

## 1. Application details and outcomes

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	10707/2
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Saturn Metals Limited
Application received:	16 February 2026
Application area:	197 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral production and associated activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Lease 31/486 Mining Lease 39/ 296 Miscellaneous Licence 31/93
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Leonora and Shire of Menzies
Colloquial name:	Apollo Hill Gold Pilot Project

### 1.2. Description of clearing activities

Saturn Metals Limited proposes to clear up to 197 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 755.653 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities (Saturn Metals Limited, 2024; Talis Consultants, 2024). The amendment area is located approximately 50 kilometres southeast of Leonora, within the Shire of Leonora and Shire of Menzies (GIS Database).

### 1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	18 June 2026
Decision area:	197 hectares of native vegetation

### 1.4. Reasons for decision

On 31 July 2025, clearing permit CPS 10707/1 was granted to clear up to 197 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 756 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities.

There was one appeal lodged against the grant of the permit, covering five grounds of appeal.

This clearing permit amendment gives effect to the determination of the Minister for Environment (Minister) that the decision to grant the permit was justified, but allowed the appeal in part (Appeal number: 032 of 2025). The Minister determined that DMPE fulfilled its responsibilities and the conditions imposed were adequate to protect the ecological values, including conditions amended during the appeal process (Minister for Environment; Appeals Convenor's Report, 2025). Aboriginal cultural heritage values were considered within the scope of a clearing permit assessment process (Minister for Environment; Appeals Convenor's Report, 2025).

The original application was for the clearing of 197 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 811 hectares. During the assessment the scope of the clearing was reviewed, and the clearing boundary was reduced to 756 hectares. The clearing boundary was revised and reduced to minimise the amount of significant habitat within the application area, by excising salt lakes and floodplains (7.7 hectares), 31.7 hectares of the Tspp vegetation unit, and rocky escarpment habitat in good or very good condition (15.3 hectares). Changes to the clearing boundary are shown in Figure 1 (area cross-hatched in red).

