

Management Plan

to accompany

Application for a new permit to clear native vegetation (area permit)

(form NV-F01v12.0)

from

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

for

McIntyre Trees Pty Ltd

Background

McIntyre Trees Pty Ltd own a property at Catterick, approximately 12 kilometres north of the town of Bridgetown in the south-west of Western Australia.

The 195 hectare property is largely devoted to commercial hardwood tree plantations for the production of timber products.

An area of approximately 17 hectares near the middle of the property is regrowth native forest comprising mostly jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*) and marri (*Corymbia calophylla*).

The company is seeking to conduct some ***silvicultural thinning*** on the 17 hectares of regrowth forest in order to provide supplementary income from the property, improve the status of the forest in a drying climate, improve the aesthetics of the forest and, importantly, to reduce the risk of damaging bushfires.

Current status of the native forest subject to this application

The remnant native forest on this Catterick property has been subjected to harvesting for timber on up to three or four occasions since early last century, with some older stumps showing evidence of the use of axe and crosscut saw. The forest type is typical “Southern Jarrah” forest, dominated by jarrah and marri, with major understory species of banksia, grass trees and *Persoonia* species. The ground level understory is sparse, reflecting the relatively high basal area of regrowth jarrah and marri.

The forest is healthy with no current signs of dieback due to *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

The forest now lends itself to some considered silviculture to release growing stock and to open up the forest to facilitate follow-up hazard reduction burning.

Soils on the regrowth forest area are predominantly gravels with some lateritic exposure.



Regrowth jarrah/marri forest on the property. Note relatively sparse understorey.

Outline of silvicultural and harvesting prescription

- The silvicultural prescription to be adopted follows the principles contained within the “Silvicultural Guidelines for Jarrah Forest”, published as “FEM Guide No 1” by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (now DBCA) in 2014.
- In summary, the prescription for the Catterick property will be to promote the growth of selected retained trees by thinning to a target basal area of 15m² per hectare.
- At least five habitat trees per hectare, on average, will be retained. Selection of habitat trees will target all and any sound, older trees with hollows or potential hollows, for fauna. In addition, 6 to 8 trees per hectare will be retained as “secondary” habitat trees.
- Marri trees of diameter above 700mm dbhob will, as a rule, be retained for fauna habitat, provided such trees do not pose a safety risk and subject to tree spacing.

- Harvesting machinery will be cleaned of any soil and plant matter before entering the property to minimise any risk of introducing jarrah dieback disease or undesirable weeds. Further measures to avoid introduction or spread of jarrah dieback include restricting operations to “dry soil” conditions.
- Harvesting will be carried out by an experienced and qualified local harvesting contractor using machinery suitable for the harvesting of native forest. This will comprise a tree harvester to fell trees and cut boles into appropriate lengths. This method is referred to by some people within DBCA as “soft felling”.
- Extraction of logs will be carried out using a rubber-tyred skidder or forwarder. Logs will be loaded onto trucks using the forwarder. Biomass will be generated from low grade log and branch material extracted to bush landings by a mobile chipping machine.
- Harvesting will be undertaken in a sustainable manner to reduce damage to mid-storey canopy and non-target vegetation.
- Extraction tracks will, where necessary, be created by the tree harvester and will use natural gaps between trees.
- Harvesting slash will be removed from around the bases of retained trees during harvesting.
- All harvesting activity will be conducted in accordance with the WA timber industry Codes of Practice, as published from time to time by the Forest Industries Federation (WA) Inc. This includes any water erosion mitigation techniques as specified in the Code.
- Following harvesting, the thinned areas will be burnt under cool conditions in autumn, winter or spring.
- A log landing (ie area where logs are stacked and then loaded onto truck) will be located along the existing property boundary track on the south side of Catterick Road.

Black cockatoo habitat trees

Because of the importance of conservation of habitat trees for Western Australia’s three species of black cockatoo (Carnaby’s cockatoo, Baudin’s cockatoo and Forest red-tailed cockatoo), any tree with hollows of a size potentially suitable for nesting by any of these three species will be retained as habitat trees. These trees tend to be over-mature or dead trees, particularly marri trees.

Because of this commitment, a cockatoo habitat tree survey prior to harvesting is not considered necessary.

Estimated quantities of forest products to be harvested

The estimated quantities of forest products, by species and grade, that could be produced from the proposed operation are:

- Jarrah sawlog: 200 tonnes
- Jarrah firewood: 400 tonnes
- Biomass (predominantly jarrah): 400 tonnes
- **Total:** approx. 1,000 tonnes

Note: these are estimates only. The actual quantities produced will depend on markets at the time of harvesting.

Future management

After the proposed silvicultural thinning and follow-up burn, the forest will need to be subjected to regular mild prescribed burning to reduce the risk of damage from bushfires, on a cycle of six or seven years.

A further commercial thinning operation should be feasible approximately 30 years hence.

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