

# Luke Foley MLC

Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change



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## UPPER HOUSE PASSES LEGISLATION THAT ALLOWS 751 NATIONAL PARKS TO BE OPENED TO HUNTERS

The O'Farrell Government has pushed legislation through the State's Upper House that could potentially open a whopping 751 national parks to hunters – instead of the 79 national parks originally announced in the Premier's dodgy deal with the Shooters and Fishers Party.

"The O'Farrell Government has passed legislation to open our national parks to hunters in the Legislative Council this morning," Shadow Environment Minister, Luke Foley said today.

"Our most pristine national parks, recognised around the world, are being sacrificed for the sake of Mr O'Farrell's backroom political deal with the Shooters and Fishers Party.

"Most concerning is the fact that the legislation simply lists 48 national parks where shooting cannot occur – instead of restricting hunters to the 79 national parks originally announced by the Premier.

"This Bill means that 751 of the State's 799 national parks could potentially be opened up to recreational shooters under the O'Farrell Government.

"This legislation goes well beyond the Premier's original announcement to allow hunters into 79 national parks.

"Instead of the parliament having the power to decide whether any new national parks are opened to hunters, all decisions will be made by Environment Minister Robyn Parker.

"Given Ms Parker's appalling record on environmental issues, the community can have no confidence that she will do the right thing and not open up more of our national parks to hunters in the future.

"Even government MPs on the Legislation Review Committee have raised concerns about the unmitigated power this Bill gives Ms Parker to declare any national park and any native animal fair game.

"The O'Farrell Government has also voted against amendments made by the Labor Opposition to bring the legislation into line with the Premier's commitments for hunters in national parks to be 'effectively supervised and regulated'.

"Bushwalkers and campers have every right to be concerned by the O'Farrell Government's refusal to back amendments that would have put extra protections in place for the hunters they will soon be forced to share our national parks with.

"Given the O'Farrell Government's record of breaking promises about not turning our national parks into hunting reserves, this far reaching legislation will be raising even more concerns across NSW.

"The Premier promised to protect our national parks from hunters, but now he is turning our protected conservation areas into hunting reserves."

*"We have no intention of doing deals with the minor parties, to sell out those plans."*

*"There will not be a decision to turn our national parks into hunting reserves."*

*(Barry O'Farrell, Sydney Morning Herald, 13 April 2011)*