

Department of Planning and Environment –
Water group

Improving Floodplain Connections Program

Gwydir Valley processes

Webinar

Presenters

Dan Connor

Ellie Randall

27 July 2023



Acknowledgement of Country



Agenda – Improving Floodplain Connections



Introductions and Agenda	Steve Rossiter
1. Purpose of today	Steve Rossiter
2. IFC Program Overview	Dan Connor
3. Review and assessment of unapproved priority flood works	Ellie Randall
4. Progress so far	Ellie Randall
5. Final questions and wrap up	Steve Rossiter

1. Purpose of today

- Overview of the Improving Floodplain Connections (IFC) program
- Cover the procedures we're following for priority unapproved flood works in the program
- Update on progress with the program in the Gwydir Valley
- Answer questions in relation to the program

Improving Floodplain Connections

Program overview

Dan Connor, Director of Floodplain Management
Department of Planning and Environment - Water group



Improving Floodplain Connections (IFC)

Will bring priority unapproved flood works into compliance with recent legislative requirements, including removal or modification where required

Improved floodplain connections

- An accelerated compliance program for identified priority flood works
- To be completed by June 2024
- Commonwealth and NSW funding
- Multi-agency program

Agency Partnership

- Department of Planning and Environment:
 - Water
 - Environment and Heritage
 - Crown Lands
- Natural Resources Access Regulator
- WaterNSW
- Regional NSW, Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries and Agriculture



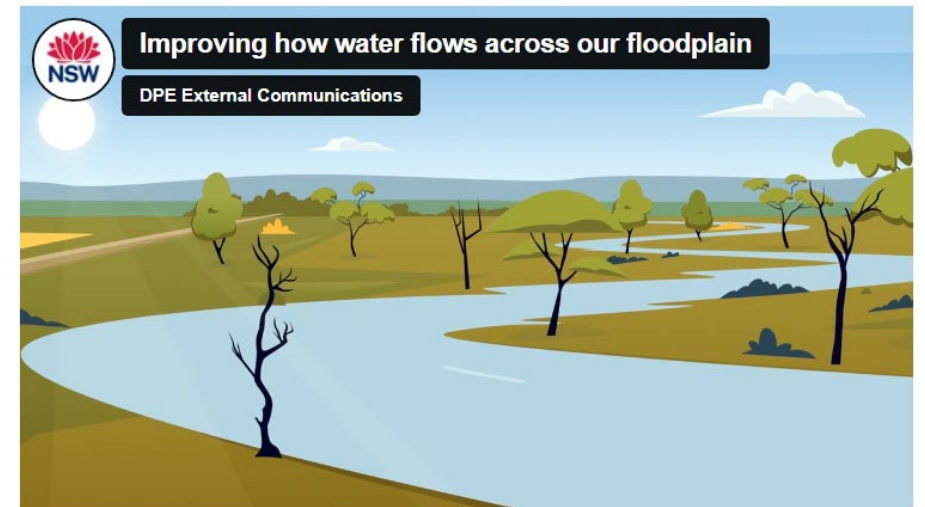
Purpose & benefits

Purpose

- Assist the passage of water across the floodplain, while supporting landscape productivity and averting flood risk
- Accelerate the timeframe for bringing unapproved flood works into compliance with the relevant floodplain management plan

Benefits

- Improved culture of compliance with flood works
- Improved connectivity for water flow, to support healthy ecosystems and cultural assets dependent on flooding



See our website: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/plans-programs/healthy-floodplains-project/improving-floodplain-connections

Support provided to landholders

Support for landholders to accelerate outcomes

- plan of works
- modelling, environmental and cultural assessments
- waiving of application fees

Key principles

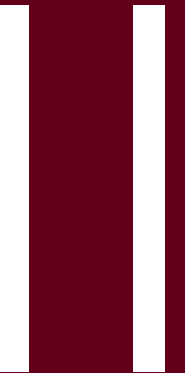
- participation is voluntary
- will require active and timely participation and cooperation by landholder
- any modification must comply with rules in the floodplain management plan

Where flood works need to be removed or landholders do not comply with principles – these matters will be referred to NRAR for further action.

