

PN25/359
4 September 2025

Daniel Halton
Ausgrid
24-28 Campbell St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Re: PN25/359 s.205 Harm Marine Vegetation – harm marine vegetation associated with powerline corridor maintenance at Ausgrid network- multiple locations

Dear Daniel,

I refer to your application dated 4 August 2025 for a permit under Part 7 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (FM Act). DPIRD Fisheries, a division of NSW Department of Primary Industries, assesses applications for harm marine vegetation in accordance with Part 7 of the FM Act, Part 14 of the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019* and the *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (2013)*.

This application attracts a minimum fee of \$358.00. The fee comprises \$179.00 application fee plus \$179.00 for the first three hours of assessment. An invoice of \$358.00 has been raised and will be emailed separately.

The environmental assessment has been completed and it has been determined that a permit can be issued. The permit is attached and takes effect on receipt of payment.

Please note that the attached permit providing authorisation under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, to undertake harm marine vegetation (s.205) does not provide authorisation under any Act or planning instrument. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they have all appropriate approvals and landowner consents before the works occur. This may include, but is not restricted to, development consent under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), landowners' consent and/or a licence under the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*, and a controlled activity approval under the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Please carefully read and note the conditions included in the permit. If you agree that all the conditions are reasonable, appropriate, and achievable, you must sign and date the attached form (Acceptance of Conditions) and return it to the Departmental Contact Officer as soon as

possible. If you believe that you cannot comply with all the Conditions, then you must not commence work. Instead, you should contact the Departmental Contact Officer listed on the first page of the permit so that your concerns can be considered.

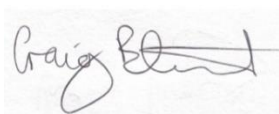
If you intend to have the work undertaken by a contractor, please ensure that the contractor receives a full copy of the permit and understands the importance of abiding by the conditions. As the permit holder, you are responsible for ensuring compliance with all conditions therein and with any other legislative obligations. Breaching a condition of a permit can incur an on-the-spot penalty notice of \$500 of up to \$11,000 through the courts in accordance with clause 225 of the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019*.

The extent of work is to be restricted to that outlined in the application and plans submitted to the Department. If for any reason, other works are required, or the works need to be extended to other areas, you must seek specific approval beforehand. DPIRD Fisheries will require a justification for these variations and may charge additional assessment fees as outlined in the permit application. Similarly, please note the expiry date on the permit. If the works are not completed by the expiry date, you will need to obtain an extension. Requests for an extension after the expiry date will incur the \$179.00 permit application fee. Requests for an extension before the expiry date will not incur an application fee.

DPIRD Fisheries, places particular importance upon the need to minimise the harm to the natural environment both at the work site and in downstream/adjacent waters. The Department expects implementation of Best Management Practice with respect to erosion and sediment control as outlined in the publication "Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction" (4th Edition Landcom, 2004), commonly referred to as "The Blue Book" (see <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/managing-urban-stormwater-soils-and-construction-volume-1-4th-edition>).

If you have any queries regarding this permit, please contact Craig Blount on 0418 925 757 or at craig.blount@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely,



Craig Blount

Senior Fisheries Manager, Aquatic Ecosystem Assessment

Permit under Part 7 of the *FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT 1994*

Permit	Permit Number	PN25/359
	Expiry Date	Unless cancelled or suspended sooner, this permit shall remain in force until 3 September 2030
Permit Holder:		Ausgrid 24-28 Campbell St, SYDNEY NSW 2000 Contact person: Daniel Halton Phone: 0490 022 169 Email: dhalton@ausgrid.com.au
Permit Area:		Ausgrid sites (Refer to Attachment 1)
Permit Activity:		Harm marine vegetation in association with or in relation to powerline corridor maintenance.
Departmental Contact Officer:		Craig Blount Ph: 0418 925 757 Email: craig.blount@dpird.nsw.gov.au
District Fisheries Officer:		Fisheries Compliance Attn: Anthony Calabro Mobile: 0409 246 061 Email: fisheries.compliance@dpird.nsw.gov.au

This permit is subject to the following Conditions:

ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS

- 1) The **Acceptance of Conditions** form (attached) must be completed and returned to ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au and fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au before commencing any works authorised by this permit.

