

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	8938/3
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Greenstone Resources (WA) Pty Ltd
Application received:	25 May 2026
Application area:	992 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral production and associated activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Leases 37/67, 37/76, 37/90, 37/179, 37/201, 37/222, 37/248, 37/330, 37/394, 37/407, 37/410, 37/416, 37/429, 37/451, 37/457, 37/496, 37/547, 37/548, 37/551, 37/570, 37/571, 37/572, 37/573, 37/574, 37/1081, 37/1105 Miscellaneous Licence 37/211
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Leonora
Colloquial name:	King of the Hills Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Greenstone Resources (WA) Pty Ltd (Greenstone) proposes to clear up to 992 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 3,898.27 hectares, for the purpose of mining mineral production and associated activities (Greenstone, 2026). The project is located approximately 25 kilometres northwest of Leonora, within the Shire of Leonora (GIS Database).

Clearing permit CPS 8938/1 was granted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration) on 30 July 2020 and was valid from 22 August 2020 to 31 October 2021. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 918.5 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 2,472.5 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities.

CPS 8938/2 was granted on 12 August 2021, amending the permit to extend the duration of the permit to 31 October 2026, increase the amount of clearing authorised from 918.5 hectares to 992 hectares and increase the permit boundary from 2,472.5 hectares to 3,898.27 hectares.

On 25 May 2026, the permit holder applied to amend CPS 8938/2 to extend the permit duration by five years (Greenstone, 2026). The permit boundary and amount of authorised clearing are to remain unchanged. The cumulative total area cleared under previous permits from reporting period 2021-2026 is 344.3 hectares (figure 2) (Vault Minerals, 2026).

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	15 September 2026
Decision area:	992 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 7 days, and no submissions were received.

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

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;
- potential land degradation; and

- potential impact to 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;
- staged clearing (commence mineral production and associated activities no later than three months after undertaking clearing) to reduce the risk of erosion; and
- a vegetation management condition requiring that surface water flows are not impacted by the proposed clearing, and the clearing of riparian vegetation is avoided, where practicable.

