



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7402/2
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Mincor Resources NL

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 15/48
Mining Lease 15/94
Mining Lease 15/103
Mining Lease 15/105
Mining Lease 15/478
Mining Lease 15/1830
Local Government Area: Shire of Coolgardie
Colloquial name: Widgiemooltha Project

1.4. Application

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

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 25 May 2017

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. One Beard vegetation association has been mapped within the application area (GIS Database).

9: Medium woodland; Coral gum (*E. torquata*) & goldfields blackbutt (*E. lesouefii*).

A Level 2 flora and vegetation survey of the application area was conducted by Botanica Consulting (2016) in October 2016. This survey identified the following seven vegetation associations:

Clay-Loam Plain

Eucalypt Woodlands

CLP-EW1: Open low woodland of *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* over low scrub of *Eremophila scoparia* *Exocarpos aphyllus* and dwarf scrub of *Atriplex vesicaria* on clay-loam plain.

CLP-EW2: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus lesouefii* over low scrub of *Eremophila interstans* *Eremophila scoparia* and dwarf scrub of *Atriplex vesicaria* *Tecticornia disarticulata* on clay-loam plain.

CLP-EW3: Low forest of *Eucalyptus ravidia* over low scrub of *Eremophila dempsterii* *Eremophila interstans* and low heath of *Atriplex vesicaria* *Tecticornia disarticulata* on clay-loam plain.

Rocky Hillslope

Acacia Forests and Woodlands

RH-AFW1: Thicket of *Acacia burkittii* *Acacia collegialis* over heath of *Prostanthera grylloana* *Thryptomene australis* and mixed dwarf scrub on greenstone hill.

Eucalypt Woodlands

RH-EW1: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus lesouefii* over heath of *Dodonaea lobulata* *Santalum acuminatum* and low scrub of *Eremophila caerulea* *Westringia rigida* on greenstone hill.

RH-EW2: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus lesouefii* over shrub mallee of *Eucalyptus griffithsii* and mixed low heath on greenstone hill.

RH-EW3: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus torquata* over heath of *Acacia hemiteles* *Allocasuarina helmsii* and low scrub of *Dodonaea stenozyga* *Westringia rigida* on greenstone hill.

Clearing Description

Widgiemooltha Project
Mincor Resources NL is proposing to clear up to 485.96 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 485.96 hectares for the purposes of mineral production. The project is located approximately 25

kilometres south of Kambalda within the Shire of Widgiemooltha.

Vegetation Condition Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery, 1994);
To:
Very Good: Vegetation structure altered, obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery, 1994).

Comment Clearing permit CPS 7402/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum on 23 February 2017. The clearing permit authorised the clearing of 481.4 hectares of native vegetation within a total boundary of 481.4 hectares for the purpose of mineral production.

Mincor Resources NL has applied to amend CPS 7402/1, for the purpose of increasing the permit boundary and the amount of authorised clearing by 4.56 hectares, and to include Mining Lease 15/1830.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments

This amendment is to include Mining Lease 15/1830 within the Permit, and to increase the permit boundary and amount of authorised clearing by 4.56 hectares.

The amended application boundary does not intersect any additional vegetation communities to those present within the previous permit area (Botanica Consulting, 2016; GIS Database).

No Threatened flora, Threatened Ecological Communities, Priority flora, Priority Ecological Communities or significant fauna have been identified within the amended boundary area (Botanica Consulting, 2016; GIS Database). The landforms and habitat found within the amended application area are considered as being well represented in the local region (Botanica Consulting, 2016).

The climate of the region is arid to semi-arid, with approximately 200 to 300 millimetres of rainfall, sometimes in summer but usually in winter, per year (BoM, 2017). Drainage lines in the area are dry for most of the year, only flowing briefly immediately following significant rainfall (Botanica Consulting, 2016). Temporary localised flooding may occur during heavy rainfall events. However, the proposed clearing is unlikely to increase the incidence or intensity of natural flooding events. 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 proposed amendment is not likely to have any significant environmental impacts above those already assessed under Clearing Permit CPS 7402/1.

Methodology BoM (2017)
Botanica Consulting (2016)

GIS Database:
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Flora
- Threatened Ecological Sites Buffered

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

Comments

There are no Native Title claims over the area under application (DAA, 2017). However, 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 (DAA, 2017). 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 Parks and Wildlife 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 amended application was advertised on 3 April 2017 by the Department of Mines and Petroleum inviting submissions from the public. There were no submissions received.

Methodology DAA (2017)
GIS Database:
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance

4. References

- BoM (2017) Bureau of Meteorology Website - Climate statistics for Australian locations, Newman Aero. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_012018.shtml> Accessed 15 May 2017.
- Botanica Consulting (2016) Flora and Fauna Assessment Widgiemootha Project for Mincor Resources NL - Supporting Information for the Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application - Purpose Permit. Unpublished report prepared by Botanica Consulting, December 2016.
- DAA (2017) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System, Government of Western Australia, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Perth, <<http://maps.dia.wa.gov.au/AHIS2/>> Accessed 15 May 2017.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

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
DotEE	Department of the Environment and Energy, 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
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community

Definitions:

{DPaW (2015) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia}:-

T	Threatened species: Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i> , listed under Schedules 1 to 4 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora (which may also be referred to as Declared Rare Flora). Threatened fauna is that subset of 'Specially Protected Fauna' declared to be 'likely to become extinct' pursuant to section 14(4) of the Wildlife Conservation Act. Threatened flora is flora that has been declared to be 'likely to become extinct or is rare, or otherwise in need of special protection', pursuant to section 23F(2) of the Wildlife Conservation Act. The assessment of the conservation status of these species is based on their national extent and ranked according to their level of threat using IUCN Red List categories and criteria as detailed below.
CR	Critically endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i> , in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.
EN	Endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i> , in Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.
VU	Vulnerable species

Threatened species considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.

- EX Presumed extinct species**
Species which have been adequately searched for and there is no reasonable doubt that the last individual has died. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 4 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Presumed Extinct Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Presumed Extinct Flora.
- IA Migratory birds protected under an international agreement**
Birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) and The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and the Bonn Convention, relating to the protection of migratory birds. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- CD Conservation dependent fauna**
Fauna of special conservation need being species dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 6 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- OS Other specially protected fauna**
Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- P Priority species**
Species which are poorly known; or
Species that are adequately known, are rare but not threatened, and require regular monitoring. Assessment of Priority codes 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:**
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, e.g. 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 and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.
- P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species:**
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, e.g. 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 and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.
- P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species:**
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. Such species are in need of 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 Conservation Dependent.
(c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.

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 indigenous to Western Australia.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare 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 clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.