



**NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service**

# **Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve**

**Draft amendment to the plan of management: facilitating greater use and enjoyment of Currys Gap State Conservation Area**



# **Acknowledgement of Country**

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve are part of an ancient landscape which includes the Aboriginal people. The parks lie within the Moombahlene Aboriginal Land Council area and within the Country of the Jukembal Aboriginal People of the Jukembal language group.

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# Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management

## Have your say

Submissions must be lodged before 5 pm on 11 April 2025

Your submission will assist in the preparation of an amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management. Submissions must be in written form and lodged via:



the online submission form at [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/have-your-say](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/have-your-say)



email to [npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au)



post to Manager, Planning and Assessment Unit, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service , Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124.

Your submission may be provided to the statutory bodies that have an advisory role under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* in the preparation of each plan of management amendment. These bodies include the Karst Management Advisory Committee, regional advisory committees and the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water complies with the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, which regulates the collection, storage, quality, use and disclosure of personal information.

# Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management

## Summary

Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve are protected in perpetuity through their reservation under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. The parks are managed to achieve the objects of the Act which are centred on conserving the natural and cultural values of the parks, as well as fostering public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of these values (Appendix A).

This draft amendment to the plan of management has been prepared to provide members of the public with an opportunity to provide feedback on proposed changes to the *Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management* (NPWS 2011).

These proposed changes aim to facilitate greater use and enjoyment of Currys Gap State Conservation Area by providing scope for the development of cycling tracks in this park. The draft amendment does not propose changes to the management of Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve or Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve.

As required under the Act, this draft amendment was prepared following consideration of the matters listed under section 72AA of the Act, including the management principles for state conservation areas (Appendix B).

At the completion of the public exhibition period, this draft amendment and all submissions received will be considered by the Northern Inland Regional Advisory Committee which may provide advice to the Minister for the Environment.

If adopted by the Minister, the plan of management will be updated to reflect the amended text. All operations undertaken in the parks must be consistent with the amended plan of management.

# Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management

## 1. Background

Cycling is currently allowed on management trails in Currys Gap State Conservation Area (referred to as 'the park'). These provide some opportunities for cycling in the park, however, visitor use and enjoyment of the park could be enhanced by establishing tracks that are designed for cycling, specifically 'single track' for mountain bike riders.

The popularity of cycling in natural areas is increasing. Cycling has physical and mental health benefits and can help people to gain an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural environment. The establishment of cycling opportunities in the park has potential to attract people to the region, generate employment and support tourism.

The mountain bike tracks proposed would be built, maintained and managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in the first instance but may be managed and maintained by a partner organisation potentially under a lease or licence in the future. Partnerships with local cycling stakeholders and volunteers may also contribute to track management and this may also encourage them to become advocates for the protection and conservation of these parks.

This draft amendment proposes to designate a recreation zone in the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management. The construction of cycling tracks will be restricted to this zone within Currys Gap State Conservation Area, thereby minimising the extent of any impacts associated with construction and cycling.

All cycling track proposals require impact assessment, consideration and approval by NPWS. Such proposals must demonstrate that they would not result in any significant impacts to the natural and cultural heritage values of the park, such as threatened species, ecosystem function, and Aboriginal sites.

The draft amendments proposed to replace some plan of management text, provide new text, replace Map 1 and add Map 2. These changes should be read in conjunction with the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve Plan of Management. Section numbers referred to in the amendment refer to sections in this plan of management.

## 2. Proposed amendments

### Section 2.4 Specific management directions

#### Plan reference: page 3

##### Insert:

- the construction of cycling tracks within the Currys Gap SCA recreation zone may be considered and approved (see Map 1 and Map 2).

### Section 3.4 Visitor use

#### Plan reference: page 9

##### Delete:

The reserves currently receive low level visitor use. Use is usually limited to low impact, self-sufficient, nature-based recreation, such as picnicking, bird watching and bushwalking.

There are no visitor facilities or public vehicle trails in Currys Gap SCA. Public pedestrian access to Currys Gap SCA is via a gate on the Mount Mackenzie Road, three kilometres from Tenterfield. No public vehicle access is allowed due to the highly erodible soils as well as the potential to spread weeds and harm threatened flora.

##### Replace with:

The reserves have historically received a low level of visitor use, mostly limited to low-impact, self-sufficient, nature-based recreation, such as picnicking, bird watching and bushwalking. Cycling tracks within the recreation zone in Currys Gap SCA are expected to result in increased visitation.

