

Fox Control

Stony Creek Reserve Kinglake West

August 2022

Why is Council trialling a Fox Control Program in Stony Creek Reserve?

- Council, in collaboration with King Parrot Catchment Fox Control Group, is trialling this Fox Control Program in Stony Creek Reserve to reduce the number of foxes preying on native animals.
- Foxes are an introduced species that prey on both native animals and livestock and pose a significant risk to the environment and agriculture. Foxes have been recorded on camera in the Reserve and so has the threatened Brush-tailed phascogale and the vulnerable Long-nosed bandicoot.
- Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act, landholders have a responsibility to control pest species and Council is required to do the same on Council-managed land.

When will the Program commence?

The Program will run from 15 – 28 August 2022

Who is conducting the Fox Control Program?

Council has appointed Melbourne Wildlife and Pest Control to manage the Fox Control Program in Kinglake West. They are a local business, with more than 30-years of experience in invasive animal control.

The Program will operate under the requirements of Animal Welfare Victoria, Agriculture Victoria and Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

What control method will be used?

We'll be using soft jawed, leghold traps, which are an efficient method of trapping foxes.

Soft jawed traps are designed to capture the animal by the foot or leg. They are less easily seen than cage traps, so there is a greater chance of trapping a fox. Cage trapping is also likely to attract the curiosity of native animals, less likely with crafty fox, learning and smelling what to avoid.

What lure will be used?

Lures could include commercial cat food, rabbit or rotting meat. No poisons will be used.

How often will the soft jaw traps be checked?

Traps will be checked each morning and reset as required. Traps will also be under camera surveillance and will be regularly monitored.

How will foxes be destroyed?

Foxes will be humanely destroyed, in-line with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Permit obtained.

What happens if a native animal is trapped?

Fox Control Stony Creek Reserve Kinglake West

If a native animal is caught in a trap, it will be assessed by the Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter. If the animal is uninjured, it will be released. If injured, the animal will be attended to by the Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter. The public **should not approach** any animal caught in the soft jaw trap. The animal must be approached by an experienced operator.

What happens if a domestic animal is trapped?

The public **should not approach** any animal caught in the soft jaw trap. The animal must be approached by an experienced operator.

It is important that pet owners do not let their animals wander in the reserve at any time. Domestic pets also endanger native wildlife.

- Dogs
 - Dogs should not be roaming in the reserve. It is an offence under the *Domestic Animal Act 1994 – S.24(1)&(2)* to allow your dog to wander outside of your property.
 - If a microchipped dog is caught in a trap, we will return the dog to its owner. If we can't identify the owner, we will take it to Animal Aid in Coldstream.
- Cats
 - If a microchipped cat is caught in a trap, we will return the cat to its owners. If we can't identify the owner, it will be taken to Animal Aid in Coldstream.
 - If a feral cat is caught in a trap, it will be humanely destroyed under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994 – S84O*.

How did we notify the community about the Program?

We wrote to residents at neighbouring properties within 1.5 km of Stony Creek Reserve. We also placed an advertisement in the August edition of the Mountain Monthly and Flowerdale Flyer and displayed posters at different entrances to the Reserve.

Who is Council working with for broader fox control?

King Parrot Catchment Fox Control Group, the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network and Kinglake Wildlife Refuge.

Will a report of the trial Program be available to the public?

A report will be compiled at the end of the Program and the results will be available on Council's website.