

The draft Native Vegetation Regulatory Map

The draft Native Vegetation Regulatory (NVR) map of NSW is a tool landholders can use when considering how best to manage native vegetation on their land.



Summary

- A draft NVR map is currently being released in stages across NSW.
- The draft NVR map does not have legal effect – i.e. it does not impose any new legal obligations and is not binding.
- Landholders can seek a free review of the draft NVR map as it relates to their land. The review will normally be completed in 40 days.
- The draft NVR map can help identify opportunities for landholders to receive payments for the management of conservation assets on their land.

What's currently happening

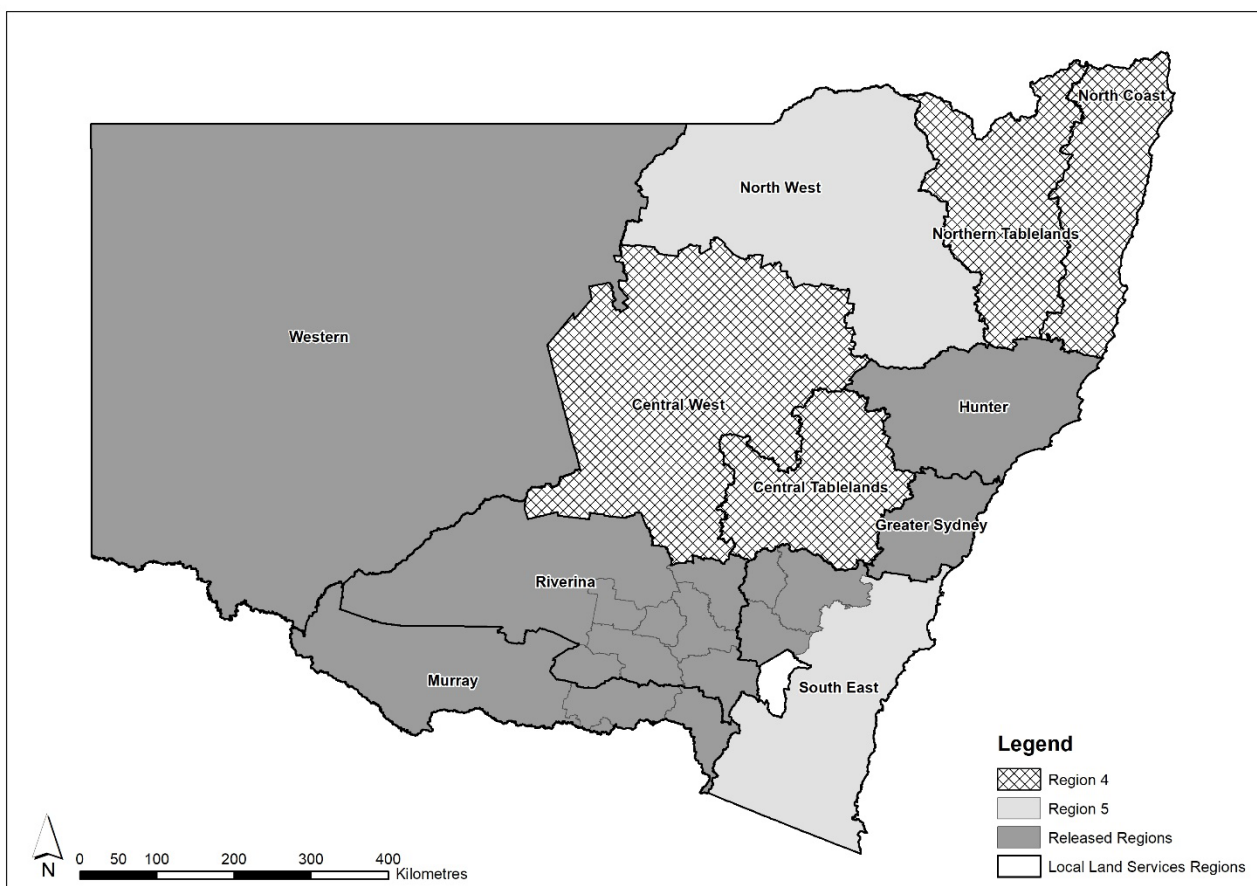
Around six per cent of NSW was formally mapped in 2017 to identify sensitive and vulnerable categories of land.