Improving Floodplain Connections

Review and assessment of unapproved priority flood works

Ellie Randall, Manager – IFC Delivery
Department of Planning and Environment - Water group



Improving Floodplain Connections

An accelerated compliance program for ‘priority unapproved flood works’ that are within one of the following categories:

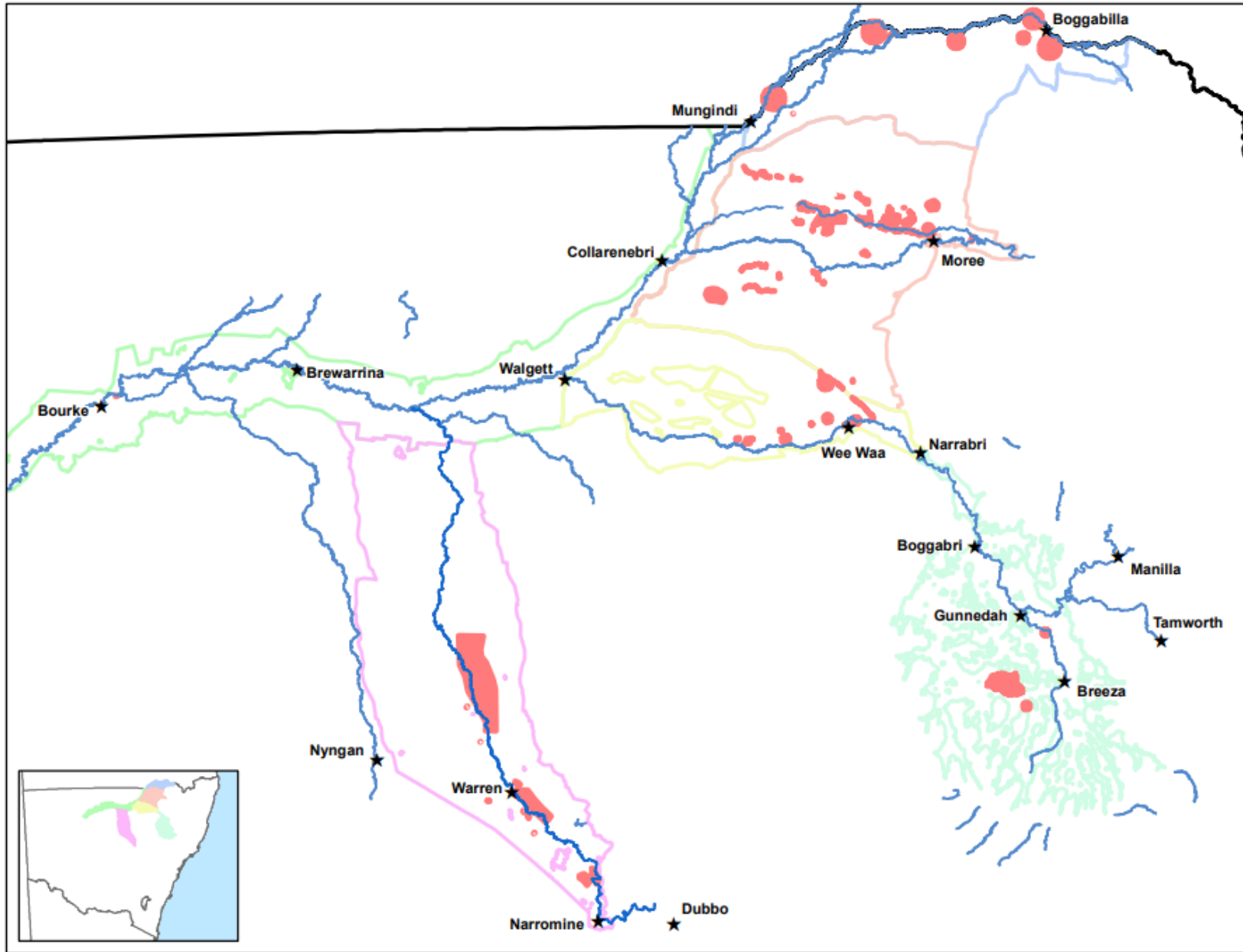
- do not have a flood work approval under the *Water Management Act 2000*
- did not need an approval at the time of construction but now needs an approval under a floodplain management plan
- has a flood work approval but is non-compliant with the flood work approval.

