

Weekly Times June 22, 2022

## Minister turns her back on the majority

SO, who's backing the 99 per cent non-hunting Victorians? ("Shooting down falsehoods," WT June 8). The Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development, for whom many believe "Minister for Hunters" a more fitting title, expressly confirmed in her letter last week the Andrews government's "strong record of backing hunters". Not exactly something to crow about when hunters represent less than 1 per cent of Victoria's population. (GMA data.)

She wrote of the "Sustainable Hunting Action Plan", an expensive exercise unwittingly funded by taxpayers, most of whom oppose recreational hunting. No cost-benefit analysis has ever been done to define the economic impact of hunting (aka loss) to regional communities.

Independent studies have

repeatedly shown that hunting has a detrimental impact on regional community. Tourists avoid shooting areas.

The minister seems intentionally oblivious of the numerous professional polls that repeatedly show most Victorians want the recreational killing and maiming of our native waterbirds banned in Victoria.

Evidently the minister has also missed the serious issue of trespass and illegal shooting on farms which, as reported in *The Conversation* in June 2020, was a bigger concern to farmers than animal activism.

The losers in Victorian politicians' bizarre fight for this minority group of hunters' votes are farmers, rural business owners, residents living near the shooting (one in four Victorians now live in the regions) and, of course, our wildlife, a top tourism attraction.

**Sue Williams,  
Regional Victorians  
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