

Management Plan

to accompany

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

(form NV-F01 v 14, Feb 2023)

from

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

for

Richard and Lee Gorski

Background

Richard Gorski and son Lee Gorski jointly own a 63.5 hectare property at Allanson, approximately 10 kilometres northwest of the town of Collie in the south-west of Western Australia.

Approximately 46 hectares (72%) of the property is regrowth native forest which the Gorskis wish to sustainably manage on a long-term basis, producing some revenue from the sale of timber products which will be used to pay for upgrades on the property, chiefly fencing and fire management. Sustainable management will involve silvicultural thinning from time to time.

Fenceline maintenance involving the judicial removal of some trees along fencelines is also planned to be carried out.

The Gorskis are also very cognisant of the need to manage the threat of bushfire, hence a silvicultural thinning now, with removal of residue timber as biomass, is seen as an important step in enabling the Gorskis to safely conduct fuel reduction burning on a regular basis in future.

Current status of the native forest subject to this application

The regrowth native forest on this property has been subjected to harvesting for timber on possibly up to three or four occasions since early last century. Older and more recent stumps are evident. The forest type is fundamentally “Northern 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 reasonably 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 and gravelly loams over clay.



Fig 1. Regrowth jarrah/marri forest on the property. Note sparse crowns in this heavily stocked patch of forest.



Fig 2. Regrowth jarrah/marri forest. Note stumps from previous harvesting operations.



Fig 3. Regrowth jarrah/marri forest. Note sparse understory.

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 property will be to promote the growth of selected retained trees by thinning to a target basal area of 14m² 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.
- 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.
- Harvesting and marketing of forest products will be managed by WAPRES foresters, with actual harvesting and transport of products carried out by an experienced and qualified local harvesting contractor using machinery suitable for the harvesting in native forest. This will comprise a tree harvester to fell trees and cut boles into appropriate lengths. 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.

- 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.
- Following harvesting, the thinned areas will be burnt under cool conditions in autumn, winter or spring.
- Log landings (ie areas where logs are stacked and then loaded onto truck) will be located along existing property boundary tracks and on already cleared land in the middle of the property.

Black cockatoos

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 suitable or 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.

It is also important to note that the heavily stocked regrowth forest, such as in most of the proposed thinning area, features trees with sparse crowns. A thinning operation as proposed will encourage retained trees to become more vigorous and produce more spreading crowns and hence will produce more fruits/seeds for foraging by black cockatoos.

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/marri sawlog: 400 tonnes
- Jarrah firewood: 600 tonnes
- Biomass (predominantly jarrah/marri): 1000 tonnes
- **Total:** approx. 2,000 tonnes

Note: these are estimates only.

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 no more than five to seven years.

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

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