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## **SFID MEDIA RELEASE**

**The aftermath of the K'gari (Fraser Island) Fires.**

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Disturbing photos of malnourished dingoes have emerged since the destructive fires ravaged half of K'gari. Offers of assistance by the Humane Society and International Fund for Wildlife to search for displaced and injured animals have been deemed unnecessary by the authorities.

The Dept of Environment and Science in a statement released, assured the public that departmental ecologists, local rangers and Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation are conducting the assessments and implementing recovery actions in relation to not only the wildlife and natural values but also the cultural assets and infrastructure impacted by the fires.

In the meantime, UNESCO World Heritage Centre has expressed concerns of the impact the fires have had on the Outstanding Universal Values of the Island which is the basis for World Heritage listing.

An Inquiry has also been launched by the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management to review the K'gari (Fraser Island) bushfire event. Public submissions are invited until 22 January.

There have been numerous sightings of dingoes across the Island and whilst this is in itself is a positive outcome, there are growing concerns regarding the long term health of the population.

Residents and visitors have reported lone pups and adults in poor condition. While we are accustomed to seeing skinny dingoes on K'gari disturbing photos of emaciated animals and starving pups have emerged.

The burning question is do we intervene and assist these animals? The QPWS operate under the FIDCRMS (Fraser Island Dingo Conservation Risk Management Strategy 2012) and this clearly does not support supplemental feeding unless the viability of the population can be scientifically demonstrated to be compromised. Since the ecological assessment of the fires is still underway can the government definitively say that this is not the case?

Experts seem to be divided, there are those who take the governments position and have no concern about the longevity and welfare of the Island dingoes, whilst others, more cautiously, worry about the long term impact on the population.

Meanwhile the dingoes continue to fight for survival on their Island home.

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