McArdles Gap Wetland Watering Infrastructure

Application Number: **02797** Commencement Date: **03/03/2025** Status: **Locked**

1. About the project

1.1 Project details

1.1.1 Project title *

McArdles Gap Wetland Watering Infrastructure

1.1.2 Project industry type *

Natural Resources Management

1.1.3 Project industry sub-type

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1.1.4 Estimated start date *

01/01/2026

1.1.4 Estimated end date *

31/12/2026

1.2 Proposed Action details

1.2.1 Provide an overview of the proposed action, including all proposed activities. *

Sale Common is a freshwater wetland located south of the township of Sale in East Gippsland, Victoria, and forms part of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site. Reduced freshwater flows and the increasing impacts of climate change and severe weather events are anticipated to affect Sale Common by increasing salinity levels moving into Lake Wellington via MacLennan Strait. Without management interventions this is predicted to result in a decline in freshwater vegetation, a process that can already be observed in some locations around the Gippsland Lakes.

The West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) is intending to construct a river off-take channel and water regulating structure at McArdles Gap, an existing short channel off the nearby Thomson River. This is intended to allow freshwater flows into Sale Common to manage water and salinity levels in response to environmental conditions. Similar intake channels already exist elsewhere in the wetland and the new channel at McArdles Gap is intended to replace an existing channel downstream that is at risk of saltwater intrusion. The works have not been scheduled as yet and WGCMA in the process of gathering the necessary information for both State and Federal approvals if they are required.

The proposed works include the installation of a water regulator at the end of the existing channel. McArdles Gap will then be extended until it meets the channel running under the South Gippsland Highway and the water will flow into Sale Common. Although the works at McArdles Gap are being undertaken for conservation purposes and to preserve the existing condition of the wetland, the proposed changes to hydrological regimes and water quality in Sale Common may meet the criteria of a significant impact.

The entire project area encompasses the Ramsar site and the adjacent construction zone at McArdles Gap where construction works are to be undertaken. The entire project area covers 309.9 hectares of which the Ramsar site makes up 308.3 hectares and the area where construction works will be undertaken comprises up to 1.6 hectares including access tracks, equipment storage areas, construction zone, and areas of indirect impacts to native vegetation.

The disturbance footprint includes native vegetation patches and 8 scattered trees totaling up to 0.86 hectares that will be removed within the construction zone, however these works do not directly impact the Ramsar site and are not subject to this referral; these impacts will be addressed via Victorian native removal vegetation guidelines as per Clause 52.17 of the Wellington Planning Scheme. The remaining disturbance footprint has been estimated to be 237.1 hectares within the Ramsar site which corresponds to areas mapped as wetland or lake in Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) spatial data. The volume of water within the Ramsar site will change from year to year depending on environmental conditions, hence the disturbance area is an estimate.

1.2.2 Is the project action part of a staged development or related to other actions or proposals in the region?

No

1.2.6 What Commonwealth or state legislation, planning frameworks or policy documents are relevant to the proposed action, and how are they relevant? *

Planning and Environment Act 1983 (Vic.)

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* establishes a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria. It guides the preparation of the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) and planning schemes across the state. McArdles Gap is subject to the Wellington Planning Scheme. Under local government regulations any removal of native vegetation is subject to Clause 52.17 of the relevant planning scheme. Unless an exemption applies, native vegetation removal must be offset and efforts to avoid and minimize vegetation removal must be demonstrated.

As native vegetation is proposed to be removed during construction at McArdles Gap, WGCMA will need to apply to Wellington Shire Council for a planning permit to remove native vegetation prior to works.

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic.)

The *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) is the Victorian Government's legislation for the conservation of threatened species and communities and the management of potentially threatening processes. The FFG Act provides for the listing of threatened plant and animal species and ecological communities (Threatened List) and potentially threatening processes (Processes List). It also contains provisions for declared protected flora, which are not listed as threatened, but declared to be protected under Section 46 of the FFG Act for other reasons.

The works may be subject to the FFG Act due to the potential removal of Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata,* however this will depend on the final access track alignment which will be determined in consultation with the contractor. Spotted Gum is listed as vulnerable under the FFG Act. Although they do not naturally occur in the area near McArdles Gap the removal of Spotted Gum on land managed by a public authority will require a Protected Flora Permit from the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (Vic.)

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act) is the Victorian Government's legislation governing the management of invasive species in the State, including defining responsibilities for landowners based on threats to catchment and other values. Three species of introduced weed recorded at McArdles Gap are considered "regionally controlled weeds" in West Gippsland: Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, Scotch Thistle *Onopordum acanthium*, and Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus spp. agg.* Under the CaLP Act landowners must prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds. Any ground disturbance during construction works at McArdles Gap is likely to create favourable conditions for the further spread of regionally controlled weeds. Follow up weed control may be required to contain the spread.

Wildlife Act 1975 (Vic.)

The Wildlife Act is the Victorian Government's legislation that sets out how wildlife in Victoria is protected, conserved, sustainably managed and used in the State. It is an offence under the Act to willfully disturb, destroy, injure, etc. protected wildlife. While works at McArdles Gap are undertaken it may be necessary to have a licensed wildlife handler onsite to ensure compliance with the Wildlife Act. It should be noted that the Act is currently under review with an expert advisory panel having reported to the Victorian Government in 2021. Before commencing works at McArdles Gap it is recommended that the status of the Wildlife Act be reviewed to determine whether there are any additional requirements under the Act or its replacement.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Comm.)

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) s the Australian Government's environmental legislation which provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally significant flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places, defined in the EPBC Act as Matters of National Environmental Significance. The EPBC Act is applicable to the project due to potential impacts to nationally threatened species, ecological communities, and wetlands of international importance.

