

26th September, 2023

KN:MD

Manager, National Parks and Wildlife Service Planning and Assessment
E: npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au

RE: Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management: public consultation

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is a national incorporated association established to consult with government in advocating for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia's members are a collective of various sporting, breeding and hobbyist clubs representing the full spectrum of animals kept as pets and companions, including horses and farm animals. This submission has been prepared by ACA's Horse Representative and members of our Horse & Livestock Advisory Group.

Safe, off-road horse riding opportunities around Sydney are declining, and those available are becoming less safe. It is vitally important that the NSW Government and its departments take responsibility to ensure that safe, off road access for horse riding is kept accessible, including within the Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park.

With this in mind, ACA would like to make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1:

No existing trails are closed or restricted to exclude horse riders. Regular use of trails is the cheapest, easiest and community-oriented way to keep trails open and clear for when they may be required for emergency vehicles and fire prevention or protection. This includes creating suitable creek crossings (bridges or weirs) where required to prevent damage to, or pollution of waterways.

Recommendation 2:

Existing easements via freehold land are maintained, and kept open, to ensure trails are kept clear and are fire safe, and where this is genuinely not possible, an alternative access route is created nearby from a public road or crown land.

Recommendation 3:

All Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park trails that are suitable for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians be made accessible to horse riders, seven days a week without a booking (unless there is a valid reason to temporarily close access – such as for booked events, trail maintenance, or following bad weather).

Animal Care Australia welcomes the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns as well as assist in providing additional input into improving on the missed opportunities of this Draft Plan. We look forward to reviewing the next stage of the Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management: public consultation

We respectfully request a meeting with you, and look forward to hearing from you regarding a suitable time to discuss the now urgent matter.

Please do not hesitate to make contact if we can assist further.

Kind regards,



Michael Donnelly
President
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