



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	1153/5
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Metals Exploration Pty Ltd
Application received:	24 July 2025
Application area:	60 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral exploration
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Exploration Licence 69/535
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Ngannjatjarraku
Colloquial name:	Wingellina Area

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Metals Exploration Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 60 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 8,701.121 hectares, for the purpose of mineral exploration. The project is located approximately 698 kilometres northeast of Laverton, within the Shire of Ngannjatjarraku.

Clearing permit CPS 1153/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration) on 26 May 2011 and was valid from 26 May 2011 to 31 May 2016. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 4.23 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 8,554 hectares, for the purpose of exploration drilling and related infrastructure.

CPS 1153/2 was granted on 26 May 2016, amending the permit to extend the permit duration by five years to 31 May 2021.

CPS 1153/3 was granted on 7 December 2017, amending the permit to increase the permit boundary from 8,554 hectares to 8,638.17 hectares and increase the size of the area permitted to be cleared from 4.23 hectares to 5.233 hectares.

CPS 1153/4 was granted on 22 April 2021, amending the permit to extend the permit duration by five years to 31 May 2026.

On 24 July 2025, the permit holder applied to amend CPS 1153/4 to extend the permit duration by five years to 31 May 2031, increase the size of the area permitted to be cleared from 5.233 hectares to 60 hectares, and redescribe the boundary of the area authorised to be cleared from 8,638.17 hectares to 8,701.121 hectares. 5.02 hectares of native vegetation has been cleared within the permit boundary under previous permits.

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	5 March 2026
Decision area:	60 hectares of native vegetation

1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was submitted, accepted, assessed, and determined in accordance with sections 51KA(1) and 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE) advertised the application for a public comment for a period of 21 days, and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix B), relevant datasets (Appendix F), supporting information provided by the applicant (Appendix A) including the results of a flora and vegetation survey (Appendix E), the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (Appendix C), proposed avoidance and minimisation measures (Section 3.1), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (Section 3.3). The Delegated Officer also took into consideration the purpose of the clearing to mineral exploration.

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in:

- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values;
- impacts to conservation significant flora;
- the increased risk of fauna injury or mortality; and
- the clearing of riparian vegetation.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing can be minimised and managed to be unlikely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

The Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to conditions to:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- engage a botanist to conduct a targeted flora survey for the presence of priority flora to clearing and maintain a 10 metre buffer of identified priority flora located in the area shaded red in Figure 2; and
- where practicable, avoid clearing riparian vegetation.

The assessment has not changed since the assessment for CPS 1153/4, except in the case of principles (a) and (b). The Delegated Officer determined that the proposed extension of duration, extension of area approved to be cleared, and redescription of the permit boundary is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