The significant impact criteria as outlined in *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 - Matters of National Environmental Significance* was used during the self assessment process to determine impacts on three threatened species known from the project area or identified by the Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) as being potentially present: Dwarf Galaxias *(Galaxiella pusilla),* Australian Grayling *(Prototroctes maraena)*, and Grey-headed Flying-fox *(Pteropus poliocephalus)*. The self assessment did not identify the works as meeting the criteria for these species.

Two EPBC Act-listed ecological communities were also identified by the PMST as potentially present: Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains, and Gippsland Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis* subsp. *mediana*) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland. Neither community was identified at the works site. Although a survey of the entire project area (including Sale Common) was not undertaken these communities are not thought to be present.

The significant impact criteria were also used to assess potential impacts on EPBC Act-listed Ramsar Wetlands. The self assessment identified the following criteria as potentially being met by the proposed works A) a substantial and measurable change in the hydrological regime of the wetland, for example, a substantial change to the volume, timing, duration and frequency of ground and surface water flows to and within the wetland, and B) a substantial and measurable change in the water quality of the wetland – for example, a substantial change in the level of salinity, pollutants, or nutrients in the wetland, or water temperature.

1.2.7 Describe any public consultation that has been, is being or will be undertaken regarding the project area, including with Indigenous stakeholders. Attach any completed consultation documentations, if relevant. *

The proposed work intersects several land parcels, and there are subsequently four land managers that have been consulted: Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action, Department of Transport, Wellington Shire Council, and Parks Victoria. These agencies have been engaged at the collaboration level due to the works directly impacting on their land and assets. This has involved briefings on the project, site visits, and evaluation of risks.

The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) are the Registered Aboriginal Party that represent the Gunaikurnai people, the Traditional Owners of the land where the works will be undertaken. As the works involve disturbance of riverbanks, and changes to watering options for a wetland, GLaWAC were engaged initially to determine if the project supported their cultural values and Land and Water Plan, which it did. They were also engaged to assist in evaluating Cultural Heritage values and risks (refer section 3.3.2).

1.3.1 Identity: Referring party

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1.3.1.1 Is Referring party an organisation or business? *

Yes

Referring party organisation details

ABN/ACN	678151114
Organisation name	ECOLOGIC NRM PTY LTD
Organisation address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875

Referring party details

Name	Aileen Collyer
Job title	Senior Environmental Consultant
Phone	0413977260
Email	aileen@ecologicnrm.com.au
Address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875

1.3.2 Identity: Person proposing to take the action

1.3.2.1 Are the Person proposing to take the action details the same as the Referring party details? *

No

1.3.2.2 Is Person proposing to take the action an organisation or business? *

Yes

Person proposing to take the action organisation details

ABN/ACN	88062514481
Organisation name	WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
Organisation address	3844 VIC

Person proposing to take the action details

Name	David Stork
Job title	Waterways Project Officer
Phone	(03) 5613 5957
Email	davids@wgcma.vic.gov.au
Address	16 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

1.3.2.14 Are you proposing the action as part of a Joint Venture? *

No

1.3.2.15 Are you proposing the action as part of a Trust? *

No

1.3.2.17 Describe the Person proposing the action's history of responsible environmental management including details of any proceedings under a Commonwealth, State or Territory law for the protection of the environment or the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources against the Person proposing to take the action. *

The West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) is a Victorian State Government appointed agency tasked with managing the health of waterways and catchments within its jurisdiction under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. Since its establishment in 1994, the WGCMA has worked directly and with partners to protect and enhance the environmental health of the region's waterways and catchments, and the sustainability of the flora and fauna species that rely on it. In executing its duties, it has ensured compliance with State and Federal regulations including the EPBC Act and Ramsar commitments.

1.3.2.18 If the person proposing to take the action is a corporation, provide details of the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework

The WGCMA's corporate environmental policy commits the actions of the organisation and those undertaking works on behalf of it, to meet the standards of all relevant legislation and best practices. In executing its duties, the WGCMA will:

- Comply with Victorian and Commonwealth statutory environmental requirements
- Train and raise awareness of best practices for employees
- Minimise environmental impacts
- Communicate its environmental policy
- Integrate improved environmental management practices
- Create a culture of awareness
- Monitor our impact
- Report on our impact

A copy of the WGCMA Corporate Environmental Policy has been attached.

1.3.3 Identity: Proposed designated proponent

1.3.3.1 Are the Proposed designated proponent details the same as the Person proposing to take the action? *

Yes

Proposed designated proponent organisation details

ABN/ACN	88062514481
Organisation name	WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
Organisation address	3844 VIC

Proposed designated proponent details

Name	David Stork
Job title	Waterways Project Officer
Phone	(03) 5613 5957
Email	davids@wgcma.vic.gov.au
Address	16 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

1.3.4 Identity: Summary of allocation

Confirmed Referring party's identity

The Referring party is the person preparing the information in this referral.

ABN/ACN	678151114
Organisation name	ECOLOGIC NRM PTY LTD
Organisation address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875
Representative's name	Aileen Collyer
Representative's job title	Senior Environmental Consultant
Phone	0413977260
Email	aileen@ecologicnrm.com.au
Address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875

Confirmed Person proposing to take the action's identity

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual, business, government agency or trustee that will be responsible for the proposed action.

ABN/ACN	88062514481
Organisation name	WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
Organisation address	3844 VIC
Representative's name	David Stork
Representative's job title	Waterways Project Officer
Phone	(03) 5613 5957
Email	davids@wgcma.vic.gov.au
Address	16 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

Confirmed Proposed designated proponent's identity

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual or organisation proposed to be responsible for meeting the requirements of the EPBC Act during the assessment process, if the Minister decides that this project is a controlled action.

Same as Person proposing to take the action information.

