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NEW DEER LAW PLANNED

Gympie Times

By Arthur Gorrie 24th December 2010

Private landholders, especially those whose properties are close to areas deemed to be environmentally significant, are worried about a new draft feral deer management strategy, which seems to put all responsibility for the problem onto them.

The new draft, recently released for public comment, was the focus of a public meeting at Gympie Pavilion, with landowners and hunters prominent among attendees.

Clark McGhie, secretary for the Research Into Deer Genetics and Environment group (RIDGE Inc), was calling for landholders and hunters to read the strategy and have their say before the revised submission date of January 21, 2011.

Mr McGhie says landholders are alarmed at their proposed responsibilities.

He says they could be faced with the costs of deer proof fencing, if their land is adjacent to an environmentally significant area.

They could also be asked to contribute to feral deer management, either directly or indirectly, including a proposal that hunters be trained and accredited as "feral deer control operators".

"The government is using the issue of problematic deer caused from recent releases out of failed deer farms, mainly close to suburban areas, as a pretext to imposing severe restrictions and regulations on landowners across the State", he said. "In general, feral deer have been well controlled", he said.