



NSW NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Kosciuszko National Park Amendment to the Plan of Management

Snowy 2.0



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1. Summary

Kosciuszko National Park is reserved to achieve the objects of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act). These objects are centred on conserving nature, conserving cultural heritage values, and fostering public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of these special values.

All operations undertaken in the park must be in accordance with the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management as required by the NPW Act. This amendment to the plan of management has been undertaken to provide for Snowy 2.0 Project operations in Kosciuszko National Park in accordance with the NPW Act.

The Snowy 2.0 project will increase the generating capacity of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme by linking Tantangara and Talbingo Reservoirs through 27 kilometres of new tunnels and the construction of a new underground power station. This will enable the generation of electricity when demand is high, and the pumping of water from Talbingo to Tantangara Reservoir during periods when the generation of electricity is surplus to community needs.

Changes to the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* (SHC Act) enable Snowy 2.0 Project operations to occur in Kosciuszko National Park under the NPW Act. While the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management does not currently provide for those operations, the SHC Act states that, until February 2023, such operations are not prohibited on the basis that they are not in accordance with the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management.

This plan of management amendment ensures that Snowy 2.0 works enabled by the SHC Act, approved under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and authorised under the NPW Act, can proceed in accordance with the NPW Act and the plan of management after February 2023. More specifically, this amendment:

- updates information in the plan of management about the Snowy Hydro-electric Scheme including the Snowy 2.0 project and changes to the SHC Act
- allows the continuation of the Snowy 2.0 Project operations approved under the EP&A Act and undertaken in accordance with any authorisation granted under the NPW Act
- provides for the transmission connection associated with Snowy 2.0 linking the underground power station at Marica to be constructed above ground from Lobs Hole west to the park boundary, should this be authorised under the EP&A Act.

The Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management Draft Amendment – Snowy 2.0 was prepared to outline proposed amendments to the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management to members of the public. The draft amendment was placed on public exhibition from 5 February 2021 to 22 March 2021.

In preparing this final amendment, the following were considered:

- the submissions received on the draft amendment
- advice received from the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council and the Southern Ranges Regional Advisory Committee on the draft amendment and submissions received
- the 8 management principles for national parks listed under Section 30E of the NPW Act
- the matters listed under section 72AA of the NPW Act.

A primary consideration in the development of this amendment was the potential impacts of proposed overhead transmission lines from Lobs Hole west to the park boundary on:

- the conservation of biodiversity, including the maintenance of habitat, ecosystems and populations of threatened species
- the protection of landscape values and scenic features.

A range of transmission connection options are being investigated in the Environmental Impact Statement process for the transmission connection. All connection options would impact park values. If an overhead connection from the Lobs Hole substation to the Maragle substation is approved under the EPA Act then impact mitigation and offset strategies will be implemented to minimise impacts on biodiversity, landscape and other park values.

2. Background

Changes to the Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act

The SHC Act has been amended through the adoption of the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Amendment (Snowy 2.0) Act 2018*.

The amendments to the SHC Act enable the Minister administering the NPW Act to issue leases, licences, easements and rights of way under Part 12 of the NPW Act necessary for the undertaking of the Snowy 2.0 Project.

The amendments to the SHC Act also enable Snowy 2.0 Project operations to be undertaken in the park that are not in accordance with the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management 2006. This was originally for a period of 3 years from the granting of the first approval for the project under the EP&A Act (in February 2019) but was extended in 2022 for another year (ending in February 2023) through a further amendment to the SHC Act.

After that time, Snowy 2.0 Project operations must be in accordance with the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management. These include exploratory works, main works and the operation of a substation at Lobs Hole. This amendment to the plan of management enables these operations to continue beyond February 2023.

Permissions issued for the Snowy 2.0 project

The Snowy 2.0 and Transmission Project has been declared NSW critical state significant infrastructure. Approvals for critical state significant infrastructure, including the Snowy 2.0 project are assessed and approved under the EP&A Act by the Minister for Planning and may also require Federal approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). A number of approvals have been issued for the project under the EP&A and EPBC Acts for the exploratory and main works. The development of an overhead transmission line from Lobs Hole to the Maragle substation to the west of the park is currently under assessment.

The environmental and cultural impacts of the proposals are considered through assessment of Environmental Impact Statements as part of the planning process under the EP&A Act. Public and agency feedback, including from National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), is sought on these Environmental Impact Statements during these assessments. Where residual negative impacts to the park's values are determined necessary to undertake the Snowy 2.0 project, an offsets package will be developed to help mitigate these impacts through funding which will enable improvements to be achieved elsewhere in the park.