1.5. Site map

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

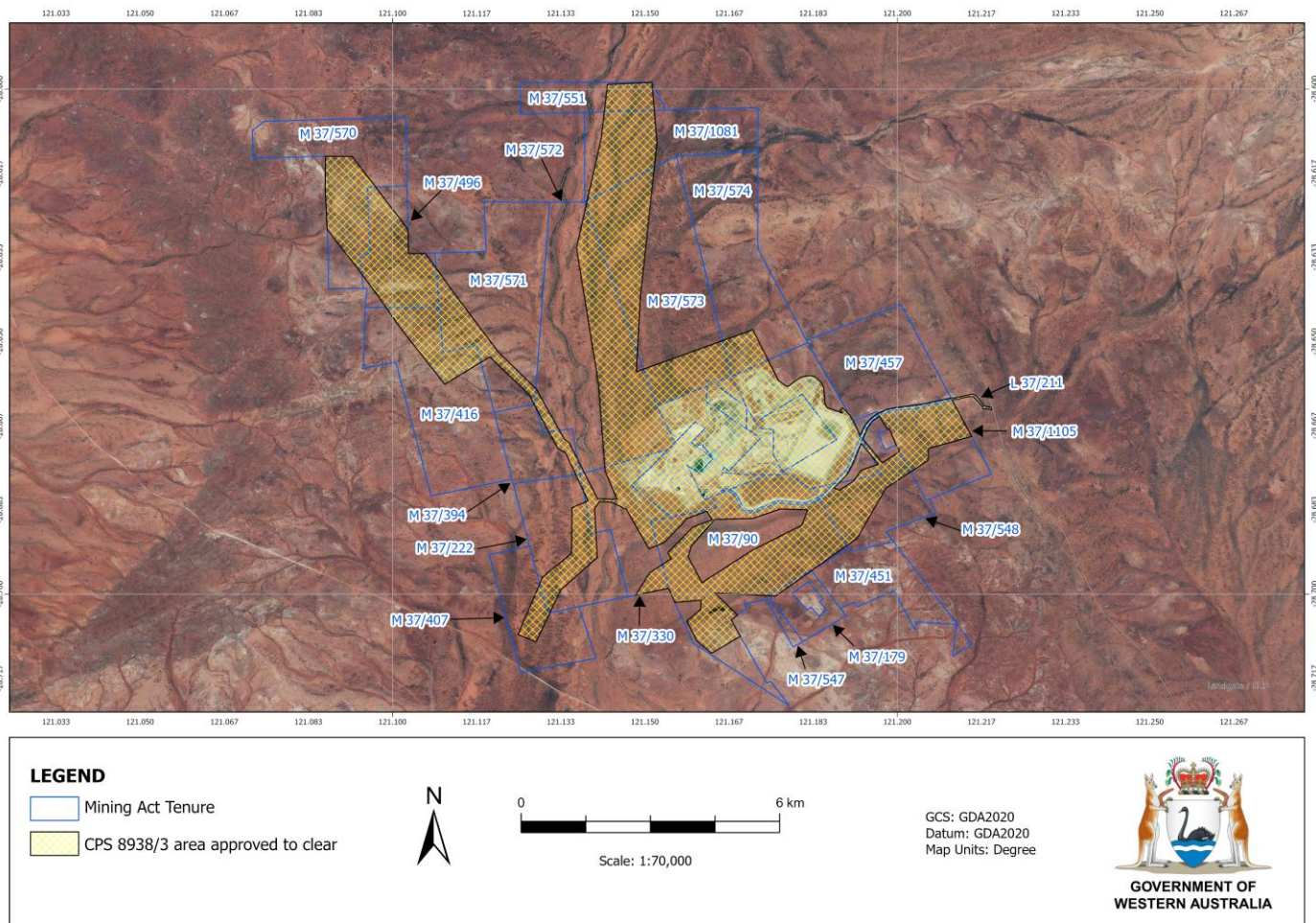


Figure 1. Map of the application area. The yellow area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit.

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

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)

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 – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2020)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The applicant has considered minimising the disturbance for auxiliary mining (workshop/admin etc) by using existing infrastructure and disturbed areas (Greenstone Resources Limited, 2026).

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

In assessing the application, the Delegated Officer has had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix A) and the extent to which the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological, conservation, or land and water resource values.

A review of current environmental information (Appendix A) reveals that the assessment against the clearing principles has not changed significantly from the clearing permit decision report CPS 8938/2.

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

Assessment

Priority flora

One Priority flora species, *Frankenia georgei* (Priority 1), was recorded occurring in the King of the Hills (KOTH) project area (Matiske, 2020). Two large populations of *F. georgei*, both exceeding 1,000 individuals covering an area of approximately 29 hectares, were recorded along the proposed haul road; out of the 29 hectares covered by the populations of *F. georgei*, 11.8 hectares fall within the application area (MBS, 2021). *F. georgei* is a low shrub belonging to the family Frankeniaceae, primarily flowering in December, however an individual with fresh flowers was collected in the March 2020 survey (Matiske, 2020). The species has various populations across the state, with records of the species occurring 130 kilometres to the north, 340 kilometres south and 420 kilometres southeast of the application area (MBS, 2020; GIS Database). Complete avoidance of this species is not achievable given requirements for avoidance of heritage sites of significance associated with Sullivan Creek and the geographical extent of these populations between the proposed satellite pits and main operational area (MBS, 2021). The permit holder has committed to avoid and minimize the impact to this priority flora where possible (MBS, 2021). The proposed haul road has already been cleared and required clearance of this flora has already been carried out (RED 5, 2024). Given this the amendment is unlikely to have significant impact on this priority flora.

Grevillea inconspicua (Priority 4), has been recorded in loamy and gravel soil along drainage lines on rocky outcrops and creeklines (Western Australian Herbarium (WAH), 1998-). This species is known from 63 Western Australian Herbarium records across the Murchison IBRA bioregion, indicating the species is common and widespread within the bioregion and many populations occurs outside the amendment area (WAH, 1998-; GIS Database). *Grevillea inconspicua* was recorded in a cluster of locations in 1992 just outside the northwestern boundary of the KOTH survey area, approximately 6 kilometres from the proposed site, and the KOTH project area contains preferred habitat for this species (MBS, 2021). However, the flora survey did not record this species within the application area (MBS, 2021). Therefore, the proposed clearing is unlikely to have significant impact on the conservation of this species.

