

GIPPSLAND KANGAROO HARVEST ZONE - CR COX

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

In accordance with Governance Rule 26 developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

SUMMARY

Yarra Ranges is home to significant biodiversity, with the region's landscapes and iconic species, including the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, attracting over four million tourists per year.

Local community members and groups have raised concerns with Councillors about animal welfare and the impact of commercial harvesting on local kangaroo populations. Kangaroo control is managed entirely by the State Government, through the Authority to Control Wildlife (ATCW) process and the 2024-2028 Kangaroo Harvesting Program (KHP).

This matter was presented to a Councillor Forum in October 2023. Since this time, several peri-urban Councils, including Nillumbik, Mornington Peninsula and Mount Alexander Shire Councils, have advocated for their removal from the commercial harvesting program.

Recently State Government's 2024-2028 Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan has redrawn the harvest zones removing other peri-urban areas from commercial harvesting. Yarra Ranges Council has not been excluded, instead shifting into the Gippsland Harvest Zone, with the implications of this change unclear, especially relating to Yarra Ranges Dandenong's region which is stated as excluded from the harvesting zone.

Locally evidence received by Council suggests that there has been limited uptake of the harvesting program to date.

The protection of kangaroos and their habitat locally is guided by endorsed Council strategies, including the Environment Strategy 2015-2025 and the Nature Plan 2024-2034.

COUNCILLOR MOTION

That Council requests that The Hon. Jacinta Allen MP, as Premier of Victoria, and The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, as Minister for the Environment, immediately exclude the Shire of Yarra Ranges from the Gippsland Kangaroo Harvest Zone and include Yarra Ranges in the exclusion [to commercial killing] zone.