



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	9799/3
Permit type:	Purpose Permit
Applicant name:	Barto Gold Mining Pty Ltd
Application received:	6 March 2026
Application area:	100 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral production and associated activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Leases 77/133, 77/159, 77/224, 77/721, 77/722 Miscellaneous Licence 77/114
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Yilgarn
Colloquial name:	Achilles Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Barto Gold Mining Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 100 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 295 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities (Barto Gold, 2025). The project is located approximately six kilometres southeast of Southern Cross, within the Shire of Yilgarn (GIS Database).

Clearing permit CPS 9799/1 was granted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration) on 13 September 2022 and was valid from 6 October 2022 to 5 October 2027. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 48.6 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 295 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities.

CPS 9799/2 was granted on 27 March 2025, amending the permit to increase the already approved area of 48.6 hectares to 75 hectares, with no changes to the permit boundary.

Based on the most recent annual clearing report (reporting period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, received 27 July 2025), a total of 46.11 hectares of native vegetation have been cleared under CPS 9799/2.

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	18 August 2026
Decision area:	100 hectares of native vegetation

1.4. Reasons for decision

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

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix A), relevant datasets (Appendix D), 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 Delegated Officer also took into consideration the purpose of the clearing to facilitate mineral production and associated activities.

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;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) and is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*);

- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for southern whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*); and
- potential land degradation in the form of erosion.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures, the Delegated Officer determined that the proposed clearing is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to the environment.

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

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- commence construction no later than three months after undertaking clearing to reduce the risk of erosion;
- a fauna management (chuditch) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 August and 31 December are inspected to identify chuditch dens and individuals, and relocate any chuditch found within two weeks prior to any clearing activities;
- a fauna management (malleefowl) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 September and 31 January are inspected to identify active (in use) and inactive malleefowl mounds, and to maintain a 200 metre buffer around identified active mounds and a 50 metre buffer around identified inactive mounds; and
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring area proposed to be cleared between 1 July and 31 October are inspected to identify active (in use) southern whiteface nests, and to maintain a 50 metre buffer around identified active nests.

With the exception of the additional fauna management condition for southern whiteface, the assessment has not changed since the assessment for CPS 9799/2. The Delegated Officer determined that the proposed increase of the area authorised to clear from 75 hectares to 100 hectares and extension of the Permit duration is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

