



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 3335/2
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Focus Minerals (Laverton) Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 38/376
Local Government Area: Shire of Laverton
Colloquial name: Admiral Hill Deposit

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
97		Mechanical Removal	Mineral Production

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 12 June 2014

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description The application area has been broadly mapped as the following Beard Vegetation Association:
18: Low woodland; mulga (*Acacia aneura*) (GIS Database).

MBS Environmental conducted a vegetation and habitat assessment of the application area in September 2004. The following five vegetation units were identified within the application area (MBS Environmental, 2004):

1. Calciphytic Pearl Bluebush Shrublands (CPBS)

This vegetation unit has been described as being dominated by *Acacia aneura*, *Hakea preissii*, *Eremophila oldfieldii* subsp. *angustifolia* scattered tall shrubs (<2% Percentage Foliage Cover (PFC), three metres tall) over *Maireana sedifolia*, *Maireana pyramidata* low chenopod shrub land (15% PFC, 0.8 metres tall) over scattered grasses. The open areas are dominated by sparse groundcover mainly comprising *Maireana* spp, principally *Maireana triptera*, *Solanum lasiophyllum*, *Frankenia*, *Ptilotus* spp and occasional shrubs and small trees of *Hakea preissii*, *Acacia aneura*, *Alectryon oleifolius* and *Pittosporum angustifolium* and can be characterised as the CPBS unit;

2. Drainage Tract Mulga Shrublands (DRMS)

The copses and creek lines have a well developed structure of upper, mid and lower storeys. The upper storey is dominated by *Acacia aneura* (various forms); the mid-storey predominantly contains other *Acacias* and *Eremophilas*, while the lower storey contains *Maireana*, *Ptilotus*, *Dianella*, *Scaevola* and *Sida* species. Bush and tree species present in the copses and creek lines include *Hakea preissii*, *Acacia aneura*, *Alectryon oleifolius* and *Pittosporum angustifolium* plus *Acacia oswaldii*, *Acacia acuminata* subsp. *burkittii*, *Eremophila species*, *Dodonaea species*, *Exocarpus aphyllus*, *Santalum spicatum* and, in the south, *Eucalyptus* species. The copses and creek lines can be characterised as DRMS vegetation unit. This unit has been described as having a highly variable composition largely composed of species common to surrounding vegetation units. It is mainly dominated by *Acacia aneura* low forest (35% PFC, five metres tall) over highly variable understorey, reflecting species present in adjacent habitats consisting of shrubs, grasses and herbs;

3. Stony Ironstone Mulga Shrublands (SIMS)

This vegetation complex is described as being dominated by *Acacia aneura*, *A. ramulosa*, *A. sp. aff. quadrimarginea* (15% PFC, up to 4 metres tall) over *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *forrestii*, *Scaevola spinescens* (narrow leaf form), *Senna artemisioides* subsp. *helmsii*, *S. artemisioides* subsp. *filifolia* low scrub (20% PFC, up to one metre tall);

4. *Eucalyptus striatocalyx* on low rise.

This vegetation complex comprised *Eucalyptus striatocalyx* with no understorey. The vegetation unit was situated along a cleared track; and

5. Open Quartz Plain.

(no description given).

Clearing Description	Admiral Hill Deposit. Focus Minerals (Laverton) Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 97 hectares of native vegetation, within a total boundary of approximately 117 hectares, for the purpose of an open pit gold mine and mining related infrastructure. The project is located approximately 10 kilometres north-east of Laverton, in the Shire of Laverton.
Vegetation Condition	Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery, 1994); To Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).
Comment	The vegetation condition rating was derived from information provided by MBS Environmental (2004). Mining related infrastructure will include an open pit, waste rock landform, haul roads, laydown and miscellaneous infrastructure (Crescent Gold, 2009). Vegetation will be cleared by bulldozer and vegetation and topsoil will be stockpiled for rehabilitation purposes (Crescent Gold, 2009). Clearing permit CPS 3335/1 was granted to Crescent Gold Limited by the Department of Mines and Petroleum on 29 October 2009, and was valid from 28 November 2009 to 31 July 2015. The permit approved the clearing of 97 hectares of native vegetation for the purposes of mineral production. On 15 April 2014, Focus Minerals (Laverton) Pty Ltd applied to amend CPS 3335/1 to change the annual reporting date from 31 July to 30 September each year, and to change the name of the permit holder from Crescent Gold Limited to Focus Minerals (Laverton) Pty Ltd, due to a change of company name.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments

The amendment to change the annual reporting date and to change the name of the permit holder will not change the environmental impacts of the proposed clearing. The size of the area approved to clear (97 hectares) and the permit boundaries remain unchanged.

The assessment against the clearing principles remains consistent with the assessment in decision report CPS 3335/1.

Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.

Comments

There are no Native Title Claims over the area under application (GIS Database). 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 no registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (GIS Database). 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.

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

Methodology

GIS Database:
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance
- Native Title Claims - Determined by the Federal Court
- Native Title Claims - Filed at the Federal Court
- Native Title Claims - Registered with the NNTT

4. References

- Crescent Gold (2009) Clearing Permit Application Supporting Documentation, September 2009.
Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
MBS Environmental (2004) Vegetation and Habitat Assessment of the Euro, Sickle and Admiral Hill Project Areas, Laverton. Martinick Bosch Sell, Western Australia.
Western Botanical (2007) Flora and Vegetation of the Craiggie more Project Area and Associated Haul Road Alignment. Unpublished report for Crescent Gold Limited, July 2007.

5. Glossary

Acronyms:

BoM	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DPaW and DER)
DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
DotE	Department of the Environment, Australian Government
DoW	Department of Water, Western Australia
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia
DSEWPaC	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DotE)
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Federal 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
s.17	Section 17 of the <i>Environment Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community

Definitions:

{DPaW (2013) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia}:-

- T** **Threatened species:**
Specially protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna or the Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora (which may also be referred to as Declared Rare Flora).

Threatened Fauna and Flora are further recognised by the Department according to their level of threat using IUCN Red List criteria. For example Carnaby's Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus latirostris* is specially protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* as a threatened species with a ranking of Endangered.
- Rankings:
CR: Critically Endangered - considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.
EN: Endangered - considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild.
VU: Vulnerable - considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.
- X** **Presumed Extinct species:**
Specially protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, listed under Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Presumed Extinct Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Presumed Extinct Flora (which may also be referred to as Declared Rare Flora).
- IA** **Migratory birds protected under an international agreement:**
Specially protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, listed under Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
Birds that are subject to an agreement between governments of Australia and Japan, China and The Republic of Korea relating to the protection of migratory birds and birds in danger of extinction.
- S** **Other specially protected fauna:**
Specially protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, listed under Schedule 4 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- P1** **Priority One - Poorly-known species:**
Species that are known from one or a few collections or sight records (generally less than five), all on lands not managed for conservation, e.g. agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, Shire, rail reserves and Main Roads WA road, gravel and soil reserves, and active mineral leases and under threat of habitat destruction or degradation. Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more localities but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes.
- P2** **Priority Two - Poorly-known species:**
Species that are known from one or a few collections or sight records, some of which are on lands not under imminent threat of habitat destruction or degradation, e.g. national parks, conservation parks, nature

reserves, State forest, unallocated Crown land, water reserves, etc. Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more localities but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes.

P3

Priority Three - Poorly-known species:

Species that are known from collections or sight records from several localities not under imminent threat, or from few but widespread localities 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 localities but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them.

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 do not qualify for Conservation Dependent, but that are close to qualifying for Vulnerable.
- (c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.

P5

Priority Five - Conservation Dependent species:

Species that are not threatened but are subject to a specific conservation program, the cessation of which would result in the species becoming threatened within five years.