1.4 Payment details: Payment exemption and fee waiver

1.4.1 Do you qualify for an exemption from fees under EPBC Regulation 5.23 (1) (a)? *

No

1.4.3 Have you applied for or been granted a waiver for full or partial fees under Regulation 5.21A? *

No

1.4.5 Are you going to apply for a waiver of full or partial fees under EPBC Regulation 5.21A?

No

1.4.7 Has the department issued you with a credit note? *

No

1.4.9 Would you like to add a purchase order number to your invoice? *

No

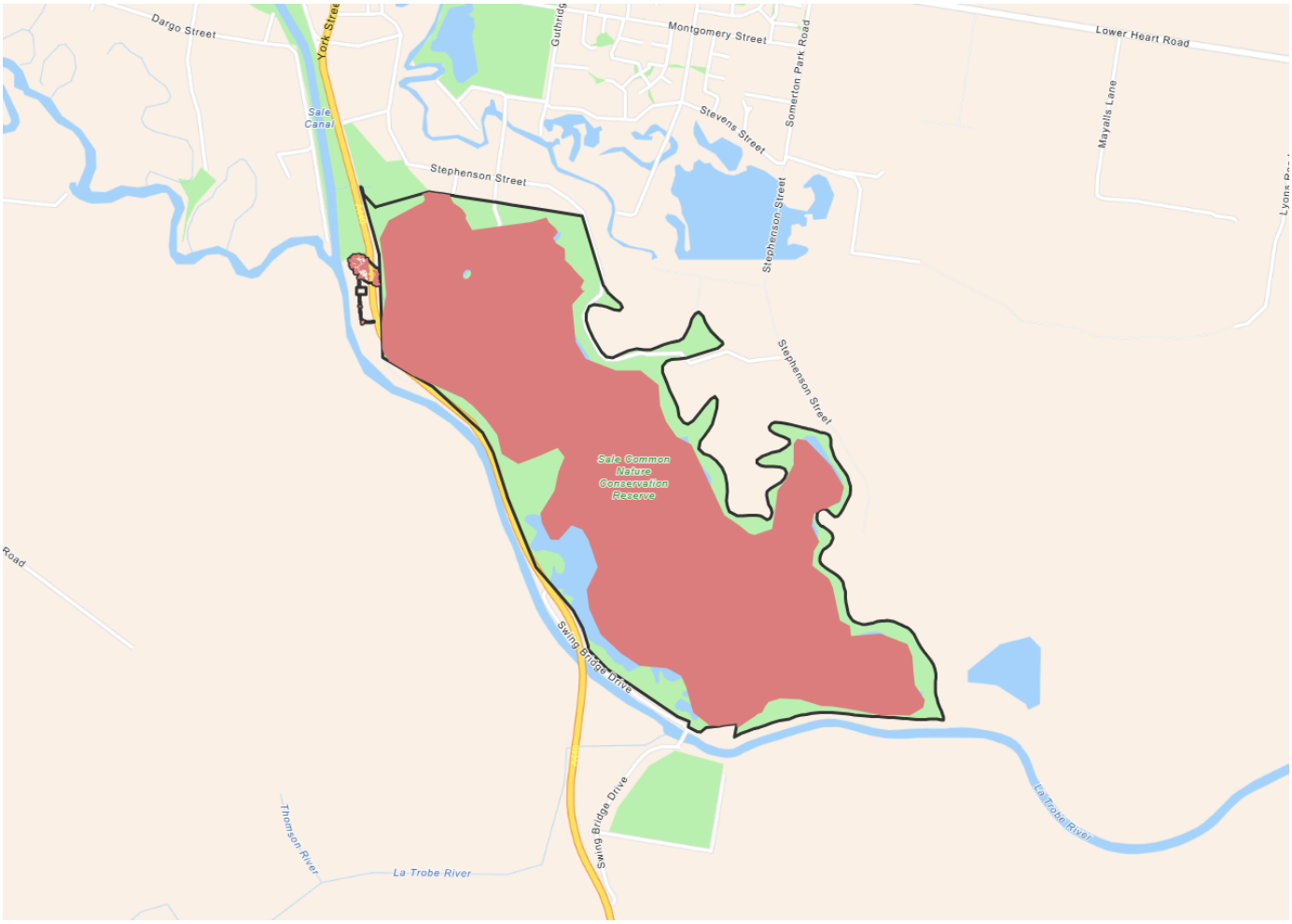
1.4 Payment details: Payment allocation

1.4.11 Who would you like to allocate as the entity responsible for payment? *

Referring party

2. Location

2.1 Project footprint



Project Area: 309.97 Ha **Disturbance Footprint:** 237.95 Ha

2.2 Footprint details

2.2.1 What is the address of the proposed action? *

The address where works would be undertaken is 6879 South Gippsland Highway, Sale VIC 38

2.2.2 Where is the primary jurisdiction of the proposed action? *

Victoria

2.2.3 Is there a secondary jurisdiction for this proposed action? *

No

2.2.5 What is the tenure of the action area relevant to the project area? *

The Ramsar site is within the Sale Common Nature Conservation Reserve which is Crown land managed by Parks Victoria. The McArdles Gap location where construction works are proposed is Crown land managed by Wellington Shire Council under a Committee of Management arrangement. The South Gippsland Highway is located between these two tenures and is within a a road reserve managed by the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning.

3. Existing environment

3.1 Physical description

3.1.1 Describe the current condition of the project area's environment.

McArdles Gap is located along the Thomson River approximately 1km south of the township of Sale, Victoria, within the Gippsland Plain bioregion. The land where works are to be undertaken is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) while Sale Common is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). The South Gippsland Highway runs between McArdles Gap and Sale Common and this section is zoned Transport Zone 2 - Principal Road Network (TRZ2). The surrounding area is entirely comprised of Farming Zone (FZ). A caravan park was located at McArdles Gap until about ten years ago and the now disused access track off the South Gippsland Highway will be used to allow vehicle access to the site during construction works.