1.5. Site map

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

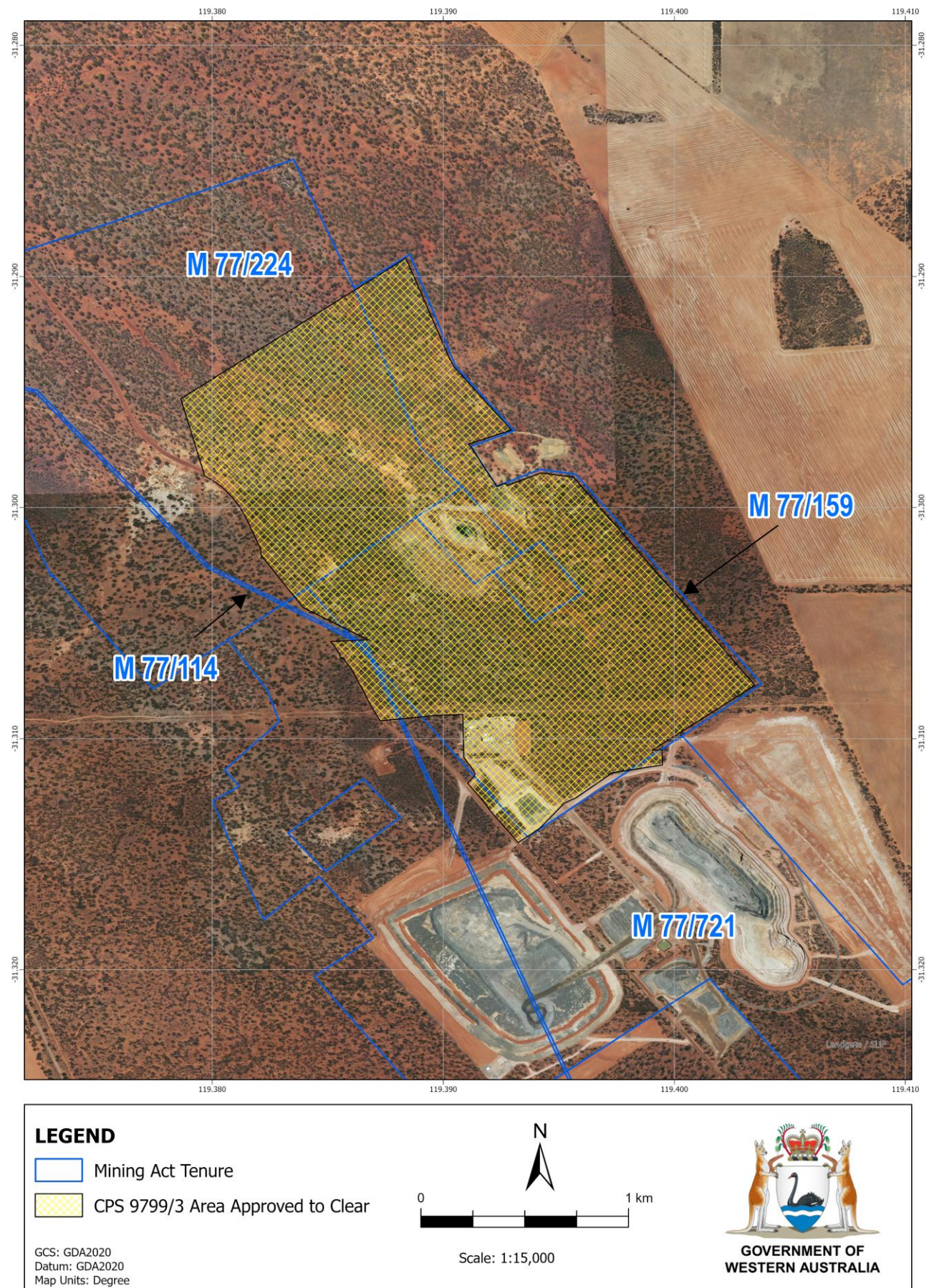


Figure 1. Map of the application area. The yellow area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit.

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)
- *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, 2014)
- Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits (DWER, 2021)
- Guideline for Cumulative Impact Assessment (EPA, 2026)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The area proposed to be cleared has been designed by the applicant to avoid any direct impact to *Rinzia fimbriolata* (P1) and an associated 50 metre buffer (Stantec, 2022). Clearing has been minimised by utilising existing disturbed areas. In addition to these measures, the proponent committed to implement the following measures:

- where practical, existing disturbed areas will be utilised for haul/access roads and associated infrastructure to minimise clearing requirements;
- pre-clearance surveys within the specified clearing areas will be undertaken in the morning of clearing to search for the presence of significant fauna species;
- no night time clearing is to occur to avoid impacting nocturnal species;
- awareness training will outline the appropriate behaviour and responses in the event of contact with native fauna;
- clearing will not be undertaken until construction is imminent, minimising erosion and dust risks; and
- topsoil and vegetation will be stockpiled for later use in rehabilitation activities.

The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values.

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

A review of current environmental information (Appendix A) reveals that the assessment against the clearing principles has not changed significantly from the clearing permit decision report CPS 9799/1 or CPS 9799/2, however an updated assessment for Principle (b) has been conducted due to the amendment application to increase the amount of clearing authorised under CPS 9799/2 from 75 hectares to 100 hectares.

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.

The assessment against the clearing principles identified that the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological values (fauna). The consideration of these impacts, and the extent to which they can be managed through conditions applied in line with sections 51H and 51I of the EP Act, is set out below.

3.2.1. Biological values - Clearing principle (b)

Assessment

A targeted fauna survey was carried out in 2021 by Stantec to determine the suitability of the application area as *Dasyurus geoffroyi* (chuditch) habitat, and assess the distribution and significance of the fauna habitat of the application area (Stantec, 2021a). The fauna survey identified the Eucalyptus Woodlands as a significant faunal habitat as 'with the potential to support conservation significant fauna'. The large hollow-bearing trees provide important habitat for the Western Rosella (*Platycercus icterotis xanthogenys*) (P4). In addition, the thick vegetation at some sites may also serve as suitable foraging habitat for the Western Rosella within this habitat type (Stantec, 2021a). Large woody debris and logs present in the Eucalyptus Woodlands habitat may provide denning habitat for the Chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroyi*) (VU) (Stantec, 2021a). The Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) (VU) has been recorded recently within the Southern Cross tenements, including sightings and active mounds; however, the mounds are located approximately 29 kilometres away from the application area and primarily within Acacia Shrubland and Eucalyptus Woodland habitats (Stantec, 2021b). It is considered possible that the Malleefowl utilises the

application area for foraging on occasion. The Eucalyptus Woodlands habitat is widespread and not restricted to the area proposed to be cleared (Stantec, 2022).

