
ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION - Mt Clear Remote Area Weather Station (RAWS) (ESO 202600028)

In accordance with section 140 (4) of the *Planning Act 2023* (the Act), I provide the following environmental significance opinion:

APPLICANT

ACT Parks and Conservation Service, as represented by Adam Mclachlan, Assistant Director, Fire Planning.

APPLICATION and DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The applicant has applied under section 140 (4) of the Act to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna for an environmental significance opinion to the effect that the development proposal set out in the submission is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact (the application).

The development proposal is for the installation of a non-permanent Remote Area Weather Station (RAWS) structure as described in the submission.

LOCATION

Block 40 District of Mt Clear within Namadgi National Park.
Mount Clear Fire Trail – on the summit of Mount Clear.

MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES

This opinion applies only to the development proposal as described in the application.

OPINION

Provided the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the following conditions, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

This opinion is granted subject to the following conditions made under s140 (4)(b) of the Act:

1. All works must be undertaken in accordance with the mitigation measures as stated in the application, within the ESO statement and works plan.
2. Access to the site must be granted to Conservation Officers if a random compliance inspection is requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.

3. If excavated areas remain open overnight, a protocol for mitigating threatened species entrapment must be put in place, including the following measures:
 - Daily prestart trench/pit checks.
 - Appropriate fencing is to be installed to exclude fauna, such a sediment fencing erected around the perimeter of each pit.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.

Bren Burkevics
Conservator of Flora and Fauna

11 September 2026

STATEMENT OF REASONS REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The proposed development is a proposal mentioned in Schedule 1 of the *Planning (General) Regulation 2023* – requiring environmental impact statement, being:

Part 1.2, item 18 - *proposal for development in a reserve, unless the proposal is for minor public works to be carried out by or for the Territory in accordance with a minor public works code approved by the conservator of flora and fauna under the Nature Conservation Act 2014, section 318A;*

The RAWs installation site is located within Namadgi National Park.

The proponent is seeking an environmental significance opinion to remove the requirement for an environmental impact statement on the grounds that the proposal is not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact and has applied to the Conservator of Flora and Fauna for an opinion to that effect.

Meaning of **significant** adverse environmental impact

An adverse environmental impact is **significant** if—

- (a) the environmental function, system, value or entity that might be adversely impacted by a proposed development is significant; or
- (b) the cumulative or incremental effect of a proposed development might contribute to a substantial adverse impact on an environmental function, system, value or entity.

In deciding whether an adverse environmental impact is **significant**, the following matters must be taken into account:

- (a) the kind, size, frequency, intensity, scope and length of time of the impact;
- (b) the sensitivity, resilience and rarity of the environmental function, system, value or entity likely to be affected.

In deciding whether a development proposal is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact it does not matter whether the adverse environmental impact is likely to occur on the site of the development or elsewhere.

It has been determined that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant environmental impact, based on the documentation submitted, known values of the site, and provided the works and ongoing management are carried out in accordance with the conditions attached to this ESO.

Project description

Namadgi National Park is located in the south and west of the ACT and covers 106,095 hectares or approximately 46% of the ACT. The western boundary of the park is the ridgeline of the Brindabella, Bimberri and Scabby Ranges. The south-eastern border of Namadgi NP follows the ridgeline of Clear Range.

As outlined within the submission, this project is delivered in alignment with both the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan, and the Regional Fire Management Plan. The installation of the RAWS will allow for real-time data to support fire management operations across the network of fire trails on both sides of the ACT/NSW border.

The RAWS installation site is in the south-east of Namadgi NP, on the summit of Mount Clear, within the ACT boundary. The site is adjacent to NSW Crown Land Reserve and a telecommunications compound. The proposal indicates the intent to enhance weather surveillance capabilities in support of fire risk monitoring and prescribed burning across higher elevation areas of southern and eastern Namadgi NP and neighbouring areas of NSW.

The RAWS requires three small pad footings and three guy wire stakes to touch the ground. The pad footings will have a maximum dimension of 40cm width x 40cm length x 60cm depth, which are excavated into the ground and poured with concrete to anchor the station frame. The RAWS unit will occupy an off-ground area of approximately 25m² and 10m tall. The RAWS unit is not a permanent structure and can be removed if required, the footings can be removed from the ground and the holes backfilled.

Vehicle access to the area will be along the existing Mt Clear Fire Trail and the remaining distance of approximately 30m will be accessed on foot. All vehicles which are brought into the site will be washed down prior to, and post accessing the reserve.

Documentation Submitted

- Parks and Conservation (Fire Management Unit) – Draft Works Plan
- Environmental Significance Opinion Supporting Statement
- Mt Clear proposed RAWS site map
- Letter of Authorisation
- Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

The vegetation type surrounding the development area has been identified as Subalpine Woodlands. Predominate species include snow gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*), mountain gum (*E. dalrympleana*) and *Daviesia mimosoides*, none of which are currently considered threatened under territory or federal legislation.

The following species have been recorded and/or are known to occur within an approximate 500m radius of the proposed development:

- Mother Shield Fern (*Polystichum proliferum*)

- Superb Lyrebird (*Menura novaehollandiae*)
- Spencer's Skink (*Pseudemoia spenceri*)
- Mountain Crane's-bill (*Geranium potentilloides* var. *abditum*).

Habitat mapping indicates the following species listed as threatened under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014* (NC Act) within an approximate 500m radius of the proposed development:

- Yellow-bellied Glider (*Petaurus australis*)
- Spotted-tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus maculatus*)
- Rare invertebrates.

Namadgi NP is known to support several other species listed under the NC Act, however these species have not been recorded within the development area.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

The works are very low impact, and appropriate mitigation measures have been detailed within the submission. The footprint of each pad footing is small, and their installation is unlikely to impact any fauna species. The site has been well chosen to avoid any clearing of vegetation. The total footprint is less than 25m² and is elevated off the ground, with the main disturbance being the excavation of three concrete footings which are each roughly the size of a 25L bucket. Due to the low level of impact identified and mitigation measures described, only minor impacts to flora and fauna, if any, are expected to occur.

Works will be undertaken by in-house Fire Management Unit PCS staff to reduce the likelihood of inadvertent impacts with the use of contractors unfamiliar with Namadgi NP and its values. Additionally, the proposal includes weed and pathogen hygiene considerations which reduces the likelihood of weed spread into nearby areas of the national park. The staff undertaking the works will prepare pre- and post-work photographs of the site to allow for effective monitoring of potential impact.

The works will result in less than 25m² of disturbance to native groundcover vegetation and avoids tree and timber removal. Although not explicitly identified as a concern, rock removal (rock-picking) mitigation measures have been identified to minimise rock removal from site, clearly outlining steps to be taken should rock relocation be required.

Conditions have been included to minimise the risk of fauna entrapment during installation.

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2. Access to the site must be granted to Conservation Officers if a random compliance inspection is requested by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna.
3. If excavated areas remain open overnight, a protocol for mitigating species entrapment must be put in place, including the following measures:
 - Daily prestart trench/pit checks.

- Appropriate fencing is to be installed to exclude fauna, such a sediment fencing erected around the perimeter of each pit.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the above conditions attached to the ESO they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.