

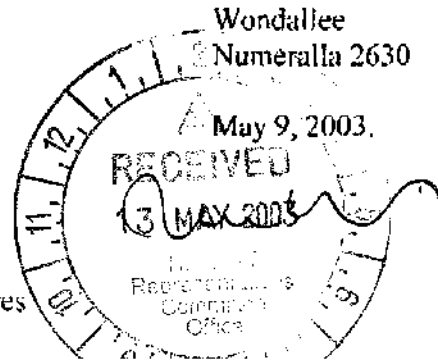
FAX TO 62975768



# MONARO MERINO ASSOCIATION INC.



The Committee Secretary  
House Select Committee on Recent Australian Bushfires  
Department of House of Representatives  
Parliament House,  
Canberra. ACT 2600.



Submission No.235

Dear Sir,

Please find attached submission on behalf of the Monaro Merino Association Stud Breeders for your attention.

We focus this submission on the problems caused by bushfires in the Monaro region of New South Wales and future control and preventative methods for dealing with fires in this region.

We invite you to the Monaro to inspect the damage.

Yours faithfully,

Sue Litchfield  
Secretary,  
Monaro Merino Association Stud Breeders.

Email: [rmslitch@snowy.net.au](mailto:rmslitch@snowy.net.au)  
Phone/fax 02 64533269.

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APPENDIX A - TAPE FOR YOUR INFORMATION



# MONARO MERINO ASSOCIATION INC.



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- **Monaro - Geographically Entrapped**
- **Impact of Fire on the Merino Stud Industry**
- **Fuel Build Up in National Parks & Other Government Lands**
- **Volunteer Bushfire fighters**
- **Future Management practices**



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**The Monaro Merino Association represents 24 merino stud breeders in the three shires of the Monaro region.**

**The Monaro region is now surrounded by 1 million hectares of National Park and other government lands. This summer has seen the devastation of two thirds of the Kosciusko National Park, south and west of Monaro grazing lands and it is just a matter of time until National Parks on the Eastern side of the Monaro are similarly devastated.**

**Many of our Stud Breeders either adjoin National Parks or are in close proximity to Parks.**

**The high country grazing is managed very carefully on private lands. However landholders have been predicting this years uncontrollable fire outbreaks as inevitable due to lack of 'management' in National Parks.**

**The impact of the fires on local landholders was minimal (with some exceptions) due to careful land management of private lands and good fortune with wind changes. Landholders lived in fear of fire from the KNP for many weeks. However landholders are angry that their predictions have come true and the fires have inflicted immeasurable damage to the Flora and Fauna of the Snowy Mountains.**

**Monaro merino sheep genetic are sought nationally and our studs must maintain their flocks to continue this dominance, and earning for the Monaro region.**

**The recent fires have left no feed within the Parks for wildlife and predators such as wild dogs. Dogs are now impacting more than usual on adjoining landholders, and starving wildlife are feeding on precious winter grasses on private lands – many areas owned by Merino Stud Breeders.**



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The KNP and adjoining private lands were not in drought as has been depicted by National Park Management. The only reason that the fires burnt so hot was due to a huge build up of fuel within the Park.

**Volunteer Bushfire Fighters** - many of them from the Monaro Merino Association, have been called upon the fight this years fires for weeks on end. They are disillusioned as they feel they have been exploited to fight fires that were preventable - did not start on their lands - and their advice on land management has not been listened to by the bureaucracy who have no practical firefighting experience.

**Compensation** - Although losses on private lands were relatively small considering the area burnt within the park, compensation to those landholders and Stud Breeders is inadequate. Burnt boundary fencing with the National Park is part compensated but internal division fencing destroyed is not compensated. Loss of livestock feed is not considered. National Parks and Wildlife Service should be held responsible and liable for all damages as the fires escaped from the Park on to private property.

**Future Management Practices** - As private land managers we insist that we are consulted and listened to on the advantages of best practice for land management. The National Parks management have listened to academics and inexperienced voices from the 'green' urban population since the 1950s - conservation has gone off the rails and is now up in smoke due to poor management policies pushed from urban Australia.

The Australian eucalypt bush has to be managed. We have observed an enormous build up of scrub, heath and combustible material that has lead up to the recent hot fire storms across two thirds of Kosciusko National Park - now a National disgrace.



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**Monaro Merino Stud Breeders, together with all other livestock producers on the Monaro urgently request the following management strategies for National Parks and other government lands –**

**Immediate action to reopen all fire trails as accessibility is imperative for fire control. Fire trails to be kept in order – i.e. scrub cleaned up and canopy timber kept under control. All fire trails used in the last fires to left open and maintained.**

**Slow burns regularly used to stop understory build up.**

**National Parks to have their own specialized Fire Fighting response units – trained in 'bush' fire fighting. Quick response in rugged terrain is essential for fire management.**

**Limited livestock grazing within the National Parks to be utilized as a tool for fire management.**

**We as members of the Monaro community urgently require action on fire management in National Parks and other government lands.**