

Biodiversity

Hunter Transmission Project

Fact Sheet | July 2026

The Hunter Transmission Project will deliver a new 110-kilometre 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Bayswater (near Muswellbrook) and Olney (near Eraring), strengthening the NSW electricity network and supporting the transition to renewable energy.

Project status

Following detailed assessment by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has granted planning approval for the Hunter Transmission Project and issued the Conditions of Approval.

The assessment considered environmental and technical studies, community and stakeholder feedback, and advice from councils and government agencies.

The project will now progress through detailed design and planning before construction can begin.

Subject to approvals and delivery planning:

- A network operator is expected to be appointed in 2026
- Detailed design and construction planning will continue
- Construction is expected to commence in early 2027.

Biodiversity management

Conditions of Approval include requirements for biodiversity management and environmental mitigation measures during construction and operation. The assessment considered:



Native vegetation and endangered ecological communities



Threatened plants and animals



Aquatic and wetland habitats



Potential biodiversity impacts during construction and operation.

Conditions of Approval require detailed biodiversity and environmental management plans to be approved before construction begins.



Designing the project to protect biodiversity

Avoiding and minimising biodiversity impacts has been a key driver of the Hunter Transmission Project design, with the alignment, construction methods and access arrangements refined over time to reduce impacts wherever possible. The approved alignment has been designed to minimise impacts to Watagans and Werakata National Parks, while avoiding Warrawolong Flora Reserve and existing conservation offset areas where feasible.

Following field surveys, technical investigations, agency advice and community feedback, further refinements were made to reduce impacts on:



Threatened frog breeding habitat



Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby habitat



Sooty Owl breeding locations



High-quality woodland vegetation

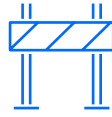


Creeklines and wetland habitat

In sensitive habitat areas, disturbance footprints were reduced, buffers to waterways increased and additional no-clearing areas established where possible.

How clearing is minimised

Where clearing is required for safety and operation:



Clearing is limited to the approved disturbance footprint



Low-growing vegetation retained where feasible



Steep gullies are spanned where possible



Existing roads and tracks are prioritised where feasible

Approximately 83% of proposed access tracks are based on existing roads and tracks. In many areas, only taller vegetation will be removed, allowing lower-growing native vegetation to remain where safe and feasible.

Key findings

The Hunter Transmission Project passes through a mix of disturbed land, State Forest and native vegetation.

The project footprint includes the transmission corridor as well as access tracks, construction support sites and other temporary construction areas. During construction:

- around 945 hectares of native vegetation will be directly affected
- approximately 44% of this vegetation is already disturbed or modified
- seven endangered ecological communities listed under NSW law occur within the impact area.

Post-exhibition refinements further reduced impacts in sensitive areas, including threatened species habitat, high-quality woodland and waterways.

Detailed design will continue to refine tower locations and access arrangements where feasible.





Biodiversity in the project area

Potential biodiversity impacts identified:

38 plant species of conservation significance

28 animal species of conservation significance

These species rely on a range of habitats along the project corridor, including woodland, forested ridgelines, river flats and gully systems. Species recorded near the project area include the Regent Honeyeater, Swift Parrot, Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby, Sooty Owl and Littlejohn's Tree Frog.

Field surveys, technical investigations, agency advice and community feedback informed refinements to reduce biodiversity impacts wherever possible. Refinements included reducing disturbance footprints, increasing buffers around waterways and sensitive habitat, and adjusting access routes to reduce clearing.

Project refinements and ecological investigations helped avoid many known Littlejohn's Tree Frog breeding ponds. Where impacts cannot be avoided, mitigation measures and biodiversity offsets will be implemented in accordance with project approvals and NSW legislation.

Designing to reduce biodiversity impacts

Avoiding and minimising biodiversity impacts has been a key driver of the Hunter Transmission Project design, with the alignment, construction methods and access arrangements refined over time to reduce impacts wherever possible. Project refinements have included:

- Reducing disturbance areas in locations including Olney State Forest
- Refining access routes to reduce clearing and make greater use of existing roads and tracks where possible
- Ongoing detailed design refinement to further avoid and minimise impacts where feasible

Sensitive habitat refinements

Targeted surveys and consultation informed additional refinements in sensitive habitat areas, including:



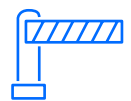
Avoidance of threatened species habitat, including frog breeding areas



Increased buffers around creeks, rivers and sensitive ecological areas



Additional no-clearing areas in some locations



Reduced construction footprints in sensitive areas wherever possible



What happens next

Planning approval has been granted for the Hunter Transmission Project, with Conditions of Approval now in place. The project will now progress through detailed design, pre-construction planning and delivery preparation. Before construction can commence, a range of management plans and additional approvals required under the Conditions of Approval must be prepared and approved.

In 2024, Transgrid was identified as the preferred network operator for the Hunter Transmission Project. Subject to final approvals and contractual arrangements, a network operator is expected to be formally appointed in 2026.

EnergyCo, Transgrid and future delivery partners will continue working with communities, councils, landholders and stakeholders as the project progresses.

Biodiversity offsets

EnergyCo acknowledges that construction of the Hunter Transmission Project (HTP) will result in some impacts to biodiversity.

Where impacts are unavoidable, biodiversity offset credits are required under NSW and Australian legislation. All biodiversity offsets must meet strict requirements under the NSW Biodiversity Assessment Method and must be secured before impacts occur.

Strategic Offsets Delivery Agreement



EnergyCo is progressing a Strategic Offsets Delivery Agreement (SODA) to support coordinated biodiversity offset delivery for the Hunter Transmission Project (HTP). This approach allows biodiversity offsets to be planned strategically, supporting broader conservation outcomes rather than a site-by-site approach.

Offset delivery may also include programs such as the NSW Conservation Incentive Scheme (CIS), which supports landholders to protect and manage land for conservation outcomes. All biodiversity offsets will be delivered in accordance with the Conditions of Approval and relevant NSW legislation.

How to stay informed

All project documentation, including links to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Submissions Report, Amendment Report and Conditions of Approval, is available on the Hunter Transmission Project website.

You can also sign up to receive project updates and e-newsletters. Visit energyco.nsw.gov.au/http



Scan the QR code to access the Hunter Transmission Project webpage.



Contact us

EnergyCo is the NSW Government statutory authority responsible for delivering the Hunter Transmission Project as a critical part of transitioning to a cleaner future under the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap.



htp@energyco.nsw.gov.au



1800 645 972 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)



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Scan the QR code for more information.

If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call us on **1800 645 972**.