

Snowy 2.0 Recreational Fishing Management Plan

2025/2026 Annual Report

August 2026



Executive Summary

This report details the implementation of the Snowy 2.0 Recreational Fishing Management Plan (RFMP) during the 2025/2026 financial year, during which Snowy Hydro achieved full compliance with all RFMP requirements.

Key Highlights:

- **Facility Construction:** The primary achievement of this period was the construction of a new grow-out facility at the Gaden Trout Hatchery in Jindabyne. This project fulfills the core commitment to develop captive breeding capacity to restock Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene, should this ever be required.
- **Project Compliance:** Snowy Hydro successfully met all RFMP obligations for the reporting period, demonstrating a commitment to minimising the project's impact on recreational fishing.
- **Timeline and Delivery:** The facility has been completed and is operational well ahead of any potential need for restocking. It was completed on time and within the \$5 million budget.

Future Outlook

With the facility now operational and integrated into existing production, Snowy Hydro has ensured the enhanced production capacity needed to support future fisheries management. Following the commissioning of the Snowy 2.0 project, ongoing monitoring will allow DPIRD Fisheries to mitigate any potential impacts further safeguarding the viability of Tantangara and Eucumbene as world-class impoundment fisheries.

Acronyms and definitions

Approval	Infrastructure Approval for Snowy 2.0 Main Works issued under Section 5.19 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (Dated: 20th May 2020) (SSI 9687)
BRMP	Snowy 2.0 Biosecurity Risk Management Plan
CSSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
Dam	A physical structure to hold back water and raise its level, forming a reservoir of water
DAWE	Department of Agriculture Water and the Environment, now Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
DCCEEW	Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (formerly the Department of Agriculture Water and the Environment (DAWE, now the National EPA))
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment (formerly Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and now Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure)
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (formerly DPIE and DPE)
DPIRD	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, formerly NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), formerly part of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment at the time of project consent
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, now known as Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and the Department of Energy the Environment, Climate Change and Water (DEECW)
National EPA	National Environment Protection Agency (formerly the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water)
NSW	New South Wales
Pre-Connection	The period of time before Talbingo and Tantangara Reservoirs are hydrologically linked in an upstream direction via Snowy 2.0
PHES	Pumped Hydroelectric Station (Snowy 2.0)
Post-Connection	The period of time after Talbingo and Tantangara Reservoirs are hydrologically linked in an upstream direction via Snowy 2.0
RAS	Recirculating Aquaculture System
Reservoir	The impoundment of water behind a dam
RFMP	Snowy 2.0 Recreational Fishing Management Plan
TFMP	Snowy 2.0 Threatened Fish Management Plan

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Acronyms and definitions	3
Table of Contents	4
1. Introduction	5
1.1 Snowy 2.0 Project Overview	5
1.2 Snowy 2.0 Project Approval	5
1.3 Recreational Fishing Management Plan Background	6
1.4 RFMP Annual Report Requirements	7
2. Captive breeding and restocking activities	7
2.1 Next Steps	8
3. Conclusion	8
4. References	8

1. Introduction

The objective of the Snowy 2.0 Recreational Fishing Management Plan (RFMP) is to minimise the impact of the development on recreational fishing in Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene.

The current plan (Revision A) was endorsed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries Director General, Scott Hansen, on the 31st of October 2023.

This report provides an update of all activities undertaken as part of Snowy Hydro's commitment to develop the capability to restock Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene with salmonid fish associated with the RFMP.

Full compliance with the requirements of the RFMP was achieved during the reporting period.

The key activity during the reporting period was the construction of the grow out facility at the Gaden Trout Hatchery in Jindabyne.

The RFMP, alongside the associated Threatened Fish Management Plan (TFMP) and Biosecurity Risk Management Plan (BRMP), demonstrate Snowy Hydro's commitment to minimising the potential impacts of the project on biosecurity and fish.