96 priority unapproved flood work areas identified:

- focus on areas of interest that have unapproved flood works with the most significant impact on the floodplain, especially with ecological and cultural assets.

Improving Floodplain Connections Program

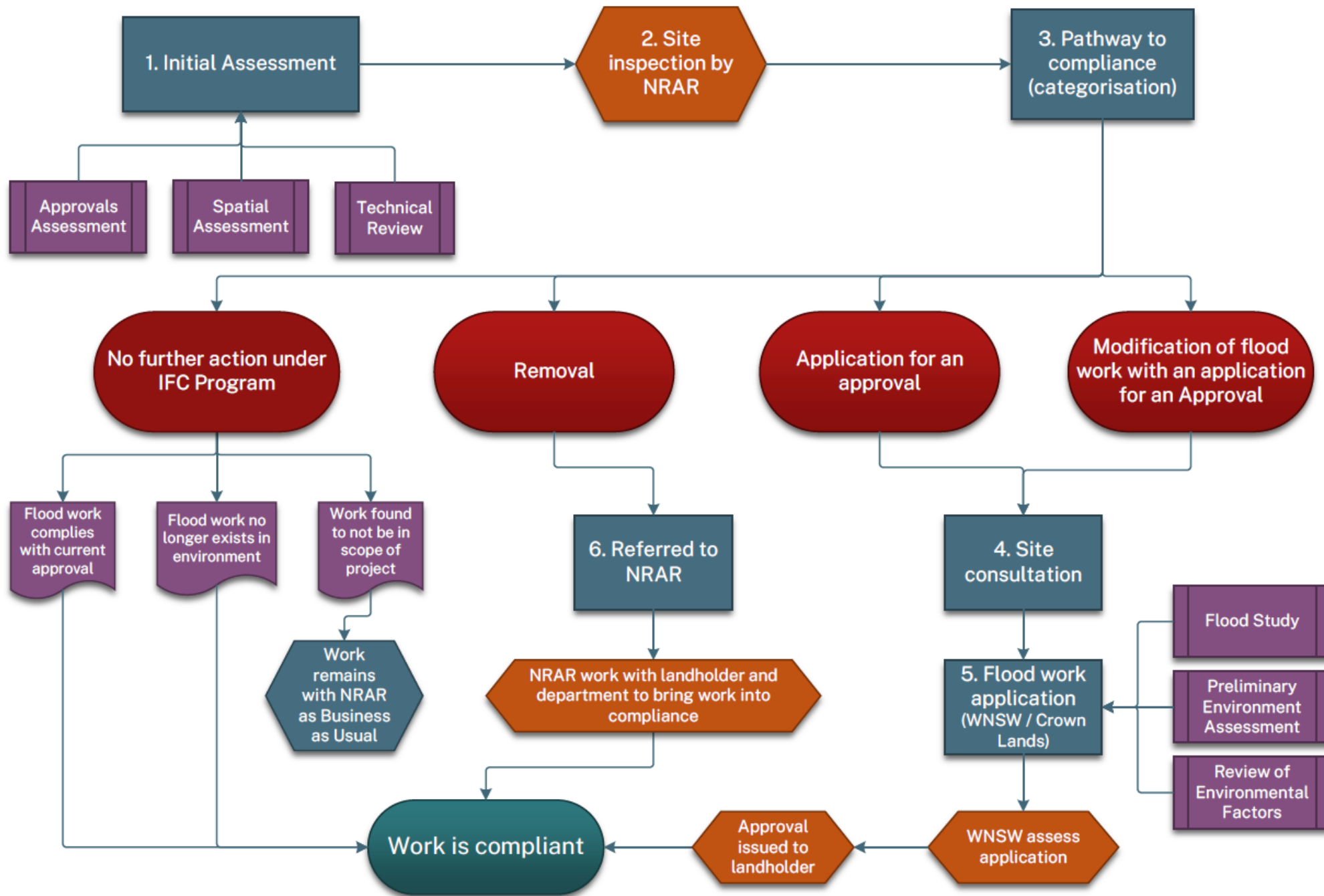
Priority Unapproved Flood Works in the NSW Northern Basin



