

Submission Cover Sheet

North East Link Project EES IAC

149

Request to be heard?: yes

Full Name: Tim Curmi

Organisation: Native Fish Australia (Vic)

Affected property:

Attachment 1: east_west_link.do

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: as attached



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Native Fish Australia (Vic) has a number of concerns with the proposed North East link

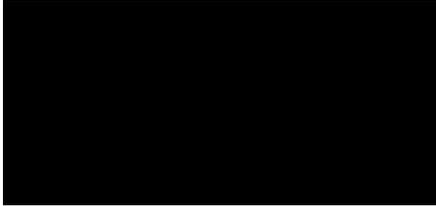
Primarily we have major concerns with the effect of the link on the population of **Macquarie Perch** (*Macquaria australasica*) in the Yarra River. Macquarie Perch is listed under the EPBC act. This population was translocated primarily from waterways in the Goulburn River catchment from the **1850's** and is very important to the future recovery of this endangered species. This is due to the **genetic robustness** of the fish within the Yarra River as they have been stocked from a number of different source populations. Recent scientific studies have shown that Macquarie Perch from the Yarra River are suitable to be used in recovery projects across the state and breeding programs using Yarra River fish should be encouraged and supported.

Macquarie Perch are visual feeders and any decrease in water quality particularly turbidity and suspended solids will impede feeding and negatively affect the fish. The works may also restrict movement of Macquarie Perch through proposed works areas, particularly during spawning migrations in Spring/Summer where fish move upstream to preferred spawning habitat.

A recently published recovery plan for the species “**National Recovery Plan for the Macquarie Perch** (*Macquaria australasica*) was published in 2018 and documents plans for the recovery of this endangered species. This plan needs to be referred to before any works are commenced.

We are very concerned with the **lack of any significant aquatic surveys** in the areas where works are proposed. Aquatic surveys need to be undertaken in all areas where works are proposed. These need to include standard techniques including electrofishing, fyke netting and bait traps. The use of EDNA would also aid in determining fish populations. Surveys should also be conducted to determine Platypus populations within the works areas.

A third area of concern is the **covering of a large stretch of both Banyule and Koonung Creeks**. This is a backward step considering that there are currently many projects in metropolitan Melbourne where once covered creeks are being opened and rehabilitated into beautiful open spaces. A great example of this is Dandenong Creek which is currently being opened and rehabilitated at a number of sites primarily by Melbourne Water.



Tim Curmi
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President
Native Fish Australia (Vic)



30 May 2019