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## **LIBERALS AND NATIONALS TO ESTABLISH FOX AND WILD DOG BOUNTY**

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will implement a year-round statewide bounty to control fox and wild dog numbers across Victoria.

The Coalition has announced \$4 million over four years to establish a Fox and Wild Dog Bounty if elected to government.

Victorian fox and wild dog numbers have exploded in recent years and are a serious threat to farming communities and the natural environment.

Foxes and wild dogs are exposing farmers to severe stock losses, resulting in hefty costs to farm businesses and Victoria's economy.

Native fauna and our natural ecosystems are also under threat from these introduced vermin.

Under the Coalition's program all licensed shooters, including rural landholders, will be eligible for a \$10 bounty for every fox and a \$50 bounty for every dog killed.

The Fox and Wild Dog Bounty will give community groups, rural landholders and shooting organisations an active management role in controlling Victoria's fox problem.

The bounty will be a vital part of a comprehensive fox and wild dog eradication program to protect livestock and the natural environment.

Research shows foxes are estimated to cost Australia more than \$228 million per year in combined environmental and agricultural impacts and control costs, with the direct impact on sheep production alone estimated at \$17.5 million every year – in some areas they have been known to take up to 30 per cent of lambs.

In reintroducing the bounty, we are aiming to replicate the success of the 2003 program when about 198,000 foxes were killed.

The Brumby Government's token 'Fox Stop' program has proved to be an abject failure.

The Brumby Government has ignored the state's wild dog problem and has failed to control fox numbers.

# Policy

Just 6,200 foxes were killed last year under the Fox Stop program last year, as opposed to 198,000 when the Fox Bounty was trialled in 2003.

The Coalition's plan will ensure control of foxes and wild dogs is no longer funded on a temporary, ad-hoc basis.

The Fox and Wild Dog Bounty will be part of a fully-integrated pest control program which includes poisoning and other measures to control vermin.