3.1.2 Describe any existing or proposed uses for the project area.

McArdles Gap is along the Sale Common Wetlands Walk and a sealed walking track passes adjacent to and through the proposed works area. This use of the area will be maintained following works, however a small section of the walking track may be rerouted.

3.1.3 Describe any outstanding natural features and/or any other important or unique values that applies to the project area.

The Sale Common Nature Conservation Reserve is within the project area and forms part of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar site.

3.1.4 Describe the gradient (or depth range if action is to be taken in a marine area) relevant to the project area.

There is little change in topography across the project area with no elevated areas. The project area comprises flat land along a river and adjacent wetland.

3.2 Flora and fauna

3.2.1 Describe the flora and fauna within the affected area and attach any investigations of surveys if applicable.

Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) modelling suggests the McArdles Gap area once supported EVC 56 Floodplain Riparian Woodland prior to European arrival. Although weed cover in the ground layer has all but eliminated native herbs and graminoids, the vegetation at McArdles Gap retains elements of this EVC including position in the landscape along the banks of the Thomson River and characteristic eucalypt species such as River Red-gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* and Swamp Gum *E. ovata*.

Historical aerial imagery and onsite assessment suggest the vegetation at McArdles Gap has undergone periods of significant disturbance and regeneration with possible supplementary planting. Large old trees within the general McArdles Gap area and caravan park site tend to be Manna Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis* (average diameter at breast height 96cm). All the trees lining the existing channel are regenerating River Red-gum *E. camaldulensis* (average diameter at breast height 37cm) that are mostly absent from aerial imagery taken in 2006; this appears to coincide with the installation of the current walking track. River Red-gums are also regenerating in the area between McArdles Gap and Cox's Bridge, while the area south of McArdles Gap features regenerating Swamp Gum *E. ovata* (average diameter at breast height 15cm) and a few small Yellow Box *E. melliodora*. Where the caravan park was previously located, Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata* (maximum diameter at breast height 88cm) have been planted along the track that existed when the caravan park was operational, and immature individuals are propagating nearby. Spotted Gum are highly restricted in their natural distribution in Victoria and do not grow naturally in the McArdles Gap area.

The shrub layer is composed of a diverse range of native species however many were recorded as single individuals and would not be expected to occur in natural regeneration of Floodplain Riparian Woodland. This includes species such as Blue Oliveberry *Elaeocarpus reticulatus*, Blue Howittia *Howittia trilocularis*, Mutton-wood *Myrsine howittiana*, Lilly Pilly *Syzygium smithii*, and Kanooka *Tristaniopsis laurina*. None of these species are listed on the EVC benchmark as typical for this EVC, and none have been recorded in the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) within 5km of McArdles Gap; it is likely they have been planted during revegetation works. Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata*, Crimson Bottlebrush *Callistemon citrinus*, and Burgan *Kunzea ericoides* are present in higher numbers and at different life stages suggesting these are naturally regenerating.

The understorey is almost entirely comprised of non-native weeds including a significant infestation of Kikuyu *Cenchrus clandestinus* that in some areas is effectively suppressing all other groundcover species. In areas immediately around the existing channel the groundcover is sparser with increased cover of leaf litter and post-flood accumulated woody debris. Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare* is prominent in some areas.

The floristic composition at the location where the proposed water intake will flow into Sale Common features additional aquatic and wetland-affiliated species not found elsewhere at the site such as Tall Spike-sedge *Eleocharis sphacelata*, Common Reed *Phragmites australis*, and Swamp Paperbark *Melaleuca ericifolia*.

Despite areas of modified and highly weedy vegetation, the McArdles Gap area is occupied by a range of fauna taxa. During field surveys, 43 bird species, 4 frog species, and 9 mammal species were recorded. Bird species included a range of woodland birds typical to the area as well as wetland species such as Musk Duck *Biziura lobata*, Australasian Swamphen *Porphyrio melanotus*, and Dusky Moorhen *Gallinula tenebrosa*. This is consistent with the combination of habitat types available at the site including areas of native eucalypt woodland with a shrub component and introduced trees and nearby wetland habitats. Frog species recorded are also typical of wetlands and swamps in the area and include Common Froglet *Crinia signifera*, Southern Brown Tree Frog *Litoria ewingii*, Peron's Tree Frog *L. peronii*, and Verreaux's Tree Frog *L. verreauxii verreauxii*. White-striped Free-tailed Bat *Austronomus australis* is audible to human hearing and was detected during surveys. Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* was recorded in non-native trees. Three other bat species were likely to have been detected during surveys based on analysis of acoustic recordings, however trapping would be required for positive identification. Multiple possum species were recorded including Eastern Ring-tailed Possum *Pseudocheirus peregrinus* and Common Brush-tailed Possum *Trichosurus vulpecula* in relatively large numbers for the size of the area.

Fauna habitat at the site includes native and non-native trees that provide roosting and feeding habitat for a range of canopy-dwelling birds and nocturnal mammals. A native shrub layer in some areas also provides habitat for smaller birds that generally occupy the midstorey such as Grey Fantail *Rhipidura albiscapa*, and Brown Thornbill *Acanthiza pusilla*. The ground cover is comprised almost entirely of non-native weed species, with particularly dense infestations of Kikuyu *Cenchrus clandestinus* in some areas. Although this provides excellent cover for small mammals and reptiles, the lack of native grasses and tussocks potentially limits their feeding opportunities. However, several bird species that occupy the lower strata were recorded including Superb Fairy Wren *Malurus cyaneus*, White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis*, and Red-browed Finch *Neochmia temporalis*. There were few hollow-bearing trees present which is consistent with the area immediately around McArdles Gap having been largely cleared around 2006; hollows formation takes decades to occur.

