the Park which does not exist elsewhere and cannot be relocated or replaced.” *Skipfree 3/12/14*

Forum 24 – What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option?

8.25 Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

Forum Title	Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?
Forum Text	This infographic outlines (External link) how the wild horse population has grown and spread throughout Kosciusko National Park in the past ten years, seeing wild horses entering areas of the park where previously they had never inhabited. Are there locations that should be kept free of wild horses, where are these places and why should we keep them free of wild horses?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Chris Hayward on wild horses and the bushwalking experience
Views	111
Contributor Comments	21
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	5.3 Fencing 7 Exclusion Zones and Feeder areas
Top 3 Contributors	Themba (4) Mountain Man (3) Donna (2)
Main discussion topics	Exclusion of other non-native animals Hut heritage Environmental damage Horse population World heritage listing Park carers
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/ http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/npawa1974247/

Opinions expressed

"It truly amazes me that people who don't live in and around the park, and who have no history there think they know how to manage the park better than the people who have been doing it more than effectively for years before it become a national park." *Themba 11/12/14*

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

"The serious issue here is does what is primarily a local issue override State and Commonwealth obligations to protect an iconic area of Australia particularly as the Alpine parks area is under consideration as World Heritage Area. The answer should not be no and allow this issue to be hijacked." *Coastwatcher 5/12/14*

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

"My concern is that the World Heritage issue will be a non-event in Victoria and NSW unless they do something about reducing the number of and seriously managing feral horses in the Alpine and KNP."

Coastwatcher 8/12/14

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

"If an area is particularly sensitive to horse impacts, then it should be fenced off so that the horses cannot get to. This applies not only to the impact of horses though, this applies to anything that is causing a disturbance." *HVBA Vice President 1/12/14*

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

8.26 Forum 26 – What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?

Forum Title	What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?
Forum Text	Wild horse management in National Parks attracts a broad spectrum of views. Here are four perspectives – what resonates with you? What stands out? What challenges your views? Listen to Leisa Caldwell, Madison from the Hunter Valley Brumby Association, David Chief Inspector of NSW RSPCA, Mick from NPWS, Rob from the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Lisa Caldwell presents a perspective at the 21 st Century Town Hall
Views	127
Contributor Comments	13
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Top 3 Contributors	HVBA Vice President (3) Bio-brumby (3) Themba (3)
Main discussion topics	Humaneness/welfare of horses Aerial culling 21 st Century town hall Fertility control Horse population Impact of fires
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

"I am increasingly convinced that, had we focused on managing sustainable numbers, not the all or nothing approach, we could have made inroads into understanding all view points and even found a range of balanced, practical management options." *Bio-brumby 5/12/14*

Forum 25 – What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?

"The presentation by HVBA Vice President Madison is the one that resonates the most with me. Madison clearly stated the need for humane treatment of the horses and what that meant." *Themba 3/12/14*

Forum 25 – What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?

"To me, the humaneness of any method used is paramount and supersedes these considerations first and foremost." *Donna 30/11/14*

Forum 25 – What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you and why?

8.27 Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

Forum Title	What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?		
Forum Text	Wild horse management is a complex and sensitive issue. When you talk about it in your community what is the one thing you want people to understand?		
Forum Stimuli	Video – Alexandra Brown on rehoming wild horses		
Views	233		
Contributor Comments	66		
Length of time open	12 days		
Link to Plan	All		
Top 3 Contributors	Peter_mcc (15) Themba (12) Donna (9)		
Main discussion topics	Funding Humane management Sustainable population Exclusion zones/fencing Environmental impact		
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated		
Links to any material provided in forum	http://kb.rspca.org.au/What-do-we-mean-by-humane-killing-or-slaughter_115.html http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AL9KILqL1bl http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/reviewing-the-october-2000-aerial-shooting-of-guy-fawkes-brumbies/ http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2014/s4134165.htm http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-11-22/claims-camel-culling-program-causes-inhumane-deaths/5910544 http://www.skynews.com.au/news/national/2014/11/15/qld-bushfire-threatens-properties.html http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/201301/s3671484.htm http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-05-08/clc-defends-horse-cull-central-australia/4677724 http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-05-09/waler-horses-central-australia-cull-reaction/4679264 http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-13/animal-welfare-horse-culling/4873726		

<http://horsetalk.co.nz/2013/08/14/vets-conduct-study-on-aerial-horse-culling-operation/#axzz3J902VCuC>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-30/aerial-cull-of-horses-to-take-place-in-the-kimberley/5057208?>
<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2013/s3883788.htm>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-11-06/opponents-of-cull-of-wild-horses-say-it-is-inhumane/5072566>
<https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/wa/a/19696285/horses-left-to-rot-after-kimberley-aerial-cull/>
<http://pindanpost.com/2013/11/10/kimberley-wild-horses-shot-from-helicopters-many-injured-and-left-to-die/>
<http://ireport.cnn.com/docs/DOC-1060902>

<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2010/12/30/3103740.htm>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2008-08-29/aerial-culling-to-be-reviewed-rspca/492676>
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2008-08-26/cull-cuts-carnarvon-gorge-brumby-numbers/488536>
<http://www.abc.net.au/site-archive/rural/qld/content/2007/s2088587.htm>
<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/the-killing-fields/story-e6frereo-1111114841138>
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-494610/Massacre-murder-spring-The-shocking-cull-wild-horses-Aussie-outback.html>
<http://www.farmweekly.com.au/news/agriculture/cattle/general-news/pga-calls-for-horse-cull/2674420.aspx>
<http://wildequus.org/gallery/los-llanos-venezuela-2011/>
<http://wildequus.org/gallery/cave-horses-galicia-2012/>
<http://www.courier.co.uk/Exmoor-ponies-new-pesticide-Crowborough-meadow/story-21187200-detail/story.html#J5AQQQhImMD3jiCY.99>

http://www.nintione.com.au/resource/DKCR-Report-47-Ch08_Saalfeld-and-Zeng_Review-of-non-commercial-control-methods-for-feral-camels-in-Australia.pdf
http://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/images/documents/conservation-management/pests-diseases/camel/lorna_glen_camel_survey_post_culling_2007.pdf
http://www.ruralsolutions.sa.gov.au/data/assets/word_doc/0007/158515/National_MBI_Recommendations.doc
<http://www.senatedwards.com.au/Media/MediaReleases/tabid/89/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/29/Taxpayers-Humped-With-Cost-Of-An-Ineffective-Camel-Cull.aspx>
<http://horsetalk.co.nz/2013/05/11/planned-aust-aerial-cull-target-10000-horses/#axzz3LUe69iA7>
<http://www.wild-horses-namibia.com/future.htm>
<http://namibiahorsesafari.com/index.php/about-us>

Opinions expressed

"I'd like people to understand that the amount of money NPWS has is limited and that this must be taken into account when looking at how to manage horse numbers." *Peter_mcc 7/12/14*

Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

Opinions expressed

"I would really like people to look at the damage that has been done in KNP and other parks. Look at it in person, or on video or in photos so that you can understand that the damage is real." *Jindygal 2/12/14*

Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

"So the thing that I so desperately want people to understand about wild horse management, is you do not have to choose between the environment and the horses. The only difference between any of us is this. Do you believe that a method that causes tiny foals to die from starvation while laying next to their mothers that they just watched bleed out through her withers or spine or kneecap is humane or not." *HVBA Vice President 2/12/14*

Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

"I want people to understand that management does not equal death and that our ethics as human beings prevent us from using lethal means of control on sentient beings, especially those sharing equally in our history and development." *Donna 3/12/14*

Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

"The most important thing for me, is to help people understand that it's not just about reducing an invasive species population and to preserving native species and habitat, it's about righting the wrongs of the past, and moving into the future together." *Native 4/12/14*

Forum 27 – What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

8.28 Forum 28 – What is your preferred control method and why?

Forum Title	What is your preferred control method and why?
Forum Text	Where do you sit on a sliding scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being (this control method) is completely UNACCEPTABLE for wild horses in KNP and 10 being (this control method) is completely ACCEPTABLE for wild horses in KNP? Methods that could be considered to manage the wild horse population include: • Trapping and removal then rehoming or transport to abattoir • Trapping and euthanasia at trap site where horses can't be rehomed or transported • Aerial or ground mustering • Fertility control • Ground shooting • Brumby running or roping • Fencing • Aerial shooting • Do nothing option
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Mike Braysher on the challenges in managing National Parks
Views	186
Contributor Comments	28
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	5. Horse management methods
Top 3 Contributors	HVBA Vice President (5) Themba (5) Jindygal (4)
Main discussion topics	Forum design/purpose of the question Viability of methods Cost of methods Combination of methods Welfare of horses Aerial mustering – New Zealand
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Pro-brumby dominated.
Links to any material provided in forum	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/pestsweeds/englishReport.pdf https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/ http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/10091039/Kaimanawas-wild-horse-muster

Opinions expressed

“There should not be a preferred method for horse management in KNP, there should in my view be a range of methods available to management to choose the one that best suits the situation, circumstances and need for control.” *Perplexed 5/12/14*

Forum 28 – What is your preferred control method and why?

“These options need to be considered against the background that the Parks service has a limited budget.” *Jindygal 6/12/14*

Forum 28 – What is your preferred control method and why?

“The point is, you don't need to choose one method only, its a combination of control measures that is going to achieve the desired outcome of a sustainable population of wild horses that does not negatively impact the environment they live in.” *HVBA Vice President 9/12/14*

Forum 28 – What is your preferred control method and why?

8.29 Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?

Forum Title	What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan? Have you learned anything about the issue you didn't know?
Forum Text	Over the past five months a number of additional things have been put forward for NPWS to consider as part of the review of the plan. Do you have any additional things you would like to see reflected or addressed in the new plan?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Keith Muir, Colong Foundation Director, presents a perspective at the 21 st Century Town Hall
Views	111
Contributor Comments	29
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Top 3 Contributors	Bio-brumby (6) Khankhan (4) HVBA VP/Themba/Jindygal (3 each)
Main discussion topics	USA experience Conservation of native species Fertility control Benefits/dangers of introduced species
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced
Links to any material provided in forum	http://news.ufl.edu/archive/2013/08/pastured-wild-horses-to-cost-us-1-billion-by-2030-researchers-warn-in-report.html https://horsesfordiscourses.wordpress.com/2014/07/16/the-true-history-of-the-stockman-cattlemen-horses-and-aboriginal-dispossession-in-australia/

Opinions expressed

"I think NSWP needs to consider adding enough flexibility into the plan to deal with unexpected changes to the population and the region." *HVBA Vice President 6/12/14*
Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?

"I am also at loss to understand why considering the benefits of introduced animals fits into the objects of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974" *coastwatcher 12/12/14*
Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?

"Fertility control is still being suggested because, contrary to your quick review it has been used in the USA for over 30 years to successfully control smaller, isolated horse populations." *Bio-brumby 10/12/14*
Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?

"When the numbers of horses are small, and the population isolated, fertility control may be effective in limiting numbers, but these conditions will not occur in Kosciuszko. The most effective way to reduce large numbers maintain small populations will still be aerial shooting or any other lethal method that removes the animal once it is located." *Mbidgee 11/12/14*

Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should

"I continue to learn much more about fertility control than I even considered and now firmly believe it is a viable option for population control." *Themba 10/12/14*

Forum 29 – What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan?

8.30 Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?

Forum Title	Why do we need to have national parks?
Forum Text	In your own words what is the purpose of a National Park? And do we need them today?
Forum Stimuli	Video – Richard Snashall the documentary maker
Views	81
Contributor Comments	13
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	3.1 Why KNP is important
Top 2 Contributors	Bio-brumby (3) Cobber (2)
Main discussion topics	Education Environmental protection Challenges to national parks Impact of humans
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Environmentally dominated
Links to any material provided in forum	None.

Opinions expressed

"To me it is pretty evident that national parks were established to conserve native flora and fauna, not conserve introduced species, at least not at the expense or detriment of the native ones." *Perplexed 12/12/14*

Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?

"We do need to protect areas from development and overuse by humans. Parks should be important in educating people on nature and the need to protect it." *Stromlo 9/12/14*

Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?

"Preservation can only be mitigated by inclusion of holistic land management which is the ability to serve across all species, including those that are introduced- which I include humankind in that category as well as the brumbies." *Wild horse ecology 9/12/14*

Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?

"I think the original purpose of a National Park is to allow nature to live without interference from the destructiveness of Humans." *HVBA Vice President 9/12/14*

Forum 30 – Why do we need to have National Parks?

8.31 Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?

Forum Title	Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Forum Text	. The safety of NPWS staff and others involved in the activity . The cost of the undertaking the control method . How humane the control method is . The effectiveness of the method to control population numbers
Forum Stimuli	Video – Matt Alexander, the wild horses handler
Views	180
Contributor Comments	27
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	5. Horse management methods
Top 3 Contributors	Interested observer (5) Jindygal (5) Donna (3)
Main discussion topics	Humaneness Question construction Safety of staff Horse numbers Colong Foundation operations Cost effectiveness
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

“There will never be a circumstance in which humaneness is justifiably measured, and thus reduced, by cost” *Donna 9/12/14*

Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?

“Cost and effectiveness go hand in hand. If something’s not affordable, then there’s no way it can be undertaken so effectiveness is irrelevant. If something’s affordable but not effective, you’re wasting your time. Seems to me current controls are not effective and not affordable.”

Interested observer 12/12/14

Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?

“There can not be a MOST important factor when making these decision.” *Perplexed 12/12/14*

Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?

