



Department of Primary Industries

FE21/69

C21/50

29 January 2021

Mick Fallon

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

RE: Inland Rail – Narromine to Narrabri (SSI-9487)

DPI Fisheries are responsible for ensuring that fish stocks are conserved and that there is “no net loss” of *key fish habitat* upon which they depend. To achieve this, the Department ensures that developments comply with the requirements of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (namely the aquatic habitat protection and threatened species conservation provisions in Parts 7 and 7A of the Act respectively) and the associated *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (Update 2013)*. DPI Fisheries have reviewed the EIS and have the following comments.

Fish Passage

The design of bridge, culverts, and waterways crossings should be in accordance with the document *Why do Fish Need to Cross the Road? Fish Passage Requirements for Waterway Crossings (NSW Fisheries 2003)* and the *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (Update 2013)*. Consideration should also be given to the detailed design of any scour protection below watercourse crossing structures to ensure that fish passage is not impeded.

Riparian Buffer Zones

DPI Fisheries policy advocates the use of terrestrial buffer zones as per the *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (Update 2013)* available on the Department’s website at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat/publications/policies,-guidelines-and-manuals/fish-habitat-conservation> which states that “NSW DPI will generally require riparian buffer zones to be established and maintained for developments or activities in or adjacent to TYPE 1 or 2 habitats or CLASS 1-3 waterways.” The department anticipate that adequate riparian buffer zones will be maintained adjacent to the watercourses that will be crossed as part of this project.

Where disturbance is inevitable, environmental management plans should be prepared to minimise the extent of the disturbance footprints and re-establish riparian and aquatic habitat features.

Stockpiling Felled Timber

Consultation with DPI Fisheries should occur regarding stockpiling of felled trees from the footprint of the development for use as Snags (large woody debris) to rehabilitate and improve the habitat quality of Key Fish Habitats.

Should you have any queries regarding this correspondence please contact me on (02) 6763 1255 or 0429 908 856.

D. Ward.

David Ward
Fisheries Manager (Tamworth)