Reason – To remove any doubt that the Permit Holder understands and accepts the Conditions before work commences.

- 2) The **Commence Works Notification** form (attached) must be completed and sent to ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au and fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au at least three to five (3-5) days BEFORE the commencement of works authorised by this permit.

Reason - To ensure that local DPIRD Fisheries staff are aware that the works authorised by this permit are about to commence.

- 3) The **Active Works Notification** form (attached) must be completed and sent to ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au and fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au at least three to five (3-5) days BEFORE works are complete or machinery is removed from the site. Several colour photographs showing the work site must be included.

Reason – To provide an opportunity for local DPIRD Fisheries staff to inspect the site whilst machinery is still on site and available to do any remedial work that may be necessary.

- 4) The **Post Works Notification** form (attached) must be completed and sent to Fisheries Compliance (fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au) and the Fisheries Contact Officer (ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au) within 21 days of completion of works at the site. Several colour photographs showing the work site must be included.

Reason - To provide an opportunity for local DPIRD Fisheries staff to inspect the site to ensure compliance with the Conditions of this permit.

- 5) This permit (or a true copy) must be carried by the permit holder or sub-contractor operating on-site at all times during works activity in the permit area. Where work is exempt, the relevant 'Environmental planning documentation' must be carried by the permit holder or sub-contractor.

Reason – DPIRD Fisheries staff may wish to check compliance of works with imposed conditions.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF WORKS

- 6) The permit holder must ensure that all works authorised by this permit are restricted to the permit area and are undertaken in a manner consistent with those described in the permit application dated 4 August 2025. Other works, which have not been described, are not to be undertaken. With respect to marine vegetation, Ausgrid has indicated that routine maintenance works could include:

- Pulling up in a barge to a remote part of the network in a sensitive estuarine habitat
- Fixing a cable fault in an estuarine area where seagrass has grown over the cable
- Traversing over saltmarsh communities or mangrove aerial roots using necessary plant/ equipment to complete a more complex maintenance task
- Accessing the network where an access track has been overgrown and needs to be re-established
- Maintaining safety clearances around overhead mains

- Maintaining asset protection zones around substations and other assets such as transmission towers
- Decommissioning and removal of electricity works in sensitive estuarine habitat.

Reason – This permit has been granted following an assessment of the potential impacts of the described works upon the aquatic and neighbouring environments. Other works, which were not described in the application have not been assessed and may have significant adverse impacts. If any additional works are proposed to be carried out under this permit they will need to be agreed in writing by the Contact Officer.

CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN & OTHER PLANS

- 7) Compliance with Ausgrid’s internal environmental management guidelines and procedures, ensures that works are undertaken in a manner that minimises the impact to sensitive areas including aquatic habitats, riparian zones and threatened saltmarsh communities. Ausgrid’s environmental management guidelines and procedures include:

- NS174C Environmental Handbook for Construction and Maintenance- which includes procedures and protocols for Erosion and Sediment Control and Working in Ecologically Sensitive Areas. NB Seagrass, saltmarsh and mangroves are included among the nominated Ecologically Sensitive Areas
- Tree Safety Management Plan- a plan prepared in consideration of community and stakeholder feedback, relevant legislation and industry guidelines for ensuring workers minimise environmental harm, including minimising damage or destruction of marine vegetation
- Form EF 560- a framework (where marine vegetation exists at a site) for developing a site specific CEMP in addition to NS 174C requirements for Managing Marine Vegetation and those given in the Tree Safety Management Plan

In each instance where a site specific CEMP (i.e. form EF 560) is prepared (i.e. for sites where marine vegetation is present) it is to include the requirements below. Key sections of the documents above are also referred to where appropriate.