There is a legal obligation to map two other categories of land across the State – category 1 (exempt) and category 2 (regulated) land. A draft map, maintained by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Group, will be published in stages, and the map will be finalised only after its accuracy is further improved in consultation with landholders.

This process commenced in October 2022. When a draft NVR map is published in an area, landholders can request a free map review from the Department at any time now or into the future. The draft NVR map does not create any new regulatory requirements or place additional requirements on landholders.

This is the last round of the staged release process, and the draft NVR map has now been published for all LLS Regions across the State.

The following map displays previously released areas plus the Region 4 and Region 5 areas released in 2024.



Why are we preparing a draft NVR map for NSW?

The *Local Land Services Act 2013* (LLS Act) and *Local Land Services Regulation 2014* state that a NVR map must be prepared and published. The publication of the map is a legal requirement introduced as part of the reforms to native vegetation management in 2017.

The map applies to all land on which native vegetation management is regulated under the LLS Act – around 78 per cent of the State. Before the final map is published, it is first released as a draft so landholders can review it and seek changes if they have additional property scale information. The draft NVR map is being released in stages (e.g. by region).

What is the draft NVR map required to show?

The LLS Act and Regulation require the map to show:

- Sensitive land – this was mapped in 2017 and covers 1.7 per cent of NSW
- Vulnerable land – this was mapped in 2017 and covers 4.3 per cent of NSW
- Category 1 – Exempt land – draft map is being published in stages
- Category 2 – Regulated land – draft map is being published in stages.

What do the different categories of land mean?

Category 1 - Exempt land is land where native vegetation can be cleared without approval from LLS.

Category 2 land is divided into:

- Category 2 – Regulated land is Category 2 land that is not vulnerable or sensitive regulated land. There are pathways for notification of land management activities or where approval is required from LLS to clear native vegetation from rural zoned land in this category. There is also a range of allowable activities where approval from LLS is not required. For more information on allowable activities, visit the [LLS website](#) or contact LLS on 1300 795 299.
- Category 2 – Vulnerable regulated land is land where clearing of native vegetation may not be permitted under the *Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018*, and a limited range of allowable activities are permitted.
- Category 2 – Sensitive regulated land is land where clearing is not permitted under the *Land Management Code (Native Vegetation) Code 2018*, and a limited range of allowable activities are permitted.

Excluded land is land where the LLS Act and allowable activities do not apply. Each land category is determined by various criteria as outlined in the LLS Act.

Why is the draft NVR map released in stages?

The staged release of the draft NVR map was adopted to ensure the Department could focus customer service resources to specific Regions as they were released. This ensures enquiries and applications for Category Explanation Reports or map reviews are actioned in a timely way to support landholders. The release of the draft NVR map has now been completed for all LLS Regions across NSW.

For more information on the criteria that apply to each land category in the remaining areas of NSW where the draft map remains unpublished, visit the [LLS website](#) or contact LLS on 1300 795 299.

When will the draft NVR map for other areas of NSW be available?

The draft NVR map will be progressively released across NSW. The timeline for publication will be staged to ensure sufficient service for landholders as each Region is released.

The map showing category 1 and 2 land is published as a “draft” – what does that mean?

The reason for publishing the map as a draft is to provide landholders with a chance to review the accuracy of the mapping of their land before the map is finalised and has regulatory status. Even after the map is finalised, landholders will still be able to request map revisions, without charge.

The draft NVR map does not create new regulatory requirements or place additional requirements on landholders. While the draft NVR map is under review, land categories remain defined by the criteria in the legislation.

While it is only a draft, landholders can consider the draft NVR map in making their decisions about vegetation management. For example, if landholders agree that land mapped as draft category 1 (exempt) land meets the criteria in the LLS Act, they can feel confident they do not require LLS approval to clear native vegetation on that land. Being able to see the draft NVR map can help reduce the risk of the landholder making an error in deciding what category an area of land is in, which may inadvertently lead to breaches of the LLS Act.

A map of vulnerable and sensitive regulated land has been published since 2017 which legally restricts land clearing in those areas.

How can a landholder check the draft NVR map?

