

Stakeholder update

April 2023



The NSW Wild Dog Fence Extension Project was announced in 2019. While considerable progress has been made on the project, the original timeline has not been delivered due to unforeseen and unprecedented challenges, including but not limited to:



COVID-19 and all associated impacts.



Drought.



The complexity of the approvals process.



Floods, severe weather events and ongoing wet conditions.



Identifying the approvals pathway.



Identifying and exploring biodiversity offset opportunities.



The need for further assessments for biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage following initial assessments.

This resource aims to provide further detail on the project, and address some of the key questions of local landholders and stakeholders.

NSW Wild Dog Fence Extension Project - stakeholder update

Assessments and approvals required before construction can commence

The project must undertake assessments for biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage and receive approval from the Commonwealth and relevant State Governments prior to any construction commencing.

Of the proposed alignment, only a small section of the NSW and South Australian alignment is still to be assessed for biodiversity, with around half of the NSW and Queensland alignment still to be assessed for Aboriginal cultural heritage. Following the initial assessments, some secondary assessments will be required as the approvals progress.

The assessments required represent a mammoth task when considering the length of the proposed alignment (up to 440km along the NSW and Queensland alignment and up to 350km along the NSW and South Australian alignment), and the consultation with property owners and stakeholders.

Project approvals continue to be the priority

The approvals process is extensive and complex. An indication of what's involved is summarised below:

- A Development Application (DA) for vegetation clearing along the NSW and Queensland alignment is required. The DA for vegetation clearing has been drafted and will be submitted once completed to the relevant Queensland Government department.
- A DA is required for waterway barrier works for the NSW and Queensland alignment, that is, to construct the fence in waterways. Work is continuing to develop the waterways DA and it will be submitted to the relevant Queensland Government department once completed. In light of the need for a waterways DA, the fence design for waterway crossings needs to be refined. Relevant stakeholders are being engaged for this process.
- In addition to the DAs, a referral will need to be made under the federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act* for the NSW and Queensland alignment. This will be progressed once the waterway fence designs have been finalised. A referral under the EPBC Act will also be required for the NSW and South Australian alignment.
- The project must ensure that survey infrastructure is preserved during construction. The team is working with the relevant personnel in NSW, South Australian and Queensland to ensure impacts to survey infrastructure is identified and mitigated.
- A Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) is being developed for the NSW and South Australian alignment to address impacts to biodiversity. Some further field surveys and investigations are needed to progress the BDAR.
- Some initial assessments for biodiversity and follow up assessments for Aboriginal cultural heritage along the NSW and South Australian alignment are to be completed. Once surveys have been finalised, an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) will be prepared as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- An EIS addressing impacts to biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage, as well as other potential impacts, will be prepared and submitted to the NSW Department of Planning for approval for the NSW and South Australian alignment.

Working toward construction commencing

While it is difficult to give an updated timeline for when construction will commence due to the moving parts involved in the assessments and approvals process, the project is working as efficiently as possible and exploring many different options to expedite the approvals process.

The project is hopeful construction of a 32km priority section which runs along the NSW and South Australian border from the southern end of the existing NSW dog fence will commence in the second half of 2023.

This 32km priority section of fence will close the gap between the existing NSW dog fence and the renewed South Australian dog fence, and the approvals for this section are progressing well.

The project team thank local landholders and stakeholders for their patience and understanding while it works through the approvals process.