A review of current information shows that there are an additional 11 conservation significant fauna species recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area, and while this species has not been recorded nearby the application area falls within the known range of *Aphelocephala leucopsis* (southern whiteface) (GIS Database). Suitable habitat has been identified within the application area for the following four fauna species:

- *Aphelocephala leucopsis* (southern whiteface) (VU);
- *Falco peregrinus* (peregrine falcon) (OS);
- *Idiosoma castellum* (tree-stem trapdoor spider) (P4); and
- *Notamacropus irma* (western brush wallaby) (P4).

Southern whiteface

At the time of the previous surveys and the assessment for CPS 9799/1 and CPS 9799/2, *Aphelocephala leucopsis* (southern whiteface) had not been listed as a threatened or priority species. This species is now listed as Vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Southern whiteface is a small bird similar to thornbills but with a stockier build, with brownish-grey upperparts with a pale white underside (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). This species is widespread across the south of Australia but patchily distributed throughout its range, preferring woodlands and tall shrublands with grassy understorey or low shrub layer (Commonwealth of Australia). While there are no records of this species within or near the application area, it has only been listed as of March 2023, as such it was not considered by the 2021 Stantec survey or 2022 supporting documentation (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Stantec, 2021a; Stantec, 2022). The open woodland over shrubs described within the application area provides suitable foraging/breeding habitat for this species, with the majority of the vegetation (83.58% as of the 2022 Stantec report) being considered in excellent condition (Stantec, 2022).

Peregrine falcon

The peregrine falcon is a wide ranging species, maintaining a home range of 20 to 30 kilometres from their 'nests', consisting of recessed cliff faces, tree hollows or abandoned nests of other large birds (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). While the tree hollows present within the application area could be utilised for nesting, they have not previously been recorded nesting within the application area. Given the tendency of adults of this species to return to previous nesting sites, and offspring returning to their original home areas to breed, it is unlikely that this species would rely upon the application area as critical nesting habitat (WAM, 2026). As such, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact the conservation of this species.

Western brush wallaby

The western brush wallaby inhabits open forest or woodland with low grasses and open scrub thickets, distributed through the southwest of Western Australia (Menkhorst and Knight, 2011). While the application area may provide some suitable habitat for this species, the vegetation is denser than the vegetation this species has most commonly been recorded in. As such, the species is likely to only utilise the application area as an ecological linkage, and in addition to the wide distribution and frequency of records throughout the southwest of Western Australia the impacts to this species as a result of the proposed clearing are considered to be low.

Conclusion

While the application area may provide suitable foraging habitat for the peregrine falcon, western brush wallaby and central long-eared bat, it is unlikely to represent critical habitat for these species. Of the 75 hectares approved to be cleared under CPS 9799/2, a total of 46.11 hectares has been cleared as of the 2024-2025 clearing report submitted by Barto Gold Mining Pty Ltd (Barto Gold, 2025). Due to the disturbance of the area, the application area is unlikely to represent critical habitat for these three fauna species as populations will have already been affected by the clearing and mining activities carried out to date. Despite this, the application area is still situated in a remnant tract of native vegetation at the eastern edge of the wheatbelt, providing an ecological linkage to a larger area of native vegetation approximately 20 kilometres southeast of the application area (GIS Database). As such, there may be potential impacts to these conservation significant species. Potential impacts to malleefowl and chuditch may be minimised through the continued implementation of fauna management conditions, and potential impacts to southern whiteface may be minimised through the implementation of a pre-clearance survey condition. Other impacts to conservation significant fauna may be minimised through the implementation of a directional clearing condition.

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing may result in impacts on the aforementioned fauna species. Potential impacts to these fauna species may be managed through the implementation of the following conditions.