The draft Preliminary Environmental Management Plan has been attached and provides further information on survey methods (Att A_McArdles Gap Environmental Report_Draft v1, Section 2, page 5) and field survey results (Att A_McArdles Gap Environmental Report_Draft v1, Section 3, page 8). This is a draft document pending the outcome of this referral.

3.2.2 Describe the vegetation (including the status of native vegetation and soil) within the project area.

The vegetation has largely been described in section 3.2.1. Various soil types are expected to occur across the project area with alluvial soils along the Thomson River and lake deposits within Sale Common. Potential acid sulphate soils may be present and soil samples will be collected prior to works.

3.3 Heritage

3.3.1 Describe any Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas or other places recognised as having heritage values that apply to the project area.

There are no Commonwealth heritage places overseas or other recognised places relevant to the project.

3.3.2 Describe any Indigenous heritage values that apply to the project area.

The project area is located on Gunaikurnai country. Waterways and wetlands have important cultural significance to the Gunaikurnai people and the entire project area is considered an area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) was previously undertaken by VicRoads for the upgrade of the South Gippsland Highway adjoining McArdles Gap. The area of study for the CHMP included the area proposed to be disturbed as part of the current project. In consultation with GLaWAC (RAP) it was determined by them that the existing CHMP adequately covers the cultural heritage values and risks that would be encountered as a result of the propose works at McArdles Gap.

3.4 Hydrology

3.4.1 Describe the hydrology characteristics that apply to the project area and attach any hydrological investigations or surveys if applicable. *

Sale Common is a freshwater wetland adjacent to the Thomson River and La Trobe River forming part of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site. Water inflows are predominantly over-bank flooding from these rivers and rainfall, with some artificial filling from the La Trobe River having taken place. McArdles Gap is along the Thomson River. This river originates from Mount Whitelaw within Baw Baw National Park.

4. Impacts and mitigation

4.1 Impact details

Potential Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) relevant to your proposed action area.

EPBC Act section	Controlling provision	Impacted	Reviewed
S12	World Heritage	No	Yes
S15B	National Heritage	No	Yes
S16	Ramsar Wetland	Yes	Yes
S18	Threatened Species and Ecological Communities	Yes	Yes
S20	Migratory Species	Yes	Yes
S21	Nuclear	No	Yes
S23	Commonwealth Marine Area	No	Yes
S24B	Great Barrier Reef	No	Yes
S24D	Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas	No	Yes
S26	Commonwealth Land	No	Yes
S27B	Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas	No	Yes
S28	Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency	No	Yes

4.1.1 World Heritage

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.1.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.1.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.2 National Heritage

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.2.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.2.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.3 Ramsar Wetland

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Ramsar wetland
Yes		Gippsland Lakes

4.1.3.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

Yes

4.1.3.2 Briefly describe why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on these protected matters. *

The construction of the river off-take channel and water regulator at McArdles Gap will allow for the addition of freshwater from the Thomson River into Sale Common. This is intended to preserve the existing condition of the wetland by deliberately changing the hydrological regime and water quality to mitigate the impacts of increasing salinity. In the listing criteria for the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar site, increasing salinity is noted as one of the factors adversely affecting the site's ecological character and Sale Common is noted as a “permanent freshwater marsh”.

Although the proposal is intended to be beneficial for the Ramsar site, inappropriate water regimes could have adverse impacts by artificially elevating water levels thereby affecting vegetation growth or floristic composition and altering the availability of key foraging and breeding habitats for fauna. Additional nutrient inflows from farming activities along the Thomson River may also have adverse impacts however it should be noted that Sale Common already receives water from the Thomson River during over-bank flooding events.

4.1.3.4 Do you consider this likely direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact? *

Yes

4.1.3.5 Describe why you consider this to be a Significant Impact. *

The works at McArdles Gap are being undertaken for conservation purposes and to preserve the existing condition of the wetland. However, it appears to meet certain definitions of the significant impact criteria related to hydrological regimes and water quality. The two criteria outlined in the *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance* that would potentially be met are:

1. A substantial and measurable change in the hydrological regime of the wetland, for example, a substantial change to the volume, timing, duration and frequency of ground and surface water flows to and within the wetland
2. a substantial and measurable change in the water quality of the wetland – for example, a substantial change in the level of salinity, pollutants, or nutrients in the wetland, or water temperature which may adversely impact on biodiversity, ecological integrity, social amenity or human health

(The latter criteria includes the words “adversely impact” however it is unclear whether this applies to the criteria generally or is for example purposes only.)

The intended beneficial impacts are anticipated to create significant changes in the hydrological regimes and water quality within Sale Common and therefore a “Significant impact” however it is noted the Minister cannot take this into consideration when making a decision. The potential adverse impacts (inappropriate water regimes and increased nutrient inflows) could in theory meet the above criteria however it is not anticipated that there is a “real chance of possibility” of this occurring, as specified in the *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance.* An existing channel downstream, now at risk of saltwater intrusion, has been used for over a decade to deliver additional water into Sale Common hence it is unlikely the new channel at McArdles Gap will increase the possibility of a significant impact occurring. We therefore do not consider these as a Significant impact.

4.1.3.7 Do you think your proposed action is a controlled action? *

No

4.1.3.9 Please elaborate why you do not think your proposed action is a controlled action. *

If the Minister cannot consider the likely beneficial impacts of an action when making a referral decision, the adverse impacts alone are not considered to have a “real chance or possibility” of meeting any of the Significant impact criteria for a Ramsar wetland as outlined in the *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance* and hence the project is not a controlled action.

4.1.3.10 Please describe any avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action and attach any supporting documentation for these avoidance and mitigation measures. *

Potential impacts to this protected matter caused by the activation and leaching of Potential Acid Sulfate Soils (PASS) will be mitigated by the development and implementation of a Soil Management Plan that will adhere to best management practices as outlined in the *Victorian Best Practice Guidelines for Assessing and Managing Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils* which have been attached (Att C_CASS-BPMG-2010, Section 10, page 31).

