

**COMMUNITY SERVICES AND ENGAGEMENT
DIVISIONAL REPORT**



ITEM NUMBER	0.0
TITLE	Relocation of Numbulwar Local Authority Funds
REFERENCE	1351104
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RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Infrastructure Committee approve the re-allocation of \$60,000 of Numbulwar Local Authority funds towards the removal of the feral Pig population of Numbulwar.

KEY OUTCOME AREA

Wellbeing: Contribute to the wellbeing of residents individually and communities as a whole; by fostering increased participation in community activities, education, healthy lifestyles, and a safe living environment.

Environment: Protect and care for the physical environment, including developing and maintenance of clean and environmentally focused communities.

BACKGROUND

The feral pig population of Numbulwar has been highlighted over several years as an issue of concern for the health and wellbeing of the Numbulwar Community.

In November 2022 a community consultation was held with experts from Bio Security Australia in relation to the risk associated for the transmission of Japanese Encephalitis (JEV) from the pig population to the residents of Numbulwar. At the time samples were taken from the pig population and subsequent sampling was taken by the Northern Australian Quarantine Strategy (NAQS).

Last week Council's Animal Program Manager discussed the most recent feral pig sampling survey results with Dr Guy Weerasinghe A/g Technical Manager Animal Health Surveillance Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS).

Although the samples did not conclusively demonstrate the pigs were carrying Japanese Encephalitis Virus at the time of sampling, serology results demonstrate activity in the complex of viruses known as Flaviviruses which include Japanese Encephalitis, Murray Valley Encephalitis and Kunjin virus. NAQS now consider Japanese Encephalitis Virus to be endemic in the Northern Territory.

Although pigs play varying roles in amplifying each individual disease, the advice is that it can be safely assumed that pigs pose a considerable health risk to the Numbulwar community and it is not advisable that people live near feral pig populations.

Advice from the NLC Ranger group is that wild pigs are also impacting on the environment and in particular, turtle nesting grounds.

The council proposes that due to its considerable experience and track record, the professional Feral Animal Management service "Wild Science" is engaged to undertake the pig removal and euthanasia.

It is of the utmost importance that the task is undertaken professionally and sensitively in compliance with legislation.

Wild Science has prepared a comprehensive strategy, timeline and costings.

ISSUES/OPTIONS/SWOT

The consequences of human infection from this group of viruses (Flaviviruses which include Japanese Encephalitis, Murray Valley Encephalitis and Kunjinvirus) is severe, particularly in vulnerable populations. Young children and elderly are highly susceptible to severe infection, with death or permanent disability a likely outcome.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The cost of the proposal is approximately \$60,000

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.