“The safety of staff is the most important so the staff are not injured and the job can continue.” *Mbidgee 10/12/14*

Forum 31 – What is most important when considering control methods?

8.32 Forum 32 – In the discussion on wild horse management, who do you most agree with and why?

Forum Title	In the discussion on wild horse management, who do you most agree with and why?
Forum Text	Over the course of the consultation we have heard from a wide range of people on the management of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains including rangers, ecologist, people rehoming brumbies, the RSPCA, local helicopter pilot, documentary maker, a bushwalker, mountain horsemen and women, to acknowledge a few. In this our final forum for the online consultation we ask: Who do you most identify or agree with when it comes to the protection of the park and wild horse management? Watch all 34 videos on the Protecting the Snowies playlist.
Forum Stimuli	Video – Dr Linda Broome on regenerating national parks
Views	54
Contributor Comments	5
Length of time open	12 days
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Top Contributors	Gerg1400 (2) Themba/ckm Jackson/Perplexed (1 each)
Main discussion topics	Rehoming Environmental protection Emotion vs. rationality
Pro Brumby or Environmentally dominated	Balanced
Links to any material provided in forum	None

Opinions expressed

"Control the Brumby's yes, but don't kill our heritage and a magnificent animal that if you take all the greed, political persuasion, power plays, one sided studies etc. away - can exist in the High / Snowy River Country in a controlled manner." *Ckm Jackson 12/12/14*

Forum 32 – In the discussion on wild horse management who do you most agree with and why?

"...there are many which I believe are blinded by their passions to the point of not being able to rationally reassess their views. I respect the passion and belief that the horse lovers and animal liberationists have for the horses and their right to exist in the park, but ask them to consider that many others have the same passion and belief to protect our defenseless native species and native environment particularly in the areas where it is legally set aside to do so." *Perplexed 12/12/14*

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should

"I most identify with and agree with the people rehoming the Brumbies. These people are doing all they can to ensure our unique mountain brumbies survive for future generations without any assistance from the government." *Themba 11/12/14*

Forum 25 – Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses?

9. Key Insights

The key areas of focus for the online discussion as well as the key discussion topics have been analysed in more detail alongside essential parts of the plan. Critically, comments pertinent to a section of the existing plan arose across a number of forums and at times moderators provided links to related information to clarify or contextualise parts of the discussion. For the purposes of ensuring a focus on correctly measuring participants' sentiment, moderator comments have not been included.

The following analysis indicates the forums from which the related comments have been drawn.

As would be expected, within each forum there were a number of aspects discussed – related and unrelated – to the primary topic.

'Agree' or 'Disagree' votes were cast during the discussions, most of them on particular comments rather than the primary topic – a limitation of the Engagement HQ methodology.

Caution therefore needs to be exercised in the 'Agree' and 'Disagree' voting numbers and the voting numbers do not feature prominently in this report as they are an imprecise and potentially misleading measure and may or may not hold any relevance to the primary topic.

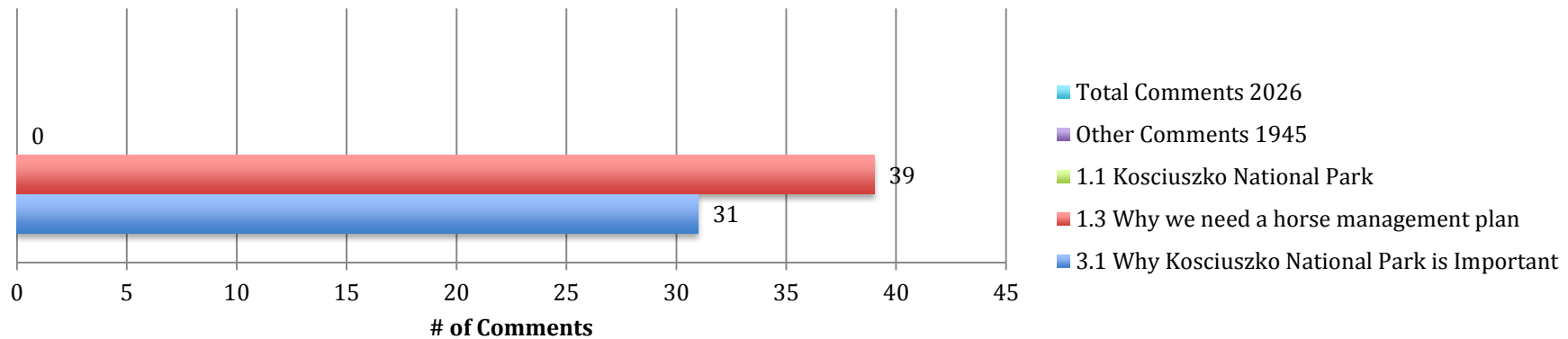
Caution also needs to be exercised when considering comments made on the forums as they express personal opinions and beliefs rather than established and agreed facts. However, they are important indicators of the perceptions and sentiments of forum participants about wild horse management.

Note: Many of the individual 1453 comments were lengthy and related to several areas of the existing plan. As a result of attributing a singular comment to several areas of the plan, the total number of comments for analysis is 2026.

9.1 Purpose and importance of National Parks?

Key Insights 1	Purpose and importance of National Parks
Link to Plan	1.1 Kosciuszko National Park 1.3 Why we need a horse management plan 3.1 Why Kosciuszko National Park is important
Related Forums	• How is a National Park different from a paddock? • Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you? • Why do we need to have National Parks?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you? • What do wild horses mean to you? • Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies? • Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience • What is more important to consider- the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses on the National Park? or both?
Related Documents	• Wild Horse Management Plan for Kosciuszko National Park • Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management • Information Sheet 1 – Wild horses and the unique value of the Snowy Mountains
Other	• Infographic – Protecting the Snowies

Chart 4: Comments on Purpose and Importance of National Parks



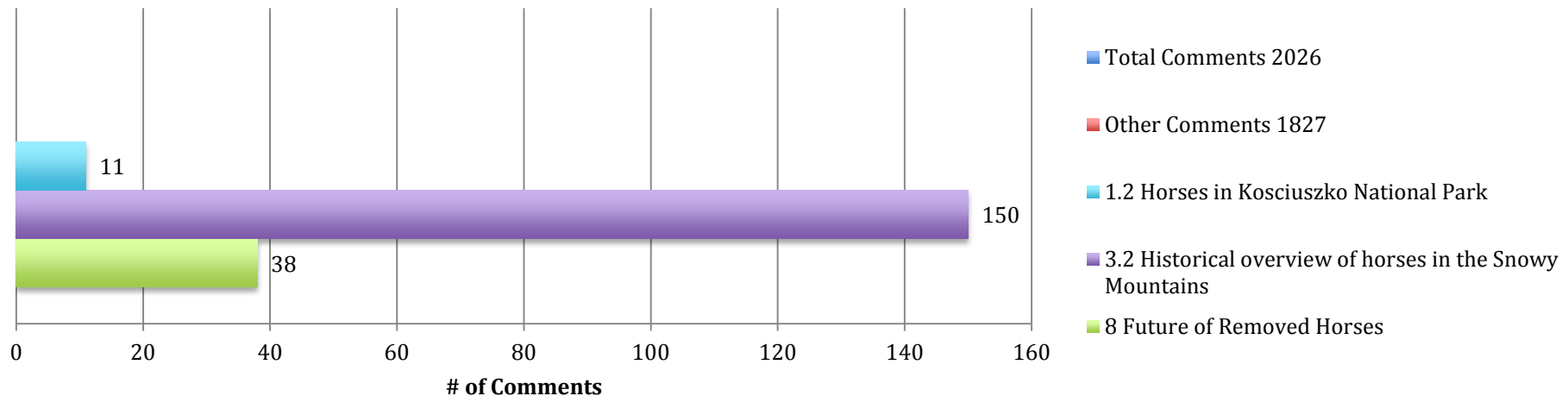
Key opinions expressed:

- Land will never go back to the way it was before white man arrived
- Denied access to the high country
- Need to protect but get the balance right

9.2 Community value and experience of wild horses

Key Insights 2	Community value and experience of wild horses
Link to Plan	1.2 Horses in Kosciuszko National Park 3.2 Historical overview of horses in the Snowy Mountains 8. Future of removed horses
Related Forums	• Have you adopted a wild horse? • What do wild horses mean to you? • Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies? • What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations? • Where have you seen wild horses?
Most Active Forums	• Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?
Discussing Topic	• Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?
Related Documents	• Invitation to register interest in taking ownership of a wild horse
Other	Stories – invitation to submit personal stories and pictures

Chart 5: Comments on Community value and experience of wild horses



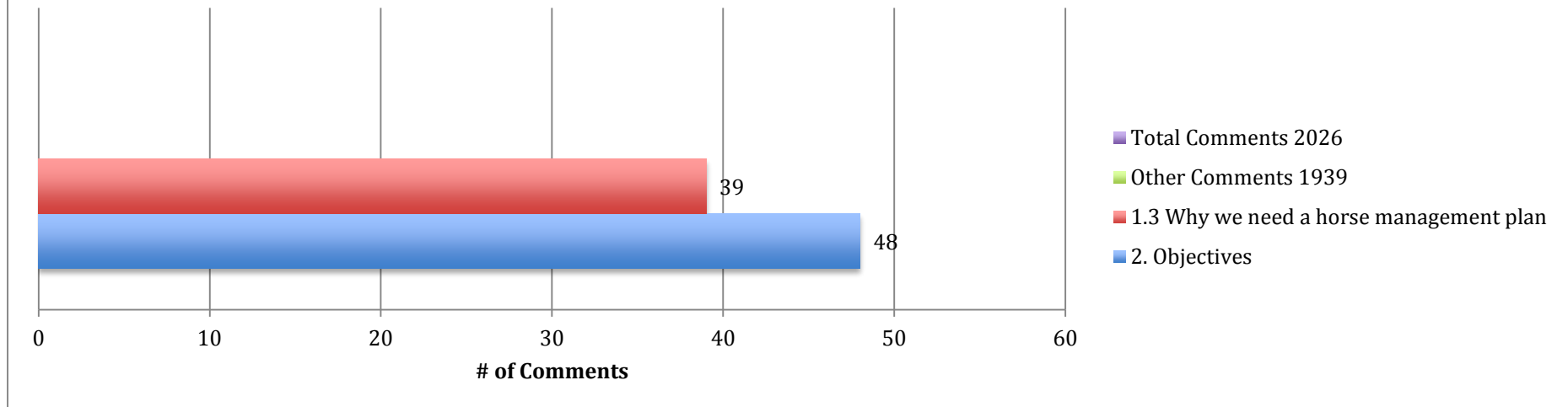
Key opinions expressed:

- Wild horses are part of our heritage
- Wild horses should be protected
- Glut of ex-racehorses on the market makes it difficult to find homes for wild horses removed
- Majority of stories submitted were related to experiences of wild horses or the adoption of a wild horse

9.3. The need for a plan of management for wild horses

Key Insights 3	The need for a plan of management for wild horses
Link to Plan	1.3 Why we need a horse management plan 2. Objectives
Related Forums	• What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horse be and why? • What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option? • What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why? • What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses? • Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience • Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?
Related Documents	Information Sheet 2: Impact of wild horses on the Snowy Mountains
Other	Infographic – Protecting the Snowies

Chart 6: Comments on The Need for a Management Plan



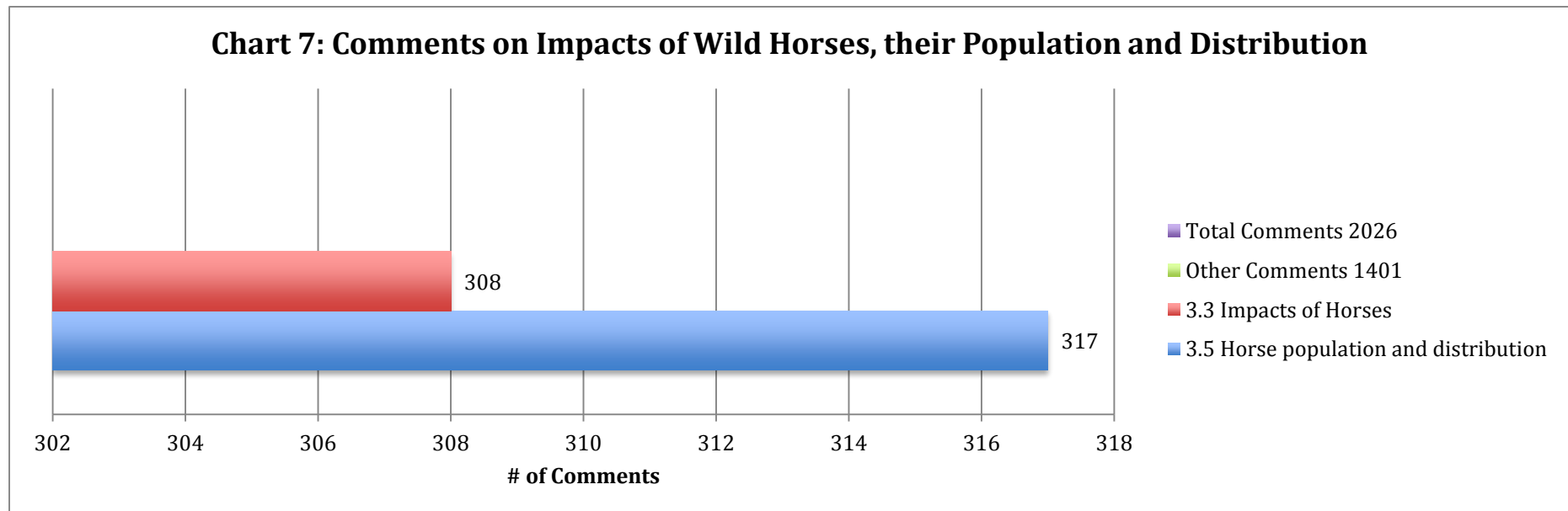
Key opinions expressed:

- Doing nothing is not an option
- The goal should be to remove wild horses humanely with no aerial culling

9.4 Impacts of wild horses and their population and distribution

Key Insights 4	Impacts of wild horses and their population and distribution
Link to Plan	3.3 Impacts of horses 3.5 Horse population and distribution
Related Forums	• Are there parts of the National Park that should be completely free of wild horses? • What is more important to consider – the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses or both? • Where have you seen wild horses? • How is a National Park different from a paddock? • Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing? • Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found impacts of wild horses?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• What is more important to consider- the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses on the National Park? or both? • Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies? • What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations? • Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you? • What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?
Related Documents	• Summary: Preliminary results of 2014 aerial survey of wild horses in the Australian Alps • 2009 aerial survey of wild horses in the Australian Alps • Australian Alps feral horse management fact sheet • Information Sheet 2: Impact of wild horses on the Snowy Mountains
Other	• Infographic – Protecting the Snowies

Chart 7: Comments on Impacts of Wild Horses, their Population and Distribution



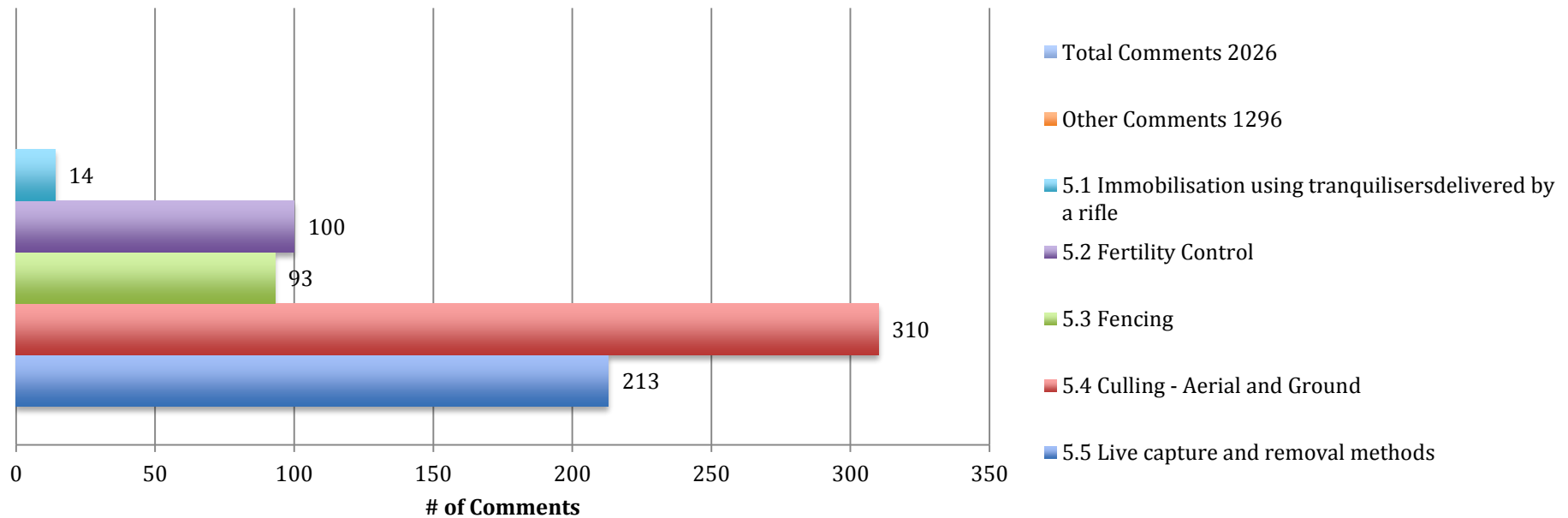
Key opinions expressed:

- There is not enough scientific evidence of the damage caused by wild horses and regeneration of sensitive areas
- Wild horses should not be in the upper alpine areas of the National Park
- Provide more fencing in sensitive areas
- Validity of the population figures
- Mismanagement of the park/other impacts from feral animals, mountain bikes and development

9.5 Wild horse management methods – General

Key Insights 5	Wild horse management methods - General
Link to Plan	5. Horse management methods
Related Forums	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park? • It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • Do we need a wild horse sanctuary? • What do you think of roping and 'brumby' running as a control method? • What is your preferred control method and why? • Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • What is your preferred control method and why? • Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience • What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?
Related Documents	• Summary: Preliminary results of 2014 aerial survey of wild horses in the Australian Alps • 2009 aerial survey of wild horses in the Australian Alps • Australian Alps feral horse management fact sheet • Information Sheet 3: Urgent need for wild horse control
Other	• Infographic – Protecting the Snowies

Chart 8: Comments on Wild horse management methods - General



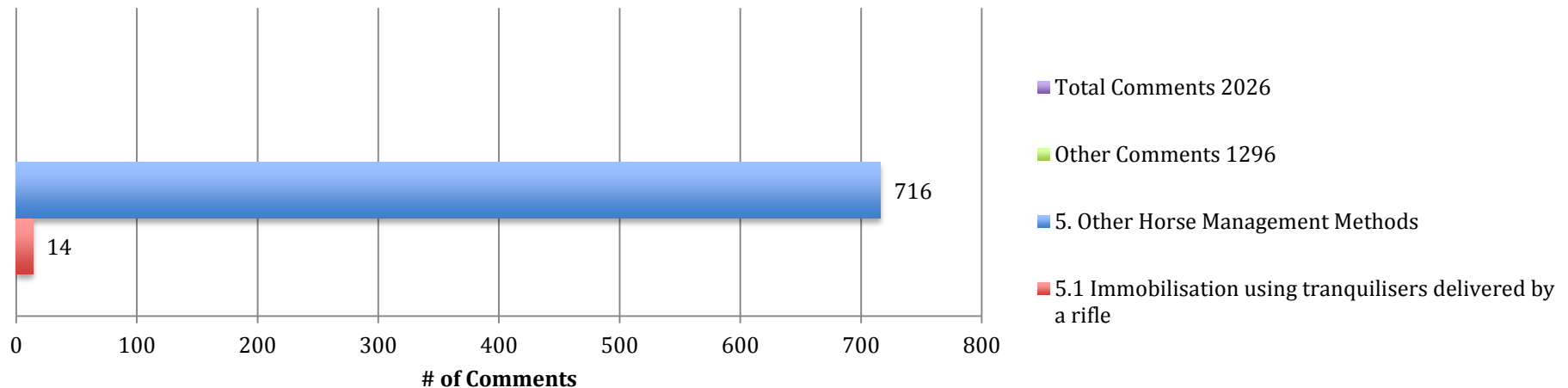
Key opinions expressed:

- Rehoming efforts are hampered by glut of ex-racehorses on the market
- Fertility control is the preferred method of controlling population
- Aerial and ground culling perceived as inhumane

9.6 Trapping and euthanasia at trap site

Key Insights 6	Trapping and euthanasia at trap site
Link to Plan	5.1 Immobilisation using tranquillisers delivered by a dart rifle
Related Forums	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • What is your preferred control method and why? • Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods? • What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?
Most Active Forums	• What is your preferred control method and why?
Discussing Topic	• Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?