- Legend**
- ★ Towns
 - Priority Unapproved Works
 - Major Watercourse
 - Barwon-Darling Valley Floodplain
 - Border Rivers Valley Floodplain
 - Gwydir Valley Floodplain
 - Lower Namoi Valley Floodplain
 - Macquarie Valley Floodplain
 - Upper Namoi Valley Floodplain
 - NSW State Border

N
 Scale: 1:2,400,000
 (at A4 size)
 Projection: NSW Lamberts Conformal Conic
 Datum: GDA94

Roads, rivers, towns data source:
 © Spatial Services - NSW Department of Customer
 Services 2022.
 Panorama Avenue, Bathurst 2795
 spatialservices.finance.nsw.gov.au



Initial assessment

An initial assessment is conducted to understand the current condition and impact of the work.

Each assessment included a review of the following:

1. Approvals assessment
2. Spatial assessment
3. Technical review

Site inspection by the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR)



Where required, NRAR will conduct an initial site visit to verify the information obtained from the preliminary desktop assessment.

The site visit will be assessing the following items:

- the work is on the ground
- recording the location of the work
- recording measurements – height, length, width
- obtaining photo and/or aerial imagery.

Assessment to determine the pathway to compliance

The work is subjected to an assessment to determine the likely pathway forward for the flood work to achieve compliance.

The assessment includes:

- A review of NRARs report
- A review of Floodplain Management Plans conditions
- A licensing review by WaterNSW

Outcome of the assessment

At the conclusion of the assessment the work will fall under one of four categories:

- No further action under the program
- Application for an approval
- Application for an approval with modification to the flood work
- Removal

Site consultation for flood works on the application for approval pathway

The department will conduct site consultations with landholders whose work have been determined as requiring approval (with or without modification to the flood work).

This consultation process will involve:

- A discussion with the landholder about the flood work application and approval process
- Modifications that may be required for the work to comply
- A discussion on the purpose of the work and the necessity for it to remain in the environment

Applications to bring works into compliance



The Water group will support the landholder by commencing the technical work required to prepare the flood work approval application on the landholder's behalf.

Once the application is complete, the form and supporting documentation will be emailed to the landholder. The landholder will have 28 days to review, sign and return the application, for submission to WaterNSW.

All flood works that require an application through Water NSW or Crown Lands (General Licence Application) will have their application fees paid for through the IFC program.

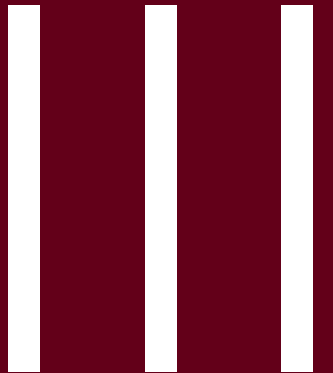
Questions about process so far?

