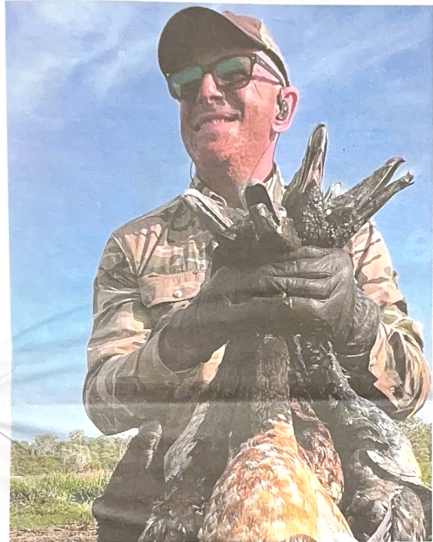


Victory in Victoria! Waterfowl Hunting Ban Defeated

SCI, Ambassador Called Worldwide Attention To Battle In Australia

By Barbara Crown
SCI Hunter Information Service



Ramsey Russell, a well-known international duck hunter who documents his travels on Instagram @ramseyrusselgetducks, called attention to the proposed ban on duck hunting in Victoria, Australia. See details of Russell's journey in the March/April 2024 of SAFARI Magazine.

Safari Club International, Field and Game Australia, and hunters in Australia's state of Victoria are celebrating a hard-won victory over a battle to save duck hunting.

SCI members will recall that SCI's Advocacy Team joined a fight to prevent animal rightsists in Victoria from banning waterfowl hunting there. (See June 2023 edition of *Safari Times*) Sonya Kilkenny, the Outdoor Recreation Minister at that time, openly admitted wanting to ban waterfowl hunting and created a Select Committee comprised of anti-hunting proponents to "investigate" the duck season and determine the future of waterfowl hunting in Victoria.

SCI issued a Hunter Advocacy Action Center alert and on May 8 submitted 685 comments and letters from SCI members and advocates to the committee. In addition to explaining that hunting drives conservation programs, including duck conservation, to the letters urged the Select Committee to base its decisions on science and ignore anti-hunting bias.

SCI also funded Ramsey Russell of getducks.com to travel to Australia with waterfowl scientists to investigate and report on

the looming threats to waterfowl hunting there and the wildlife management and conservation that would be lost with a hunting ban. Russell posted his documentary about the issue on his website. Look for Russell's story, "Battleground: Australia" in the March/April issue of *SAFARI Magazine*.

In a letter to fellow members of FGA, a national association supporting sportsmen's rights and conservation, board member Paul Sharp said, "so grateful that Safari Club International has seen our plight and stood so solidly with us in our fight to continue hunting in our country of Australia and all its challenges."

FGA's Hunting and Conservation Manager Glenn Falla wrote, "This would not have been possible without the support of so many great people, including SCI and getducks.com."

On January 29, new Minister of Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos used a press release announcing that recreational duck and quail hunting will continue in Victoria with some changes to ensure it remains safe, sustainable and responsible.

The government will adopt seven of the Select Committee's eight recommendations

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ognizing the knowledge and land manage-

ment of aboriginal communities.

"While the committee did not reach con-

sensus in its report, the views of more than

10,000 Victorians and organizations were

heard in the biggest response to a parliamen-

tary inquiry ever in Victoria," according to

Dimopoulos. "Recreational duck and quail

hunting is a legitimate activity, and it matters

to thousands of Victorians who love the

great outdoors."

Additionally, his ministry has authorized

the Game Management Authority to imple-

ment science-based adaptive harvest man-

agement to guide the length and conditions

of each duck season, beginning in 2025. The

2024 duck season in Victoria will run from

April 10 through June 5, 2024.