1.5. Site map

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

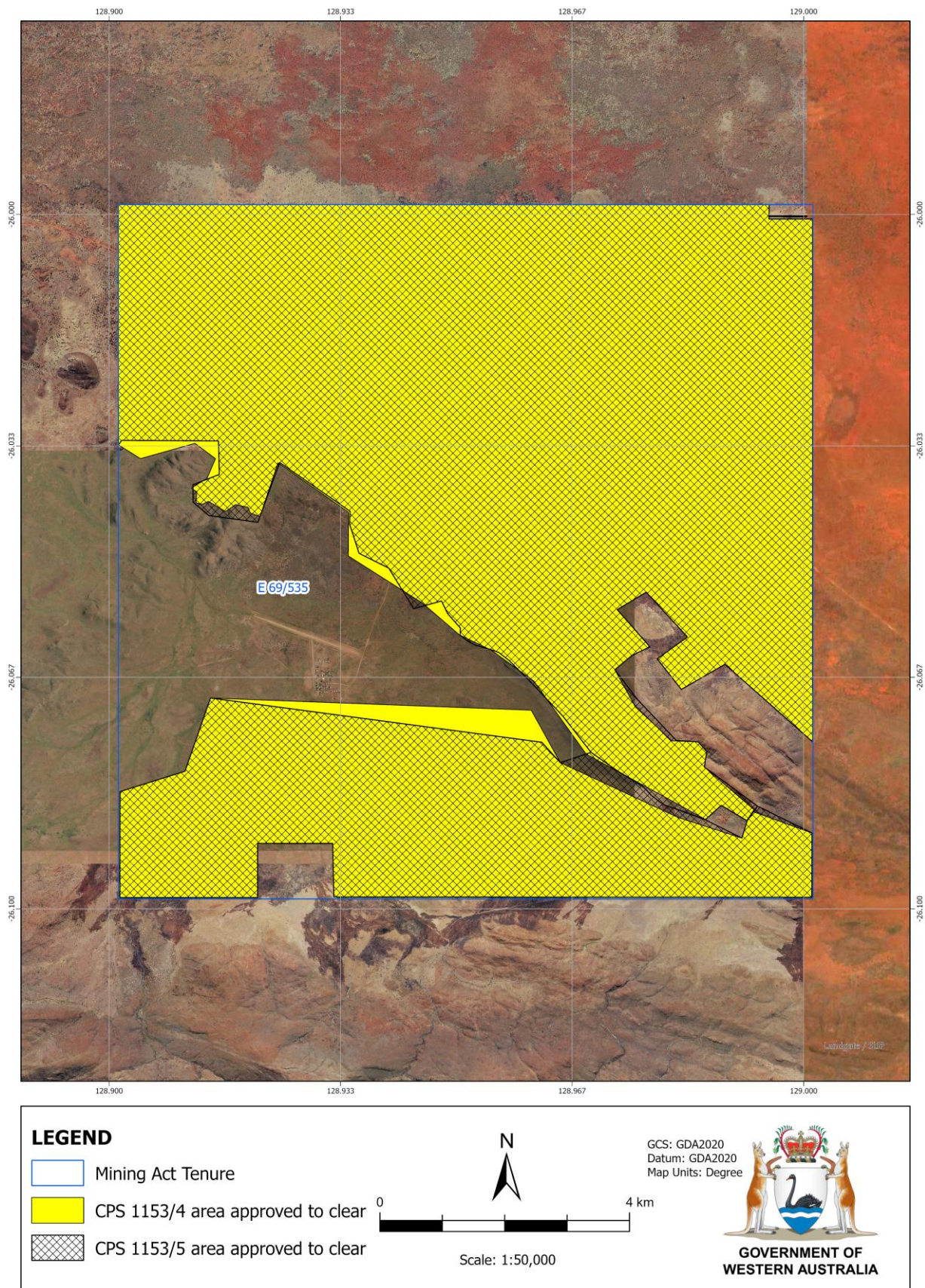


Figure 1. Map of the application area. The black cross-hatched area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit.