Stenanthemum patens (Priority 1) have records in areas of rocky hillside (WAH, 1998-). *Stenanthemum patens* is known from 11 Western Australian Herbarium records across Murchison IBRA bioregions (WAH, 1998-; GIS Database). It has been recorded within 5 kilometres outside of the application area (GIS Database). However, this species was not recorded within the application area during the survey (MBS, 2021). Therefore, the proposed clearing is unlikely to have significant impact on the conservation of this species.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing is unlikely to have any significant impact to conservation significant flora species.

Conditions

No flora management conditions required.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 9 June 2026 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 (WAD142/2018 – Darlot) claim over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been determined by the Federal Court 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 two registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance 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.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- 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. Site characteristics

A.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 (GIS Database). It is surrounded by the landscape and vegetation of Eastern Murchison of the Murchison bioregion as described in Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) (GIS Database). The predominant land use in the region is grazing native pastures (CALM, 2002).																																
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area does not contain any known or mapped ecological linkages (GIS Database).																																
Conservation areas	There are no conservation areas in the vicinity (100 kilometres) of the amendment area (GIS Database).																																
Vegetation description	The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations: 18: Low woodland; mulga (<i>Acacia aneura</i>); 28: Open low woodland; mulga; and 39: Shrublands; mulga scrub (GIS Database). Several flora and vegetation surveys were conducted over the amendment area (MBS, 2021). The following vegetation associations were recorded within the amendment area (MBS, 2021): <table> <tr> <th>Vegetation Community</th><th>Description</th></tr> <tr> <td>A1</td><td>Low Open Forest of <i>Acacia</i> spp. over <i>Eremophila youngii</i> subsp. <i>youngii</i>, <i>Eremophila forrestii</i> subsp. <i>forrestii</i>, <i>Rhagodia drummondii</i>, <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i>, <i>Solanum lasiophyllum</i> over <i>Aristida contorta</i>, <i>Enneapogon caeruleus</i>, annual herbs and grasses on sandy loams on flats and flowlines.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A2</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia</i> spp. over <i>Hakea preissii</i>, <i>Eremophila forrestii</i> subsp. <i>forrestii</i>, <i>Spartothamnella teucriflora</i>, <i>Ptilotus calostachyus</i>, <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i>, <i>Solanum lasiophyllum</i> over <i>Maireana suaedifolia</i>, <i>Aristida contorta</i>, <i>Enneapogon caeruleus</i>, annual herbs and grasses on sandy-loams on flats and lower slopes.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A3</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia</i> spp. over <i>Hakea preissii</i>, <i>Eremophila galeata</i>, <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i>, <i>Solanum lasiophyllum</i> over mixed Chenopods, annual herbs and grasses on flats and lower slopes with pebbles and quartz on surface.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A5</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia</i> spp. and patches of <i>Casuarina pauper</i> over <i>Senna</i> and Chenopod species over annual herbs and grasses on ridges and slopes, with sandy-loams with mixed volcanic rocks on surface.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A6</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia fuscaneura</i> and <i>Acacia aneura</i> over <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i>, <i>Solanum lasiophyllum</i>, <i>Eremophila galeata</i> with occasional <i>Brachychiton gregorii</i> over mixed Chenopods, annual herbs and grasses on lower slopes with calcrete soils and quartz on surface.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A7</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia</i> spp. over <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i>, <i>Solanum lasiophyllum</i>, <i>Eremophila galeata</i> over mixed Chenopods, annual herbs and grasses on flats and lower slopes with calcrete soils.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A8</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia</i> spp. over <i>Eremophila</i> species, <i>Dodonaea lobulata</i>, <i>Prostanthera albilifera</i> on volcanic rockier hills and slopes or on erosional slopes.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A9</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> and <i>Hakea preissii</i> over mixed Chenopods and <i>Eremophila</i> species on sandy-loam soils with pebbles and quartz.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A10</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> and <i>Acacia ramulosa</i> var. <i>ramulosa</i> over <i>Eremophila youngii</i> subsp. <i>youngii</i> over <i>Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia</i>, annual herb and grasses on quartz ridge.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A11</td><td>Low Open Woodland of <i>Acacia aneura</i> – <i>Acacia tetragonophylla</i> over <i>Dodonaea rigida</i>, <i>Scaevola spinescens</i> over annual herbs and grasses on ironstone outcropping ridge.</td></tr> <tr> <td>A13</td><td>Low woodland of <i>Acacia ?incurvaneura</i> over <i>Acacia</i> spp. tall open shrubland over <i>Eremophila ?platycalyx</i>, <i>Scaevola spinescens</i>, <i>Senna artemisioides</i> subsp. <i>x artemisioides</i>, <i>Eremophila latrobei</i> subsp. <i>glabra</i> and <i>Psydrax</i> spp. mid sparse shrubland on hard red clay flats.</td></tr> <tr> <td>C1</td><td>Open Chenopod Shrubland with <i>Atriplex nummularia</i>, <i>Maireana pyramidata</i> and mixed <i>Sclerolaena</i> species with occasional emergent <i>Hakea preissii</i> and patches of <i>Acacia aneura</i> on calcrete soils.</td></tr> <tr> <td>E1</td><td>Open Woodland of <i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> subsp. <i>obtusata</i> with pockets of <i>Casuarina</i> and <i>Acacia citrinoviridis</i> over <i>Bossiaea walkeri</i> over mixed grasses and annual herbs on sandy soils in creeklines.</td></tr> <tr> <td>D</td><td>Disturbed Sites. 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Vegetation condition	The vegetation survey and aerial imagery indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in excellent to completely degraded (Trudgen, 1991) condition (MBS, 2021; GIS Database). The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix C.																																
Climate and landform	The amendment area is located in an arid zone of Western Australia with a low average annual rainfall of approximately 236.4 millimetres (BoM, 2026).																																
Soil description and Land degradation risk	The soils of the amendment area are broadly mapped as the following land systems (DPIRD, 2026; GIS Database):																																