1.1 Snowy 2.0 Project Overview

Snowy Hydro owns, manages and maintains the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme (the Snowy Scheme). The Snowy Scheme currently includes 16 major dams, nine power stations, one pumped power station, 145 km of interconnected tunnels and pipelines, and 80 km of aqueducts. The Snowy Scheme, principally located within the Kosciuszko National Park (KNP), is one of the largest and most complex hydroelectric schemes in the world.

Snowy 2.0 is the pumped hydro-electric expansion of the Snowy Scheme. It will link the existing Tantangara and Talbingo reservoirs via a new underground tunnel and a Pumped Hydroelectric Station (PHES). Snowy 2.0 will provide an additional 2,200 MW of dispatchable generating capacity, along with approximately 350,000 MWh of large-scale energy storage that will be available on demand as quick-start electricity generation at critical times of peak demand.

For more than 75 years, Snowy Hydro has responsibly operated the Snowy Scheme within KNP. Snowy Hydro is committed to avoiding and minimising potential impacts from Snowy 2.0, including biosecurity, as they do for the existing business.

1.2 Snowy 2.0 Project Approval

This project was designated Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI 9687) and assessed under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act). Under sections 5.23 and 5.24 of the EP&A Act, certain separate approvals and licences are not required. The project was approved by the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Section 5.19 of the EP&A Act on the 20th of May 2020.

A referral (EPBC 2018/8322) was also prepared and lodged with the Federal Minister for the Environment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the proposal was subsequently determined to be a controlled action under that Act. The project was approved by the Department of Agriculture Water and the Environment (DAWE), now the National Environmental Protection Agency (National EPA) under sections 130(1) and 133(1) of the EPBC Act on the 29th of June 2020.

Full details of the Project Approval and supporting information can be found at:

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/12891>

1.3 Recreational Fishing Management Plan Background

Snowy 2.0 PHES will establish a new novel two-way hydrologic connection pathway for water to enter Tantangara Reservoir from Talbingo Reservoir. This transfer of water could potentially move pest species of fish, including Redfin (*Perca fluviatilis*), from Talbingo Reservoir to Tantangara Reservoir (Cardno 2019). Whilst no threatened species are known to occur in Tantangara Reservoir, if pest fish are transferred and subsequently establish, the incursion may affect recreationally important populations of non-native species such as Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*). Should this occur, there will be secondary risk of transfer to Lake Eucumbene.

Project control measures outlined in the BRMP mean that it is less likely that any pest fish could be subsequently transferred from Tantangara Reservoir to Lake Eucumbene however actions in this plan are intended to accommodate this possibility. To mitigate potential impacts of pest fish species on salmonid populations in Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene, Snowy Hydro committed to funding an upgrade to the Gaden Trout Hatchery in Jindabyne to produce salmonids for release as part of the NSW DPIRD stocking program.

Should impacts of pest fish species in Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene be detected, appropriate captive breeding and restocking activities will be undertaken at the new facility to mitigate potential impacts on recreationally important fish species. These activities will be initiated and managed by NSW DPIRD.

The RFMP and the management measures described within represent the key measures for Snowy Hydro to minimise the impact of the development on recreational fishing in Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene.

In addition to the TFMP and BRMP, it is also a key measure to minimise the biosecurity risks associated with Snowy 2.0, including the movement and/or spread of weeds, pests and pathogens.

The three management plans are closely linked and have been designed in concert to avoid and minimise the potential aquatic and biosecurity impacts of Snowy 2.0. Copies of these management plans are available at: <https://www.snowyhydro.com.au>.

1.4 RFMP Annual Report Requirements

In accordance with Section 2.10 of the Recreational Fishing Management Plan (Rev. A), this report has been prepared to satisfy the requirement for annual reporting. That requirement is as follows:

Activities undertaken as part of Snowy Hydro's captive breeding capability, capacity and stocking commitments in the 12 months prior to 30 June each year (or later date as agreed by NSW DPI), following the approval of the RFMP, will be summarised and provided in a report that will be made available to the public on Snowy Hydro's website (see Section 4). Annual reporting will cease once the facilities at Gaden are commissioned and produce salmonids.