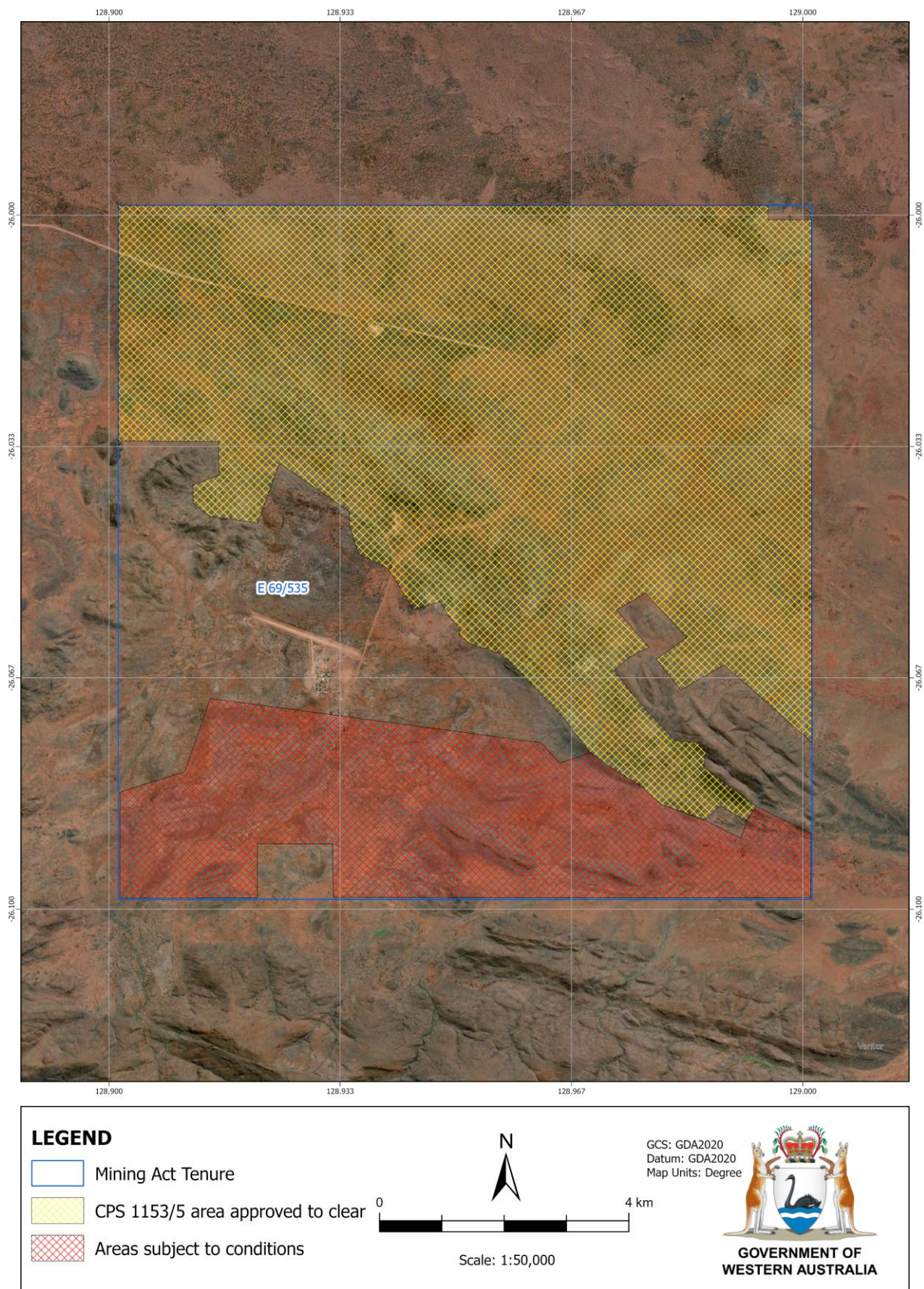


Figure 2. Map of the application area. The red cross-hatched area indicates the area subject to condition 8 as outlined in the clearing permit.

2. Legislative context

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the EP Act and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004 (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (Section 1.4), the Delegated Officer has also had regard to the objects and principles under section 4A of the EP Act, particularly:

- the precautionary principle
- the principle of intergenerational equity
- the principle of the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity
- the polluter pays principle.

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)

Relevant agreements (treaties) considered during the assessment include:

- Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2014)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2021)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2004a)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2004b)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The application area avoids rocky outcrops which are deemed suitable for conservation significant fauna species. In particular, the Central Australia rock-wallaby, 'warru', which is confined to rocky outcrops during daylight hours and forages the surrounds at night. In addition to this, the Delegated Officer implemented a slow, one directional clearing condition and restricted clearing to daytime hours to avoid and minimise fauna strikes during clearing activities. The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values.

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

A review of current environmental information (Appendix B) reveals that the assessment against the clearing principles has not changed significantly from the clearing permit decision report CPS 1153/4, except in principles (a) and (b). The assessment against the clearing principles (Appendix C) identified the impacts of the proposed clearing are limited and able to be managed to be environmentally acceptable with avoid and minimise, directional clearing, weed hygiene, vegetation management, and flora and fauna management conditions. Due to a lack of recent survey information the precautionary principle was applied to this assessment.

3.2.1. Biological values (flora) - Clearing principle (a) and (c)

Assessment

A flora and vegetation survey has been conducted over the application area by Outback Ecology Services (2011) in April 2008 and October 2010. Four conservation significant flora species were located during the survey in the southern portion of the application area (Outback Ecology, 2011). The clearing of these individuals was previously deemed unlikely however, the disturbance profile has increased in comparison to previously applications. There are an additional two conservation significant flora species within the application area that were not recorded at the time of the survey (WA Herbarium, 1998-).

