

# HERDS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

## A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO GAME ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

### WHAT IS A HERD OF SPECIAL INTEREST?

A Herd of Special Interest (HOSI) is a legal tool in the Game Animal Council Act 2013. HOSI is used to manage highly valued game animal herds to improve hunting, conservation and community outcomes.

### WHY DOES NZ NEED HOSI?

The current legal approaches to game animal management focuses solely on control and eradication and doesn't recognise the value of these species to the hunting community or their importance to New Zealand.

Hunter's annual harvest of game animals is estimated to be more than 350,000. This

far exceeds that of government control and sustainable management cannot be achieved without hunters. But the current approach disincentivises hunters from supporting management efforts and fails to recognise the value of these herds to New Zealand.

HOSI enables a new approach, one that supports and empowers hunter and community led game animal management conservation efforts. Through the HOSI model, we can promote sustainable, responsible, and collaborative environmental stewardship of New Zealand's natural environment while maximising the benefits game animals provide to people.

### HOW CAN HOSI BENEFIT NEW ZEALAND?

Benefit	How
Community supported and led game animal management.	Empowering community, iwi and hunters to lead game animal management in a way that supports local outcomes.
Improved conservation outcomes.	Highly valued game animal populations maintained at levels that support regeneration of indigenous vegetation.
Improved hunting outcomes.	Higher quality animals supporting a range of hunting values.
Recreational, health and wellbeing and economic outcomes.	High-quality sustainable hunting experiences and opportunities.
Reducing reliance on government funding.	Expansion of voluntary conservation and game animal management programmes at near, or no cost to the taxpayer.



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## HOW WILL BOTH HUNTING AND CONSERVATION VALUES BE IMPROVED?

HOSI management is based on sound scientific approaches to game animal management achieved at low, or no, cost to the taxpayer.

- It uses data and monitoring to understand a herd's impact on its environment, if any, and the herds values to inform management decisions.
- If the herd is preventing regeneration of indigenous plants, the population is reduced using an approach that respects hunter and conservation values.
- If regeneration is being achieved, the herd is maintained in a way that maximises benefits to hunters and conservation.

By protecting conservation values in a way that respects hunter values, hunter volunteerism for conservation and community related initiatives is encouraged.

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**“When it comes to game animals under a HOSI, it's about quality over quantity and therefore a win-win for hunting and conservation.”**

**Corina Jordan, Chief Executive,  
Game Animal Council**

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## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT HOSI PROPOSALS?

### **Wapiti – Fiordland**

The Fiordland Wapiti Foundation has demonstrated the power of hunter-led conservation. Through its ballot system and

hunter-funded management and conservation programmes, it delivers:

- A world-renowned recreational hunting experience.
- Significantly lower animal densities and a high-quality game animal herd.
- Regeneration of indigenous vegetation.
- Predator control for taonga species like whio and kiwi.
- Conservation at little-or-no cost to the taxpayer.

### **Sika – Central North Island**

The Central North Island Sika herd is treasured by many New Zealand hunters. Through recent management by the Sika Foundation, this herd and the environment are beginning to benefit from:

- Active hunter-led management efforts.
- Herd monitoring and education initiatives.
- Predator control programmes.

Designating these herds as HOSI would formalise and support the work of the two foundations, recognising and safeguarding sustainable management that provides positive outcomes for hunters, for conservation and for communities, at low-no cost to the taxpayer.

## HOW DOES A HERD OF GAME ANIMALS BECOME A HOSI?

A detailed proposal is submitted to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing outlining the herd's location, values and proposed management approach. A draft herd management plan is prepared and undergoes iwi and public consultation. If approved, the herd is officially designated as a HOSI, enhancing the value of the herd while delivering beneficial conservation and community outcomes.

Learn more at  
[nzgac.org.nz/herds-of-special-interest](https://nzgac.org.nz/herds-of-special-interest)



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