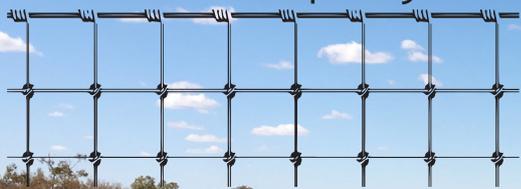


NSW Wild Dog Fence extension project



Project update

April 2020

Project background

A feasibility study commissioned by the Border Fence Maintenance Board and funded by Local Land Services determined there are considerable benefits to be had by extending the dog fence in two sections — 420 kilometres in the east adjacent to Mungindi and 322 km in the south to just short of the Murray River.

The feasibility study estimated a benefit cost ratio (BCR) of between 2.48 and 7.12. The extension of the dog fence will lead to increases in agricultural outputs, as well as other social and environmental benefits, including employment, reduced social impact from psychological stress, improved animal welfare outcomes and increased biodiversity benefits.

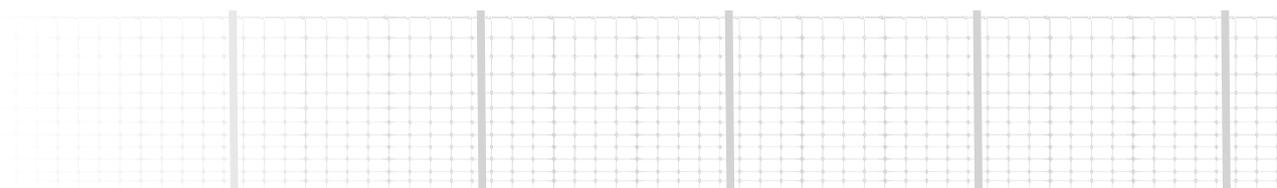
The project will be an excellent boost for Western NSW, expecting to create 85 direct and indirect jobs during construction while the equivalent of a further seven jobs will be required to manage the extended fence.

Extending the dog fence was a key 2019 election commitment of the NSW Government.

Progress to date

This project presents many challenges on a number of levels, with three states involved, many NSW Government departments, a range of stakeholder groups and organisations, as well as the complexities around the alignment and construction of the extended fence, assessments for biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage values, various tenders and ongoing stakeholder engagement. We also face challenges from weather and the Coronavirus pandemic.

However, the team of dedicated and professional staff have made good progress in each of these areas.





Mapping

Preliminary mapping for the extended fence along the NSW and South Australia border has been carried out.

The extended fence will start at Broughams Gate, approximately 110 km north of Broken Hill, and finish just south of Old Wentworth Rd, near the Murray River. Mapping works were undertaken over six days and over 430 fence-line features were mapped.

Due to flooding in the north of the state, on-ground mapping along the NSW and QLD proposed alignment has not been done.

Desktop mapping for the section bordering Queensland has been carried out, and we will undertake on-ground mapping as soon as possible.



The mapping team meet locals from stations in the southwest of the state (Loch Lilley and Kimberley Stations).



Tenders

A number of tenders for the project have been completed, with contractors engaged to undertake the assessments for biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage values. An \$11.2 million tender for the supply and manufacture of fence materials opened at the end of January and closed mid-March.

Close to 100 businesses downloaded the resources pack from the etender website, with a good number of those making a submission. The submissions are currently being evaluated and the successful tenderer/s will be announced in due course.

There will be more opportunities for businesses and landholders to be involved in this project with a tender to be called in May for businesses to undertake earthworks and erect the fence.

Interested parties that wish to be notified when this tender and other tenders open, can contact Project Support Officer, Alydia Goolagong on 0428 236 782 or alydia.goolagong@scs.nsw.gov.au.

The NSW Government is committed to using local contractors and businesses in the project where possible, and this is factored into the procurement strategy with the criteria for tenders reflecting this.



While rain has been very welcome, it did have an effect on our ability to undertake some works.



Assessments

The contractors to carry out the biodiversity assessments and Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments have been engaged following a tender process. Niche Environment and Heritage are preparing the biodiversity assessment for both the NSW and SA and NSW and QLD borders, Lantern Heritage is preparing the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment for the NSW and SA border, and Extent Heritage is preparing the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment for the NSW and QLD border.

The desktop analysis for the biodiversity assessments along the NSW and SA extension have been completed, and the desktop analysis for the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments along the NSW and SA extension have commenced.

Planned on-ground assessments and engagement with local stakeholders have been postponed due to COVID-19. Once safe and practical to do so, the contractors will commence on-ground assessment works and continue with local engagement of landholders and community groups.



Stakeholder engagement

Since the project commenced, we have been committed to providing regular updates to stakeholders with an interest in the project.

We have provided updates through a number of channels including face to face presentations at group meetings, workshops for landholders, meeting with landholders while carrying out preliminary mapping works, media interviews, online updates via group emails and e-newsletters, social media and the [Local Land Services website](#).

Of note was presenting to more than 100 landholders at a series of wild dog workshops that were coordinated by Western Local Land Services in February this year. The workshops were held in Tilpa, Louth, Bourke, Fords Bridge, Wanaaring and White Cliffs, and allowed for a project update and to answer questions from those in attendance.

A series of workshops was earmarked for the end of April to provide an update to landholders along the NSW and SA border, however COVID-19 has seen these events postponed. Once safe and practical to do so, workshops will be held in Buronga, Wentworth, Anabranck and Broken Hill.

In the interim, we are more than happy to attend any meeting via telephone or video and provide written updates for any groups or individual landholders.

The project team will continue to provide updates, such as this and the accompanying dashboard report, on a regular basis.



Presenting to landholders and other stakeholders in Lightning Ridge.



Project Manager Dan Owens, being interviewed on 2WEB in Bourke to provide an update on the project.



Current status and impacts of COVID-19

The project team are adapting to a new way of working in light of COVID-19, with measures put in place to ensure the safety of landholders, community and staff. While it is not business as usual, the project team will be progressing the project where possible in the weeks and months ahead.

We are continuing to investigate opportunities to continue with on-ground activities, such as mapping along the NSW and QLD border, as well as on-ground assessments along the NSW and SA border, where safe and practical to do so. Our main priority will always be the safety and wellbeing of our stakeholders and staff.

Please refer to the dashboard resource which provides an update of where the project currently sits with regards to delivery. If you have any questions or would like further details on what is provided, please contact the project team on the details listed below.

On the horizon

While some aspects of the project, such as the on-ground assessments and face to face meetings with landholders and other stakeholders, may need to be postponed for extended periods due to COVID-19, work will be continuing with regards to planning approvals, future procurement opportunities, engaging with stakeholders and so forth.

As mentioned earlier, the tender for construction businesses to undertake earthworks and erect the fence will be advertised in May. We will be in contact with businesses that have registered an interest about this tender once it opens.

Stakeholders that would like an update on the project at an upcoming meeting are encouraged to get in touch so it can be organised.

The project team will continue to circulate regular updates on the project, while further information and a number of resources can be found on the [Local Land Services website](#).

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