Characteristic	Details
	- Gundockerta Land System: It is described as 'Extensive, gently undulating calcareous stony plains supporting bluebush shrublands'. This land system is moderately susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Wilson Land System: It consists of 'Large creeks with extensive distributary fans, supporting mulga and chenopod shrublands'. Large proportions of this land system are severely degraded and eroded (Pringle et al., 1994). The drainage tracts, alluvial fans and hardpan plains are most extensively eroded (Pringle et al., 1994). The vegetation of this land system is highly preferred for grazing by introduced and native animals, rendering it susceptible to overgrazing and consequent degradation (Pringle et al., 1994). - Brooking Land System: It is described as 'Prominent ridges of banded iron formation supporting mulga shrublands and occasional minor halophytic communities'. This land system is not generally susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Jundee Land System: It is described as 'Hardpan plains with variable gravelly mantles and minor sandy banks supporting weakly grooved mulga shrublands'. Soil erosion can be initiated where tracks and diversion structures harvest water on sloping land (Pringle et al., 1994). - Laverton Land System: It is described as 'Low greenstone hills and stony plains supporting mixed chenopod shrublands'. This land system is not generally susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Leonora Land System: It is described as 'Low greenstone hills and stony plains supporting mixed chenopod shrublands'. This land system is not generally susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Nubev Land System: It is described as 'Gently undulating stony plains, minor limonitic low rises and drainage floors supporting mulga and halophytic shrublands'. This land system is not generally susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Rainbow Land System: It is described as 'Hardpan plains supporting mulga tall shrublands'. This land system is not generally susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Violet Land System: It is described as 'Gently undulating gravelly plains on greenstone, laterite and hardpan, with low stony rises and minor saline plains; supporting grooved mulga and bowgada shrublands and occasionally chenopod shrublands'. This land system is mildly susceptible to erosion (Pringle et al., 1994). - Monk Land System: It is described as 'Hard plains with occasional sandy banks supporting mulga tall shrublands and wanderrie grasses'. The drainage tracts within this land system are mildly susceptible to water erosion, and this system is susceptible to water starvation and consequent loss of vigour in vegetation if natural water flow is impeded (Pringle et al., 1994).
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that there are several minor non-perennial watercourses transecting the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database).
Hydrogeography	The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is Leonora Water Reserve located approximately five kilometres southeast of the amendment area (GIS Database). The amendment area is located within the Goldfields Ground Water Area proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> (GIS Database). The groundwater salinity is mapped as 3,000 to 7,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as saline respectively (BoM, 2019; GIS Database).
Flora	The flora survey did not record any Threatened flora species; however, one Priority flora species <i>Frankenia georgei</i> (P1) was recorded within the amendment area (MBS, 2021).
Ecological communities	There are no known records of Threatened or Priority Ecological Community (TEC or PEC) within or in close proximity of the amendment area (MBS, 2021; GIS Database). The closest PEC is Sturt Meadows calccrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Sturt Meadows Station (Priority 1) which is approximately 17 kilometres west of the amendment area (GIS Database).
Fauna	The fauna survey conducted by Terrestrial Ecosystem over the amendment area and desktop assessment did not record any conservation significant fauna species (Terrestrial Ecosystem, 2020; GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	A targeted fauna survey was conducted over the amendment area by Terrestrial Ecosystem (2020). The following fauna habitats were recorded within the amendment area (Terrestrial Ecosystem, 2020): - Mulga woodland habitat (open mulga woodland over mixed shrubs and scattered grasses or bare ground); and - Sullivan Creek habitat (woodland of large eucalypts over mixed shrubs and scattered grasses along the ephemeral creek line that runs north-south through the amendment area).

