



# WAFCWG

WA Feral Cat Working Group

*Protecting WA's Biodiversity*

## Meeting 11 Communiqué

*A Working Group to improve native fauna conservation trajectories with a focus on effective and humane management of feral cats.*

This communiqué highlights key discussions and considerations from the Working Group's (WG) meeting as well as other important information.

**Date:** Tuesday 19 March 2024

**Location:** CSIRO Floreat and online

**Organisations represented:** WAFCWG, Natural Resource Management WA (and PHCC), National Feral Cat Taskforce, CSIRO, Australian Wildlife Conservancy, Bush Heritage Australia (BHA), The WA Biodiversity Science Institute (WABSI), Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).

The WA Feral Cat Working Group Meeting (#11) received information on Executive Officer activities and future workplan, funding update, owned cat containment advocacy documents and Ministerial engagement outcomes.

### Summary of Matters for Decision:

**Action:** Plan a media release on "Benefits of Pet Cat Containment" with collaboration with the WA Cat Haven in coming weeks.

**Action:** Involvement of review of our [education videos](#) will include Indigenous Desert Alliance, DBCA staff, CSIRO, and the WAFCWG Chair.

**Action:** Distribute a social media document outline to some Working Group organisations for communication support on the coordinated roll-out of [education videos](#) produced under a Lotterywest grant.

### Summary of Matter for Discussion:

**1.** Outcome of the State Feral Cat NRM (round 1) request is unknown, despite panel providing their report to the minister weeks prior. The Working Group Executive will aim to assess the outcome of the grant process following the announcement.

**2.** Chair, Susan Hunt; EO, Gillian Bryant; and Exec, Bruce Webber are meeting Lotterywest to discuss possible future funding which may include another Feral Cat Symposium and a Communication Support Officer. Other ideas to be discussed also.

### Summary of Matters for Noting:

- Advocacy work around Pet-Cat containment is very active. Representatives (Bruce Webber and WAFCWG EO) met with Minister Beazley to discuss the Cat Act review.
- Chair outlined meeting she had with the Director General, Stuart Smith of DBCA. Cat control outside DBCA land is important and relates to all categories of cats; pet, stray and feral.

## Highlights of Working Group Activities:

### **Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

- Autumn baiting (under the Western Shield program) with Eradicat® will increase to 7 sites this year.
- PAPP-Felixer pen-trials have been completed.
- Pen-trials have been undertaken using Bush Guardian traps (collaboration with New Zealand company and Murdoch University).

### **Natural Resource Management WA / PHCC**

- Noted significant reduction in NRM WA funding for the regions, resulting in less funding for conservation work overall.
- PHCC have paid contractors to kill feral species and DNA samples collected have asked contractors to target key-problem areas.

### **Australian Wildlife Conservancy**

- Feral cat-shooting efforts at Yampi Sounds Training Area has been unlikely to have made a significance difference to cat activity, despite +50 cats culled in a week.
- On-ground Eradicat® baiting has provided good evidence of effectiveness of feral cat control at Mt Gibson Sanctuary.
- A year-long Felixer trial has been completed at Mt Gibson and Paruna Sanctuaries.

### **Bush Heritage Australia**

- Midwest and FitzStirling reserve updates include activities of completed ground baiting with Eradicat® (after rabbit control), feral cat trapping and shooting,
- There has been Felixer deployment in three BHA-managed locations (Midwest, FitzStirling and Birrilibirru).
- No aerial baiting collaboration with DBCA from 2024 will be possible.
- BHA noted their research support to university students is active and there is a PhD writing-up and another PhD that has commenced recently.

### **National Feral Cat Taskforce**

- The next national task force meeting (Meeting 15) is planned for on 29 and 30 April 2024 (online attendance) and meeting communiqué are found on the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water [webpage](#).

## Next Meeting

The next WAFCWG meeting will be held Thursday 19 September 2024 in person at WABSI.

## Note

This communiqué presents a synthesis of the meeting and should not be taken to represent the position of any individual Feral Cat Working Group member.

Susan Hunt AM PSM

Chair, WAFCWG