



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 5297/1
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Silver Lake Resources Limited

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 26/242
Local Government Area: City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Colloquial name: Lakewood Gold Processing Plant Project

1.4. Application

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

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 15 November 2012

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description Beard vegetation associations have been mapped for the whole of Western Australia and are useful to look at vegetation in a regional context. Two Beard vegetation associations have been mapped within the application area:

Beard vegetation association 468: Medium woodland; salmon gum & goldfields blackbutt; and

Beard vegetation association 540: Succulent steppe with open low woodland; sheoak over saltbush (Government of Western Australia, 2011; GIS Database).

Recon Environmental (2009) conducted a vegetation and flora survey of the application area during 6 to 8 February 2009, and described two broad vegetation communities within the application area:

Low Chenopod Shrubland (PSAS-D)

Found in the centre of the broad valleys where there is a concentration of water flow. It usually supports a low shrubland of sago bluebush (*Maireana pyramidata*). Mid shrubs include *Lycium australe* and *Atriplex nummularia*. Dominant low shrub species include *Tecticornia indica* subsp. *bidens*, *T. disarticulate* and *Lycium australe*, while other species include *Atriplex vesicaria*, *A. bunburyana*, *Frankenia setosa*, *F. ?tetrapetala*, *Maireana pyramidata* and *M. pentatropis*; and

Plain Mixed Halophyte Low Shrubland (PXHS)

Found on alluvial plains adjoining salt lakes. The dominant layer in this habitat is usually the low shrubs where either samphire and/or pearl bluebush (*Maireana sedifolia*) dominate. Dominant tall shrubs include *?Myoporum montanum*, dominant mid shrubs include *Lycium austral*, *Atriplex nummularia*, *?Myoporum montanum*, and dominant low shrubs include *Tecticornia indica* subsp. *bidens*, and *T. disarticulate*. Other species include *Maireana pyramidata*, *M. triptera*, *M. ?georgei*, *Atriplex bunburyana*, *Frankenia* sp., *Disphyma crassifolium*, and *Zygophyllum aurantiacum*.

Clearing Description

Silver Lake Resources is proposing to clear up to 30.3 hectares of native vegetation within a larger application area of 33.3 hectares for the construction of a tailings storage facility to accommodate tailings production beyond the current TSF1 capacity.

Vegetation Condition

The vegetation will be cleared using a track mounted dozer.
Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery, 1994);

To:

Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost without native species (Keighery, 1994).

Comment

The application area is located in the Eastern Goldfield subregion of Western Australia and is situated approximately five kilometres south-east of the Boulder town site (GIS Database).

The vegetation condition was derived from a vegetation survey conducted by Recon Environmental (2009).

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

(a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The application area occurs within the Eastern Goldfields sub-region of the Coolgardie Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia bioregion (GIS Database). This sub-region is characterised by gently undulating plains interrupted in the west with low hills and ridges of Archaean greenstones and in the east by a horst of Proterozoic basic granulite. The vegetation is of Mallees, Acacia thickets and shrubheaths on sandplains. Diverse *Eucalyptus* woodlands occur around salt lakes, on ranges, and in valleys. Salt lake support dwarf shrublands of samphire. Woodlands and *Dodonaea* shrubland occur on basic granulites of the Fraser Range (CALM, 2002).

Recon Environmental (2009) conducted a flora and vegetation survey over the application area and surrounding areas during 6 to 8 February 2009. A total of 53 vascular plant taxa from 25 genera belonging to 15 families were recorded within the survey area (Recon Environmental, 2009). Flora taxa recorded within the application area were representative of flora taxa in the Eastern Goldfields subregion (Recon Environmental, 2009). The condition of the vegetation was determined to be 'degraded' with some areas affected by introduced species and historical disturbances in a 'completely degraded' condition (Recon Environmental, 2009; Keighery, 1994). A search of the Department of Environment and Conservation's Threatened and Priority Flora databases revealed that no Threatened Flora species and four Priority species may potentially occur within a 10 kilometre radius of the application area (DEC, 2012). Recon Environmental (2009) identified no Threatened flora and no Priority Flora species within the application area. No Threatened Ecological Communities or Priority Ecological Communities were recorded within the application area (GIS Database).

There were two weed species identified during the survey; Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and Ward's weed (*Carrichtera annua*) (Recon Environmental, 2009). Care must be taken to ensure that the proposed clearing activities do not spread or introduce weed species to non-infested areas. Potential impacts to biodiversity as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the implementation of a weed management condition.