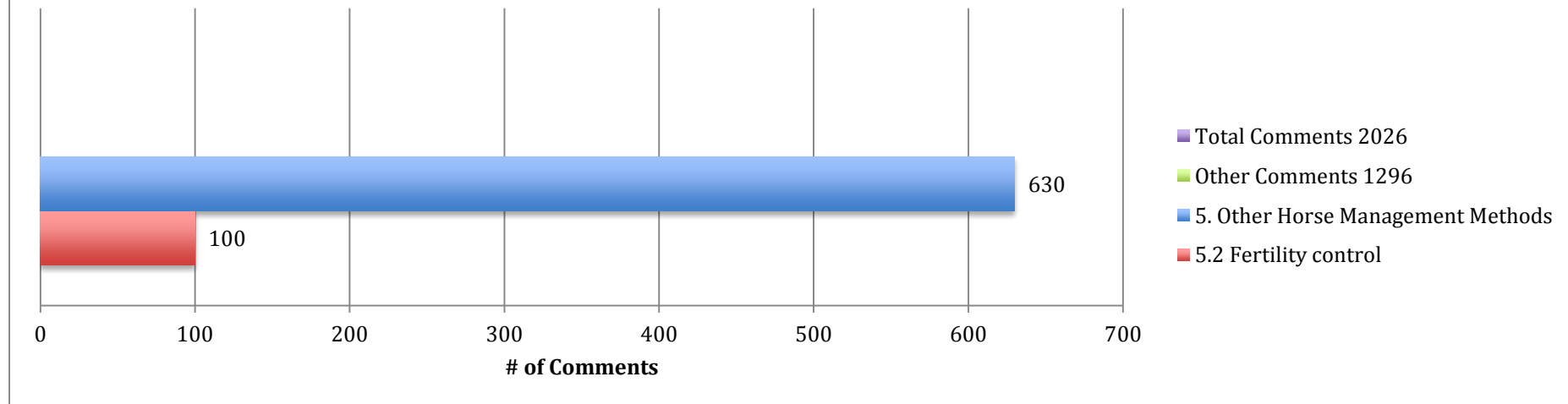
Chart 9: Comments on Trapping and Euthanasia at Trap Sites



9.7 Fertility control

Key Insights 7	Fertility control
Link to Plan	5.2 Fertility control
Related Forums	- What does humane treatment mean to you? - What is your preferred control method and why? - Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	- Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? - What is your preferred control method and why? - Do we need a wild horse sanctuary? - It costs NPWS on average \$1074 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?

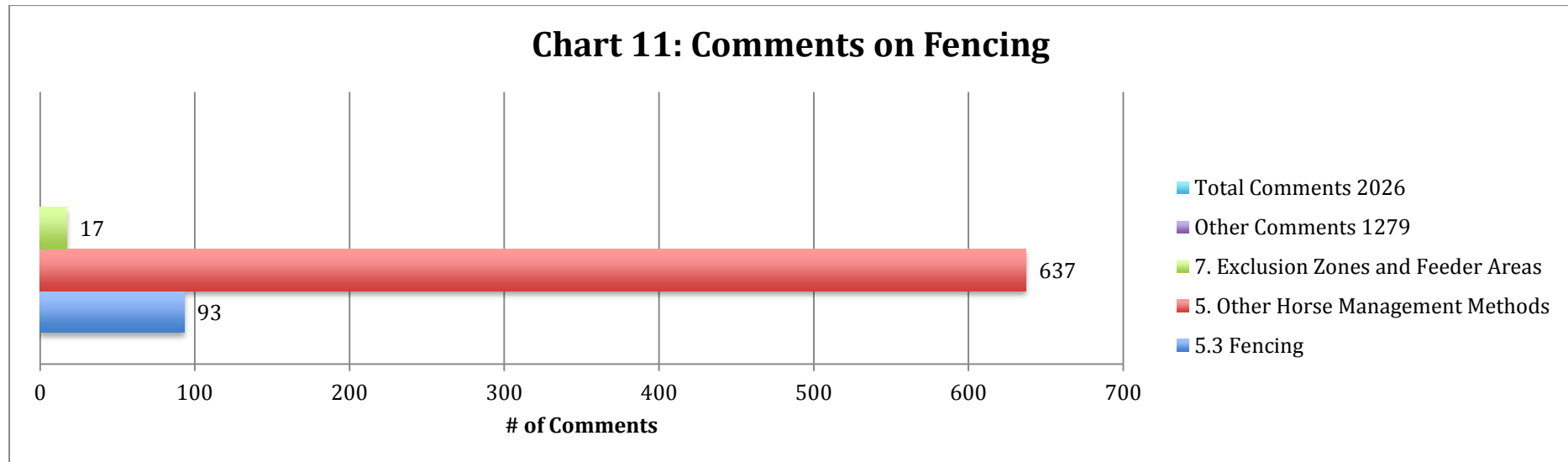
Chart 10: Comments on Fertility Control



9.8 Fencing

Key Insights 8	Fencing
Link to Plan	5.3 Fencing 7. Exclusion Zones and Feeder Areas
Related Forums	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • Do we need a wild horse sanctuary? • What is your preferred control method and why? • Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • What is your preferred control method and why? • What does humane treatment mean to you? • What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?