The draft NVR map is now available across all areas of NSW as shown on the Release Regions map above. The map viewer can be accessed on the [NVR map webpage](#).

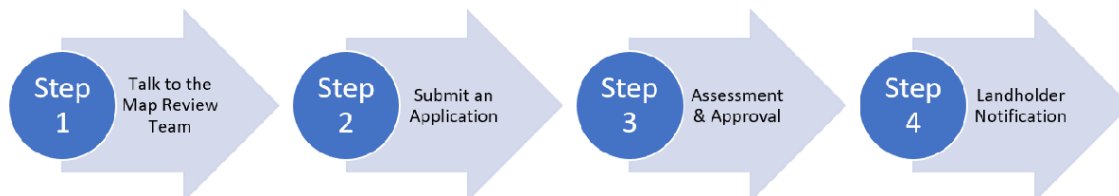
The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water’s Map Review Team is available to assist on 1800 001 490 or at map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au.

How can a landholder seek a review of the draft NVR map?

If a landholder thinks the draft map is inaccurate, they or someone authorised to act on their behalf can request a free map review. Contact the Department by either submitting an [online enquiry form](#), calling 1800 001 490 or emailing map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au. A member of the Department’s Map Review Team will contact you to discuss your concerns. Often, this initial step clears up the matter without the need for a map review. After that, a map review application can be lodged if needed.

There is no time limit to apply for a map review. Landholders can request a free map review for the transitional, draft or final NVR map at any time now or into the future.

Map Review Steps



Applications are assessed in relation to the land category criteria specified in the LLS Act.

A map review officer will work with each landholder to identify what information is available to support the review, such as photographs, dates of past clearing or cultivation events, or previous clearing consents.

The Map Review Team aims to complete reviews within 40 days, although determinations can still be made after that time. In some cases, information needed from other sources outside the Department's Biodiversity, Conservation and Science Group may cause a delay. The Map Review Team will keep applicants informed and provide a determination as soon as it is made.

How was the draft NVR map created?

The draft NVR map has been prepared using a peer-reviewed scientific method and has involved years of analysis. Images from planes and satellites were examined by qualified staff to generate land use and vegetation maps, with quality checks on the ground. A total of 120 other data sources were also used, such as elevation, threatened species records, and existing approvals and agreements. Improvements are always being made, and an updated [map method statement](#) was published in 2022.

In 2015 and 2017, independent experts from Geosciences Australia, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and Victoria and Queensland governments reviewed the map method and found the method was appropriate and based upon the available technology.

Is the draft NVR map accurate?

A range of independent reviews have found the draft map is typically more than 90 per cent accurate statewide. The draft map is as accurate as can be achieved without additional landholder input.

Over the past five years, the draft map has been through a variety of external reviews and consultation.

In 2021, the Department and LLS engaged an independent evaluation of stakeholder confidence in the unpublished categories of the draft map. Elton Consulting surveyed over 120 properties across the State and less than half of the landholders found the need to request a property scale review and for those that did, there was less than three per cent net change of regulated land for reviewed properties.

In the sensitive and vulnerable categories – published in 2017 – the map has proved to be highly accurate. 194 landholder reviews have resulted in a net change of 1.4 per cent across the area mapped in those categories.

Despite using the best available science and undertaking several reviews, it is acknowledged there will be some inaccuracies at a property level in the draft NVR map. The purpose of publishing a draft map is to allow landholders to identify inaccuracies at the property scale and have them corrected through the map review process before a final map is published.

How can the map help identify economic benefits?

Areas mapped as sensitive, vulnerable or draft category 2-regulated land may hold natural capital assets that could generate economic benefits for landholders.

Economic opportunities for landholders with natural capital assets on their land could include:

- generating biodiversity credits for sale through the Biodiversity Credits Supply Fund and Taskforce
- carbon credits: receiving incentives and private equity through carbon trading schemes.

How can I get assistance?

If you have concerns or would like more information about the NVR mapping for your property and would like to seek advice, request a Category Explanation Report or to request a map review, contact the **Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's Map Review Team** on 1800 001 490 or at map.review@environment.nsw.gov.au.

To find more information about whether you need LLS approval to clear native vegetation on your property, please visit the [LLS website](#) or call 1300 795 299.