SITE ACCESS (requiring marine vegetation to be crossed)

- 8) Sites should be accessed by foot. Where this is not possible, light vehicles must be used and these must not to be driven or operated in or over water or saturated ground or within intertidal areas unless in accordance with works proposed in your application for the permit and the requirements of this permit. See also NS174C s 2.1 EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL & s.6.1.2 Works in ecologically sensitive areas.

Reason - When the ground surface is inundated there is a very high risk of harming aquatic vegetation as vehicle wheels rut and dig up vegetation and the ground surface. Disturbing

the ground surface, especially rutting, can obstruct or flows potentially causing lasting harm to aquatic vegetation including in intertidal areas.

- a) The number of vehicles driving over intertidal areas, even at low tide when the ground surface is dry and firm, must be minimised.
Reason - Where possible vehicles should remain on existing tracks to avoid disturbing the ground surface of intertidal areas as vehicle wheels rut and dig up the ground surface and marine vegetation. Disturbing the ground surface, especially rutting, can obstruct or alter tidal flows potentially causing lasting harm to marine vegetation and intertidal areas.
- b) Consider marking “no go” areas on a map and then on site (with the aim of keeping the impacted area to a minimum), prior to accessing site. When working near marine vegetation (seagrass, mangroves, and saltmarsh), riparian vegetation or water land these areas need to be identified and appropriately delineated as “No Go” areas (with the aim of avoiding harm to these areas that are not part of the permitted works). Harm to marine vegetation, riparian vegetation or water land outside the work footprint approved under the authority of this permit is not permitted and any harm caused is to be documented and reported to the contact officer.
- c) Water based trimming of mangroves (from boat) is to be undertaken at high tides when a minimum of 1.0 m clearance between the vessel, including its motor, and the waterway bed can be achieved. Works should be planned to avoid seagrass areas and any anchor points and securing lines should be located away from marine vegetation.
Reason - To prevent scouring and damage of substrates and possible harm to marine vegetation.
- d) Prior to use at the site and / or entry into the waterway, machinery is to be appropriately cleaned, degreased, and serviced. Spill kits are to be always available on-site during works.
Reason – To reduce the threat of an unintended pollution incident impacting upon the aquatic environment.
- e) Use of temporary crossings or other access works (with the aim of keeping the impacted area to a minimum). This includes crossing of saltmarsh and mangrove aerial roots where matting could be considered.
- f) Material storage and stockpiling is to avoid water land, marine vegetation (saltmarsh, mangrove, seagrass) or riparian vegetation where possible. Stockpiling must be undertaken in a manner to avoid harm to these types of vegetation or water land where possible and should also be located 20 metres away from adjacent water land. Where proposed works are minor, and only a small amount of materials is required and is stored in bulka bags, temporary storage on water land is permitted whilst work is underway, Stockpiles and/or dewatering areas should be appropriately controlled by sediment fencing or other materials prescribed in the “Blue Book” to ensure sediments do not enter the waterway.

Reason – To ensure that impacts on aquatic habitats, the riparian zone and threatened saltmarsh communities are minimised. “Degradation of native riparian vegetation along NSW water courses” (excluding estuarine and marine waters) is listed as a Key Threatening Process under the provisions of the FM Act.

g) No snags¹ are to be removed, realigned or relocated without first obtaining the written authority of the Departmental Contact Officer.

Reason – “Removal of large woody debris from NSW rivers and streams” is listed as a Key Threatening Process under the provisions of the FM Act. This approval has been granted on the basis that snags are not to be removed),

SITE REHABILITATION (requiring marine vegetation to be crossed)

9) On completion of the works the site is to be rehabilitated and stabilised including:

a) Surplus construction materials and temporary structures (other than silt fences and other erosion and sediment control devices) installed during the course of the works are to be removed.

b) Ruts are to be filled with river sand. If disturbed areas potentially require replanting with native endemic riparian vegetation, this is to be discussed and approved by the Contact Officer. NB. this excludes access tracks and asset protection zones.

c) Appropriate maintenance of erosion and sediment control devices is to be undertaken until the vegetation has successfully established and the site has stabilised.