There was one faunal habitat type identified within the application area (G&G Environmental, 2009). This habitat is considered to be common and widespread within the subregion (G&G Environmental, 2009; GIS Database). There were no unique or significant faunal assemblages found within the application area (GIS Database). The clearing of 30.3 hectares of native vegetation within an application area of 33.3 hectares is unlikely to have a significant impact in a regional and local context.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

CALM (2002)
DEC (2012)
G&G Environmental (2009)
Keighery (1994)
Recon Environmental (2009)
GIS Database:
- IBRA WA (Regions - Subregions)
- Pre-European vegetation
- Threatened Ecological Sites Buffered
- Kanowna 1.4m Orthomosaic - Landgate 2003

(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 indigenous to Western Australia.

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There was no fauna survey conducted over the application area. G&G Environmental (2009) conducted a desktop fauna survey over the application area. G&G Environmental (2009) identified one broad habitat type within the application area which is described as:

- Sparse low chenopod shrubland and vegetation dominated by old man saltbush. The dominant vegetation of the Coolgardie region (eucalypt woodland) that commonly supplies habitat for tree nesting reptiles and birds has been cleared (G&G Environmental, 2009).

As a result of the severely altered and significantly degraded condition of the site and general lack of habitat in good condition, it is considered unlikely that the project area supports fauna assemblages of conservation significance (Keighery 1994; G&G Environmental, 2009). Aerial imagery suggests that the habitat present within the application area appears to be abundant within the local area (GIS Database). There were no species of conservation significance identified which are likely to occur in the application area (DEC, 2012). The application area does not contain habitats or faunal assemblages that are ecologically significant and the habitats are common throughout the local and regional area (G&G Environmental, 2009; GIS Database).

The proposed clearing of 30.3 hectares of native vegetation is not likely to impact critical feeding or breeding habitat for any conservation significant fauna species as the application area does not contain significant habitat for the potential species.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology DEC (2012)
G&G Environmental (2009)
Keighery (1994)
GIS Database:
- Kanowna 1.4m Orthomosaic - Landgate 2003

(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

According to available databases, there are no records of Threatened Flora within the application area (GIS Database). A search of the Department of Environment and Conservation's Threatened and Priority Flora databases identified no Threatened Flora species as occurring within a 10 kilometre radius of the application area (DEC, 2012).

Recon Environmental (2009) conducted flora and vegetation survey of the application area during 6 to 8 February 2009. No Threatened Flora was recorded within the survey area.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology DEC (2012)
Recon Environmental (2009)
GIS Database:
- Threatened and Priority 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.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

A search of the available databases shows that there are no Threatened Ecological Communities situated within 100 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS Database:
- Threatened Ecological Sites Buffered

(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.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The application area falls within the Coolgardie IBRA bioregion (GIS Database). The vegetation within the application area is recorded as:

Beard vegetation association 468: Medium woodland; salmon gum & goldfields blackbutt; and

Beard vegetation association 540: Succulent steppe with open low woodland; sheoak over saltbush (Government of Western Australia, 2011; GIS Database).

Beard vegetation associations 468 and 540 retain approximately 93% and 95%, respectively, of their pre-European extent within the bioregion (Government of Western Australia, 2011). The surrounding area has been extensively cleared, however the area proposed to be cleared is not a significant remnant of native vegetation.

	Pre-European area (ha)*	Current extent (ha)*	Remaining %*	Conservation Status**	Pre-European % in IUCN Class I-IV Reserves
IBRA Bioregion - Coolgardie	339,875	328,891	~96.77	Least Concern	0.19
Beard vegetation associations - State					
468	592,022	583,903	~98.63	Least Concern	4.11
540	202,424	200,159	~98.88	Least Concern	27.79

Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
468	66,475	62,253	~93.65	Least Concern	-
540	51,663	49,482	~95.78	Least Concern	-

* Government of Western Australia (2011)

** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
Government of Western Australia (2011)
GIS Database:
- IBRA WA (regions - subregions)
- Pre-European Vegetation

(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

Based on vegetation mapping by Recon Environmental (2009), the vegetation type 'PSAS-D' is a low chenopod shrubland that has evolved as a result of extensive disturbance over a long period of time and is found in the centre of the broad valleys where there is a concentration of water flow. It is in a 'degraded' to 'completely degraded' condition (Keighery, 1994), has only low species diversity, and in a number of places the soil structure is too damaged to support any perennial cover (Recon Environmental, 2009). There have been a number of modifications to the surface water flow within the application area that has placed further stress on the vegetation in the area. While there is good colonisation occurring in some of the drainage culverts, these modified drainage lines have caused a disruption to the surface water flow in the area, resulting in localised droughting and loss of vegetative cover to the adjacent areas (Recon Environmental, 2009).

Clearing of areas which contain drainage line associated native vegetation have the potential to cause localised erosion, however, the clearing of vegetation which is deemed to be 'degraded' to 'completely degraded' (Keighery, 1994) is not expect to impact the hydrological functions of these drainage systems.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Keighery (1994)
Recon Environmental (2009)
GIS Database:
- Hydrography, linear

(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Comments Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

Land system mapping by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia has mapped a variety of rangeland land systems of the adjacent areas, however the application area for this proposal has not been mapped (Recon Environmental, 2009). Recon Environmental (2009) correlated the vegetation communities present within the application area to the Gumland and Lefroy rangeland land systems.