Conditions

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

- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- a fauna management (chuditch) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 August and 31 December are inspected to identify chuditch dens and individuals, and relocate any chuditch found within two weeks prior to any clearing activities;
- a fauna management (malleefowl) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 September and 31 January are inspected to identify active (in use) and inactive malleefowl mounds, and to maintain a 200 metre buffer around identified active mounds and a 50 metre buffer around inactive mounds; and
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring area proposed to be cleared between 1 July and 31 October are inspected to identify active (in use) southern whiteface nests, and to maintain a 50 metre buffer around identified active nests.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 6 March 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 claim (WC2017/007) over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. The mining tenure has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the nature of the act (i.e. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore, the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

There are no 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 located approximately six kilometres southeast of the town of Southern Cross on crown land within the Shire of Yilgarn in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia (GIS Database). The area proposed to be cleared is situated in an isolated tract of native vegetation surrounded by farmland and mining developments (GIS Database). The application area is located in the Coolgardie IBRA Bioregion, and the Southern Cross IBRA subregion (GIS Database). This subregion has been The predominant land uses in the region are grazing, Unallocated Crown Land (UCL) and Crown Reserves, mining, and conservation (CALM, 2002).
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area forms part of an ecological linkage running northwest to southeast across the eastern extent of the wheatbelt, meeting with a substantial area of native vegetation approximately 20 kilometres southeast of the application area (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area does not form part of any known conservation areas (GIS Database). The closest conservation area is Wockallary Nature Reserve, located approximately 18.5 kilometres southwest of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation association 1068: Medium woodland; salmon gum, morrel, gimlet and <i>Eucalyptus sheathiana</i> (GIS Database). A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Stantec Australia Pty Ltd during October 2020. The following vegetation association was recorded within the application area (Stantec, 2022): EIEsuMpAvOmAm: <i>Eucalyptus longicornis</i> and <i>Eucalyptus salubris</i> woodland over <i>Melaleuca pauperiflora</i> high shrubland over <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i>, <i>Olearia muelleri</i> and <i>Acacia merrallii</i> low open shrubland. One broad fauna habitat type was identified from a fauna habitat assessment performed by Stantec (2021a). This habitat type was described as: Eucalyptus Woodlands: Gently undulating terrain dominated by a woodland of <i>Eucalyptus longicornis</i>, <i>Eucalyptus salmonophloia</i>, <i>Eucalyptus salubris</i> and <i>Eucalyptus loxophleba</i> subsp. <i>lissophloia</i> over <i>Melaleuca</i> spp. tall shrubland over low open shrubland. The habitat ranged from relatively open areas dominated by mature tall eucalypts to densely vegetated areas with immature eucalypts, regenerating after fire. Mallee forms of the eucalypts also occurred within the <i>Eucalyptus</i> Woodland habitat.
Vegetation condition	The vegetation survey (Stantec, 2022) and aerial imagery indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Excellent to Completely Degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition.
Climate and landform	The climate of the Southern Cross subregion is described as semi-arid, with the nearest weather station recording an average rainfall of approximately 303.5 millimetres per year (BoM, 2026; CALM, 2002). The application area is mapped at elevations of 370-400 metres Australian height datum (GIS Database).
Soil description and land degradation risk	The soil is mapped as the following land systems (DPIRD, 2026a; Waddell and Galloway, 2023; GIS Database): Greenmount, Perilya subsystem (260Gr) Rounded low greenstone hills and rolling rises, supporting eucalypt woodlands with non-halophytic understoreys and <i>Allocasuarina</i> thickets. Soils associated with this land system are loamy gravel, very shallow ironstone soil, red shallow loamy duplex, alkaline red deep loamy duplex, alkaline red shallow loamy duplex, calcareous loamy earth, calcareous shallow loam on greenstone, very shallow soil over ferruginous duricrust, shallow loamy gravel and bare rock. This land system is generally not prone to erosion unless protective stony mantles are disturbed. Narrow drainage tracts are mildly susceptible to water erosion, particularly if perennial shrub cover is reduced or the soil surface is disturbed. Garratt 1Qc phase (260Gt) Alluvial plains adjacent to salt lakes, supporting eucalypt (morrel) woodlands with saltbush. Soils associated with this land system are calcareous loamy earth, red loamy earth, occasionally alkaline red shallow duplexes, red shallow sandy duplex, calcareous loamy earth, red loamy earth, alkaline red shallow loamy duplex, red-brown hardpan shallow loam, red loamy earth. Alluvial plains and drainage tracts are susceptible to erosion if perennial shrub cover is substantially reduced. Infrastructure across sheetwash and alluvial plains can concentrate water flows leading to the development of erosion incision.
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that no known water lines or water bodies intersect the application area.