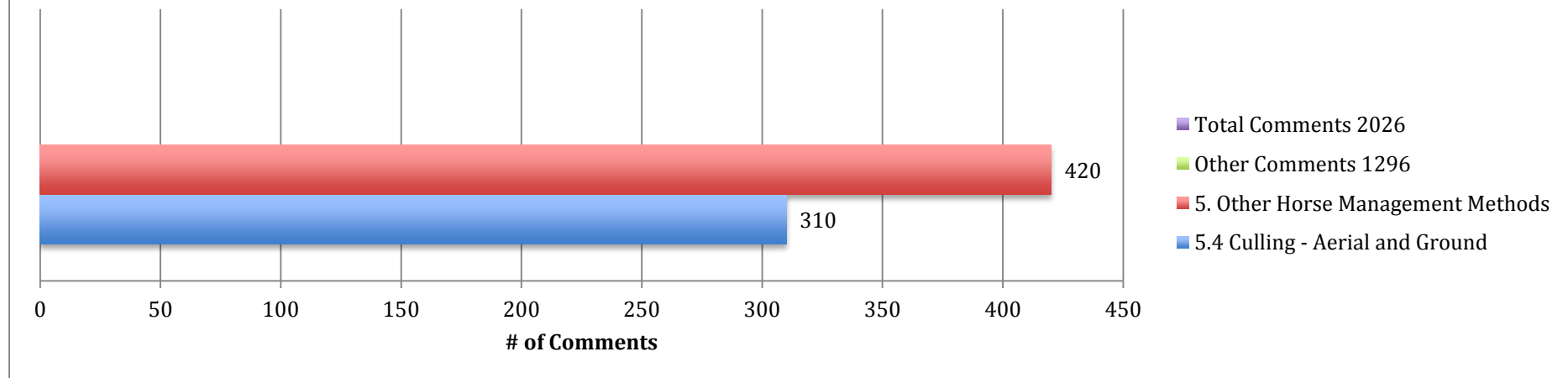
Chart 11: Comments on Fencing



9.9 Culling – aerial and ground

Key Insights 9	Culling – aerial and ground
Link to Plan	5.4 Culling – aerial and ground
Related Forums	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • What is your preferred control method and why? • Which of the following do you think is the most important thing NPWS should consider when deciding control methods?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • What do wild horses mean to you? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas? • Have you read the recent article on The Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?

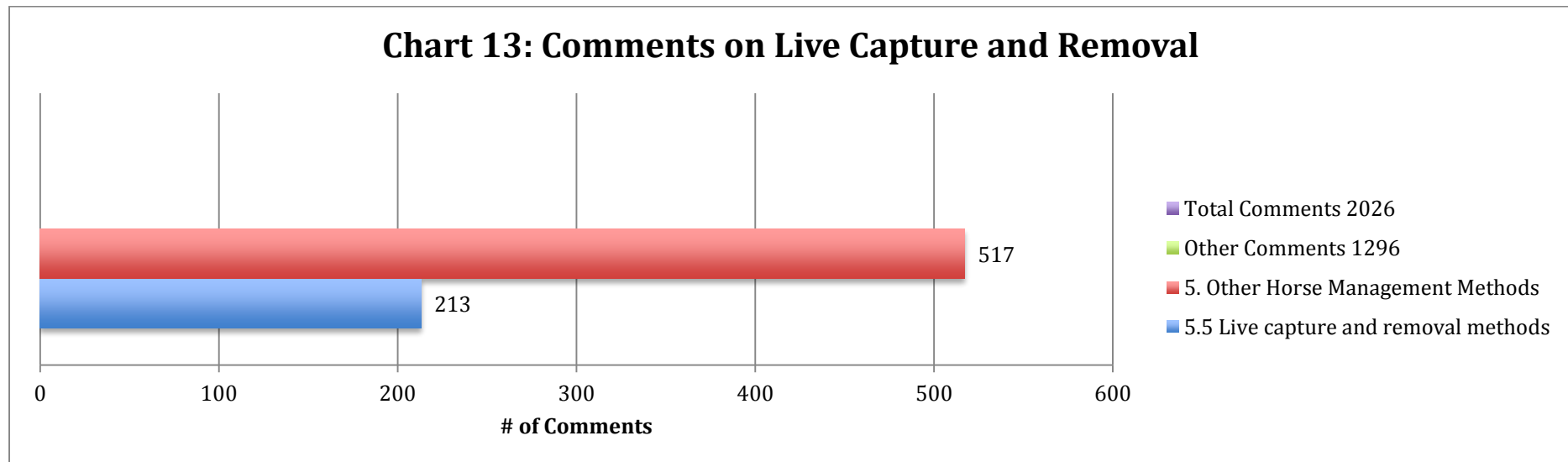
Chart 12: Comments on Culling - Aerial and Ground



9.10 Live capture and removal methods

Key Insights 10	Live capture and removal methods
Link to Plan	5.5 Live capture and removal methods
Related Forums	- What does humane treatment mean to you? - What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park? - It costs NPWS on average \$1094 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less? - What is your preferred control method and why? - What could be done to improve rehoming rates?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	- What does humane treatment mean to you? - What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses? - Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience - What do you think of roping and 'brumby' running as a control method?
Other	Infographic – Protecting the Snowies

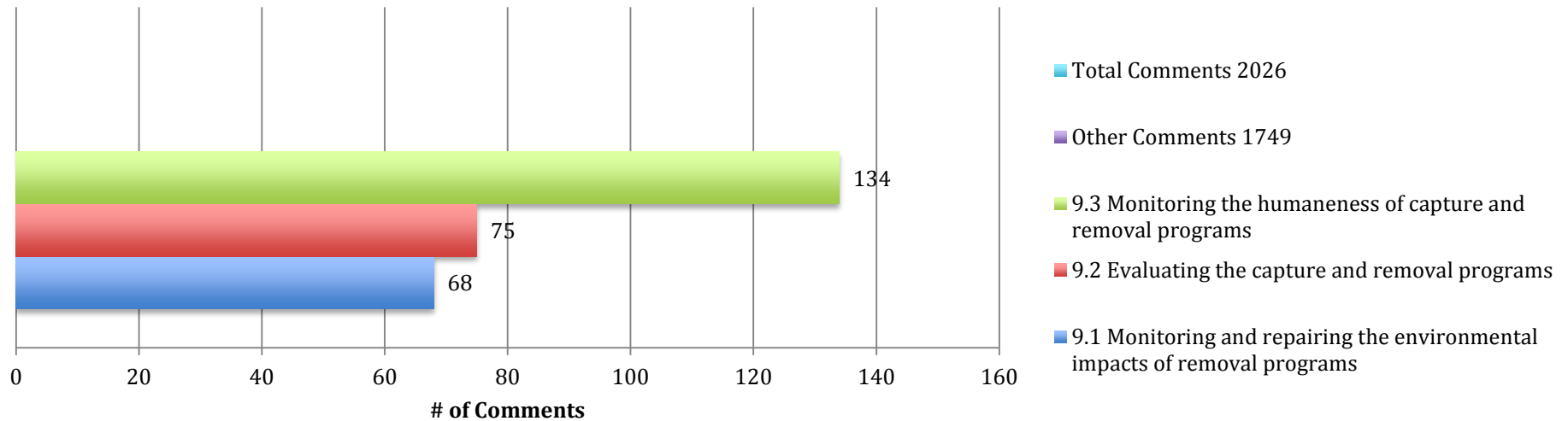
Chart 13: Comments on Live Capture and Removal



9.11 Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation

Key Insights 11	Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation
Link to Plan	9. Monitoring, Repair and Evaluation
Related Forums	• What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan? • What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you? • What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations? • What happens if we do nothing? Is it a real option? • What does humane treatment mean to you?
Most Active Forums Discussing Topic	• What does humane treatment mean to you? • It costs NPWS on average \$1074 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less? • What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management? • Which of the following do you think is the MOST important thing NPWS should consider when deciding on the control methods? • Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?