The Gumland land system is described as depositional surfaces, broad shallow valley plains with restricted areas of slightly more elevated stony surface and central drainage tracts (occasionally with shallow channels) receiving more concentrated through flow (Recon Environmental, 2009). The Lefroy land system is characterised by salt lakes and fringing saline plains, sandy plains and dunes with halophytic shrublands (Recon Environmental, 2009).

Descriptions of the susceptibility of these land systems to erosion were not available within the Recon Environmental (2009) report. Potential land degradation impacts as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the implementation of a staged clearing condition.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing may be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Recon Environmental (2009)

(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.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The application area is not located within any conservation area (GIS Database). The nearest conservation area is Lakeside Timber Reserve, located approximately four kilometres south-east of the application area (GIS Database).

Given the distance of the application area from Lakeside Timber Reserve, the proposed clearing is not likely to provide a significant ecological linkage or fauna movement corridor and is not likely to impact the environmental values of the conservation area.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS Database:
- DEC Tenure

(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.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The application area is not located within a Public Drinking Water Source Area (GIS Database). The application area is located within the proclaimed Goldfields groundwater area under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (GIS Database). Any groundwater extraction and/or taking or diversion of surface water for the purposes other than domestic and/or stock watering is subject to licence by the Department of Water.

There are no permanent watercourses within the application area (GIS Database). There is a minor ephemeral drainage line within the application area which only flows after heavy rainfall (Recon Environmental, 2009; GIS Database). Any surface water within the application area is likely to only remain for short periods following significant rainfall events. The proposed clearing is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of any surface water within or outside of the application area.

The application area has a groundwater salinity that ranges hypersaline to anoxic conditions (35,000 - 60,000 milligrams/Litre Total Dissolved solids (TDS) (GIS Database). The proposed clearing of 30.3 hectares of native vegetation over an application area of 155 hectares is unlikely to further deteriorate the quality of underground water (GIS Database).

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Recon Environmental (2009)
GIS Database:
- Geodata, Lakes
- Groundwater Salinity, Statewide
- Hydrography, Linear
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas

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

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The application area experiences an arid to semi-arid climate, with an annual average rainfall of approximately 270.3 millimetres per year (CALM, 2002; BoM, 2012). Based on an average annual evaporation rate of 2,400 - 2,800 millimetres (BoM, 2012), any surface water resulting from rainfall events is likely to be relatively short lived.

Given the size of the area to be cleared (30.3 hectares) compared to the size of the Lake Lefroy catchment area (2,488,250 hectares) (GIS Database) it is not likely that the proposed clearing will lead to an appreciable increase in run off, and subsequently cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology BoM (2012)
CALM (2002)
GIS Database:
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments

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

Comments

There is one Native Title claim over the area under application. The claim WC10/14 was filed at the Federal Court on 14 October 2010. 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 and Conservation and the Department of Water, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

The clearing permit application was advertised on 15 October 2012 by the Department of Mines and Petroleum inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received.

Methodology

GIS Database:
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance
- Native Title Claims - Determined by the Federal Court

4. References

- BoM (2012) Climate Statistics for Australian Locations. A Search for Climate Statistics for Coolgardie, Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology, viewed 6 November 2012, <http://reg.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_012018.shtml>.
- CALM (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographical Subregions. Coolgardie 3 (COO3 - Eastern Goldfields subregion) Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- DEC (2012) NatureMap - Mapping Western Australia Biodiversity, Department of Environment and Conservation, viewed 6 November 2012, <<http://naturemap.dec.wa.gov.au>>.
- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales; catchment bioregional, landscape, local. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.
- G&G Environmental (2009) Desktop Fauna Survey of the Tenement M26/242, Unpublished report prepared for Silver Lake Resources, May 2009.
- Government of Western Australia (2011) 2011 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). WA Department of Environment and Conservation, Perth.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Recon Environmental (2009) Lakewood Vegetation Survey. Unpublished report prepared for Silver Lake Resources, February 2009.

