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21st May 2008

Our Ref: DSE052921

Mr. Bill Kosky
22 Harold Street
MIDDLE PARK Vic 3206

Dear Mr. Kosky

Feral Horses in the Alpine National Park

Thank you for your letter of 23 April 2008 to the Hon Gavin Jennings MLC, Minister for Environment & Climate Change regarding feral horses in the Alpine National Park. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Parks Victoria is committed to controlling feral horses in the Alpine National Park and has an active control program in place. Feral horse populations are primarily managed through a partnership and contract with the Alpine Brumby Management Association (ABMA). This arrangement has been in place since 2002 and has been quite successful, with the number of horses removed increasing each year as the partnership strengthens and techniques are refined. The agreement has also reduced unmanaged brumby running and the consequential impacts on the park and park users they may have had.

The ABMA have removed over 100 horses since July 2007 are on target to remove up to 150 horses for this financial year. There is a particular emphasis on substantial reduction of feral horse numbers around the Bogong High Plains where the impact of increasing horse populations is potentially significant. General control programs continue in the Eastern Alps area including the Cobberas.

Parks Victoria also has a monitoring program in place to determine population numbers and distribution of horses to better understand their population dynamics and works closely with the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service on a co-operative approach across the State border.

Recognising the potential and current impact of feral horse populations, Parks Victoria intends to undertake a management plan for feral horses over the next 2 years. We need to further understand the ecology of the horses, their impacts on the main environments of the Alps and appropriate timing and methods of horse removal. Public consultation on this matter will be vital as we seek to maintain a healthy park.

Healthy Parks
Healthy People

I appreciate and share your concerns about the impact of horses and Parks Victoria will continue to manage and review the effectiveness of the feral horse control program. Should you require further advice on this matter please contact Peter Jacobs, District Chief Ranger, Alps on 03 57 550000.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Rose', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Rose
Regional Manager East