Commercial and non-commercial activities such as guided tours, commercial events, filming and photography, and group gatherings may require approval.

There are no public vehicle trails in Currys Gap SCA. Public pedestrian access to the SCA is via a gate on Mount Mackenzie Road, 3 kilometres from Tenterfield. Cycling access is via the management trails, and authorised cycling tracks within the recreation zone.

# Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management

## Section 4.4 Infrastructure and maintenance

### Plan reference: page 12–13

**Insert** after the first paragraph:

Cycling tracks may be constructed in the Currys Gap SCA recreation zone shown on Map 1. Cycling track plans must be approved by NPWS, and be generally consistent with the indicative track alignments shown on Map 2. Cycling track proposals must demonstrate that they would not result in any significant impacts to the natural, cultural heritage and other recreational values of the park. Tracks will be monitored and may be modified or closed, if necessary, to avoid unacceptable impacts on park values.

Any changes to the built track network would require approval by NPWS and may also require further assessment of environmental and cultural heritage impacts. Stakeholders and the regional advisory committee will be consulted prior to any significant changes to cycling track plans.

Additional visitor facilities such as toilets, day use areas and car parks will not be built in Currys Gap SCA.

## Section 6.3 Visitor use — Current situation

### Plan reference: page 17

**Delete:**

Public access to Currys Gap SCA is via a gate on the Mount Mackenzie Road, three kilometres from Tenterfield. No public vehicle access is permitted in Currys Gap SCA

**Replace with:**

Public pedestrian access to Currys Gap SCA is via a gate on Mount Mackenzie Road, 3 kilometres from Tenterfield. Cycling is permitted on management trails and authorised cycling tracks. No public vehicle access is permitted in Currys Gap SCA.

## Section 6.3 Visitor use — Management response

### Plan reference: page 17

**Insert** after the second item in the third column:

6.3.3. Permit cycling on management trails and authorised cycling tracks in Currys Gap SCA.

## Section 6.3 Visitor use — Priority

### Plan reference: page 17

**Insert** level of priority for management response 6.3.3 above:

Low

Ongoing



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## **Section 6.6 Infrastructure and maintenance – Management response**

### **Plan reference: page 19**

**Insert** after the last item in the third column:

- 6.6.5. Construct and maintain cycling tracks in Currys Gap SCA within the recreation zone shown on Map 1, in accordance with plans approved by NPWS and generally consistent with the indicative track alignments shown on Map 2. Consideration may also be given to the construction of cycling tracks in the road reserve that bisects the park should this be added to the park in the future. Leases or licences may be issued to partner organisations to maintain and manage the tracks.