Reason – To ensure that habitats are restored as quickly as possible, public safety is not compromised, aesthetic values are not degraded and sediment inputs into the waterway are reduced.

BEST PRACTICE MANGROVE TRIMMING TECHNIQUES

10) The Australian Standard: (AS4373-2007) Pruning of amenity trees should be adopted where possible.

Reason - Use of best practice techniques and adherence to recommendations outlined in Australian Standard Pruning of amenity trees (AS4373-2007) is necessary to minimise harm to mangrove systems and maintain the benefits they provide.

¹ “Snags” is a term used to describe **large woody debris** from trees and shrubs, including whole fallen trees, broken branches and exposed roots that have fallen or washed into a waterway and are now wholly or partially submerged by water. For the purposes of this permit, snags are only those pieces of large woody debris that are greater than 3m in length and 300mm in diameter and also includes submerged large rocks (of greater than 500 mm in two dimensions).

- 11) Adjacent marine vegetation must not be harmed. To avoid mistakenly cutting mangroves beyond the safety clearance authorised by this permit, a pre-works walk must be undertaken to identify, assess and identify limbs to be cut or trimmed. Identification and delineation of “No Go” areas should also be undertaken.

Reason - To ensure unauthorised harm to marine vegetation and intertidal systems is avoided.

- 12) The ground surface of intertidal systems and all below ground parts of marine vegetation (whether living or dead) including mangrove pneumatophores, fibrous feeder roots, cable roots and root balls must not to be gathered, cut, pulled up, removed or otherwise harmed.

Reason - Disturbing the ground surface can obstruct or alter tidal flows risking lasting harm to marine vegetation and intertidal areas. Mangrove and saltmarsh ecosystems store large amounts of carbon below-ground and this should not be disturbed.

- 13) Trimmed mangrove branches are to be left scattered on site, positioned away from river and tidal flow paths or pools of standing water. Where the intertidal zone is narrow and there is a risk trimmed vegetation could move into the waterway channel where it could be a hazard, then the vegetation should be removed for land-based disposal.

Reason - To mimic fallen branches from natural disturbance such as windfall or lighting strike and the habitat they form, and, ensure the stored carbon remains within the system.

BEST PRACTICE MANAGEMENT OF SPILLS

- 14) DPIRD Fisheries and appropriate authorities (e.g. the NSW Environment Protection Authority) are to be notified of any spills that occur while undertaking works authorised by this Code. See also NS174C s. 9 ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENTS.

Reason - To recognise and minimise the risk of an unintended pollution incident impacting upon the aquatic environment.

FISH KILL CONTINGENCY

- 15) A visual inspection of the waterway for dead or distressed fish (indicated by fish gasping at the water surface, fish crowding in pools or at the creek’s banks) is to be undertaken daily during the works. **Observations of dead or distressed fish are to be immediately reported to the Contact Officer by the Permit Holder.** In such a case all works are to cease until the issue is rectified and approval is given to proceed. If requested, the Permit Holder is to commit resources to the satisfaction of the Contact Officer for an effective fish rescue, if in the view of that officer, a fish kill event is imminent and likely to occur within or adjacent to the works area due to conditions associated with weather, water quality and other parameters.

