Department of Planing, Industry and Enviroment
Major Project Team
Attention: Anthony Ko

6 November 2019

Submission on Snowy 2.0 Main Works Environmental Impact Statement

I wish to register opposition to the Snowy 2.0 project as described in the Main Works Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Not only is it overpriced, not a net source of renewable energy, and the EIS being revealed to the public piecemeal, it is environmental vandalism.

Economically not profitable

Snowy 2.0 will *not* be economic. The cost has already increased by several times from the original $2 billion. Add costs for high voltage transmission lines (two side-by-side high voltage transmission lines for 10 km through the Park, with a 120m wide easement swathe) the total cost will increase by ten or more times. We Australians and taxpayers will bear the risk.

Snowy 2.0 a net consumer of electricity

Snowy 2.0 will be a net *consumer* of electricity, not a generator. For around a decade it will use mostly coal fired power to pump — making a mockery of the claim that it will store electricity from renewable generation. The supposed 350 GWh will rarely be realised, owing to the peculiar physics used to figure the actual capacities of Tantangara, Talbingo, and the role of Blowering.

Environmental vandalism

The footprint of the project is much larger than 0.25% of the Park. The 'project area' described in the EIS is 250,000 ha, *one third of Kosciuszko National Park* and three times the size of metropolitan Sydney.

Environmental damage will be huge and unacceptable, and not what the public expected.

The EIS seriously understates the full environmental impact on the Park, which, when vegetation clearance, earthworks, dumping and damage to streams and water-dependant ecosystems are included, will exceed 10,000 ha. Even the EIS admits that the Main Works will 'disturb' 1,680 ha, clear 1,053 ha of native vegetation and destroy 992 ha of threatened species habitat. 14 million cubic metres of excavated spoil, some of which contains asbestos and/or is acidic, will be dumped in Kosciuszko National Park. Most of the spoil will go into Talbingo and Tantangara Reservoirs, *decreasing their storage capacities*, with the remainder to go into roads or to 'landscape' the park.

Major infrastructure, including the widening and construction of 100 km of roads and tracks are proposed throughout the project area. Some will destroy sensitive environmental and geological significant areas. Under normal circumstances these would not be allowed within a National Park, so why under Snowy 2.0?

Snowy 2.0 requires tunnelling through 27 kms of rock. This will depress the water table in some sections by more than 50 m and have an impact for up to 2 kms either side of the tunnel. This will lead to montane streams and water dependant alpine bogs drying up, further impacting upon vulnerable habitats and native species. It will also lead to a reduction of inflows to Snowy reservoirs and downstream rivers. These river systems are already under threat from feral animals and global heating. Any works that threaten water quality and quantity must be avoided.

Noxious pests and weeds will be spread throughout the Snowy Scheme and downstream, including Redfin Perch (a Class One Noxious Pest) and aquatic weeds. These pests and weeds will be transported from Talbingo Reservoir up to pest-free Tantangara, the Upper Murrumbidgee catchment, and then to Eucumbene and throughout the Snowy Scheme and downstream rivers.

Kosciuszko National Park is one of the most loved and frequently visited Parks in Australia. Snowy 2.0 will put off future visitors by its visual blight on the pristine montane landscape from vantage points over thousands of square kilometres. Who wants to see transmission lines and major civil engineering structures in a natural landscape? And who will want to fish in Tantangara anymore, with introduced pest species?

Many other pumped storage opportunities have been identified in NSW with a combined capacity considerably greater than Snowy 2.0. Why were these alternatives, together with batteries and other forms of storage, not explored before proposing construction of such a huge project within a National Park? How can such an environmentally destructive, expensive and inadequate development be proposed without an exhaustive exploration of viable alternatives? *Kosciuszko is a National Park, not an industrial park!*

Offsets are not possible as this alpine region is unique in Australia. The approval process, as carried out here, has tried to obscure, not clarify, impact on the environment. Never before has a project of such immense size and environmental destruction been proposed within a National Park.

Sincerely,

Margery Street
AALIA, GradDipTourismM, M EnvStud