



**ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OPINION – Corin Dam – outlet valve maintenance
(ESO 202500034)**

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

APPLICANT

Icon Water Ltd, as represented by Mr Henry Grogan, Senior Environmental Scientist.

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 works to reinstate vehicle access to a failed main outlet cone valve downstream of Corin Dam as described in the submission.

LOCATION

Works are located in Block 21 Cotter River district.

MATTERS TO WHICH THIS OPINION APPLIES

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

OPINION

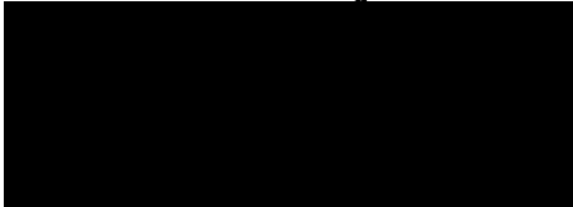
Provided the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the following conditions in addition to the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.

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

1. Conditions of approval including mitigation measures as stated in the application.

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. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is to be submitted and endorsed by the Conservator prior to commencement of works. The CEMP is to include the following:
 - a) Details and mapping of all proposed works and mitigation measures, including access plans, sediment control measures, weed hygiene measures, and restoration plans.
 - b) Prior to entering the National Park, vehicles and machinery must be cleaned and free of any plant material or soil.
 - c) Fauna and flora
 - i. Undertake fish inspections (and fish removal if required) prior to works commencing. If fish removal is required, captured fish is to be placed 50m downstream of the works. Backpack electro fishing is recommended as the preferred capture method by a qualified ecologist. Species and number of each species captured is to be reported to the Conservator.
 - ii. No riparian native vegetation removals are permitted without endorsement from the Conservator.

Attached is a Statement of Reasons for the decision.



Bren Burkevics
Conservator of Flora and Fauna
City and Environment

7 October 2025

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 16 - proposal that is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on 1 or more of the following:

- (a) a critically endangered species;*
- (b) an endangered species;*
- (c) a vulnerable species;*
- (d) a conservation dependent species;*
- (e) a regionally threatened species;*
- (f) a regionally conservation dependent species;*
- (g) a provisionally listed threatened species;*
- (h) a listed migratory species;*
- (i) a threatened ecological community;*
- (j) a protected native species;*
- (k) a Ramsar wetland;*
- (l) any other protected matter*

Over 400 species, with at least 30 species listed under the *Nature Conservation Act 2014*, have been recorded in Namadgi:

- Brindabella Midge Orchid (*Corunastylis ectopa*).
- Northern Corroboree Frog (*Pseudophryne pengilleyi*)
- Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*)
- Smoky Mouse (*Pseudomys fumeus*)
- Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)
- Baeuerlen's Gentian (*Gentiana baeuerlenii*)
- Riek's Crayfish (*Euastacus riei*)
- Southern Brown Bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus obesulus*)
- Key's Matchstick Grasshopper (*Keyacris scurra*)
- Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans*)
- Mountain Skink (*Liopholis montana*)
- Trout Cod (*Maccullochella macquariensis*)
- Broad-toothed Rat (*Mastacomys fuscus mordicus*)
- Macquarie Perch (*Macquaria australasica*)
- Murray River Crayfish (*Euastacus armatus*)
- Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*)
- Southern Greater Glider (*Petauroides volans*)
- Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*)
- Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*)
- Dwarf Violet (*Viola improcera*)

- Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*)
- Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*)
- Varied Sitella (*Daphoenositta chrysoptera*)
- Spotted-Tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculates*)
- Two-Spined Blackfish (*Gadopsis bispinosus*)
- Painted Honeyeater (*Grantiella picta*)
- White-throated Needletail (*Hirundapus caudacutus*)
- White-Winged Triller (*Lalage sueurii*)
- Alpine Tree-frog (*Litoria verreauxii alpina*)
- Yellow-bellied Glider (*Petaurus australis australis*)
- Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*)
- Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*)
- Pale Pomaderris (*Pomaderris pallida*)
- Pilotbird (*Pycnoptilus floccosus*)
- Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*)
- Austral Toadflax (*Thesium australe*)
- Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*)

Works may impact on aquatic species such as the Trout Cod and Macquarie Perch.

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 proposed works are 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 protects Canberra's main water supply catchment with Corin and Bendora Dams located within the Park and the expanded Cotter Dam immediately downstream. The proposed project involves civil works in the riverbed downstream of the Corin Dam portal to provide vehicle access for the replacement of a failed main outlet valve moderating flows and water release.

Works will involve the following:

- Establish a stable platform for vehicle access – this involves pulling up river cobbles downstream of the Corin Dam portal onto the concrete base and reducing water level by about 400mm from its current level to the base of the outlet portal.
- No large-scale excavations or tree disturbance will be undertaken, with only minimal disturbance to grasses around the site.
- Works are expected to take 1-2 weeks to complete.
- A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared and implemented by the constructor and will include a rehabilitation plan to restore the site once the maintenance work is completed.

Documentation Submitted

- Explanatory note regarding supporting documentation for the application for an Environmental Significance Opinion;
- Additional information provided as part of Request for Information response;
- Letter(s) of Authorisation
- Form 1M.

Natural conservation values present

Namadgi National Park is located in the south and west of the ACT and covers 106,095 hectares or approximately 46% of the ACT. Namadgi conserves a wide variety of ecosystems and contributes to regional ecological connectivity through its links to reserves within NSW. The Park is an important water catchment area and supplies the ACT as its main source of water.

The areas surrounding the Corin Dam have regenerated significantly since the 2020 bushfires. Native vegetation along the river consists of Ribbon Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*), with a dense mid-storey of Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxydon*) and Hop Bush (*Cassinia longifolia*), and an understorey of Alpine Spear-Grass (*Austrostipa nivicola*) and Wallaby Grass (*Rytidosperma sp.*).

The site is in a relatively isolated stretch of the Cotter River, containing shallow areas with exposed cobbles. The outlet portal is lined on the bottom and sides with concrete.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts

The main potentially significant impacts will be to the Cotter River and aquatic species, including trapping of threatened aquatic species with lowering of water levels, and introduction of contaminants from vehicle access into the waterway. As the works are within the waterway with minimal impact to the terrestrial environment, it is unlikely that terrestrial flora and fauna will be impacted.

While no threatened ecological community is likely to occur, numerous rare and threatened species have potential to occur within proximity to the works footprint, notably aquatic species such as Macquarie Perch and Two-spined Blackfish. Water levels are quite low at the site, with exposed cobbles on shallow reaches, and no fish were identified in a recent inspection. It is unlikely the works will pose any meaningful impact to threatened species habitat. The proponent has committed to undertaking pre-inspections for threatened aquatic species prior to work commencing, and fish removal will be undertaken if identified.

Conditions have been included to ensure that works will not trap threatened aquatic species and minimise introduction of contaminants into the catchment.

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

1. Conditions of approval including mitigation measures as stated in the application.

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. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is to be submitted and endorsed by the Conservator prior to commencement of works. The CEMP is to include the following:
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 - ii. No riparian native vegetation removals are permitted without endorsement from the Conservator.

It has been determined that if the works are undertaken in a manner consistent with the above conditions attached to the ESO in addition to the mitigation measures contained in the supporting application for an ESO, they are unlikely to cause a significant adverse environmental impact.