Adverse impacts resulting from inappropriate water regimes will be mitigated through monitoring and planning. Flora and fauna monitoring, as well as water level and quality testing will be undertaken across the Sale Common Ramsar site to ensure watering events meet the ecological requirements at that time. Water planning is undertaken annually and water delivery is undertaken based on seasonal and ecological conditions.

4.1.3.11 Please describe any proposed offsets and attach any supporting documentation relevant to these measures. *

We do not believe this project is a controlled action and hence no offsets have been identified.

4.1.4 Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

Threatened species

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	Yes	Amphibromus fluitans	River Swamp Wallaby-grass, Floating Swamp Wallaby-grass
No	No	Anthochaera phrygia	Regent Honeyeater
No	Yes	Botaurus poiciloptilus	Australasian Bittern
No	No	Caladenia tessellata	Thick-lipped Spider-orchid, Daddy Long-legs
No	No	Calidris acuminata	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Callocephalon fimbriatum	Gang-gang Cockatoo
No	No	Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami	South-eastern Glossy Black-Cockatoo
No	No	Charadrius leschenaultii	Greater Sand Plover, Large Sand Plover
No	No	Climacteris picumnus victoriae	Brown Treecreeper (south-eastern)
No	No	Commersonia prostrata	Dwarf Kerrawang
No	No	Dasyurus maculatus maculatus (SE mainland population)	Spot-tailed Quoll, Spotted-tail Quoll, Tiger Quoll (southeastern mainland population)
No	No	Dianella amoena	Matted Flax-lily
No	No	Dodonaea procumbens	Trailing Hop-bush
No	No	Eucalyptus strzeleckii	Strzelecki Gum
No	No	Falco hypoleucos	Grey Falcon
Yes	Yes	Galaxiella pusilla	Eastern Dwarf Galaxias, Dwarf Galaxias
No	Yes	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
No	No	Glycine latrobeana	Clover Glycine, Purple Clover
No	No	Grantiella picta	Painted Honeyeater

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Heleioporus australiacus	Giant Burrowing Frog
No	No	Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated Needletail
No	No	Lathamus discolor	Swift Parrot
No	No	Lepidium hyssopifolium	Basalt Pepper-cress, Peppercress, Rubble Pepper-cress, Pepperweed
No	No	Limosa lapponica baueri	Nunivak Bar-tailed Godwit, Western Alaskan Bar-tailed Godwit
No	No	Lissolepis coventryi	Swamp Skink, Eastern Mourning Skink
No	No	Litoria aurea	Green and Golden Bell Frog
No	No	Litoria raniformis	Southern Bell Frog,, Growling Grass Frog, Green and Golden Frog, Warty Swamp Frog, Golden Bell Frog
No	No	Melanodryas cucullata cucullata	South-eastern Hooded Robin, Hooded Robin (south-eastern)
No	No	Neophema chrysostoma	Blue-winged Parrot
No	No	Numenius madagascariensis	Eastern Curlew, Far Eastern Curlew
No	No	Prasophyllum spicatum	Dense Leek-orchid
No	Yes	Prototroctes maraena	Australian Grayling
No	No	Pseudomys novaehollandiae	New Holland Mouse, Pookila
No	No	Pteropus poliocephalus	Grey-headed Flying-fox
No	No	Pycnoptilus floccosus	Pilotbird
No	No	Rostratula australis	Australian Painted Snipe
No	No	Stagonopleura guttata	Diamond Firetail
No	No	Sternula nereis nereis	Australian Fairy Tern
No	No	Thesium australe	Austral Toadflax, Toadflax
No	No	Tringa nebularia	Common Greenshank, Greenshank
No	No	Uperoleia martini	Martin's Toadlet
No	No	Xerochrysum palustre	Swamp Everlasting, Swamp Paper Daisy

Ecological communities

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Ecological community
No	No	Gippsland Red Gum (Eucalyptus tereticornis subsp. mediana) Grassy Woodland and Associated Native Grassland
No	No	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains

4.1.4.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

Yes

4.1.4.2 Briefly describe why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on these protected matters. *

The construction of the river off-take channel and water regulator at McArdles Gap will allow for the addition of freshwater from the Thomson River into Sale Common. This is intended to preserve the existing condition of the wetland by deliberately changing the hydrological regime and water quality to mitigate the impacts of increasing salinity.

Although the proposal is intended to be beneficial for environmental values, inappropriate water regimes could have adverse impacts on threatened species by artificially elevating water levels thereby affecting vegetation growth or floristic composition and altering the availability of key foraging and breeding habitats for fauna. Additional nutrient inflows from farming activities along the Thomson River may also have adverse impacts however it should be noted that Sale Common already receives water from the Thomson River during over-bank flooding events.

Amphibromus fluitans - River Swamp Wallaby-grass

River Swamp Wallaby-grass may be negatively impacted by large water inputs into Sale Common that reduce the potential growing area and inundate any existing plants.

Botaurus poiciloptilus - Australasian Bittern

As noted in the Conservation Advice for the species, the Australasian Bittern occurs mainly in freshwater wetlands and favours tall dense vegetation, where it forages in still, shallow water up to 0.3 metres deep. Large water inputs into Sale Common could result in a reduction of shallower water areas suitable for this species. Changes in floristic composition that result in the loss of their preferred vegetation type might result in the species being unable to occupy Sale Common.

Galaxiella pusilla - Eastern Dwarf Galaxias

Altered hydrology is a threat to Eastern Dwarf Galaxias populations. For example, as noted in the Conservation Advice for the species they usually occupy shallow water up to 1.5 metres deep. Large water inputs into Sale Common could result in a reduction of shallower water areas suitable for this species.