Characteristic	Details
	The nearest Wetland of National of International Importance is Lake Cronin located approximately 123 kilometres south of the application area (GIS Database).
Hydrogeography	The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is the Broad Arrow Dam Catchment Area located approximately 200 kilometres northeast of the application area (GIS Database). The application 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 14,000 to 35,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as saline (BoM, 2019; GIS Database).
Flora	There are records of 33 priority flora within 20 kilometres of the application, and two records of threatened flora within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database). There are no records of priority or threatened flora within the application area (GIS Database).
Ecological communities	There are no Priority Ecological Communities or Threatened Ecological Communities (PECs/TECs) intersecting the application area (GIS Database). There are two PECs/TECs within 20 kilometres of the application area, the Priority 3 plant assemblages of the Parker Range System and the Critically Endangered Eucalypt woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt (GIS Database).
Fauna	There are records of 13 fauna of conservation significance within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database). There are no records of conservation significant fauna within the application area (Stantec, 2021a).
Fauna habitat	One broad fauna habitat was identified within the application area, described as 'Eucalyptus Woodlands' and comprises 81% of the application area, with the remaining 19% of the application area being cleared or disturbed (Stantec, 2021a).

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 - Coolgardie	12,912,204.85	12,648,491.39	97.96	2,114,349.37	16.37
Beard vegetation associations - State					
Veg Assoc No. 1068	268,900.45	142,088.42	52.84	16,761.06	6.23
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
Veg Assoc No. 1068	193,988.20	104,804.17	54.03	14,153.99	7.30

Government of Western Australia (2019)

A.3. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), and the results of the Stantec survey of the application area, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database).

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Threatened			
<i>Daviesia microcarpa</i>	N	<10	10
<i>Eucalyptus crucis</i> subsp. <i>crucis</i>	N	<10	45
Priority 1			
<i>Eucalyptus calycogona</i> subsp. <i>miraculum</i>	N	<15	14
<i>Goodenia heatheriana</i>	Y	<5	9
<i>Hemigenia</i> sp. Newdegate (E. Bishop 75)	Y	<5	11

<i>Hydrocotyle corynophora</i>	Y	<5	12
<i>Millotia newbeyi</i>	Y	<5	5
<i>Rinzia fimbriolata</i>	Y	<20	4
<i>Verticordia elizabethiae</i>	N	<10	11
<i>Verticordia roei</i> subsp. <i>meiogona</i>	N	<15	18
Priority 2			
<i>Acacia asepalae</i>	N	<20	19
<i>Acacia concolorans</i>	N	<20	18
<i>Balaustion grandibracteatum</i> subsp. <i>junctura</i>	N	<20	41
<i>Leucopogon</i> sp. Yellowdine (M. Hislop & F. Hort MH 3194)	Y	<15	11
<i>Lissanthe scabra</i>	Y	<10	18
<i>Verticordia multiflora</i> subsp. <i>solox</i>	Y	<20	31
Priority 3			
<i>Acacia cylindrica</i>	Y	<20	33
<i>Acacia desertorum</i> var. <i>nudipes</i>	Y	<10	25
<i>Acacia filifolia</i>	Y	<15	54
<i>Acacia formidabilis</i>	N	<20	15
<i>Balaustion grandibracteatum</i> subsp. <i>grandibracteatum</i>	Y	<10	35
<i>Cryptandra crispula</i>	N	<20	15
<i>Eucalyptus polita</i> subsp. <i>polita</i>	Y	<10	19
<i>Eutaxia actinophylla</i>	Y	<5	19
<i>Hakea pendens</i>	Y	<10	24
<i>Notisia intonsa</i>	Y	<5	29
<i>Phebalium drummondii</i>	N	<15	22
<i>Phlegmatospermum eremaeum</i>	Y	<5	19
<i>Prostanthera nanophylla</i>	N	<10	9
<i>Stylidium choreanthum</i>	Y	<10	30
<i>Teucrium diabolicum</i>	Y	<5	16
<i>Verticordia mitodes</i>	N	<10	24
<i>Verticordia stenopetala</i>	N	<15	36
Priority 4			
<i>Eremophila caerulea</i> subsp. <i>merrallii</i>	N	<20	23
<i>Stenanthemum bremerense</i>	Y	<5	38

