



**Media release, Wednesday, 9 March 2022:**

## **LABOR BRINGS KANGAROO CARNAGE TO NILLUMBIK**

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Victorian kangaroos are in crisis. Since commercialisation of kangaroo shooting in 2014 average quotas have tripled, rescuers deal with horrific wounding, and shooters are desperately soliciting for dwindling kangaroos. On top of lethal Authority to Control Wildlife permits, Nillumbik comes under the 'Central Harvest Zone' where an additional 65,050 kangaroos are earmarked for profit-driven slaughter. Nillumbik locals are outraged that the amenity of their area, known as the 'Green Wedge Shire', is being negatively impacted by kangaroo shooters.

The Kangaroo Harvest Program is overseen by Victorian Labor and councils are unable to opt out of the program despite objections based on environmental, amenity, human safety and tourism concerns. Speaking on his own behalf, the Nillumbik Council Deputy Mayor Ben Ramacharan states, "one thing that stands out about the Nillumbik community is how much we love our wildlife. People move to the Green Wedge Shire to be amongst nature and take pride in sharing our homes with the incredible range of wildlife Nillumbik has to offer, including kangaroos. The profit-focussed kangaroo harvesting program is decimating healthy kangaroo populations and leaving injured animals behind to suffer a truly horrific death. It is heartbreaking to think that this is happening right here in our backyard."

Kangaroo shooters have been reported doorknocking, leafleting and soliciting on Facebook community groups looking for kangaroos in the Nillumbik area. The operator of the Stringybark Wildlife Shelter in Kangaroo Ground states, "I live in what should be kangaroo heaven, but I will not release my hand-raised joeys here because I often hear shooters in nearby properties." In the almost four years she has been rescuing kangaroos in Nillumbik, she and fellow rescuers have attended dozens of kangaroos that have been shot and left wounded. "We've seen kangaroos with half their face missing, kangaroos with bullet holes in their rumps, legs, and abdomens. They are called in by concerned residents who find them suffering unimaginable pain and fear, slowly dying of infection." She describes how wildlife rescuers deal with suffering every day, "but seeing these kangaroos being deliberately slaughtered and maimed is absolutely soul destroying. We dedicate our lives to helping wildlife while our neighbours call in shooters to needlessly kill them. There is no justification needed, no reason." She adds, "studies have shown that kangaroos do not compete with livestock in any measurable fashion, and damage to fences can be avoided with very simple and cost-effective modifications. Yet our government continues to encourage the persecution of our beautiful native fauna."

A Kangaroo Ground resident, Robyn Dahl, feels similarly indignant. "I live in the heart of the Green Wedge. That means most residents choose to live here because of our love of wildlife and nature. We love our kangaroos which already contend with increasing urbanisation, carnage on our roads, unsuitable fencing and now shooters! We feel let down by our state government. Our kangaroos deserve better."

Victorian Kangaroo Alliance spokesperson, Alyssa Wormald, states "it is a disgrace that nature-loving communities are subjected to kangaroo shooters. Nearby residents may not be informed about impending shoots and are unable to stop the slaughter. Their rights and wishes are trampled on by an industry profiteering off the back of our wildlife with full governmental support." She concludes, "we are sick of the relentless killing of kangaroos and tormenting of communities that love them. We want progressive leadership from Victorian Labor to genuinely protect our kangaroos and foster respectful cohabitation."

**Dropbox link for images and resources. Please copy into browser:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/psrmyfozsovijwq/AACjplOgZkD1OcdRV-BUGSLva?dl=0>