There is no known suitable habitat for Threatened flora within the application area (Outback Ecology, 2011). As a result, the assessment of principle (c) is unchanged from previous assessments.

***Caesia chlorantha*, Priority 1**

Caesia chlorantha is a rhizomatous and tuberous tufted perennial herb that grows in black soil plains and grey cracking clay (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The 13 Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) *Caesia chlorantha* records are distributed across the Central Ranges and Victoria Bonaparte IBRA bioregions. These records were recorded between 2010 and 2021, with 12 of the 13 records collected in January 2021 in the Victoria Bonaparte IBRA region (WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). The remaining record was located in the southern portion of the application area in 2010.

Goodenia lunata, Priority 1

Goodenia lunata is a slender erect/ascending perennial herb that occurs on clay loam or plains (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The nine Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) records are distributed across the Central Kimberley, Central Ranges, Great Sandy Desert and Ord Victoria Plain IBRA bioregions. Records have been collected between 1974 and 2021, with the majority being collected since 2009. The application area is at the southwestern extent of its distribution, with one record within the application area (MWH, 2015; GIS Database).

Menkea lutea, Priority 1

Menkea lutea is an erect or prostrate annual herb that occurs in cracking clay and low lying internally drained areas with red sandy clay soil (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The six Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) records are limited to the Mann-Musgrave Block IBRA subregion of the Central Ranges bioregion. There are two historic records and four recent records of this species (WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). There is one record within the application area and one record within 5 kilometres of the application area (MWH, 2015; GIS Database).

Scaevola collina, Priority 1

Scaevola collina is a perennial herb that occurs in stony brown clay sand and in tussock grassland (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The two Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) records are limited to the Mann-Musgrave Block IBRA subregion of the Central Ranges bioregion. The records were collected in 2010 and 2013. One record occurs within the application area and the other is within 5 kilometres of the application area (WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database).

Euphorbia inappendiculata var. queenslandica, Priority 3

Euphorbia inappendiculata var. *queenslandica* is a prostrate herb that occurs in hardpan mulga woodland on red brown cracking clay (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The 18 Western Australia Herbarium (1998-) records are distributed across the Central Ranges, Ord Victoria Plain and Pilbara IBRA bioregions. The records were collected between 1973 and 2024, with the majority recorded since 2010. There is one record within 5 kilometres of the application area and suitable habitat within the application area in the form of mulga woodland (MWH, 2015; Outback Ecology, 2009; GIS Database).

Euphorbia parvicaruncula, Priority 1

Euphorbia parvicaruncula is a short-lived annual or perennial herb that occurs in claypan grassland and low lying internally drained areas with cracking red sandy clay soil (WA Herbarium, 1998-). The three Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) records are limited to the Central Ranges and Pilbara IBRA bioregions. There are two historic records from 1963 and 1971, and one recent record located over 100 kilometres from the application area. It is noted there is suitable habitat within the application area that is within the distribution of the species (MWH, 2015).

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing may result in localised and regional impacts to conservation significant flora in the known area. The considered impacts cannot be adequately assessed due to the dated flora surveys provided.

For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the impacts of the proposed clearing on potential habitats for conservation significant flora species can be managed with conditions to be environmentally acceptable. It is noted that conservation significant flora are likely to occur in a restricted area of the application area, therefore targeted flora survey conditions have been applied to the southern portion of the application area as outlined in Figure 2. There is potential for weeds being present within the application area and the proposed clearing as the potential to exacerbate the spread of weeds.

Conditions

To address the above impacts, the following management measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- prior to any clearing within the red cross-hatched area in Figure 2 of the permit, a botanist shall be engaged to conduct a targeted flora survey for the presence of priority flora and avoided with a 10-metre buffer.

3.2.2. Biological values (fauna) - Clearing principle (b)Assessment

A desktop assessment has identified one conservation significant fauna species record within the application area (GIS Database). In addition, there is suitable habitat for three more conservation significant fauna species as per Section B.4 (Outback Ecology, 2009).

