

**Environment and Communications References**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water Portfolio**

**Inquiry:** Impacts and management of feral horses in the Australian Alps  
**Question No:** IQ23-000253  
**Hearing Date:** 23 August 2023  
**Division/Agency:** Biodiversity Division  
**Topic:** Feral horse funding breakdown  
**Hansard Page:** 38, 45  
**Question Date:** 23 August 2023  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator David Pocock asked:**

Senator DAVID POCOCK: Can you give me an idea of the current level of funding when it comes to feral animals in the alpine national parks?

Dr Fraser: Yes, certainly. I haven't come here with an extensive list. If you want more information that what I provide, I can take that on notice. Just building on what the other jurisdictions at the table mentioned earlier, funding that was specifically for the lethal control of feral horses has been \$1.7 million, namely across Victoria and New South Wales, in the last couple of years—essentially in response to the bushfires but also more recently.

Complementary to that, specifically for the Alps but not specifically for feral horses, there's been around \$4.7 million in integrated pest control. That could be weeds, feral herbivores and invasive predators such as cats and foxes, and the survey and management that go with that integrated control. That's just in the last handful of years.

I'm just talking about the big-ticket items here; we have lots of smaller projects that run in these areas. Through our Natural Heritage Trust funding, we also have large projects that are focused on our environmental assets—the mountain pygmy possum is one; peatland is another—where we are looking at integrated recovery efforts. They're multimillion dollar projects, as well, that run over several years. All of those are either about to finish soon or have finished just recently.

With the Australian Alps identified as a priority place through the Threatened Species Action Plan, as Ms Kennedy just mentioned, there are integrated recovery actions for those assets, such as the threatened ecological community of the alpine sphagnum bogs and fens and the multitude of threatened species, several of which you've just mentioned. There will be a focus on funding through the Natural Heritage Trust but also through the government's new Saving Native Species Program, both for species-specific actions and for place-based actions that might look at addressing threats at the landscape scale.

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Senator DAVID POCOCK: Dr Fraser, I was keen to follow up on that \$1.7 million figure that you mentioned. Was that committed under the Morrison government or the Albanese government?

Dr Fraser: It's a mix across the previous government and a commitment by Minister Plibersek. I haven't got all the details here, but I will provide the breakdown of that on notice.

**Answer:**

A total of \$1.73 million has been provided to state governments for lethal control of feral horses in the Australian Alps. The NSW Government received \$1.3 million with \$1.1 million provided under the \$200 million bushfire recovery package in November 2021 and \$200,000 under the Saving Native Species program in June 2023. The remaining \$430,000 was provided to the Victorian Government through the bushfire recovery package in July 2021.