



Vegetation removal from Gatelys Road to the Pacific Highway

The Australian and NSW governments are funding the \$2.2 billion, 14-kilometre Coffs Harbour bypass project. The bypass will boost the regional economy and improve connectivity, road transport efficiency and safety for local and interstate motorists.

As part of major construction work, the Coffs Harbour bypass project team is removing vegetation and between Gatelys Road and the Pacific Highway to prepare the alignment for drainage and earthworks.

Vegetation removal

The project team will be removing vegetation and banana trees from Gatelys Road northern tunnel portal to the Pacific Highway between **1 May and 30 June 2023**. This work will be carried out during standard construction hours. The project team will follow approved requirements when handling banana plant waste to minimise the risk of spreading Panama disease which can seriously impact plantations. For more information on the project's management of Panama disease during construction, please read our factsheet at www.pacifichighway.com.au/coffsharbourbypass.

The project follows strict protocols for tree removal including a two stage process to reduce impacts on native animals and to relocate threatened plants. This process includes clearly marking out environmental protection exclusion zones that will not be impacted and the areas where vegetation will be removed. Additionally, the project's qualified and experienced ecologist carries out a survey before any vegetation removal starts. This assessment identifies and tags all potential habitat trees – ones that typically have hollows or signs of animals living in them. Other vegetation removal work is started while the habitat trees are not disturbed for at least 48 hours. This time allows animals to relocate nearby, including to the 165 nest boxes installed as part of the Coff Harbour bypass.

When habitat trees are felled, it is done using a specific method to minimise any disturbance to native animals. All felled habitat trees are inspected by the project ecologist and they also carry out a health assessment on any native animals found. If they are healthy, they are released into adjacent habitat while any injured fauna are taken into care including use of local wildlife carer groups.

This staged method has been successfully used on previous Transport for NSW projects.

Landscape and habitat restoration

Extensive landscaping and revegetation works covering about 150 hectares, at this stage, will be carried out as part of the project. Revegetation includes koala habitat over Roberts Hill and Gatelys Road tunnels and under the bypass at Jordans Creek. This work will connect bushland from the escarpment to the low lying areas of Coffs Harbour creating a significant fauna corridor. Other proposed revegetation will include areas of rainforest and native species. Details will be included in the Place Design and Landscape Plan which the project team will be placing on public display later this year for feedback.

The project will protect roughly 300 hectares of natural habitat through biodiversity offsets including in the Coffs Basin, and Jordans Creek area next to the alignment and Upper Kalang, just west of Urunga. We have also contributed more than \$270,000 to NSW Biodiversity Conservation division for research into the management of Myrtle Rust and its impacts on the Scrub Turpentine species.

Reuse of timber

As part of the vegetation removal process, all trees are assessed to be used for merchantable timber, the project's furniture within and adjacent to fauna crossings, as rootballs to create aquatic habitat in creeks and help stabilise creek banks or as mulch for project erosion and sediment controls.

More information about this work can be found in the project's Vegetation removal and landscape and habitat factsheet at www.pacifichighway.nsw.gov.au/coffsharbourbypass.

How will the work affect you?

At times there may be short restrictions to access in specific areas as larger trees are brought down. Residents will be directly contacted if there is going to be any impact on their access to their property.

There may be some dust and noise from these activities. Dust will be managed using water carts and binders, if required. Noise will be managed through ensuring equipment is maintained and switched off when not in use. Equipment for these activities will include excavators, chainsaws, mulchers and light and heavy vehicles.

Looking ahead

Vegetation and banana plantation removal between Shephards Lane northern tunnel portal and Gatelys Road southern tunnel portal from **25 May 2023**.

Building of access roads and building minor site compounds at various locations along the alignment.

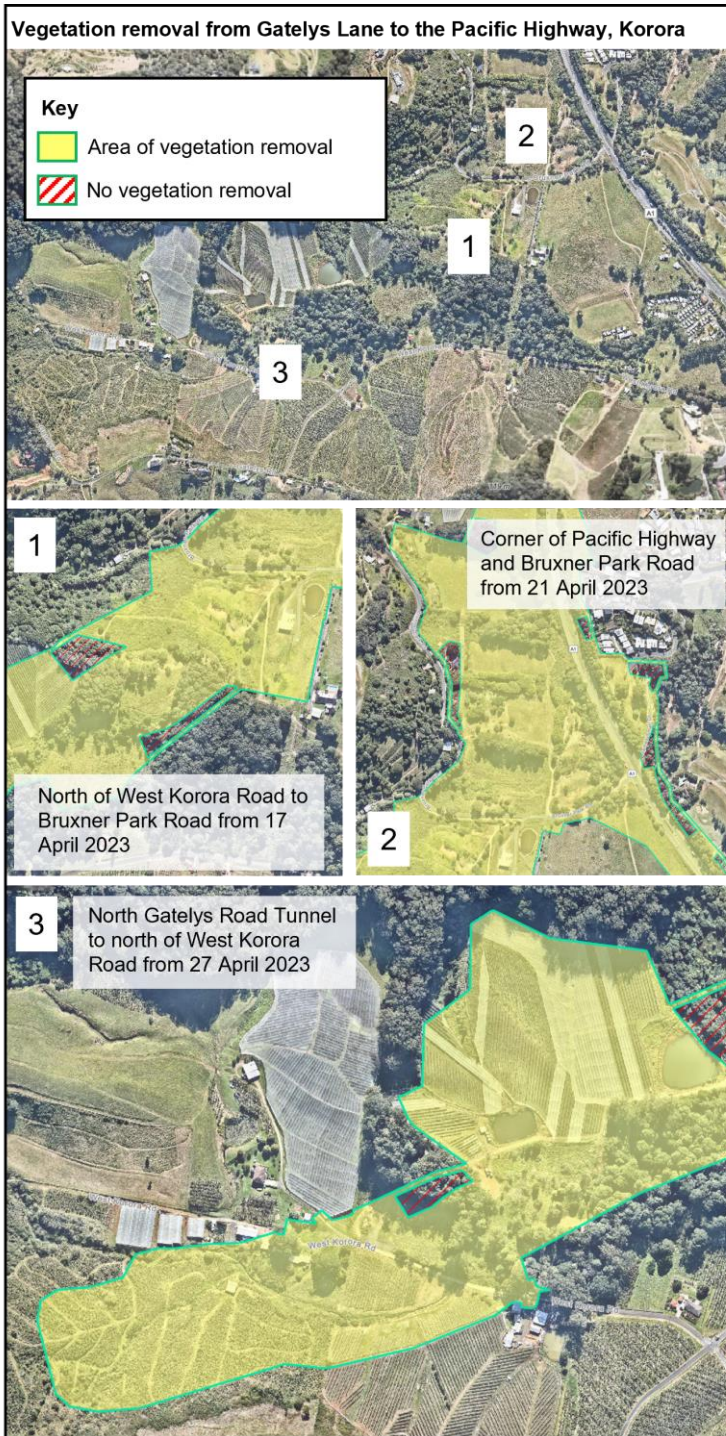
Standard construction hours

The standard construction hours for the project are:

- **Monday to Friday from 7am to 6pm**
- **Saturday from 8am to 1pm**

We apologise for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience as we build this important project which will boost the efficiency and safety for local and interstate motorists.

Locations of work



Contact

If you have any enquiries and complaints, please contact the project team on 1800 550 621 or community@chbteam.com.au

Translating and interpreting service



If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to call us on 1800 550 621