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Re: Hume Battery Energy Storage System

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the above project.

Meridian is the current owner and operator of the Hume Dam Hydro Power Station (HPS), located at Lake Hume in southern NSW, is proposing to develop a Hume Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), to be connected to the existing switchyard currently servicing the HPS (the Project).

A Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) has taken into consideration the principles of avoidance and minimisation. In terms of the squirrel glider it recommends the following key actions:

- Construction crews would be made aware that any native fauna species encountered must be allowed to leave site without being harassed and a local wildlife rescue organisation must be called for assistance where necessary.
- Barbed wire fencing is to be avoided wherever possible.
- Fencing should be lowered to a minimum required height where possible.
- Where barbed wire fencing cannot be avoided, it should be located away from retained vegetation and have improved visibility measures installed, such as adding visible (and often audible) objects to the fence, such as tape, plastic flags and metal tags (Booth 2007).
- All fencing containing barbed wire that is erected during the construction of the project is to be monitored daily in areas around known Squirrel Glider movement corridors.
- Permanent barbed wire fencing required by the development in identified movement corridors should implement alternative connectivity structures such as rope crossing and glide poles.
- Planting of native trees and shrubs through identified movement corridors would be undertaken with the agreement of WaterNSW to improve the connectivity of habitat for the Squirrel Glider and reduce the potential for impact.

I make a submission as someone concerned about Squirrel Glider being indirectly impacted not only by fencing and infrastructure but also by noise and disturbance during the construction period, and ultimately any parts of the development that inhibit movement along corridors and the overall resilience of the local population.

All the above measures are worthwhile. I am strongly supportive of the removal or barb wire measure and the use of visual signals such as plastic and metal flags.

However I also think that some of the measures could be more specific to ensure there is greater accountability. Most noticeably:

- Construction crews would be made aware that any native fauna species encountered must be allowed to leave site without being harassed and a local wildlife rescue organisation must be called for assistance where necessary. *These contacts should be determined before construction and their contact details readily accessible by the crews during construction*

- Planting of native trees and shrubs through identified movement corridors would be undertaken with the agreement of Water NSW ... *I am also aware populations have fluctuated markedly over the years in this location. As such the species selection be should native tree and shrubs that encourage a more resilient glider population (e.g. planting wattles as a source of gum, width of plantings so that gliders are not overly exposed to predation)*
- At times the during the construction phase highly disruptive noise and vibration levels are unavailable and may impact significantly on the glider's day sleep cycle, and importantly, their ability raise and care for their young. *Thus the commencement of construction should be timed so that when high noise levels need to occur (if things go to plan) it occurs outside the glider breeding season.*

Regards

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