3. Amendments to the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management 2006

This amendment replaces some of text in the *Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management* and provides some new text. These changes should be read in conjunction with the online version of the *Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management 2006*, which incorporates amendments undertaken in 2010 and 2014. Section numbers referred to in the amendment refer to the above plan of management.

Amendments to the plan

Preliminary (page iii)

Add an additional point to the end of the list on page iii:

6. Snowy Hydro 2.0

Despite any other provisions of the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management, the management objectives of Kosciuszko National Park and all management units within Kosciuszko National Park include allowing the undertaking of the Snowy 2.0 Project operations in accordance with any leases, licences, easements or rights of way which may be granted under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, in accordance with EP&A Act approvals, and as consistent with the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997*.

Section 5.1 – Introduction (page 27)

Remove the fifth paragraph under ‘Management Zones’:

Infrastructure associated with the operations of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme is included in the zoning scheme. Despite any other provision of the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management, the management objectives of the Kosciuszko National Park and all management units within Kosciuszko National Park include the objective of providing for the continuation of the works, activities or things proclaimed under section 40 of the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* and approved developments and activities related to the operations of the Scheme within Kosciuszko National Park.

Replace with:

Infrastructure associated with the operations of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme is included in the zoning scheme. Despite any other provision of the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management, the management objectives of the Kosciuszko National Park and all management units within Kosciuszko National Park include the objective of providing for the continuation of the works, activities or things proclaimed under section 40 of the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* and undertaking Snowy 2.0 Project operations in accordance with any leases, licences, easements or rights of way granted under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, in accordance with EP&A Act approvals, and consistent with the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997*. This also extends to approved developments and activities related to the operations of the Scheme within Kosciuszko National Park.

Section 12.5 – Snowy Hydro Limited (page 216)

Remove:

The operation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme is addressed in the Snowy Park Lease between the Minister for the Environment and Snowy Hydro Limited. The Scheme comprises an integrated network of dams and tunnels, aqueducts and power stations that collect, divert, store and release water for generating hydro-electricity. In 2002, the scheme was corporatised and the assets and liabilities were transferred to Snowy Hydro Limited. The shareholders under the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* are the governments of the Commonwealth of Australia, the State of New South Wales and the State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

Replace with:

The operation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme is addressed in the Snowy Park Lease between the Minister for Environment and Heritage and Snowy Hydro Limited. The Scheme comprises an integrated network of dams and tunnels, aqueducts and power stations that collect, divert, store and release water for generating hydro-electricity. In 2002, the scheme was corporatised and the assets and liabilities were transferred to Snowy Hydro Limited. Until 2018 the shareholders under the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* were the governments of the Commonwealth of Australia, the state of New South Wales and the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. The Commonwealth Government is now the sole shareholder under the *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997*.

Add a new paragraph between the first and second paragraphs:

In 2019 the Snowy 2.0 Project commenced within Kosciuszko National Park. This project will increase the generating capacity of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme through linking of Tantangara and Talbingo Reservoirs and the construction of an additional underground power station.

Add a new dot point in the third paragraph after the second dot point:

- Snowy 2.0 leases

Section 12.6 – Electricity Transmission Authorities and Telecommunication Carriers, Policies and Actions (page 219)

Add a new paragraph after the second paragraph in 'Background':

In 2019 the Snowy 2.0 Project commenced within Kosciuszko National Park. New leases, licences and easements in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and *Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997* may be granted to enable the construction and operation of an electricity transmission system from the electricity generating works associated with the Snowy 2.0 Project.

Remove:

Require all additional telecommunication and transmission lines to be located underground.

Replace with:

Require all additional telecommunication and transmission lines to be located underground, except those constructed as part of the Snowy 2.0 Project.

Schedule 4 – Appropriate Recreational Activities (page 259)

Remove dot point 5 under legend notes:

- Schedule 1 does not restrict the operation of current services provided by Snowy Hydro Limited under the terms of the Snowy Park Lease.

Replace with:

- Schedule 4 does not restrict the operation of current services provided by Snowy Hydro Limited under the terms of the Snowy Park Lease or the Snowy 2.0 leases, licences and easements.

Appendix 1 – Glossary (page 311)

Add the following definition to the glossary:

Snowy 2.0 Project: development described in clause 9 of Schedule 5 to *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*, as in force on 8 May 2022 (referred to in that clause as the Snowy 2.0 and Transmission Project), excluding clauses 9(4)(b,c and d), that is approved to be carried out under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

4. More information

- [Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management 2006](#)