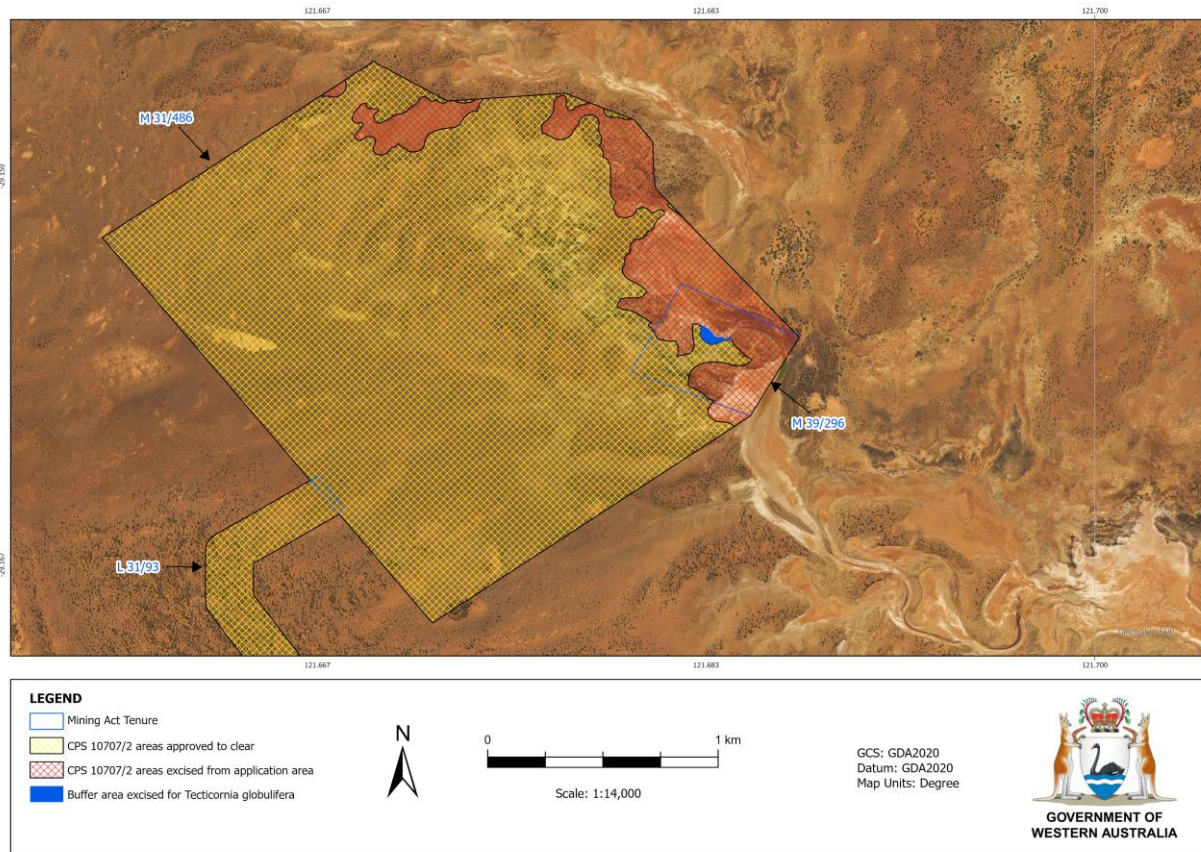
Additionally, the Minister determined that a 50 metre buffer is required to be applied around all occurrences of the Priority flora *Tecticornia globulifera*, and that this buffer area is to be excised from the approved clearing footprint (Minister for Environment; Appeals Convenor's Report, 2025). In accordance with the Minister's determination, any part of the 50 metre buffer surrounding occurrences of *Tecticornia globulifera* that falls within the application area has been excised (Figure 1). As a result, approximately 0.489 hectares (see figure 1, area shaded in blue) was further excluded from the amendment area, due to which

the original clearing boundary of the amendment area got reduced from approximately 811 hectares to approximately 755.653 hectares (GIS Database).

Given the above, the Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit to reflect the Minister's determination. The assessment against the clearing principles has not changed from the Clearing Permit Decision Report CPS 10707/1.

## 1.5. Site map

A site map of proposed clearing is provided in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1. Map of the amendment area. The area cross-hatched yellow indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit. The area cross-hatched red indicates the areas which have been removed as a result of the amendment. The area shaded blue is the 50 metre buffer for Priority flora *Tecticornia globulifera* that has been excised from the permit boundary.**

## 2. Detailed assessment of application

### 2.1. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

The assessment against the clearing principles has not changed from the clearing permit decision report CPS 10707/1.

### 2.2. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

To give effect to a decision of the Minister under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (the EP Act), the Chief Executive Officer of DWER or their delegates may amend a clearing permit under sections 51K(1)(e) and 51K(1)(h) of the EP Act. Section 105(aa) of the EP Act states that amendments made under this section of the EP Act are not appealable. On this basis, the above mentioned amendments made by the Delegated Officer are not available for third party appeals.

## Appendix A. Sources of information

### A.1. References

Minister for Environment; Appeals Convenor's Report (2025) Appeal Number 032 2025. Minister's Appeal Determination: Appeal Against clearing permit CPS 10707/1, Apollo Hill Pilot Project, Shire of Leonora and Shire of Menzies.

Saturn Metals Limited (2024) Clearing permit application form, CPS 10707/1, received 1 August 2024.

Talis Consultants (2024) Native Vegetation Clearing Permit (Purpose): Supporting Documentation – Apollo Hill Pilot Project. Prepared for Saturn Metals Limited, by Talis Consultants, July 2024.