Mammals

- Central Australian rock-wallaby, warru (*Petrogale lateralis centralis*)

Birds

- Princess parrot (*Polytelis alexandrae*)
- Rainbow bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*)
- Fork-tailed swift (*Apus pacificus*)

Central Australian rock-wallaby, warru

Central Australian rock-wallaby occur in areas with extensive developments of caves, crevices and overhangs that act as shelter from extreme weather and protection from predators (DPaW, 2013). There is a historic record located within 10

kilometres of the application area, and suitable habitat in the immediate surrounds of the application area (GIS Database). There have been no recent fauna surveys undertaken across the application area or within the suitable habitat directly adjacent to the application area. It is possible that the rock-wallaby may frequent some areas of the application area while foraging at night. To minimise impacts to the conservation significant species, clearing must occur only in daylight hours and must be carried out in one direction in a slow, progressive manner to allow reasonable time for fauna to move into adjacent native vegetation ahead of clearing activity.

Princess parrot, rainbow bee-eater and fork-tailed swift

Princess parrot occur in sand dunes and sand flats in the arid zone of western and central Australia, particularly environments which consist of scattered stands of *Eucalyptus*, *Casuarina* or *Allocasuarina* trees; an understorey of shrubs; and a ground cover dominated by *Triodia* species (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). While some potentially suitable habitat has been identified within the application area, it is unlikely that the species will be significantly impacted at a regional level (Outback Ecology, 2009). However, it is recommended that trees containing hollows be inspected prior to clearing to avoid clearing any potential roosting or nesting habitat.

Rainbow bee-eater occur in open forests and woodlands, shrublands and in various cleared or semi-cleared habitats including inland and coastal sand dune systems (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Menkhorst et al., 2019). The species prefers habitats featuring mallee woodlands and shrublands, and open forests dominated by eucalypts. While some of these preferred habitat features have been identified within the application area, it is unlikely that the species will be significantly impacted at a regional level (Outback Ecology, 2009). However, it is recommended that trees containing hollows be inspected prior to clearing to avoid clearing any potential roosting or nesting habitat.

Fork-tailed swift occur over inland plains, foothills and coastal areas, often near cliffs and beaches (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). They are often found over dry or open habitats, treeless grasslands and sandplains covered with spinifex, open farmland and inland sand dunes. While some potentially suitable habitat has been identified within the application area, it is unlikely that the species will be significantly impacted at a regional level. Therefore, it is determined that it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will have an impact on the species.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing will result in an increased risk of injury and mortality to conservation significant fauna. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the impacts of the proposed clearing on fauna and their habitats can be managed by imposing the below conditions on the permit.

The applicant may have notification responsibilities under the EPBC Act for impacts to Central Australian rock-wallaby (*Petrogale lateralis centralis*) and its habitats, as set out in the EPBC Act. The applicant has been advised to contact the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to discuss EPBC Act referral requirements. Conditions.

Conditions

To address the above impacts, the following management measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- Undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity; and
- Clearing restricted to daytime hours only.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing amendment application was advertised on 3 October 2025 by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim (WCD2005/002 - Ngaanyatjarra Lands (Part A)) over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. The mining tenure has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the nature of the act (i.e. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore, the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

There are seven registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance (Place 2872, Place 2873, Place 2901, Place 2902, Place 2903, and Place 2953) within the application area (DPLH, 2026). It is the proponent's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

The area proposed to be cleared has undergone EPA Assessment and approval as documented in Ministerial Statement 1034. It should be noted that the proposed activities is outside the scope of the Ministerial Statement.

It is noted that the proposed clearing may impact on Central Australian rock-wallaby, which is a protected matter under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act). The proponent may be required to refer the project to the (Commonwealth) Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for environmental impact assessment under the EPBC Act. The proponent is advised to contact the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for further information regarding notification and referral responsibilities under the EPBC Act.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- A Programme of Work approved under the *Mining Act 1978*
- A Mining Development and Closure Proposal approved under the *Mining Act 1978*

It is the proponent's responsibility to liaise with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

End

Appendix A. Additional information provided by applicant

Summary of comments	Consideration of comment
Flora and fauna surveys provided following a request for further information.	Addressed in Section 3.2.1 and Section 3.2.2.