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

A.4. Fauna analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above and relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), impacts to the following conservation significant fauna required further consideration (Stantec, 2021a; Stantec, 2021b; GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Birds			
<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i> (southern whiteface)	VU	Y	>50
<i>Falco peregrinus</i> (peregrine falcon)	OS	Y	<10
<i>Leipoa ocellata</i> (malleefowl)	VU	Y	<10
<i>Platycercus icterotis xanthogenys</i> (western rosella (inland))	P4	Y	<35
<i>Tringa nebularia</i> (common greenshank)	MI	N	<10
Invertebrates			
<i>Daphnia jollyi</i> (Bond's antichiropus millipede)	P1	N	<20

<i>Idiosoma castellum</i> (tree-stem trapdoor spider)	P4	N	<10
<i>Parartemia contracta</i> (a brine shrimp (Wheatbelt))	P1	N	<30
Mammals			
<i>Dasyurus geoffroyi</i> (chuditch, western quoll))	VU	Y	<5
<i>Notamacropus irma</i> (western brush wallaby)	P4	Y	<10
<i>Nyctophilus major tor</i> (central long-eared bat)	P3	N	<15
<i>Petrogale lateralis lateralis</i> (black-flanked rock-wallaby, black-footed rock-wallaby, moororong)	EN	N	<50
<i>Phascogale calura</i> (red-tailed phascogale, kenngoor)	CD	N	<30
Reptiles			
<i>Aspidites ramsayi</i> (southwest subpopulation) (woma (southwest subpopulation))	P1	N	<15

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> There are no known records of threatened or priority flora present within the application area (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database). The application area does not intersect any known Priority Ecological Communities, and no vegetation synonymous with known PECs has been identified within the application area (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database). Five introduced flora (weed) species have previously been recorded in the application area (Stantec, 2022). None of these species were declared pests at the time of identification, and this status has not changed in the intervening time period (DPIRD, 2026b; Stantec, 2022).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No
<u>Principle (b):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared contains habitat necessary for the maintenance of conservation significant fauna (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database).	May be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<u>Principle (c):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared does not contain any known records of threatened flora species listed under the BC Act (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	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> The application is not located within any known Threatened Ecological Communities, and does not contain vegetation synonymous with known TECs (Stantec, 2022; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	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> The extent of the mapped vegetation in the local area is consistent with the national	Not at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The application area is situated within an ecological linkage running northwest to southeast, with large areas of cleared farmland to the west and east. The town of Southern Cross is at the northwest extent of the linkage, with the Marvel Loch mine site being at the southeast extent where the linkage meets with a much larger area of native vegetation. This linkage is likely to be significant for fauna species in the local area as suitable habitat for multiple conservation significant species has been identified within the application area and its surrounds, however the proposed clearing does not completely sever this ecological linkage. While the proposed clearing may disturb fauna species present within the linkage, it will not expand the existing disturbances of the Achilles Project to a degree that will significantly impact upon the ecological linkage. As such, the proposed clearing is considered not at variance to this clearing principle.		
Principle (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." <u>Assessment:</u> The distance to the nearest conservation area is 18.5 kilometres, and as such the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any conservation areas (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No
Environmental value: land and water resources		
Principle (f): "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland." <u>Assessment:</u> Given no water courses or wetlands are recorded within or in close proximity to the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact on- or off-site hydrology and water quality (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No
Principle (g): "Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation." <u>Assessment:</u> The mapped land system where the application area is located, contains areas that may be prone to salinisation, waterlogging, soil erosion and acidity (GIS Database). Noting the location of the application area, the proposed clearing is likely to have an appreciable impact on land degradation. Potential impacts to land degradation can be managed through the continued implementation of a staged clearing condition to prevent cleared areas from being exposed for a long period of time.	May be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No
Principle (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." <u>Assessment:</u> Given no permanent water courses, wetlands, or Public Drinking Water Sources Areas are recorded within the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No
Principle (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." <u>Assessment:</u> Given no permanent water courses or wetlands are recorded within or in close proximity to the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 9799/2)	No

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 Keighery, B.J. (1994) *Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community*. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

