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### **State Significant Infrastructure 57056461 – Cowarra Water Supply Scheme**

Thank you for your referral of the State Significant Infrastructure 57056461 Cowarra Water Supply Scheme (scheme) Response to Submissions (Rev 4) through the NSW Major Projects Planning Portal. The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water - National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) appreciates this final opportunity to comment on the scheme.

NPWS acknowledges that the scheme, as declared SSI under Division 5.2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), will burden (in perpetuity) lands reserved as Lake Innes Nature Reserve under the *National Park and Wildlife Act 1974*. We have reviewed the submitted documents against the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report as issued for SSI-5705646125 on 25 January 2024, and our agency's supplementary submissions on 8 August 2024 and 20 December 2024.

NPWS recognises the engagement between Port Macquarie Hastings Council, their consultant and NPWS in addressing concerns raised, and providing the amendments to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the scheme. NPWS looks forward to working with the Council during the delivery of the scheme to ensure ongoing protection of the nature reserve.

On review of the Response to Submissions and Amendment Report, NPWS raises no further environmental matters for consideration as part of the scheme's environmental assessment. NPWS requests that the following be considered in the conditioning of the planning approval, as applicable.

1. NPWS to be considered a key agency requiring consultation during the preparation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan, and ancillary subplans which apply to the Cowarra Water Supply Scheme construction and operation, where the scheme adjoins or is located on Lake Innes Nature Reserve as land reserved under the *National Park and Wildlife Act 1974*. Referral to the NPWS Hastings Macleay Area is via [npws.hastingsmacleay@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:npws.hastingsmacleay@environment.nsw.gov.au)
2. Authorisation pursuant to the *National Park and Wildlife Act 1974* must be in place before access or construction commences on Lake Innes Nature Reserve. Authorisation in the form of an NPWS Construction Easement Agreement will need to be prepared and signed before access is permitted. The Agreement will enable the use and occupation of land and allow amendments to the utility easement alignment subject to s.153 of the *National Park and Wildlife Act 1974*. Referral to the NPWS Access, Utilities and Infrastructure (Easements) is via [NPWS.easements@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NPWS.easements@environment.nsw.gov.au)

If you have any questions, please contact Shane Robinson, NPWS Manager, Hastings Macleay Area, on 02 6588 5503 or at [Shane.Robinson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Shane.Robinson@environment.nsw.gov.au).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EB', enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Emma Bleechmore  
**A/Director, North Coast**  
**NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service**

2 May 2025