Appendix B. Site characteristics**B.1. Site characteristics**

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared is part of an expansive tract of native vegetation in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia. It is located within the Mann-Musgrave Block subregion of the Great Victoria Desert bioregion (GIS Database). The proposed clearing area is located close to the state border and is surrounded by copper and nickel mining operations. It is located within the existing Wingellina Nickel Project.
Ecological linkage	The application area is not considered a significant ecological linkage. The vegetation immediately surrounding the application area and the majority of the region remains uncleared (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area is not located in any known or mapped conservation areas. The closest conservation area is the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve which is located approximately 265 kilometres north-west of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations: 19: Low woodland; mulga between sandridges 92: Hummock grasslands, sparse tree steppe; bloodwood over hard spinifex <i>Triodia basedowii</i> (GIS Database). A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Outback Ecology during April, 2008 and October, 2010. The following vegetation communities were recorded within the application area (Outback Ecology, 2011): - Open Low Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> and/or <i>E. gypsophila</i> - Open Mid Mallee Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> and/or <i>E. gypsophila</i> - Open Mid Mallee Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> and/or <i>E. gypsophila</i> over Shrubland - Open Low Woodland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> and <i>A. pruinocarpa</i> - Open Low woodland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> over either a Low or Tall Shrubland - Open Low Mallee Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> and/or <i>E. gamophylla</i> - Open Low Woodland of <i>E. gamophylla</i> and <i>Corymbia eremaea</i> - Sparse Tall Shrubland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> over Tussock Grassland - Sparse Tall Shrubland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> over Hummock Grassland - Low Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> and <i>E. gypsophila</i> - Sparse Tall Shrubland of <i>Hakea laurina</i> - Open Low Mallee Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus socialis</i> or <i>E. gamophylla</i> - Sparse Low to Open Tall Shrubland of <i>Senna artemisioides</i>
Vegetation condition	The vegetation survey (Outback Ecology, 2011) indicates the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Very Good to Very Poor (Trudgen, 1991) condition, described as - Very Good - Good - Poor - Very Poor It is noted that clearing has occurred within the region since the last condition assessment. The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix D. Representative photos are available in Appendix E.
Climate and landform	The application area is characterised by the arid climate of the Mann-Musgrave Block subregion and has an average annual rainfall of 291.5 millimetres (BoM, 2026).
Soil description	The soil is broadly mapped as falling within the Atlas Land System. The soils within the application area are described as red loamy earth and red sandy earth, as well as stony soil and bare rock (DPIRD, 2026)
Land degradation risk	The application area lies within the Wingellina Hills and consist of several rocky outcrops and steep hills (Outback Ecology, 2011). The soils within the application area are described as red brown hardpan soils, shallow stoney soils associated with hilly terrain and red loamy earths on plains (DPIRD, 2025).
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that several minor, non-perennial watercourses transect the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database).

Characteristic	Details
Hydrogeography	The application area is not within any legislated surface water areas. There are six non-perennial lakes within 20 kilometres of the application area, all located north. The Laverton Water Reserve and Catchment Area is the closest Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) located approximately 660 kilometres west southwest of the application area (GIS Database). The application area is within the East Murchison Groundwater Area which has a mapped groundwater salinity of 1,000 – 3,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as saline.
Flora	There are five records of conservation significant flora within the application area (GIS Database). There are seven other records of conservation significant flora within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).
Ecological communities	The application area does not form any part of a known or mapped Threatened or Priority Ecological Community. The closest record is part of the Priority 3 Ecological Community 'Yellow sandplain vegetation of the Great Victoria Desert with diverse vertebrate fauna' located approximately 580 kilometres southwest of the application area (GIS Database).
Fauna	There are no known records of conservation significant fauna within the application area (GIS Database). There is one record of conservation significant fauna within 20 kilometres of the application area and several others with the potential to occur within the application area (Outback Ecology, 2009).
Fauna habitat	Outback Ecology (2009) identified several fauna habitats within the application area. It is noted that the habitats identified are widely represented throughout the surrounding region, however there were some habitats that require closer attention than others: - Rocky Ridges / Escarpments - Mallee woodland/Spinifex - Open sparse Mulga woodland over grasses on clay habitat - Open Mallee woodland over Spinifex habitat - Open Dead Mulga woodland over grasses and Mallee over dense Spinifex