Gallinago hardwickii - Latham's Snipe

As noted in the Conservation Advice for the species, Latham's Snipe usually inhabit open, freshwater wetlands with low, dense vegetation however can occur in saline or brackish water. When roosting they prefer areas of dense cover in shallow water areas. Changes in floristic composition or elevated water levels that result in the loss of their preferred vegetation type might result in the species being unable to occupy Sale Common.

Prototroctes maraena - Australian Grayling

Altered hydrology is listed in the Conservation Advice for Australian Grayling as a primary threat. Reduced river flows during the spawning season results in Australian Grayling not releasing eggs, and can impact migratory behaviour. If water extraction from the Thomson River into Sale Common reduces river flows too much, this could negatively impact Australian Grayling.

4.1.4.4 Do you consider this likely direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact? *

No

4.1.4.6 Describe why you do not consider this to be a Significant Impact. *

All direct and/or indirect impacts associated with mitigating increased salinity levels in Sale Common are anticipated to have a beneficial impact on the species noted. However, based on criteria outlined in the *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance* for EPBC-listed species, there is no “real chance or possibility” of the criteria being met by alternative (i.e., adverse) impacts and hence no Significant impacts are anticipated.

4.1.4.7 Do you think your proposed action is a controlled action? *

No

4.1.4.9 Please elaborate why you do not think your proposed action is a controlled action. *

No Significant impacts due to adverse impacts are anticipated to occur and hence the action is not considered a controlled action.

4.1.4.10 Please describe any avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action and attach any supporting documentation for these avoidance and mitigation measures. *

Potential impacts to this protected matter caused by the activation and leaching of Potential Acid Sulfate Soils (PASS) will be mitigated by the development and implementation of a Soil Management Plan that will adhere to best management practices as outlined in the *Victorian Best Practice Guidelines for Assessing and Managing Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils* which have been attached.

Adverse impacts resulting from inappropriate water regimes will be mitigated through monitoring and planning. Flora and fauna monitoring, as well as water level and quality testing will be undertaken across the Sale Common Ramsar site to ensure watering events meet the ecological requirements at that time. Water planning is undertaken annually and water delivery is undertaken based on seasonal and ecological conditions.

4.1.4.11 Please describe any proposed offsets and attach any supporting documentation relevant to these measures. *

We do not believe this project is a controlled action and hence no offsets have been identified.

4.1.5 Migratory Species

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

Direct impact	Indirect impact	Species	Common name
No	No	Actitis hypoleucos	Common Sandpiper
No	No	Apus pacificus	Fork-tailed Swift
No	No	Calidris acuminata	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris ferruginea	Curlew Sandpiper
No	No	Calidris melanotos	Pectoral Sandpiper
No	No	Charadrius leschenaultii	Greater Sand Plover, Large Sand Plover
No	Yes	Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe, Japanese Snipe
No	No	Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated Needletail
No	No	Limosa lapponica	Bar-tailed Godwit
No	No	Motacilla flava	Yellow Wagtail
No	No	Numenius madagascariensis	Eastern Curlew, Far Eastern Curlew
No	No	Pandion haliaetus	Osprey
No	No	Tringa nebularia	Common Greenshank, Greenshank

4.1.5.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

Yes

4.1.5.2 Briefly describe why your action has a direct and/or indirect impact on these protected matters. *

The construction of the river off-take channel and water regulator at McArdles Gap will allow for the addition of freshwater from the Thomson River into Sale Common. This is intended to preserve the existing condition of the wetland by deliberately changing the hydrological regime and water quality to mitigate the impacts of increasing salinity.

Although the proposal is intended to be beneficial for environmental values, inappropriate water regimes could have adverse impacts on migratory species by artificially elevating water levels thereby affecting vegetation growth or floristic composition and altering the availability of key foraging and breeding habitats for fauna. Additional nutrient inflows from farming activities along the Thomson River may also have adverse impacts however it should be noted that Sale Common already receives water from the Thomson River during over-bank flooding events.

Gallinago hardwickii - Latham's Snipe

As noted in the Conservation Advice for the species, Latham's Snipe usually inhabit open, freshwater wetlands with low, dense vegetation however can occur in saline or brackish water. When roosting they prefer areas of dense cover in shallow water areas. Changes in floristic composition or elevated water levels that result in the loss of their preferred vegetation type might result in the species being unable to occupy Sale Common.

4.1.5.4 Do you consider this likely direct and/or indirect impact to be a Significant Impact? *

No

4.1.5.6 Describe why you do not consider this to be a Significant Impact. *

All direct and/or indirect impacts associated with mitigating increased salinity levels in Sale Common are anticipated to have a beneficial impact on the species noted. However, based on criteria outlined in the *Significant Impact Guidelines 1.1 – Matters of National Environmental Significance* for EPBC-listed species, there is no “real chance or possibility” of the criteria being met by alternative (i.e., adverse) impacts and hence no Significant impacts are anticipated.

4.1.5.7 Do you think your proposed action is a controlled action? *

No

4.1.5.9 Please elaborate why you do not think your proposed action is a controlled action. *

No Significant impacts due to adverse impacts are anticipated to occur and hence the action is not considered a controlled action.

4.1.5.10 Please describe any avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action and attach any supporting documentation for these avoidance and mitigation measures. *

Potential impacts to this protected matter caused by the activation and leaching of Potential Acid Sulfate Soils (PASS) will be mitigated by the development and implementation of a Soil Management Plan that will adhere to best management practices as outlined in the *Victorian Best Practice Guidelines for Assessing and Managing Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils* which have been attached.

Adverse impacts resulting from inappropriate water regimes will be mitigated through monitoring and planning. Flora and fauna monitoring, as well as water level and quality testing will be undertaken across the Sale Common Ramsar site to ensure watering events meet the ecological requirements at that time. Water planning is undertaken annually and water delivery is undertaken based on seasonal and ecological conditions.