Reason – DPIRD Fisheries needs to be aware of fish kills so that it can assess the cause and mitigate further incidents in consultation with relevant authorities. They are also potentially

contentious incidents from the public perspective. Work practices may need to be modified to reduce the impacts upon the aquatic environment.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

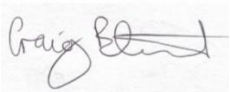
In the event of any inconsistency between the conditions of this approval and:

- the drawings / documents referred to above, the conditions of this approval prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.
- any Government publication referred to in this permit, the most recent document shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency; and
- the proponent's mitigation measures outlined in the application; the conditions of this approval prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

STOP WORK ORDERS

A Fisheries Officer or other appropriate delegate, who has reasonable cause to suspect that the conditions of this permit have not been complied with, **may order the work to stop immediately**. The order may be given to the permit holder or any person who informs the officer that they are acting in any capacity on behalf of the permit holder. Any damage caused to the habitat outside the specified permit area, or the carrying out of works not in accordance with the conditions specified in this permit and/or the application and that were accepted by the permit holder, could result in a breach of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* or *Regulations*, and penalties of up to \$220,000 may apply. Orders may also be made requiring work to rectify any damage caused by unauthorised works. Breaching a condition of a permit can incur an on-the-spot penalty notice of \$500 or up to \$11,000 through the courts pursuant to clause 225 of the *Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2019*.

Sincerely



Craig Blount

Senior Fisheries Manager, Aquatic Ecosystem Assessment

DPIRD Fisheries

Authorised delegate of the Minister of Primary Industries

4 September 2025

Attachment 1 – Location of works and contacts authorised under PN25/359

Location of works and contacts for works in relevant estuaries.

Contacts:

Office	Estuary	Telephone
Port Stephens Fisheries Office	Port Stephens	4982 1232
Swansea Fisheries Office	Hunter, Lake Macquarie	4971 1201
Central Coast Fisheries Office	Hawkesbury	4328 8622
Wollstonecraft Fisheries Office	Port Jackson	8437 4900
San Souci Fisheries	Botany Bay, Port Hacking	9529 6021

Legend for following maps.;

- Locations where AUSGRID network intersect with mangrove communities (taken from AUSGRID data)
- Mangrove communities
- Saltmarsh communities



