

HUMELINK

Ecology Surveys

FACT SHEET

Delivering affordable, safe and reliable electricity to customers

Ecology surveys

We are undertaking ecology surveys to help identify existing animal and plant species and their habitats within the study corridor. These surveys will help us understand the local environment, and identify issues to be taken into account during engineering design and project planning.

What to expect?

If we need to access private land, we will seek consent from the landowner.

Our representatives will work with landowners to understand their requirements before undertaking any ecology surveys on their property. We will discuss how to access the property and the types of activities, including timing and duration.

How are ecology surveys done?

Surveys are usually done by a team of around four ecologists. Survey methods vary depending on the focus of the survey - flora, fauna or aquatic.

Some surveys may be required at specific times of the year when certain species can be more easily identified, for example when flowering occurs or during breeding season.

HumeLink is a new 500kV transmission line which will connect Wagga Wagga, Bannaby and Maragle. It will carry electricity to customers from new generation sources, including the expanded Snowy Hydro scheme.

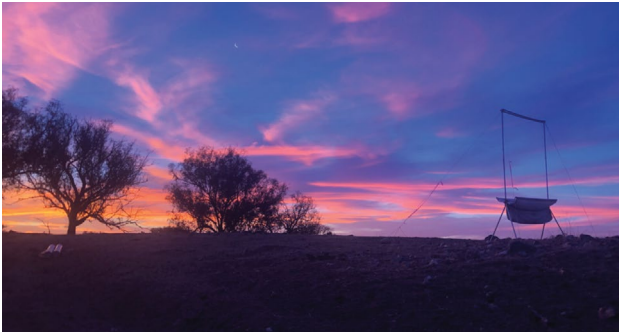
HumeLink is a priority project for the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) and the Federal and NSW Governments.

Flora surveys are usually done during the day. Ecologists mark up grids on the ground with tape, walk the survey area and take photographs of the plant species. Occasionally, they may need to take small samples of plants.



Orchid *Thelymitra simulata*. Photo courtesy of Eco Logical Australia

Fauna surveys are usually done during the day and occasionally at night. The survey method depends on the species and can involve observations and gathering samples. Humane nets and traps may be needed, for example when surveying for bats. Traps are monitored by an ecologist at all times. Captured animals are photographed and immediately released.



Harp trap for survey of bats. Photo courtesy of Eco Logical Australia

Aquatic surveys are conducted around streams, creeks and rivers and use a variety of methods.



Murrumbidgee River, NSW

Which properties do we survey?

Surveys will not be required on all properties, while some properties may require multiple visits.

Our ecologists decide which properties to survey based on information from the NSW Government's SEED database - The Central Resource for Sharing and Enabling Environmental Data at www.seed.nsw.gov.au.

The SEED database has information about the location of endangered ecological communities (EECs) and plant community types (PCTs) which are associated with different species of plants and animals.

Why do we do surveys?

We need to verify where PCTs and EECs are so we can avoid them where possible.

The surveys are also a requirement under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016. Survey information is used by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and the Environment (DPIE) to help assess the environmental impact of major infrastructure projects such as HumeLink.

How is the information reported?

Survey information collected by our ecologists is aggregated and provided in an electronic map to DPIE.

It will also be included in the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will not include specific information about private properties.