



AgForce unites resource companies and producers for pest strategy

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Feral animal control representatives from resource companies operating across southern Queensland have come together to develop a strategic plan for broadscale pest management at an AgForce forum held in Dalby last Wednesday.

AgForce Projects feral pest coordinator Damien Ferguson said the forum was held as part of an initiative to bring land managers from mining and agriculture together to encourage a more coordinated approach to pest control.

“This is part of a great opportunity for resource companies, agricultural land managers, NRM groups and the councils to work together to develop strategies and a framework for pest management,” Mr Ferguson said.

“Individual companies are investing large amounts of money and resources to control feral animals on their land, but this will only be a short term solution to the problem if the strategy is ad hoc, reactive and not part of a broader, coordinated approach working with neighbours and regional control groups.”

Mr Ferguson said it was great to see resource companies proactively working with producers to develop a long term plan for feral pest control and acknowledge the benefits for biodiversity and the sustainability of the agricultural industry they work alongside.

“Primary producers have the knowledge about where the animals are and what they are doing, so it is vital that resource companies talk to their neighbours. Many of these companies are not involved in primary production but they are now working within the landscape and are responsible for managing their land and the pests that travel through their property,” Mr Ferguson said.

Resource development in the region has opened up large corridors of land, making it easier for feral pests to travel quickly across large regions. Mr Ferguson said to reduce the movement of dogs and other pest animals, land managers need to control the corridors they might be travelling in and work strategically with neighbours, NRM groups and local councils.

“Successful strategies like the Paroo Model are proof that land managers need to look at this problem from a landscape perspective and not just an individual property issue.”

Mr Ferguson said the forum, which included representatives from more than 10 resource companies, would be followed up by a meeting with stakeholders in February to foster working relationships and develop on ground plans in conjunction with the regional councils.

Guest speakers Greg Mifsud, National Wild Dog Coordinator, Invasive Animals CRC, and Dave Berman, Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, outlined the widespread impacts of feral animals on the environment, the enormous cost to primary production and effective control methods.

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Photo caption: IMG_7268 - More than 30 resource company representatives attended an AgForce Projects pest management forum in Dalby on Wednesday 28 November.