Improving Floodplain Connections

Progress so far

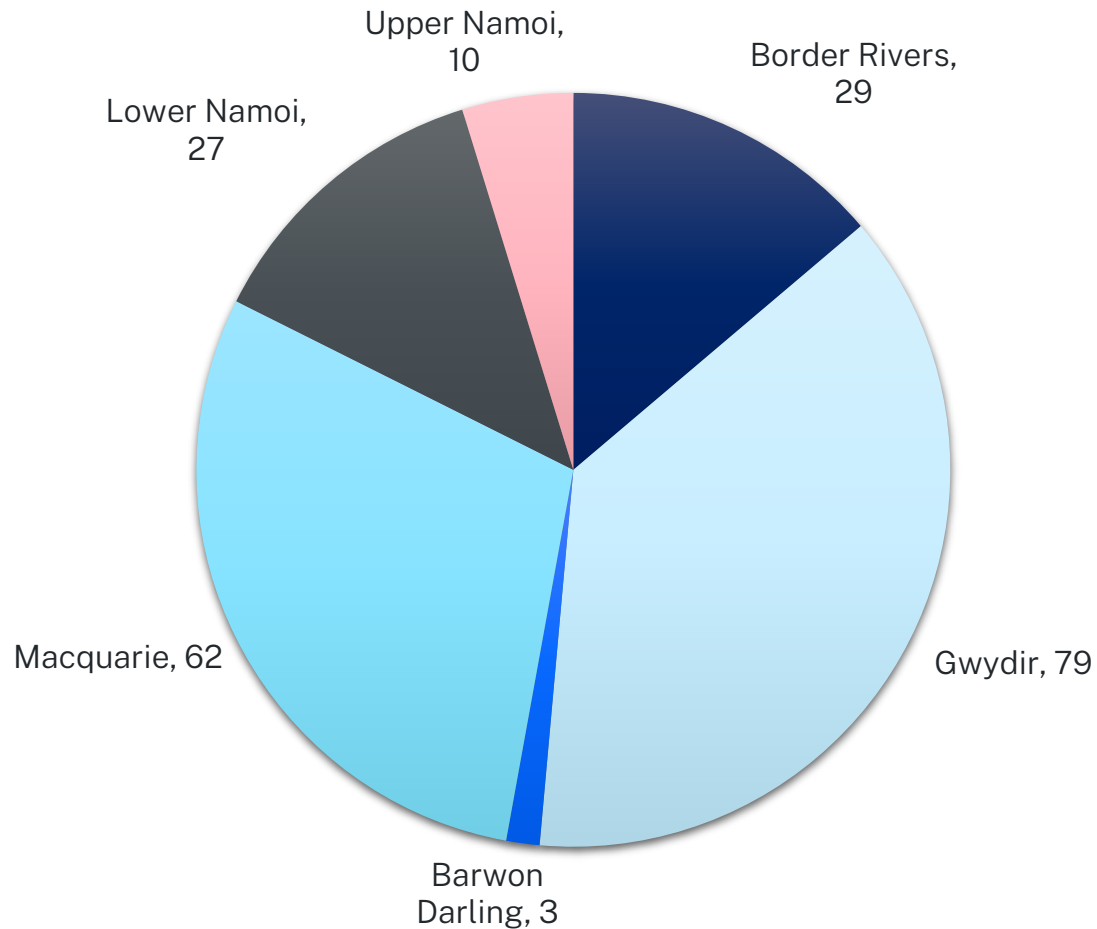
Ellie Randall, Manager – IFC Delivery
Department of Planning and Environment - Water group