B.2. Vegetation extent

	Pre-European area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current extent in all DBCA Managed Land (proportion of pre-European extent) (%)
IBRA Bioregion - Great Victoria Desert	21,794,222.05	21,784,887.23	99.96	1,844,351.02	8.46
Beard vegetation associations - State					
Veg Assoc No. 19	4,385,295.47	4,384,249.90	99.98	30,947.80	0.71
Veg Assoc No. 92	152,002.38	151,091.45	99.40	Unknown	Unknown
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
Veg Assoc No. 19	2,866,602.03	2,866,298.72	99.99	Unknown	Unknown
Veg Assoc No. 92	27,905.75	27,905.75	100.00	Unknown	Unknown

Government of Western Australia (2019)

B.3. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (Appendix F.1), and biological survey information, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration.

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (local area)
<i>Caesia chlorantha</i>	P1	Y	<0	2
<i>Goodenia lunata</i>	P1	Y	<0	2
<i>Menkea lutea</i>	P1	Y	<0	8
<i>Scaevola collina</i>	P1	Y	<0	6

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (local area)
<i>Euphorbia inappendiculata</i> var. <i>queenslandica</i>	P3	Y	<5	2
<i>Euphorbia parvicaruncula</i>	P1	N	<20	2

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

B.4. Fauna analysis table

The following conservation significant fauna species have been recorded within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Species name	Common name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
<i>Petrogale lateralis centralis</i>	Central Australian rock-wallaby, waru	VU	Y	<10
<i>Polytelis alexandrae</i>	Princess parrot	VU	Y	N/A
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	Rainbow bee-eater	VU	Y	N/A
<i>Apus pacificus</i>	Fork-tailed swift	MI	Y	N/A

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

Appendix C. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		
<u>Principle (a):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity." <u>Assessment:</u> The vegetation associations, fauna habitats and landform types present within the application area, are well represented in surrounding areas (Outback Ecology, 2009). the application area is unlikely to represent an area of higher biodiversity then surrounding areas, in either a local or regional context.	May be at variance (changed from CPS 1153/4)	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<u>Principle (b):</u> "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." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared contains habitat necessary for the maintenance of conservation significant fauna.	May be at variance (changed from CPS 1153/4)	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.2, above.</i>
<u>Principle (c):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared is unlikely to contain flora species listed under the BC Act (Outback Ecology, 2011; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<u>Principle (d):</u> "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." <u>Assessment:</u> There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities within the application area (GIS Database). Flora surveys of the application area did not record any Threatened flora (Outback Ecology, 2011).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
<u>Principle (e):</u> <i>"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared."</i> <u>Assessment:</u> The extent of the mapped vegetation type is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001; Government of Western Australia, 2019). The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area (GIS Database).	Not at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No
<u>Principle (h):</u> <i>"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> <u>Assessment:</u> Given the distance to the nearest conservation area, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of nearby conservation areas.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No
Environmental value: land and water resources		
<u>Principle (f):</u> <i>"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland."</i> <u>Assessment:</u> There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands within the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database). There are eight minor, non-perennial watercourses within the application area which are all ephemeral watercourses within the Wingellina Hills. The potential impacts to vegetation can be managed with a vegetation management condition.	At variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No
<u>Principle (g):</u> <i>"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation."</i> <u>Assessment:</u> The Wingellina Hills consists of a series of predominantly low, northwest to southwest trending ridges with occasional high steep hills and rocky outcrops (HGM, 2002). These hills are separated from nearby ranges to the east and south by 5 to 10 kilometre wide flats. The area consists of red brown hardpan soils, shallow stony associated with hilly terrain and red loamy earths on plain (DPIRD, 2025). These soils are generally not prone to erosion.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No
<u>Principle (i):</u> <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."</i> <u>Assessment:</u> The closest Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) is located approximately 660 kilometres west southwest of the application area (GIS Database). As a result, the proposed clearing is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No
<u>Principle (j):</u> <i>"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding."</i> <u>Assessment:</u> The Manns-Musgrave subregion is characterised by its arid climate with an annual rainfall of 291.5 millimetres. Between 3,200 and 3,600 millimetres evaporate from the region every year, significantly higher than the annual rainfall recorded, suggesting a low risk of flooding (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). Seasonal drainage lines are common in the region and temporary localised flooding may occur briefly following heavy rainfall events. However, the proposed clearing is unlikely to increase the incidence or intensity of natural flooding events.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 1153/4)	No

Appendix D. Vegetation condition rating scale

Vegetation condition is a rating given to a defined area of vegetation to categorise and rank disturbance related to human activities. The rating refers to the degree of change in the vegetation structure, density and species present in relation to undisturbed vegetation of the same type. The degree of disturbance impacts upon the vegetation's ability to regenerate. Disturbance at a site can be a cumulative effect from a number of interacting disturbance types.