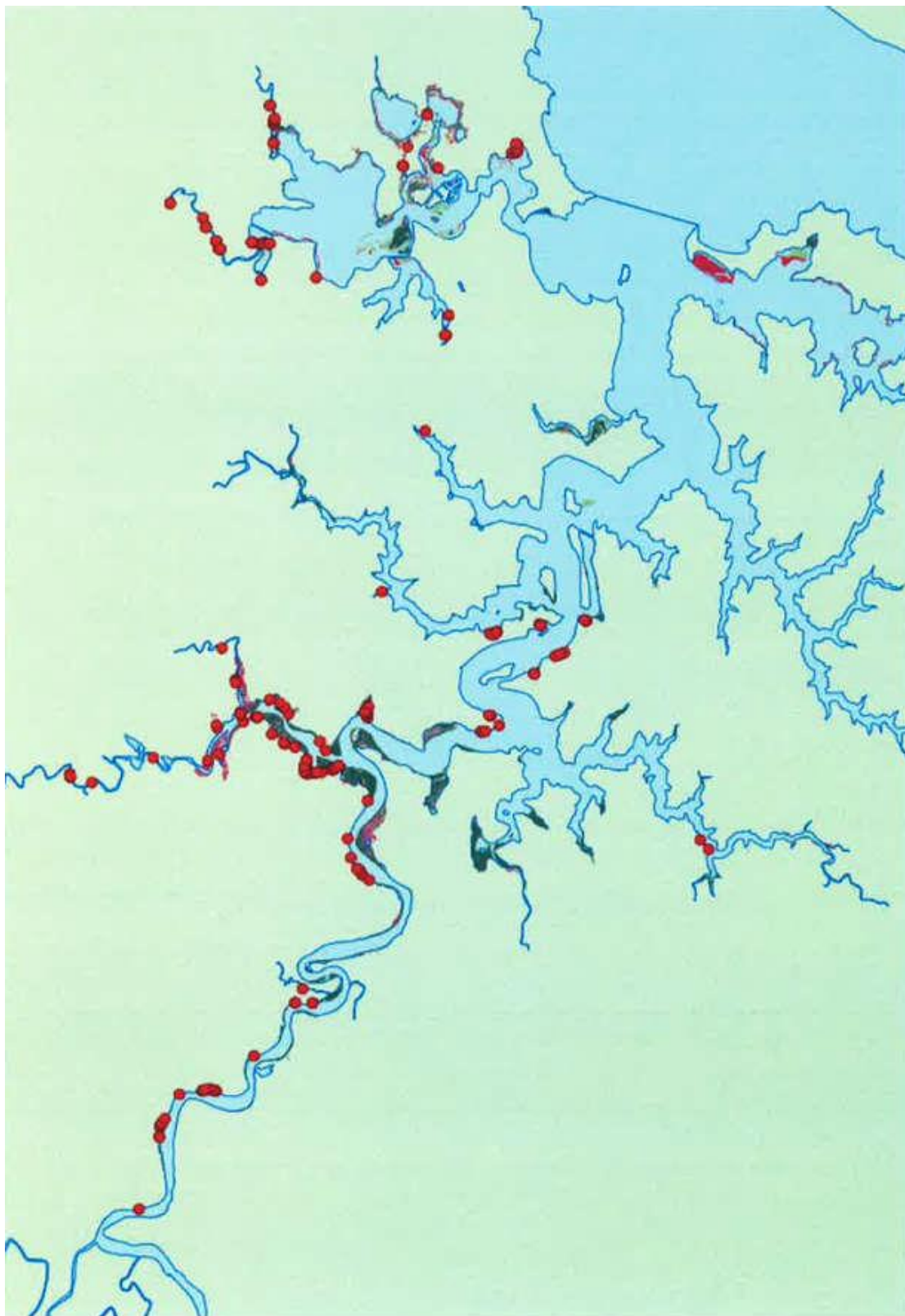
Port Stephens



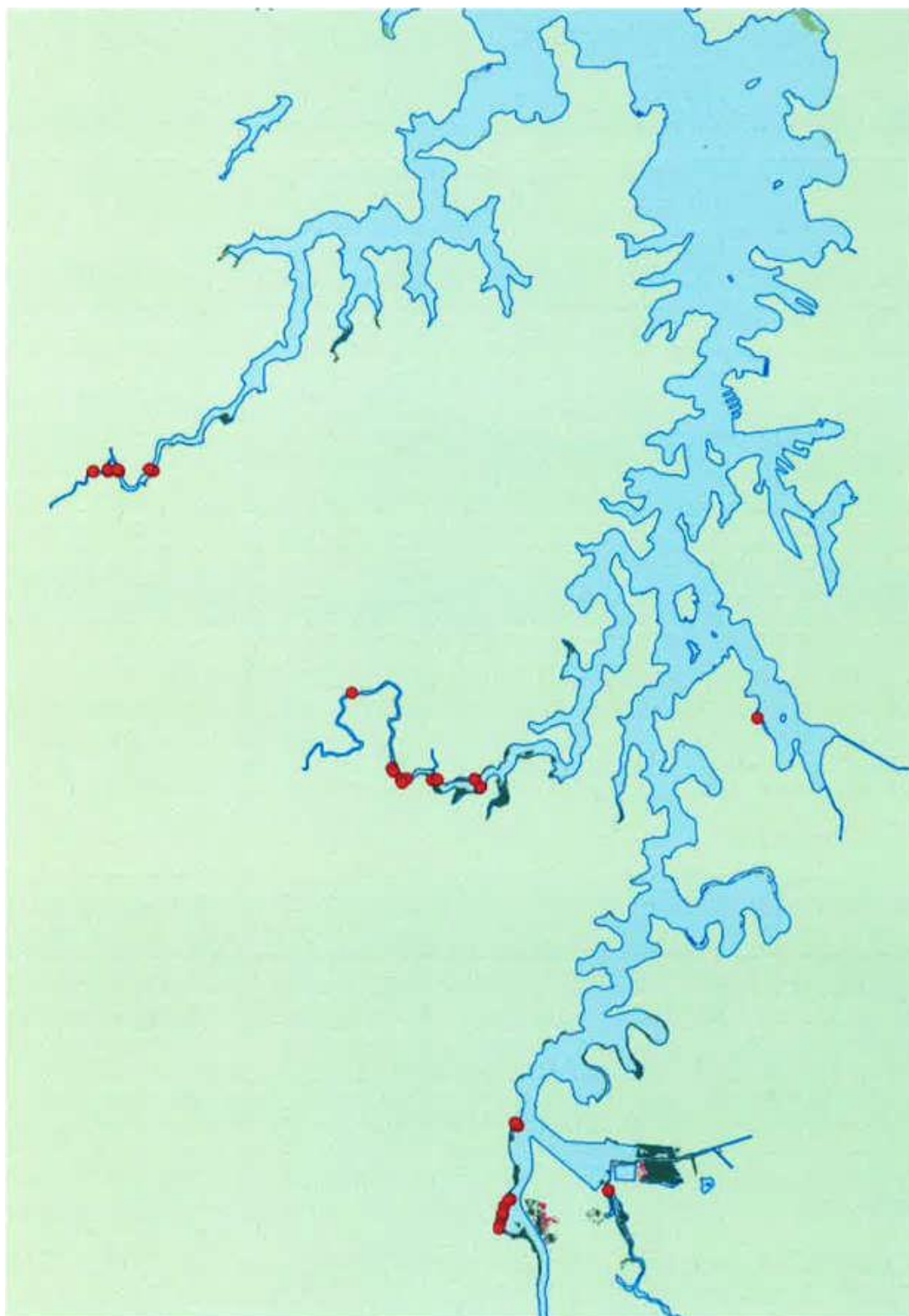
Hunter Estuary



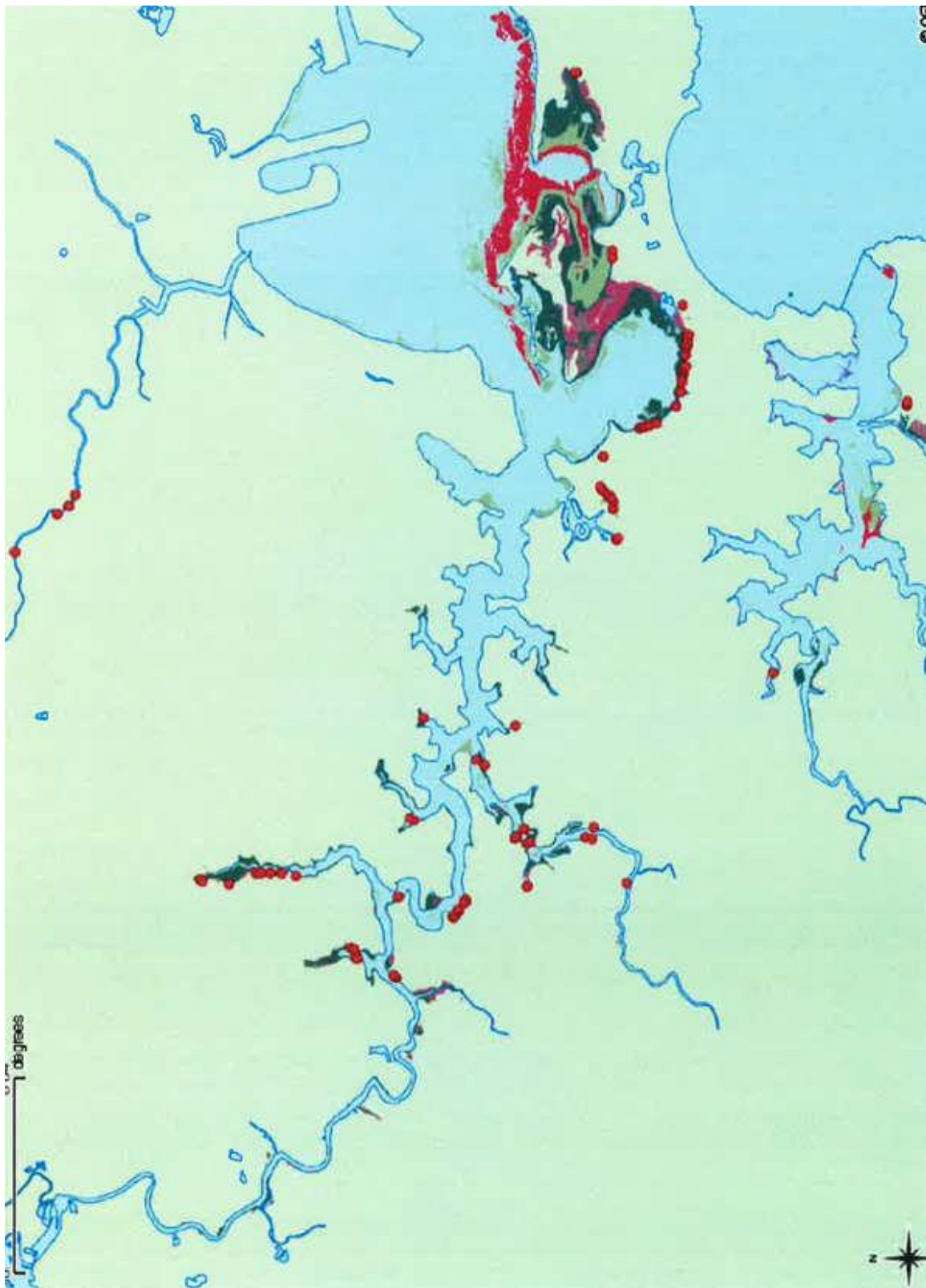
Lake Macquarie



Hawkesbury River, Pittwater, Brisbane Water



Port Jackson



Botany Bay and Port Hacking

**Permit No. PN25/359 issued under Part 7 of the
*Fisheries Management Act 1994***

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO DPIRD FISHERIES

In reference to s.205 Permit No. PN25/359 Maintenance Permit for Harm marine vegetation in
association with or in relation to powerline corridor maintenance

Acceptance of Conditions Form

I the undersigned, acknowledge that I have read and understood and agree to comply with the
conditions specified. I understand that penalties can be imposed for non-compliance with
conditions.

Permit Holder's name: _____

Permit Holder's signature: _____

Date: _____

**Please ensure you have SIGNED this page and RETAINED a copy
for your records before you email it to:**

ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au

fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au

**Permit No. PN25/359 issued under Part 7 of the
*Fisheries Management Act 1994***

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO DPIRD FISHERIES

In reference to s.205 Permit No. PN25/359 Harm marine vegetation in association with or in relation to powerline corridor maintenance

Commence Works Notification Form

(Note: to be completed and returned 3 – 5 working days before commencement of works)

Permit Holder's name: _____

Expected commencement date: _____

Permit Holder's signature: _____

Date: _____

Comments:

Please ensure you have SIGNED this page and RETAINED a copy for your records before you email it to:

ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au

fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au

**Permit No. PN25/359 issued under Part 7 of the
*Fisheries Management Act 1994***

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO DPIRD FISHERIES

In reference to s.205 Permit No. PN25/359 Harm marine vegetation in association with or in relation to powerline corridor maintenance

Post Works Notification Form

(Note: to be completed and returned within 21 days of completion of works associated with this permit, including rehabilitation of riparian areas)

Permit Holder's name: _____

Actual completion date: _____

Permit Holder's signature: _____

Date: _____

Assessment of works (e.g. straightforward, or complicated, i.e. were there complications that made it difficult to comply with permit conditions e.g. weather, unforeseen geological conditions, etc.):

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Please ensure you have SIGNED this page and RETAINED a copy for your records before you email it to:

ahp.central@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au

fisheries.compliance@DPIRD.nsw.gov.au