## **Section 6.6 Infrastructure and maintenance – Priority**

### **Plan reference: page 19**

**Insert** level of priority for management response 6.6.5 above:

Low

## **Maps**

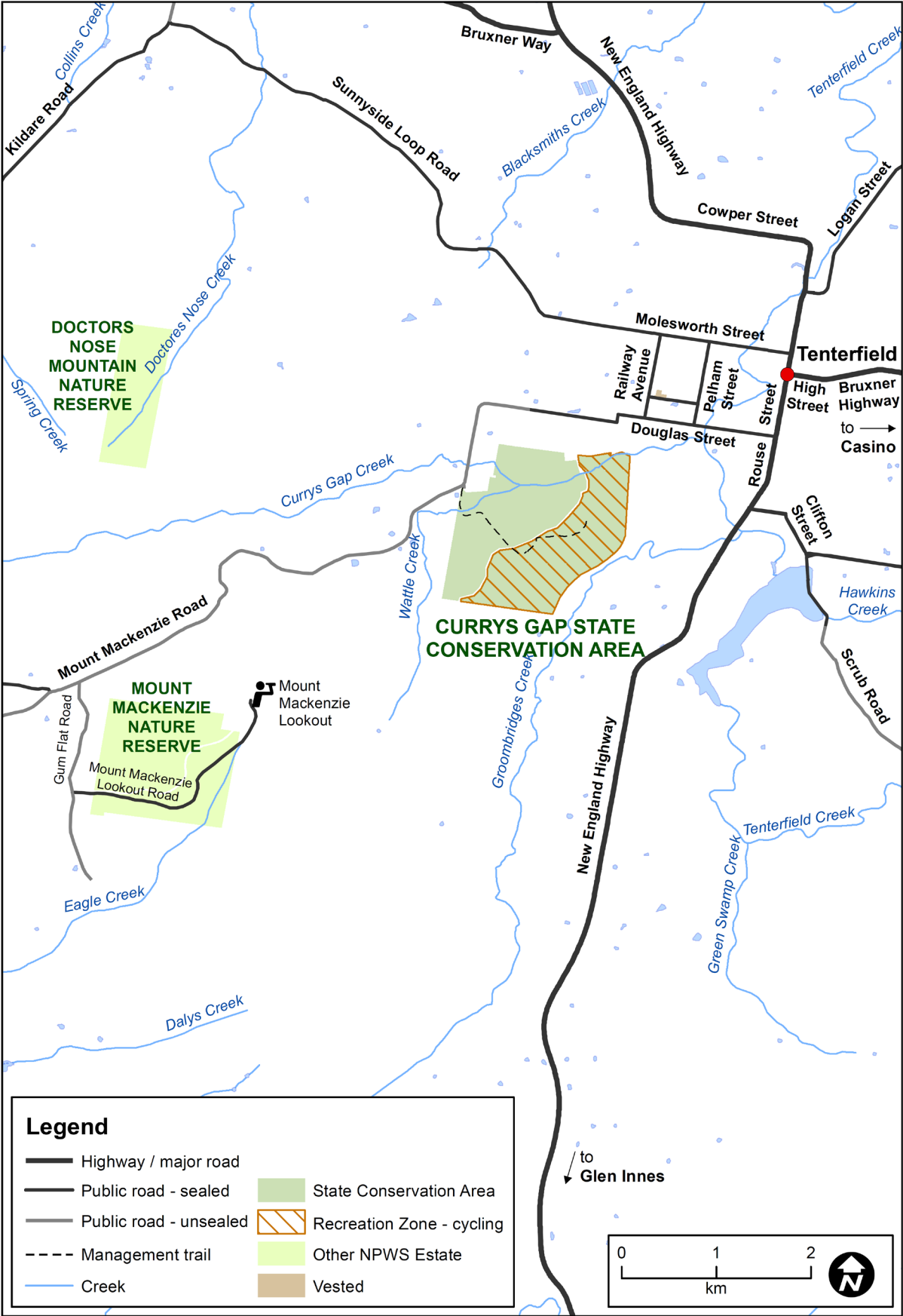
### **Plan reference: Map 1. Map of the planning area**

Replace Map 1 in the plan with the Map 1 below.

### **Plan reference: after Map 1. Map of the planning area**

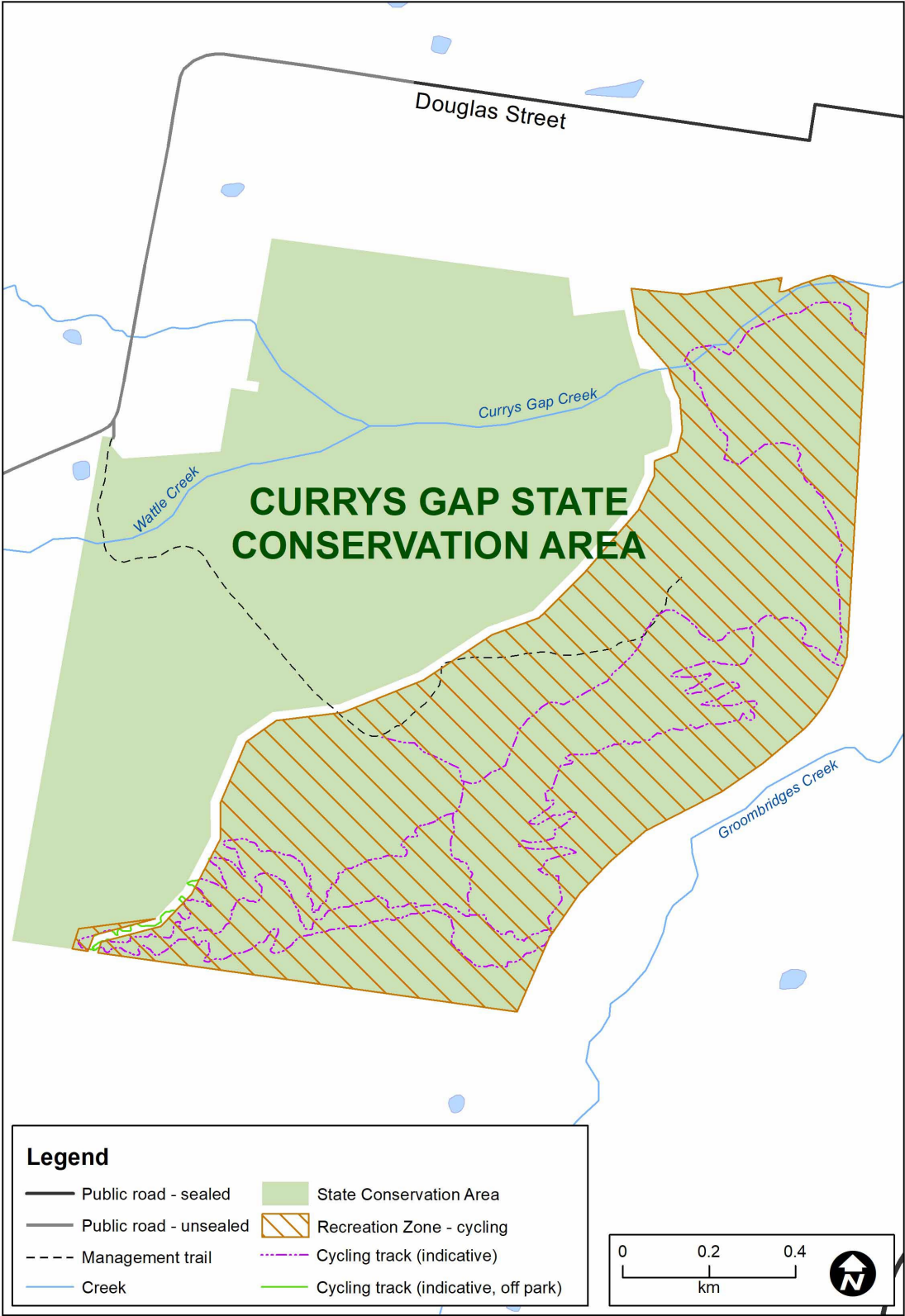
Insert Map 2. Map of the cycling zone and cycling tracks below.

**Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management**



**Map 1** Map of the planning area

**Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management**



**Map 2 Map of the cycling zone and general location of cycling tracks**

## Appendix A: Objects of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

The objects of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, set out in section 2A of the Act, are as follows:

- a. The conservation of nature, including, but not limited to, the conservation of—
  - i. habitat, ecosystems and ecosystem processes, and
  - ii. biological diversity at the community, species and genetic levels, and
  - iii. landforms of significance, including geological features and processes, and
  - iv. landscapes and natural features of significance including wilderness and wild rivers,
- b. the conservation of objects, places or features (including biological diversity) of cultural value within the landscape, including, but not limited to—
  - i. places, objects and features of significance to Aboriginal people, and
  - ii. places of social value to the people of New South Wales, and
  - iii. places of historic, architectural or scientific significance,
- c. fostering public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of nature and cultural heritage and their conservation,
- d. providing for the management of land reserved under this Act in accordance with the management principles applicable for each type of reservation.

**Draft amendment to the Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management**

## **Appendix B: Management principles for state conservation areas**

The management principles for state conservation areas, as set out in section 30G of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, are:

- (a) the conservation of biodiversity, the maintenance of ecosystem function, the protection of natural phenomena and the maintenance of natural landscapes,
- (b) the conservation of places, objects and features of cultural value,
- (c) provision for the undertaking of uses permitted under other provisions of this Act in such areas (including uses permitted under section 47J) having regard to the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the state conservation area,
- (ca) provision for the carrying out of development in any part of a special area (within the meaning of the *Hunter Water Act 1991*) in the state conservation area that is permitted under section 185A having regard to the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the state conservation area,
- (d) provision for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment that is compatible with the conservation of the state conservation area's natural and cultural values and with uses permitted under other provisions of this Act in such areas,
- (e) provision for the sustainable use (including adaptive reuse) of any buildings or structures or modified natural areas having regard to the conservation of the state conservation area's natural and cultural values and with uses permitted under other provisions of this Act in such areas,
- (f) provision for appropriate research and monitoring.

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## **References**

NPWS (2011) 'Currys Gap State Conservation Area, Mount Mackenzie Nature Reserve and Doctors Nose Mountain Nature Reserve plan of management', Office of Environment and Heritage, Sydney.

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## **Published by:**

Environment and Heritage  
Department of Climate Change,  
Energy, the Environment and Water  
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124  
Phone: +61 2 9995 5000 (switchboard)  
Phone: 1300 361 967 (Environment and Heritage enquiries)  
TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 361 967  
Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 1300 361 967  
Email: [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au)  
Website: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)

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