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from Trudgen, M.E. (1991) *Vegetation condition scale* in National Trust (WA) 1993 Urban Bushland Policy. National Trust of Australia (WA), Wildflower Society of WA (Inc.), and the Tree Society (Inc.), Perth.

Measuring vegetation condition for the Eremaean and Northern Botanical Provinces (Trudgen, 1991)

Condition	Description
Excellent	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement.
Very good	Some relatively slight signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement. For example, some signs of damage to tree trunks caused by repeated fire, the presence of some relatively non-aggressive weeds, or occasional vehicle tracks.
Good	More obvious signs of damage caused by human activity since European settlement, including some obvious impact on the vegetation structure such as that caused by low levels of grazing or slightly aggressive weeds.
Poor	Still retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it after very obvious impacts of human activities since European settlement, such as grazing, partial clearing, frequent fires or aggressive weeds.
Very poor	Severely impacted by grazing, very frequent fires, clearing or a combination of these activities. Scope for some regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. Usually with a number of weed species present including very aggressive species.
Completely degraded	Areas that are completely or almost completely without native species in the structure of their vegetation; i.e. areas that are cleared or 'parkland cleared' with their flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix E. Biological survey information excerpts / photographs of the vegetation / DMPE site inspection report

The following photographs represent the dominant vegetation communities in the application area (Outback Ecology, 2011).



Figure 1. Open Low Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* and/or *E. gypsophila*



Figure 2. Open Mid Mallee Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* and/or *E. gypsophila*



Figure 3. Open Mid Mallee Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* and/or *E. gypsophila* over Shrubland



Figure 4. Open Low Woodland of *Acacia aneura* and *A. pruinocarpa*



Figure 5. Open Low woodland of *Acacia aneura* over either a Low or Tall Shrubland



Figure 6. Open Low Mallee Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* and/or *E. gamophylla*



Figure 7. Open Low Woodland of *E. gamophylla* and *Corymbia eremea*



Figure 8. Sparse Tall Shrubland of *Acacia aneura* over Tussock Grassland



Figure 9. Sparse Tall Shrubland of *Acacia aneura* over Hummock Grassland



Figure 10. Low Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* and *E. gypsophila*



Figure 11. Sparse Tall Shrubland of *Hakea lorena*



Figure 12. Open Low Mallee Woodland of *Eucalyptus socialis* or *E. gamophylla*



Figure 13. Sparse Low to Open Tall Shrubland of *Senna artemisioides*

Appendix F. Sources of information

F.1. GIS datasets

Publicly available GIS datasets used (sourced from www.data.wa.gov.au):

- Cadastre (Polygon) (LGATE-217)
- Clearing Instruments Activities (Areas Approved to Clear) (DWER-076)
- Clearing Instruments Conditions (Areas Subject to Conditions) (DWER-077)
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Clearing Regulations - Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)

- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrological Zones of Western Australia (DPIRD-069)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Medium Scale Topo Elevation (Point) (LGATE-014)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Line) (LGATE-018)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Polygon) (LGATE-016)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Reserves (LGATE-227)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Project Areas (DPIRD-070)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Systems (DPIRD-064)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery
- WRIMS - Groundwater Areas (DWER-085)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- Threatened and Priority Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened and Priority Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

F.2. References

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- HGM (2002) Wingellina Baseline Biological Survey. Prepared by Halpern Glick Maunsell for Acclaim Exploration NL. December 2002.
- Menkhorst, P., Rogers, D., Clarke, R., Davies, J., Marsack, P., and Franklin, K. (2019) The Australian bird guide: Revised Edition. CSIRO Publishing, Victoria, 2019.
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Glossary

Acronyms:

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