NSW Government

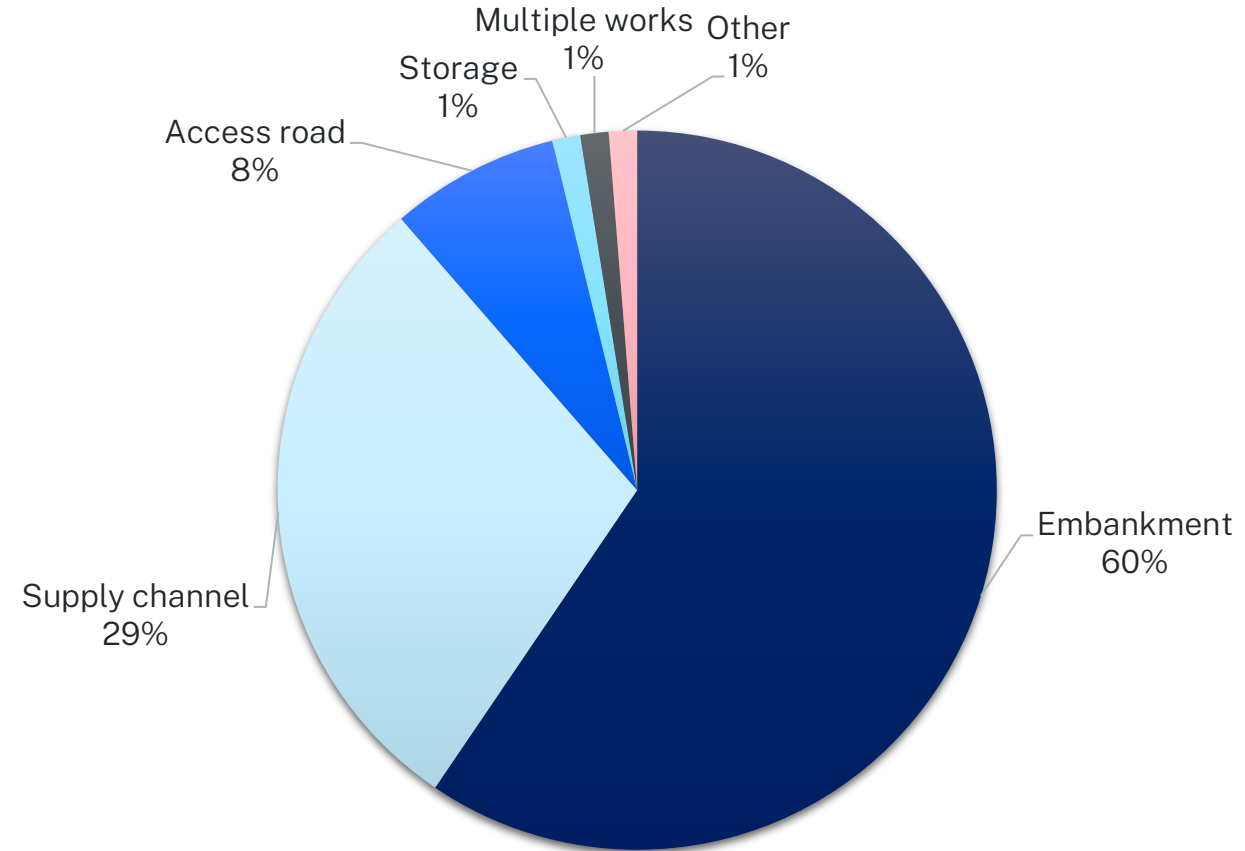


Flood works and types in the program

Number of Flood works – By Valley

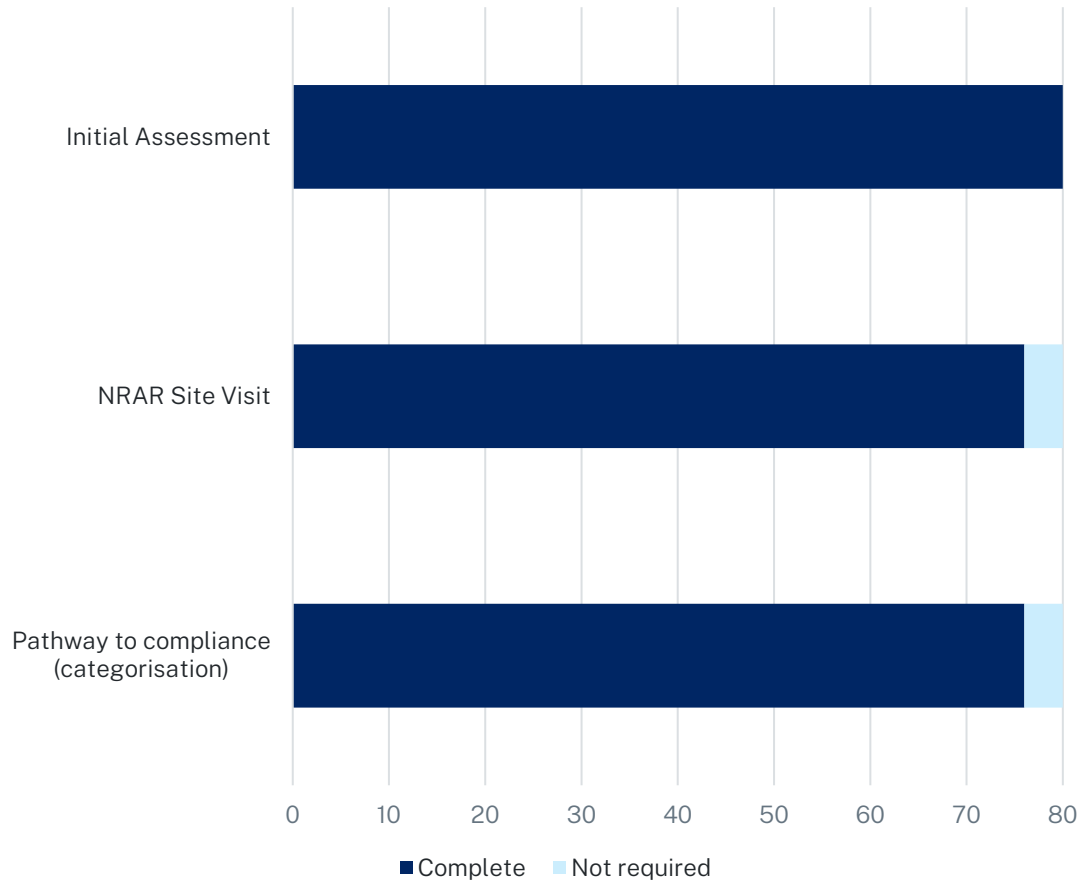


Flood work types - Gwydir

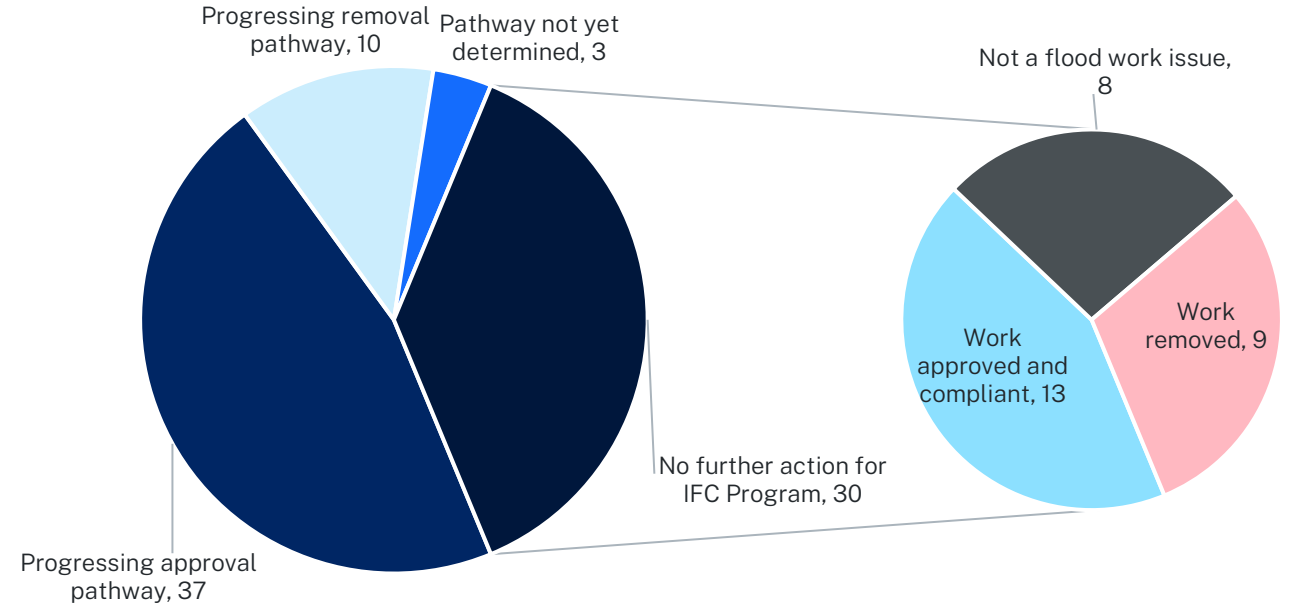


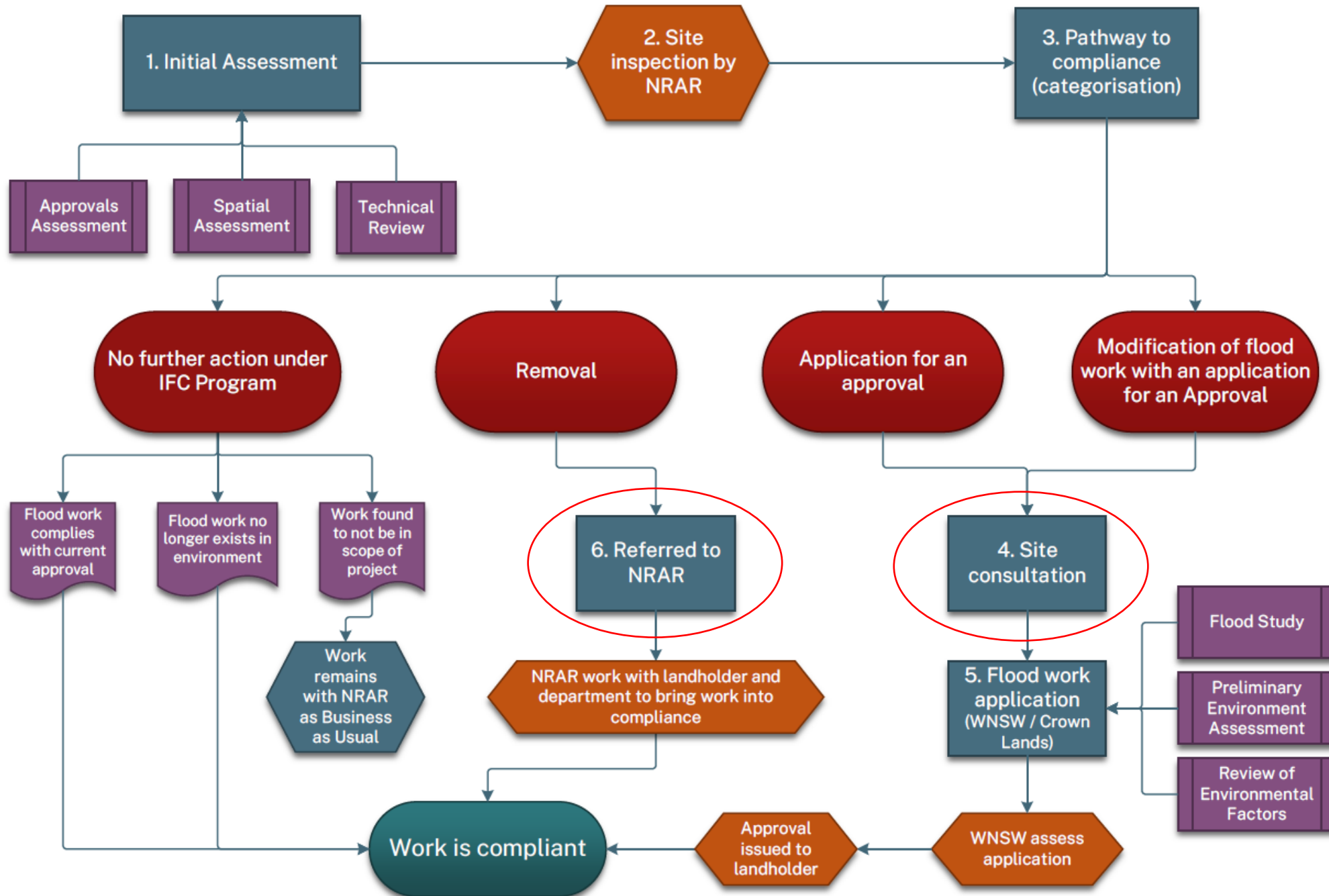
Progress – Gwydir

Gwydir assessment progress



Outcomes of investigations and pathway forward





Indicative Timeframes for Gwydir Valley

ID	Task Name	2023					2024						
		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
1	Site consultation	■											
2	Flood work applications			■									
3	Assessment of applications (WaterNSW / Crown Lands)						■						
4	Referred to NRAR	■											
5	NRAR working with landholder to bring works into compliance (ongoing)		■										

Questions about progress so far?

Feedback?

More information

Water Group

Web:

<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/plans-programs/healthy-floodplains-project/improving-floodplain-connections>

Email: floodplain.ifcdelivery@dpi.nsw.gov.au

NRAR

Email: nrar.ifc@nrar.nsw.gov.au

Healthy Floodplains Project



About the project

Reforming floodplain water management in the NSW northern Basin to ensure a fair share for all users and the environment...



Licensing framework for floodplain harvesting

A comprehensive licensing framework means limits on water take can be measured, managed and enforced.



Improving floodplain connections

An accelerated compliance program for priority unapproved flood works in the northern Murray-Darling Basin.



Water Sharing Plans

Setting out the rules for how flood water is allocated to users and the protection of the environment.