Chart 14: Comments on Monitor, Repair and Evaluation



Key opinions expressed:

- Agreement that any approach to controlling wild horses must be undertaken humanely
- There is not enough scientific evidence of the damage caused by wild horses and regeneration of sensitive areas

9.12 Community consultation and Involvement

Key Insights 12	Community Consultation and Involvement
Link to Plan	4. Community Consultation
Related Forums	• How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses? • Have you completed the online survey? • How have you been involved in the review?
Related Documents	• Information Sheet 4 – Have your say about wild horse management
Key Points	• There is an interest in continued community involved, not just in consultation but in monitoring of environmental damage and in improving the rehoming rate for wild horses • A number of suggestions to include/continue to include local people in the management of wild horses or using technology to monitor impacts

10. Appendix

Table 6. Discussion Forum Activity

Forum	Unique Visits	Contributors	Commenters	Voters	Agree Voters	Disagree Voters	Contributions	Comments	Votes	Agrees	Disagrees
Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience	920	39	33	19	18	16	381	65	316	223	93
Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?	1955	40	30	29	26	27	747	92	655	343	312
How is a National Park environment different from a paddock?	163	3	2	2	1	2	5	2	3	1	2
Are the numbers of wild horses in the Snowy Mountains really growing?	470	17	15	10	10	9	104	18	86	34	52
Where have you seen wild horses?	349	9	6	5	5	5	29	8	21	13	8
Do you have a topic you would like to discuss on Protecting the Snowies?	596	20	16	19	16	14	599	108	491	281	210
What do you think about how wild horses are removed from the National Park?	472	23	15	20	18	19	242	32	210	125	85
What is more important to consider- the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses on the National Park? Or both?	736	34	27	27	24	21	611	88	523	295	228
It costs NPWS on average \$1074 to passively remove a wild horse from the National Park. Do you think that is appropriate? Should we spend more or less?	880	23	17	18	18	12	296	54	242	128	114
Have you read the recent article by The Guardian? What do you agree with or disagree with?	1624	21	17	18	15	16	280	44	236	125	111
Do you agree or disagree that introduced species compete with native animals for food and shelter?	309	19	11	16	14	12	136	26	110	60	50

Wild Horse Management Plan Review- Online Engagement Quantitative Report
21 July to 14 December 2014

Forum	Unique Visits	Contributors	Commenters	Voters	Agree Voters	Disagree Voters	Contributions	Comments	Votes	Agrees	Disagrees
Where have you seen the impacts of wild horses in the National Park? Are there areas where you have found no impacts of wild horses?	694	16	11	11	8	11	97	19	78	39	39
What should the goal of the new management plan for wild horses be and why?	272	25	16	20	18	15	325	69	256	131	125
What do wild horses mean to you?	799	36	27	32	32	20	677	76	601	404	197
Have you read the recent article on The Conversation? What do you agree with or disagree with?	253	19	14	17	17	14	228	39	189	107	82
How could the community be more involved in monitoring and measuring the impacts of wild horses?	208	15	9	13	12	10	102	14	88	52	36
Should we fence introduced animals out of sensitive areas?	4975	23	18	18	16	17	736	118	618	340	278
What does humane treatment mean to you?	369	15	10	14	14	11	617	104	513	279	234
What legacy do you think we should leave for future generations?	377	14	13	12	12	9	476	80	396	197	199
Do we need a wild horse sanctuary?	277	19	14	17	15	13	398	71	327	173	154
Have you completed the survey? Have you ranked the wild horse management approaches?	135	7	4	5	5	2	20	8	12	7	5
How have you been involved in the Wild Horse Management Plan Review?	72	7	4	6	5	1	28	7	21	15	6
What could be done to improve the rehoming rate for wild horses?	232	12	8	11	11	8	295	61	234	135	99
What do you think of roping and 'brumby' running as a control method?	176	20	9	19	15	12	143	25	118	85	33
What happens if we do nothing? Is this a real option?	109	11	10	8	8	7	113	23	90	40	50

Wild Horse Management Plan Review- Online Engagement Quantitative Report
21 July to 14 December 2014

Forum	Unique Visits	Contributors	Commenters	Voters	Agree Voters	Disagree Voters	Contributions	Comments	Votes	Agrees	Disagrees
Are there parts of the National Park that should be kept completely free of wild horses?	104	17	12	13	11	8	115	21	94	46	48
What perspectives on wild horse management resonate with you? And why?	97	9	8	7	7	6	70	13	57	32	25
What is the one thing you want people to understand about wild horse management?	194	13	10	13	13	11	334	66	268	148	120
What is your preferred control method and why?	159	14	11	12	9	10	151	28	123	66	57
Which of the following do you think is the MOST important thing NPWS should consider when deciding on the control methods?	129	18	16	14	13	9	129	27	102	56	46
What other things do you think NPWS should consider in its review of the plan? Have you learnt anything about the issue that you did not already know?	84	12	11	10	8	9	147	29	118	57	61
Why do we need to have National Parks?	62	11	10	9	9	5	61	13	48	29	19
In the discussion on wild horse management, who do you most agree with and why?	35	8	4	6	3	4	16	5	11	5	6
Totals	18286	589	438	470	426	365	8708	1453	7255	4071	3184

11. Glossary

Description	Definition
Aware	The number of people who have visited the site. Note: Admin visits are not included in this number.
Action	When someone downloads a document or video, reads the FAQs page, clicks in to a full news article, makes a comment or agrees or disagrees with a comment. (Another way to explain it is if there is a change in the site's URL.) [Note: Admins are not included in this number.]
Engaged	The number of people who have actively contributed to the project (e.g. by commenting on a forum, taking a poll or completing a survey.) Note: Admin contributions are not included in this number.
Informed	The number of people who have taken action/s (see next item) to learn more about the project.
Unique Page Views	The number of times a page is viewed.
Unique Site Visits	The number of visits to the site by unique visitors. Unique visits are measured in sessions which end after 30 minutes of inactivity. (i.e. within one 30 minute session, a user could visit many pages on your site, but this would be calculated as one visit.)
Unique Visitors	The number of individual people that visits the site as indicated by their IP address. Each individual is counted only once in the unique visitor measure for the reporting period.

Ends

DISCLAIMER This report was prepared by Bluegrass Consulting in good faith exercising all due care and attention, but no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to the relevance, accuracy, completeness or fitness for purpose of this document in respect of any particular user's circumstances. Users of this document should satisfy themselves concerning its application to, and where necessary seek expert advice in respect of, their situation. The views expressed within are not necessarily the views of the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and may not represent OEH policy.

© Copyright State of NSW and the Office of Environment and Heritage