Measuring vegetation condition for the South West and Interzone Botanical Province (Keighery, 1994)

Condition	Description
Pristine	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of disturbance.
Excellent	Vegetation structure intact, with disturbance affecting individual species; weeds are non-aggressive species.
Very good	Vegetation structure altered, with obvious signs of disturbance. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by repeated fires, the presence of some more aggressive weeds, dieback, logging and/or grazing.
Good	Vegetation structure significantly altered by very obvious signs of multiple disturbances. Retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of some very aggressive weeds at high density, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.
Degraded	Basic vegetation structure severely impacted by disturbance. Scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of very aggressive weeds, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.
Completely degraded	The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact and the area is completely or almost completely without native species. These areas are often described as 'parkland cleared' with the flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix D. Sources of information

D.1. GIS datasets

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

- Cadastre (Polygon) (LGATE-217)
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Clearing Regulations - Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)
- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrological Zones of Western Australia (DPIRD-069)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Title (Fed Court) (LGATE-005)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Reserves (LGATE-227)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)

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)

D.2. References

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- 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) (2016a) 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
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- Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2026) Guideline for Cumulative Impact Assessment. January 2026. https://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/Cumulative%20Impact%20Assessment_final.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>
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- Menkhorst, P., and Knight, F. (2011) A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia, Third Edition. Oxford University Press, Victoria, Australia.
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Glossary

Acronyms:

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

Definitions:

DBCA (2023) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia:

Threatened species

T Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act).

Threatened fauna is the species of fauna that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

Threatened flora is the species of flora that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

The assessment of the conservation status of threatened species is in accordance with the BC Act listing criteria and the requirements of [Ministerial Guideline Number 1](#) and [Ministerial Guideline Number 2](#) that adopts the use of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [Red List of Threatened Species Categories and Criteria](#), and is based on the national distribution of the species.

CR Critically endangered species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines.

EN Endangered species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines.

VU Vulnerable species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines.

Extinct species

Listed by order of the Minister as extinct under section 23(1) of the BC Act as extinct or extinct in the wild.

EX Extinct species

Species where “*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

EW Extinct in the wild species

Species that “*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild.

Specially protected species**SP Specially protected species**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as specially protected species.

MI Migratory species

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Migratory species include birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) or The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

CD Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)

Species of special conservation need that are dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species of special conservation interest.

OS Other specially protected species

Species otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species otherwise in need of special protection.

Priority species**P Priority species**

Priority is not a listing category under the BC Act. The Priority Flora and Fauna lists are maintained by the department and are published on the department's website.

All fauna and flora are protected in WA following the provisions in Part 10 of the BC Act. The protection applies even when a species is not listed as threatened or specially protected, and regardless of land tenure (State managed land (Crown land), private land, or Commonwealth land).

Species that may possibly be threatened species that do not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act because of insufficient survey or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of prioritisation for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to potential listing as threatened.

Species that are adequately known, meet criteria for near threatened, or are rare but not threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species list or conservation dependent or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species require regular monitoring.

Assessment of priority status is based on the Western Australian distribution of the species, unless the distribution in WA is part of a contiguous population extending into adjacent States, as defined by the known spread of locations.

P1 Priority One - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, none on conservation lands

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less) which are potentially at risk. All occurrences are either: very small; or on lands not managed for conservation, for example, agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, road and rail reserves, gravel reserves and active mineral leases; or otherwise under threat of habitat destruction or degradation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, some on conservation lands

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less), some of which are on lands managed primarily for nature conservation, for example, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other lands with secure tenure being managed for conservation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species – known from several locations

Species that are known from several locations and the species does not appear to be under imminent threat or from few but widespread locations with either large population size or significant remaining areas of apparently suitable habitat, much of it not under imminent threat.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from several locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them. These species need further survey.

P4 Priority Four - Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring

- (a) Rare. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and that are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection but could be if present circumstances change. These species are usually represented on conservation lands.
- (b) Near Threatened. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed and that are close to qualifying for vulnerable but are not listed as a conservation dependent specially protected species.
- (c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species or lists of conservation dependent or other specially protected species, during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.
- (d) Other species in need of monitoring.

Principles for clearing native vegetation:

- (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.
- (b) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.
- (d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.
- (e) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.
- (f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.
- (g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

- (h) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.
- (i) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.
- (j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.