A.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 - Murchison	28,120,586	28,044,823	~99	2,185,987	7.77
Beard vegetation associations - State					
- 18	19,892,306	19,843,148	~99	1,317,179	6.62
- 28	395,895	392,171	~99	-	-
- 39	6,613,567	6,602,578	~99	795,070	12.02
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
- 18	12,403,172	12,363,252	~99	614,964	4.96
- 28	224,291	220,583	~98	-	-
- 39	1,148,400	1,138,064	~99	40,834	3.56

Government of Western Australia (2019)

A.3. Flora analysis table

The following conservation significant flora species have records within a 20 kilometres radius of the amendment area (GIS Database). Habitat suitability and likelihood of occurrence was determined utilising biological survey information (MBS, 2021; WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Likelihood of occurrence	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
<i>Calandrinia quartzitica</i>	P1	N	Unlikely	<15	18	Y
<i>Eremophila simulans</i> subsp. <i>megacalyx</i>	P3	N	Unlikely	<15	11	Y
<i>Frankenia georgei</i>	P1	Y	Likely	0	7	Y
<i>Grevillea inconspicua</i>	P4	Y	Possible	<20	63	Y
<i>Stenanthemum patens</i>	P1	Y	Possible	<1	11	Y

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

A.4. Fauna analysis table

The following conservation significant fauna species have records within a 20 kilometres radius of the amendment area (GIS Database). Habitat suitability, likelihood of occurrence and impact was determined utilising biological survey information (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Terrestrial Ecosystem, 2020; GIS Database).

Species name	Common name	Conservation status		Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Likelihood of occurrence	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
		WA	EPBC			
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	common sandpiper	MI	MI	N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	sharp-tailed sandpiper	MI	MI	N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	red knot	EN	EN & MI	N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Charadrius cucullatus</i>	hooded plover, hooded dotterel	P4		N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	peregrine falcon	OS		N	Unlikely	<10
<i>Leipoa ocellata</i>	malleefowl	VU	VU	N	Unlikely	<20

Species name	Common name	Conservation status		Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Likelihood of occurrence	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
		WA	EPBC			
<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>	bilby	VU	VU	N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>	Pacific golden plover	MI	MI	N	Unlikely	<35
<i>Tringa glareola</i>	wood sandpiper	MI	MI	N	Unlikely	<25
<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	common greenshank	MI	MI	N	Unlikely	<35

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, MI: migratory, CD: conservation dependent, OS: other specially protected, P: priority

