



13 October 2006

Project	Pacific Highway Upgrading Program - Oxley Highway to Kempsey	From	Melanie Miels
Subject	Ecological Focus Group meeting minutes	Tel	2 9239 7100
Venue/Date/Time	Telegraph Point School of Arts, Friday 15 September 2006, 6pm – 8pm.	Job No	21/13305
Copies to	All attendees		
Attendees	Dr Vanessa Standing Rebecca Pagan (State Forests) Simon Pearce (GHD) Graeme Robinson (GHD) Melanie Miels (GHD)	Apologies	John Jeayes Vanessa Standing Dave Whitfield John Gorham Cliff Toms Tony Blue

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**Minutes****Action**

Due to the small number of attendees, Simon Pearce provided an overview of the environmental features of the preferred corridor.

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**1. Section A – environmental characteristics**

1.1 Approximately 58 hectares of vegetation will be cleared in Section A.

1.2 There will be a loss of approximately 15 hectares of endangered ecological community (based on investigations north of Fernbank Creek only).

1.3 The existing highway crosses a known DEC wildlife corridor and the preferred route will widen the existing clearing. There are known Koala movements in this area.

1.4 Minor strip acquisition will be required from Rawdon Creek Nature Reserve to the north of Hastings River.

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**2. Section B – environmental characteristics**

2.1 Approximately 50-57 hectares of vegetation will be cleared depending on the final alignment.

2.2 There will be a loss of approximately 13 to 31 hectares of endangered ecological community depending on the final alignment selected.

2.3 There is a known Koala habitat in Cairncross State Forest (east and west of existing highway).



Minutes	Action
2.4 Preferred corridor traverses edges of two SEPP 14 wetlands on Dalhunny Island and the northern bank of Wilson River.	
<b>3. Section C – environmental characteristics</b>	
3.1 Approximately 38 hectares of vegetation will need to be cleared.	
3.2 There will be a loss of approximately 18 hectares of endangered ecological community.	
3.3 There is a known Koala habitat in Ballengarra State Forest (east and west of existing highway).	
3.4 Possible minor strip acquisition will be required from Cooperabung Creek NR to the north of Hastings River.	
<b>4. Section D – environmental characteristics</b>	
4.1 Approximately 77 hectares of vegetation will need to be cleared.	
4.2 There are known Koala movements across the existing highway throughout Kundabung straight.	
<b>5. Overview of studies undertaken</b>	
During the route options, the project team prepared preliminary reports, which were primarily desktop studies to identify constraints and opportunities. Four options went on public display. The team went away and did some further work on Sections A, B and C. The data collected has been used in the route selection process and these details were made available at the preferred route stage as supplementary reports in the working papers. We have mapped vegetation communities, likely endangered ecological communities, flora and fauna habitats and recorded any opportunistic sightings of threatened flora or fauna.	
<b>6. Next stages in the process</b>	
6.1 The preferred route is currently on display. The closing date for submissions is 13 October 2006.	
6.2 We are currently:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Meeting with potentially affected property owners. The issues raised in these discussions will be considered during development of the concept design.</li><li>– Conducting field investigations, including ecological surveys, , geotechnical surveys</li></ul>	
6.3 There will be a full ecological survey of the entire preferred route corridor in accordance with DEC and RTA guidelines. This includes	



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**Minutes****Action**

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threatened species searches, trapping, spotlighting, reconfirmation of vegetation boundaries and the location of endangered ecological communities.

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6.4 The concept design for the highway is likely to go on display in early to mid 2007.

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6.5 After the concept design is finalised, the RTA will work out property boundaries and write to all property owners to advise them whether they are or are not impacted by the upgrade.

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**7. Summary and close**

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This is the third and final meeting of the EFG, however there are other opportunities for EFG members to be involved in subsequent stages of the project.

The RTA may hold workshops in the future on specific topics of interest, for example, access. EFG members are welcome to come along to any of those workshops/meetings.

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Melanie thanked Vanessa for her input over the last three meetings and taking the time to attend meetings. Melanie encouraged Vanessa to contact the project information line (1800 154 724) if she had any queries or wanted to provide further information after this meeting.

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**Melanie Miels**

Community Consultation Specialist