

Local candidates lock horns over fishing, shooting

Country Alliance's local candidate for the Upper House seat of Western Victoria Region, Miles Hodge, has reacted angrily to local Upper House Greens candidate, Marcus Ward's commitment to end recreational duck shooting.

In an earlier media statement, Ward said that if elected, the Greens would introduce legislation to ban the sport. Hodge, a shooter himself, said hunting was worth some \$40m to the Victorian economy every year, and was part of rural life.

“When will these people realise that hunting is not only part of regional life, but a perfectly sustainable and environmentally sensible past time?” he said.

Mr Hodge also challenged the Greens to distance itself from animal welfare group, PETA, which wants to ban recreational fishing.

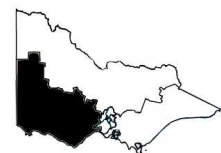
“I wrote to the Greens last month to ask them if they could state if they supported PETA's position and I'm yet to receive a response. If they don't respond then I can only assume that they'll want to ban recreational fishing because the animal welfare lobby is clearly starting to focus on fishing in the same way it started on duck shooting.”

Mr Hodge said this will be a big issue in Western Victoria because of the popularity of shooting and fishing throughout area, particularly along the coastline. He said banning either duck hunting or fishing would wipe out small towns and communities which depend on those activities.

“Country Alliance has an entirely different commitment – it will support fishing and shooting, and put the Greens last,” Mr Hodge said.

(The Greens media statement can be found on their website – Victoria division)

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