

New bid for hunting ban

DUCK HUNTING

BY JESSICA GREENAN

Region

MORE than 60 organisations are calling the shots on an end to duck shooting across regional Victoria, with one organisation taking aim at Tower Hill.

First nations clans, businesses and wildlife groups including the Portland and

Hamilton Field Naturalists clubs are urging action to end duck shooting before the new season is approved. The Victorian Game Management Authority is soon expected to announce when and how the 2022 season will begin.

Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting Inc spokeswoman Kerrie Allen said permitted hunting at natural tourist destinations across the south-west including at Tower Hill was 'counterintuitive'. "There are beautiful locales like Corangamite (rich in indigenous heritage) and Tower Hill and so many others, where most would agree bird shooting is not in keeping with the beautiful natural assets these areas are lucky enough to still have," she said. "This is exactly what

we and many other groups made a submission for in the "Future of Tower Hill" consultation by Parks Victoria about a couple of years ago."

The criticism echoes that of Animal Justice Party MP Andy Meddick who previously told *The Standard* it

was "hypocritical" the draft plan for Tower Hill.

Ms Allen said the number of registered hunters

across the state were also "dwindling". "Our dwindling birdlife have very few safe sanctuaries and no electorate in Victoria has more than 2.48 per cent of its voters as duck shooters," she said.

According to latest data from the GMA, Koroit has 20 game licence holders endorsed to hunt game ducks.

A GMA spokesperson said a range of sustainability factors would be taken into consideration.

"The GMA's recommendation will be based on assessments of rainfall data, wetland conditions, waterfowl abundance and distribution, harvest data and whether hunting activities could impact on the conservation and sustainability of waterbird populations," the spokesperson said.

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