Appendix B. 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 amendment area proposed to be cleared may contain locally or regionally significant assemblages of plants (MBS, 2021; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	Yes
<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 fauna survey conducted over the amendment area did not record any conservation significant fauna species (Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2020). The area proposed to be cleared does not contain significant habitat for conservation significant fauna species (MBS, 2021; Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2020; GIS Database). The consultant's report recommended avoiding the Sullivan Creek habitat as much as possible as it provides ecological linkages for fauna (MBS, 2021). It is estimated that about 0.44 hectares of riparian vegetation (Community A1) associated with Sullivan Creek may need to be cleared for the causeway. The causeway will be about 50 metres wide to accommodate the haul road and water pipelines, which are required for the satellite open pits northwest of the main project area (MBS, 2021). The two fauna habitat types represented in the application area are abundant and in similar condition in adjacent areas (MBS, 2021; Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2020). Therefore, the fauna assemblage that are present in the application area will also be present and abundant in the adjacent areas.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	No
<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> There are no known records of Threatened flora within the application area (GIS Database). Flora surveys of the application area did not record any species of Threatened flora (MBS, 2021).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	No
<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 (TECs) located within or in close proximity to the application area (MBS, 2020; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
<u>Principle (e):</u> “Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.” <u>Assessment:</u> Approximately 99 percent of the pre-European extent of the mapped vegetation type remains uncleared at both state and bioregional level (Government of Western	Not at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Australia; 2019). The vegetation proposed to be cleared does not represent a significant remnant of native vegetation in the local area (GIS Database).		
<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 (approximately 130 kilometres), the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of nearby conservation areas (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	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 clear (MBS, 2021; GIS Database). Several seasonal creek line pass through the application area (GIS Database). Creek lines in the region are dry for most of the year, only flowing briefly immediately following significant rainfall (CALM, 2002). The proposed disturbance footprint crosses Sullivan Creek to the west of the current main area of disturbance for the King of the Hill Project (MBS, 2021). Clearing within Sullivan Creek will be for the purposes of constructing a causeway for a haul road to the satellite open pits northwest of the main project area. The causeway will be about 50 m wide to accommodate the haul road and water pipelines (MBS, 2021). It is estimated that about 0.44 hectares of riparian vegetation (Community A1) associated with Sullivan Creek may need to be cleared for the causeway (MBS, 2021). Potential impacts to vegetation growing in association with the watercourse may be minimized by continuing the existing watercourse management condition.	At variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	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 amendment area lies within the Brooking, Gundockerta, Jundee, Laverton, Leonora, Nubev, Rainbow, Violet, Wilson and Monk land systems (DPIRD, 2026; GIS Database). These land systems comprise banded ironstone ridges, greenstone hills, stony and gravelly plains, hardpan plains, drainage floors, alluvial fans and creek systems supporting mulga and chenopod shrublands (Pringle et al., 1994). Most of these land systems are not generally susceptible to erosion under intact vegetation cover; however, the Gundockerta, Jundee, Monk, Violet land systems have some susceptibility to erosion where vegetation is removed, or natural surface water flow patterns are disturbed. The proposed clearing of up to 992 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 3,898.27 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production may cause land degradation. Potential impacts from erosion may be reduced by continuing the imposition of a staged clearing condition.	May be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	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> Given no Public Drinking Water Sources Areas are recorded within the amendment area (GIS Database). Creek lines in the region are dry for most of the year, only flowing briefly immediately following significant rainfall (CALM, 2002). The proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	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>	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 8938/2)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
There are no permanent water courses or waterbodies within the amendment area (GIS Database). Seasonal drainage lines are common in the region and temporary localised flooding may occur briefly following heavy rainfall events (CALM, 2002). However, the proposed clearing is unlikely to increase the incidence or intensity of natural flooding events.		