4.1.5.11 Please describe any proposed offsets and attach any supporting documentation relevant to these measures. *

We do not believe this project is a controlled action and hence no offsets have been identified.

4.1.6 Nuclear

4.1.6.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.6.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.7 Commonwealth Marine Area

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.7.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.7.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.8 Great Barrier Reef

4.1.8.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.8.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.9 Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas

4.1.9.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on this protected matter? *

No

4.1.9.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.10 Commonwealth Land

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.10.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.10.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.11 Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas

You have identified your proposed action will likely directly and/or indirectly impact the following protected matters.

A direct impact is a direct consequence of an action taken – for example, clearing of habitat for a threatened species or permanent shading on an ecological community as the result of installing solar panels.

An indirect impact is an 'indirect consequence' such as a downstream impact or a facilitated third-party action.

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4.1.11.1 Is the proposed action likely to have any direct and/or indirect impact on any of these protected matters? *

No

4.1.11.3 Briefly describe why your action is unlikely to have a direct and/or indirect impact. *

Protected matter not recorded in the project area.

4.1.12 Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency

4.1.12.1 Is the proposed action to be taken by the Commonwealth or a Commonwealth Agency? *

No

4.2 Impact summary

Conclusion on the likelihood of significant impacts

You have indicated that the proposed action will likely have a significant impact on the following Matters of National Environmental Significance:

- Ramsar Wetland (S16)

Conclusion on the likelihood of unlikely significant impacts

You have indicated that the proposed action will unlikely have a significant impact on the following Matters of National Environmental Significance:

- World Heritage (S12)
- National Heritage (S15B)
- Threatened Species and Ecological Communities (S18)
- Migratory Species (S20)
- Nuclear (S21)
- Commonwealth Marine Area (S23)
- Great Barrier Reef (S24B)
- Water resource in relation to large coal mining development or coal seam gas (S24D)
- Commonwealth Land (S26)
- Commonwealth Heritage Places Overseas (S27B)
- Commonwealth or Commonwealth Agency (S28)

4.3 Alternatives

4.3.1 Do you have any possible alternatives for your proposed action to be considered as part of your referral? *

No

4.3.8 Describe why alternatives for your proposed action were not possible. *

There are no suitable alternative options for locating the river off-take channel without affecting approvals under Victorian legislation. Under the Wellington Shire Planning Scheme a proposal to remove native vegetation must demonstrate efforts to avoid and minimise impacts to native vegetation. This is required even if an exemption applies and a planning permit (and offsets) is not required.

McArdles Gap is an existing short channel off the Thomson River. By utilizing this existing feature WGCMA will avoid the need to create a new channel through the bank of the Thomson River. The vegetation along the riverbank (as it runs parallel to Sale Common) is relatively intact; creating a new channel would result in the loss of riparian vegetation which plays a significant role in bank stabilization.

The Thomson River is separated from Sale Common by the South Gippsland Highway. There are only two sections of raised highway where it is possible to construct a channel from the river without significant roadworks or underboring within a wetland environment. The proposed works at McArdles Gap are within one of these raised sections.

5. Lodgement

5.1 Attachments

1.3.2.18 (Person proposing to take the action) If the person proposing to take the action is a corporation, provide details of the corporation's environmental policy and planning framework

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att B_WGCMA Corporate Environmental Policy.pdf WGCMA's Corporate Environmental Policy	01/09/2023	No	High

3.2.1 Flora and fauna within the affected area

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att A_McArdles Gap Environmental Report_Draft v1.pdf Preliminary Environmental Management Plan	30/01/2025	No	High

4.1.3.10 (Ramsar Wetland) Avoidance or mitigation measures proposed for this action

	Type	Name	Date	Sensitivity	Confidence
#1.	Document	Att C_CASS-BPMG-2010.pdf Victorian Best Practice Guidelines for Assessing and Managing Coastal Acid Sulfate Soils	01/10/2010	No	High

5.2 Declarations

Completed Referring party's declaration

The Referring party is the person preparing the information in this referral.

ABN/ACN	678151114
Organisation name	ECOLOGIC NRM PTY LTD
Organisation address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875
Representative's name	Aileen Collyer
Representative's job title	Senior Environmental Consultant
Phone	0413977260
Email	aileen@ecologicnrm.com.au
Address	87B Main Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ By checking this box, I, **Aileen Collyer of ECOLOGIC NRM PTY LTD**, declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to this EPBC Act Referral is complete, current and correct. I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

Completed Person proposing to take the action's declaration

The Person proposing to take the action is the individual, business, government agency or trustee that will be responsible for the proposed action.

ABN/ACN	88062514481
Organisation name	WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
Organisation address	3844 VIC
Representative's name	David Stork

Representative's job title	Waterways Project Officer
Phone	(03) 5613 5957
Email	davids@wgcma.vic.gov.au
Address	16 Hotham Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ I, **David Stork of WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**, declare that to the best of my knowledge the information I have given on, or attached to the EPBC Act Referral is complete, current and correct. I understand that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. I declare that I am not taking the action on behalf or for the benefit of any other person or entity. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

✔ Completed Proposed designated proponent's declaration

The Proposed designated proponent is the individual or organisation proposed to be responsible for meeting the requirements of the EPBC Act during the assessment process, if the Minister decides that this project is a controlled action.

Same as Person proposing to take the action information.

☑ Check this box to indicate you have read the referral form. *

☑ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *

☑ I, **David Stork of WEST GIPPSLAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**, the Proposed designated proponent, consent to the designation of myself as the Proposed designated proponent for the purposes of the action described in this EPBC Act Referral. *

☐ I would like to receive notifications and track the referral progress through the EPBC portal. *