## Glossary

### Acronyms:

CPS 10707/2

<b>BC Act</b>	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , Western Australia
<b>BoM</b>	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
<b>DAA</b>	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH)
<b>DAFWA</b>	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD)
<b>DCCEEW</b>	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australian Government
<b>DBCA</b>	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
<b>DEMIRS</b>	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now DMPE)
<b>DER</b>	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DMIRS</b>	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia (now DMPE)
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMPE)
<b>DMPE</b>	Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration
<b>DoEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW)
<b>DoW</b>	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DPaW</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
<b>DPIRD</b>	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
<b>DPLH</b>	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
<b>DRF</b>	Declared Rare Flora (now known as Threatened Flora)
<b>DWER</b>	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
<b>EP Act</b>	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
<b>EPBC Act</b>	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Commonwealth Act)
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>ha</b>	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
<b>IBRA</b>	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
<b>PEC</b>	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
<b>RIWI Act</b>	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
<b>TEC</b>	Threatened Ecological Community

## Definitions:

**DBCA (2023) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia:**

### Threatened species

**T** Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act).

**Threatened fauna** is the species of fauna that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

**Threatened flora** is the species of flora that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

The assessment of the conservation status of threatened species is in accordance with the BC Act listing criteria and the requirements of [Ministerial Guideline Number 1](#) and [Ministerial Guideline Number 2](#) that adopts the use of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [Red List of Threatened Species Categories and Criteria](#), and is based on the national distribution of the species.

### **CR Critically endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines.

### **EN Endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines.

**VU Vulnerable species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines.

**Extinct species**

Listed by order of the Minister as extinct under section 23(1) of the BC Act as extinct or extinct in the wild.

**EX Extinct species**

Species where “*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

**EW Extinct in the wild species**

Species that “*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild.

**Specially protected species**

**SP Specially protected species**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as specially protected species.

**MI Migratory species**

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Migratory species include birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) or The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

**CD Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)**

Species of special conservation need that are dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species of special conservation interest.

**OS Other specially protected species**

Species otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species otherwise in need of special protection.

**Priority species**

**P Priority species**

Priority is not a listing category under the BC Act. The Priority Flora and Fauna lists are maintained by the department and are published on the department’s website.

All fauna and flora are protected in WA following the provisions in Part 10 of the BC Act. The protection applies even when a species is not listed as threatened or specially protected, and regardless of land tenure (State managed land (Crown land), private land, or Commonwealth land).

Species that may possibly be threatened species that do not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act because of insufficient survey or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of prioritisation for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to potential listing as threatened.

Species that are adequately known, meet criteria for near threatened, or are rare but not threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species list or conservation dependent or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species require regular monitoring.

Assessment of priority status is based on the Western Australian distribution of the species, unless the distribution in WA is part of a contiguous population extending into adjacent States, as defined by the known spread of locations.

**P1 Priority One - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, none on conservation lands**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less) which are potentially at risk. All occurrences are either: very small; or on lands not managed for conservation, for example, agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, road and rail reserves, gravel reserves and active mineral leases; or otherwise under threat of habitat destruction or degradation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, some on conservation lands**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less), some of which are on lands managed primarily for nature conservation, for example, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other lands with secure tenure being managed for conservation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

**P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species – known from several locations**

Species that are known from several locations and the species does not appear to be under imminent threat or from few but widespread locations with either large population size or significant remaining areas of apparently suitable habitat, much of it not under imminent threat.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from several locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them. These species need further survey.

**P4 Priority Four - Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring**

- (a) Rare. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and that are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection but could be if present circumstances change. These species are usually represented on conservation lands.
- (b) Near Threatened. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed and that are close to qualifying for vulnerable but are not listed as a conservation dependent specially protected species.
- (c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species or lists of conservation dependent or other specially protected species, during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.
- (d) Other species in need of monitoring.

**Principles for clearing native vegetation:**

- (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.
- (b) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.
- (d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.
- (e) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.
- (f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.
- (g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.
- (h) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.
- (i) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.

- (j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.