Appendix C. 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 D. Biological survey information

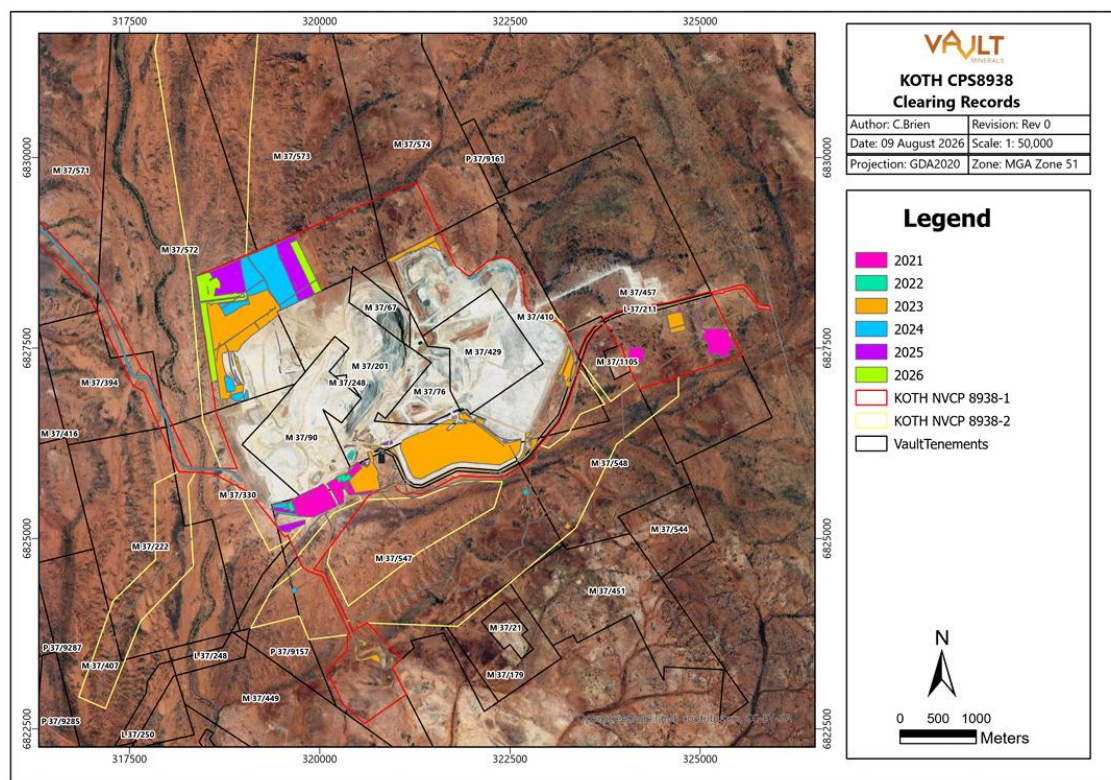


Figure 2: Clearing undertaken from financial year 2021-2026 (Vault Minerals, 2026).

