

SAPPHIRE TO WOOLGOOLGA PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE PROJECT

During pre-clearing surveys for the Sapphire to Woolgoolga Pacific Highway upgrade project, the ecologist made an unexpected find of the giant barred frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*). This threatened frog species was not identified in the environmental assessment and the farm dam where it was found is not considered by DECCW or the project ecologist to be preferred habitat.

An assessment was made to determine the potential impact and to identify management and mitigation measures. This identified that the impact could be managed by rescuing the giant barred frog individuals from the dam and relocating them to another suitable habitat.

The translocation and management of the frog has been undertaken in active consultation with DECCW. More than 10 individuals were collected from the dam and relocated downstream. The downstream site was selected over a number of other sites as it is along the same creek alignment and is similar to the dam where the frogs were found, including for water quality, stream flow characteristics and containment potential of any chytrid fungus.



*A giant barred frog
(Mixophyes iteratus) prior to translocation*

Handling of the frogs was in accordance with the DECCW hygiene protocol for the control of diseases in frogs, and farm dam dewatering is being undertaken in active cooperation with an ecologist, RTA and DECCW. Any additional giant barred frogs/tadpoles found during the dewatering process will be relocated to the downstream site.

Frog fencing has been installed to a minimum distance of 50 metres either side of the watercourse where forest vegetation exists and at the project boundary near the dam. A management strategy is being developed by a frog expert in consultation with DECCW. This plan will identify if future monitoring is required.

For further information, contact **Janelle Bancroft (6604 9331)**.