Given no activities occurred in the period prior to 2025/26, it was agreed with DPIRD that reporting would be delayed to this financial year.

2. Captive breeding and restocking activities

This section describes Snowy Hydro's progress against the commitment to spend \$5 million over 5 years from the commencement of the program to develop the capability to restock, and to restock, Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene with salmonid fish - addressing Schedule 3 Condition 26(b(i)) of the conditions of approval.

An options analysis process undertaken during the development of the RFMP, identified construction of an additional production facility at the Gaden Trout Hatchery which would utilise a Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) as the preferred approach to meet this requirement (Wedge Group, 2023).

As per the commitment in the RFMP, the facility has sufficient capacity to produce up to 20 tonnes of advanced size trout fingerlings and has improved the security of the hatchery's water supply via water reuse and temperature control.

The detailed design and construction of the facility was managed by NSW Public Works and DPIRD Fisheries via a memorandum of understanding between Snowy Hydro and DPIRD.

Construction of the new hatchery facility at Gaden Trout Hatchery commenced in February 2026 with site establishment and excavation works. This was followed in March with groundworks and in-ground services work. Piling and earthworks, including preparation works for concrete pour and installation of precast concrete tanks, was initiated in April. Pouring of concrete to the new build was completed in May. Erection of the structural steel framing and concrete prep works for an associated vehicle shed was also undertaken in May.

Roof works, Bondor cladding installation (insulated panels), installation of the state-of-the-art RAS and frame works for the vehicle shed was completed in June 2026. July saw roadworks completed with final

touches to the hatchery plus installation of Bondor cladding and roller shutter installation to the vehicle shed completed.

Defect rectification works and a formal handover to hatchery staff was finalised in August 2026 (Figure 1 and 2).



Figure 1: External view of the new hatchery facility



Figure 2: Internal view of the new hatchery facility

2.1 Next Steps

An official opening of the new hatchery facility is planned for Saturday 3rd October 2026 as part of a public open day at the Gaden Trout Hatchery site.

Now that the facility is operational, hatchery staff will familiarise themselves with the new facility and incorporate it in with existing production facilities. In response to impacts to recreationally important fish in Tantangara Reservoir and/or Lake Eucumbene a range of potential species including but not limited to the following may be produced and released as part of a restocking program:

- Rainbow Trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
- Brown Trout (*Salmo trutta*)
- Brook Trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)
- Tiger Trout (hybrid of *Salmo trutta* x *Salvelinus fontinalis*).

The species to be produced and released will be determined by NSW DPIRD.

The stocking of fish to Tantangara Reservoir and Lake Eucumbene in response to a potential impact associated with the establishment of Redfin due to Snowy 2.0 activities, will be determined by NSW DPIRD managers in association with relevant stakeholder input.

Until or unless an impact is detected, any fish produced at the facility will be at the discretion of NSW DPIRD and allocated and stocked in accordance with existing NSW stocking strategies.

Following commissioning of the Snowy 2.0 project, the fisheries at Tantangara and Eucumbene will be closely monitored. Any potential impacts as a result of redfin perch incursion will be identified and mitigated via the enhanced production capacity provided by the new facility.

3. Conclusion

The completion of the new grow out facility at the Gaden Trout Hatchery marks a significant milestone in the implementation of the Recreational Fishing Management Plan.

Through the delivery of this project, Snowy Hydro and DPIRD have significantly improved the viability of Tantangara and Eucumbene Reservoirs as world class impoundment fisheries.

4. References

Cardno (2019). Appendix M.2 Aquatic Ecology Assessment, Snowy 2.0 Main Works Environmental Impact Assessment. Prepared for EMM Consulting Pty Ltd. Cardno, St Leonards, NSW.

Wedge Group (2023). Snowy 2.0 – Gaden Hatchery Augmentation Investigations and Findings. Prepared for Snowy Hydro Limited.