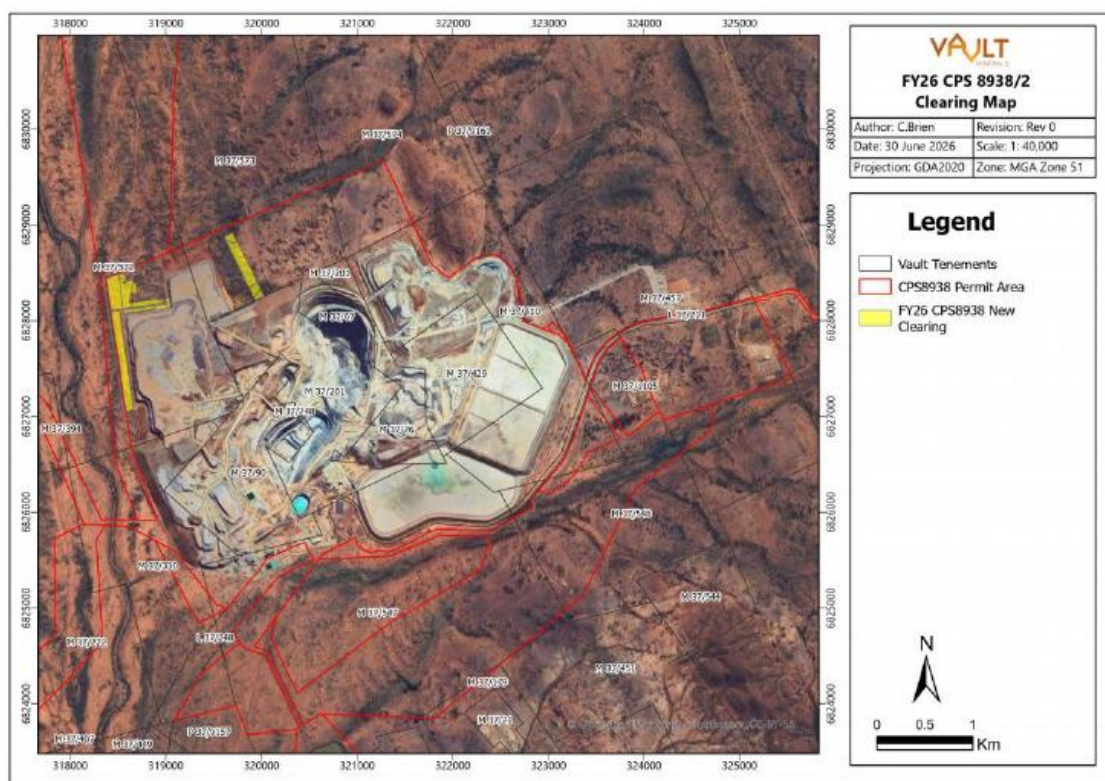


Figure 3: Clearing undertaken in financial year 2025-2026 (Vault Minerals, 2026)

Appendix E. Sources of information

E.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 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
- IBSA Survey Details (DWER-118)
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery
- Wild Rivers (DWER-087)

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)

E.2. References

- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2019) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Groundwater Information – Average Salinity. Bureau of Meteorology. <https://www.bom.gov.au/water/groundwater/insight/metadata.shtml> (Accessed 5 August 2026).
- Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) (2026) Bureau of Meteorology Website – Climate Data Online, Leonora (012046). Bureau of Meteorology. <https://reg.bom.gov.au/climate/data/> (Accessed 5 August 2026).
- Conservation and Land Management (CALM) (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographic Subregions in 2002. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2008) Species Profile and Threats Database. Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia. <https://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/sprat.pl> (Accessed 30 July 2026).
- Department of Environment Regulation (DER) (2014) *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation*. Perth. https://www.der.wa.gov.au/images/documents/your-environment/native-vegetation/Guidelines/Guide2_assessment_native_veg.pdf
- Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) (2026) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <https://espatial.dplh.wa.gov.au/ACHIS/index.html?viewer=ACHIS> (Accessed 30 July 2026).
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2026) NRInfo Digital Mapping. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia. <https://dpiird.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=662e8cbf2def492381fc915aaf3c6a0f> (Accessed 4 August 2026).
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) (2021) Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits. Joondalup. <https://www.wa.gov.au/system/files/2024-11/procedure-native-vegetation-clearing-permits.pdf>
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2016) Technical Guidance - Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment. http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Flora%20and%20Vegetation%20survey_Dec13.pdf
- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2020) Technical Guidance – Terrestrial Fauna Surveys. https://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/2020.09.17%20-%20EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Vertebrate%20Fauna%20Surveys%20-%20Final.pdf
- Government of Western Australia (2019) 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of March 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics>

- Greenstone Resources Limited (2026) Clearing permit application form, CPS 8938/3, received 25 May 2026.
- Mattiske (2020) Flora and Vegetation Values on Proposed Expansion Areas at Tarmoola. Level 1 Flora and Vegetation Survey. Memorandum prepared for Red 5 Limited by Mattiske, April 2020.
- MBS (2021) Native Vegetation Clearing Permit King of the Hills Project. Supporting information for clearing permit application CPS 8938/1. Unpublished report prepared for Red 5 Limited by MBS Environmental, June 2021.
- Pringle, H.J.R, Van Vreeswyk, A.M.E. and Gilligan, S.A. (1994) An inventory and condition survey of rangelands in the north eastern Goldfields, Western Australia, Technical Bulletin No. 87., Department of Agriculture, South Perth, Western Australia.
- Vault Minerals (2026) King of the Hills (KOTH) Gold Mine – Clearing Permit Report 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026. Prepared for Greenstone Resources (WA) Pty Ltd, by Vault Minerals, received May 2026.
- Terrestrial Ecosystems (2020) Level 2 Vertebrate Fauna Assessment for the King of the Hills Project. Unpublished report prepared for Red 5 by Terrestrial Ecosystems, May 2020.
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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**
- 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.