5. Glossary

Acronyms:

BoM	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management (now DEC), Western Australia
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia
DEH	Department of Environment and Heritage (federal based in Canberra) previously Environment Australia
DEP	Department of Environment Protection (now DEC), Western Australia
DIA	Department of Indigenous Affairs
DLI	Department of Land Information, Western Australia
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia
DoE	Department of Environment (now DEC), Western Australia
DoIR	Department of Industry and Resources (now DMP), Western Australia
DOLA	Department of Land Administration, Western Australia
DoW	Department of Water
EP Act	Environmental Protection Act 1986, Western Australia
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (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
RIWI Act	Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914, Western Australia
s.17	Section 17 of the Environment Protection Act 1986, Western Australia

Definitions:

{Atkins, K (2005). *Declared rare and priority flora list for Western Australia, 22 February 2005. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Como, Western Australia* }:-

- P1 Priority One - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from one or a few (generally <5) populations which are under threat, either due to small population size, or being on lands under immediate threat, e.g. road verges, urban areas, farmland, active mineral leases, etc., or the plants are under threat, e.g. from disease, grazing by feral animals, etc. May include taxa with threatened populations on protected lands. Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in urgent need of further survey.
- P2 Priority Two - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from one or a few (generally <5) populations, at least some of which are not believed to be under immediate threat (i.e. not currently endangered). Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in urgent need of further survey.
- P3 Priority Three - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from several populations, at least some of which are not believed to be under immediate threat (i.e. not currently endangered). Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in need of further survey.
- P4 Priority Four – Rare taxa:** taxa which are considered to have been adequately surveyed and which, whilst being rare (in Australia), are not currently threatened by any identifiable factors. These taxa require monitoring every 5–10 years.
- R Declared Rare Flora – Extant taxa (= Threatened Flora = Endangered + Vulnerable):** taxa which have been adequately searched for, and are deemed to be in the wild either rare, in danger of extinction, or otherwise in need of special protection, and have been gazetted as such, following approval by the Minister for the Environment, after recommendation by the State's Endangered Flora Consultative Committee.
- X Declared Rare Flora - Presumed Extinct taxa:** taxa which have not been collected, or otherwise verified, over the past 50 years despite thorough searching, or of which all known wild populations have been destroyed more recently, and have been gazetted as such, following approval by the Minister for the Environment, after recommendation by the State's Endangered Flora Consultative Committee.

{Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2005} [Wildlife Conservation Act 1950] :-

- Schedule 1 Schedule 1 – Fauna that is rare or likely to become extinct:** being fauna that is rare or likely to become extinct, are declared to be fauna that is need of special protection.
- Schedule 2 Schedule 2 – Fauna that is presumed to be extinct:** being fauna that is presumed to be extinct, are declared to be fauna that is need of special protection.
- Schedule 3 Schedule 3 – Birds protected under an international agreement:** being birds that are subject to an agreement between the governments of Australia and Japan relating to the protection of migratory birds and birds in danger of extinction, are declared to be fauna that is need of special protection.
- Schedule 4 Schedule 4 – Other specially protected fauna:** being fauna that is declared to be fauna that is in need of special protection, otherwise than for the reasons mentioned in Schedules 1, 2 or 3.

{CALM (2005). *Priority Codes for Fauna. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Como, Western Australia* }:-

- P1 Priority One: Taxa with few, poorly known populations on threatened lands:** Taxa which are known from few specimens or sight records from one or a few localities on lands not managed for conservation, e.g. agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, active mineral leases. The taxon needs urgent survey and evaluation of conservation status before consideration can be given to declaration as threatened fauna.
- P2 Priority Two: Taxa with few, poorly known populations on conservation lands:** Taxa which are known from few specimens or sight records from one or a few localities on lands not under immediate threat of habitat destruction or degradation, e.g. national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, State forest, vacant Crown land, water reserves, etc. The taxon needs urgent survey and evaluation of conservation status before consideration can be given to declaration as threatened fauna.
- P3 Priority Three: Taxa with several, poorly known populations, some on conservation lands:** Taxa which are known from few specimens or sight records from several localities, some of which are on lands not under immediate threat of habitat destruction or degradation. The taxon needs urgent survey and evaluation of conservation status before consideration can be given to declaration as threatened fauna.
- P4 Priority Four: Taxa in need of monitoring:** Taxa which are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and which are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection, but could be if present circumstances change. These taxa are usually represented on conservation lands.
- P5 Priority Five: Taxa in need of monitoring:** Taxa which are not considered threatened but are subject to a specific conservation program, the cessation of which would result in the species becoming threatened within five years.

Categories of threatened species (*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*)

- EX** **Extinct:** A native species for which there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died.
- EX(W)** **Extinct in the wild:** A native species which:
(a) is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; or
(b) has not been recorded in its known and/or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite exhaustive surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form.
- CR** **Critically Endangered:** A native species which is facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with the prescribed criteria.
- EN** **Endangered:** A native species which:
(a) is not critically endangered; and
(b) is facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with the prescribed criteria.
- VU** **Vulnerable:** A native species which:
(a) is not critically endangered or endangered; and
(b) is facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with the prescribed criteria.
- CD** **Conservation Dependent:** A native species which is the focus of a specific conservation program, the cessation of which would result in the species becoming vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered within a period of 5 years.