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Published on: 30 November 2023

Statement No. 1214

STATEMENT THAT A PROPOSAL MAY BE IMPLEMENTED
(*Environmental Protection Act 1986*)

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024–2033

Proposal: The Forest Management Plan 2024–2033 (FMP 2024–2033) is a statutory plan for the management of approximately 2,522,000 hectares of land and waters vested in the Conservation and Parks Commission in the South West of Western Australia, in accordance with the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* to fulfil the statutory purposes for which that land is reserved. The proposal is to undertake a range of management activities, the most significant being conservation reserve creation, ecological thinning and prescribed burning, to balance multiple use objectives, deliver conservation outcomes and enhance ecological and climate resilience.

Proponent: Conservation and Parks Commission

Proponent address: 17 Dick Perry Avenue
KENSINGTON WA 6151

Assessment number: 2361

Report of the Environmental Protection Authority: 1745

Introduction: Pursuant to section 45 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, it has been agreed that the proposal entitled Forest Management Plan 2024–2033 described in the ‘Proposal Content Document’ attachment of the referral of 17 October 2022, may be implemented and that the implementation of the proposal is subject to the following implementation conditions and procedures:

Conditions and procedures

Part A: Required amendments and proposal extent

Part B: Environmental outcomes and objectives

Part C: Environmental monitoring

Part D: Other conditions

PART A: REQUIRED AMENDMENTS AND PROPOSAL EXTENT

A1 Amendments to the Proposal

- A1-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal to incorporate the requirements of this Statement prior to it being transmitted to the Minister for Environment under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*.
- A1-2 The proponent shall report to the Minister for Environment on how condition A1-1 has been met.

A2 Limitations and Extent of Proposal

- A2-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that when implemented, the following extent is not exceeded:

Proposal element	Location	Maximum extent
Operational elements		
Ecological thinning	State forest and timber reserves	No more than 8,000 ha per year

PART B – ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

B1 Flora and Vegetation, Terrestrial Fauna, Inland Waters and Terrestrial Environmental Quality

- B1-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that it is to be implemented in a manner that:
 - (1) seeks to maintain **biological diversity** and **ecological integrity** with respect to forest health in mature ecosystems;
 - (2) seeks to improve **biological diversity** and **ecological integrity** with respect to forest health in degraded ecosystems and rehabilitated areas; and
 - (3) maintains the quality of land, soils and water.
- B1-2 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that it is to be implemented so as to achieve the following environmental objective:
 - (1) land areas subject to the plan are managed consistent with the achievement of the environmental outcomes in B1-1 for the entire plan area as well as for the achievement of the objective of any specific land category prescribed for that area under legislation.

B2 Flora and Vegetation, Terrestrial Fauna, Inland Waters and Terrestrial Environmental Quality

B2-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that an evaluation report must be prepared for the endorsement of the Conservation and Parks Commission on whether **ecological thinning** is likely to meet the requirements in condition B1 prior to it being implemented in areas identified as:

- (1) **disturbance avoidance zones;**
- (2) formal conservation reserves; and
- (3) **proposed conservation reserves.**

B2-2 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that the silvicultural guidelines for ecological thinning and any future iterations of these guidelines shall be made publicly available as soon as practicable once finalised.

B3 Annual ecological thinning plans

B3-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that **annual ecological thinning plans** must be published annually and include:

- (1) identification of candidate areas;
- (2) criteria used to identify candidate areas;
- (3) an evaluation of how the planned **ecological thinning** is likely to be consistent with achievement of condition B1;
- (4) outcomes of consultation with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and Water Corporation (where **ecological thinning** occurs in drinking water catchment areas), Noongar regional corporations, mining companies, conservation groups, and forest-based industries and businesses; and
- (5) evidence of adaptive management and incorporation of learnings from the implementation of previous **annual ecological thinning plans** to demonstrate continuous improvement.

B4 Periodic Performance Assessment

B4-1 The proponent must arrange for an **independent review** of the performance of **ecological thinning** in achieving the outcomes referred to in condition B1.

B4-2 The outcome of the **independent review** required by condition B4-1 is to be included in the **periodic performance assessments** of the implementation of the proposal.

B4-3 The **periodic performance assessments** of the implementation of the proposal are to include:

- (1) an assessment against the achievement of the proposal's strategic goals;
- (2) an assessment of the effect of **ecological thinning** and **prescribed burning** activities in achieving the proposal's strategic goals;
- (3) the progress towards the creation of 400,000 ha of **reserve proposals**;
- (4) timelines to complete creation of 400,000 ha of **reserve proposals**;
- (5) if **reserve proposals** targets are unlikely to be met by the end of the term of the proposal, an explanation as to why targets are unlikely to be met;
- (6) if not yet formally reserved, a demonstration that identified target areas are being managed consistent with the intended or proposed change of purpose;
- (7) details on the progress towards achieving the **previously proposed additions** to the conservation estate;
- (8) a description of any changes to **ecological thinning** prescriptions and guidelines as evidence of adaptive management; and
- (9) a description of any changes to **prescribed burning** policies and practices as evidence of adaptive management.

PART C – ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

C1 Conditions Related to Monitoring

C1-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that the **forest health monitoring program** implementation plan shall be published.

PART D – OTHER CONDITIONS

D1 Public Availability of Data

D1-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that a biennial report that summarises activities and implementation of the forest health monitoring program shall be published, including through relevant publications.

D2 Scientific Research Program

D2-1 A scientific research program into **prescribed burning** is to be established, with the aim of investigating the measured impacts on forest ecosystems and biodiversity from fire management strategies and bushfires.

D2-2 The scientific research program required by condition D2-1 is to be carried out for the 10-year life of the proposal, without compromising the broader responsibility of **prescribed burning**.

D3 Stakeholder Consultation

D3-1 The proponent shall amend the proposal such that:

- (1) within five years of the date of this Statement, a draft of the proposed boundaries of the newly created 400,000 ha reserves will be publicly released to support stakeholder consultation, including interested community groups.

[signed on 30 November 2023]

Hon Reece Whitby MLA

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; CLIMATE ACTION

Table 1: Abbreviations and definitions

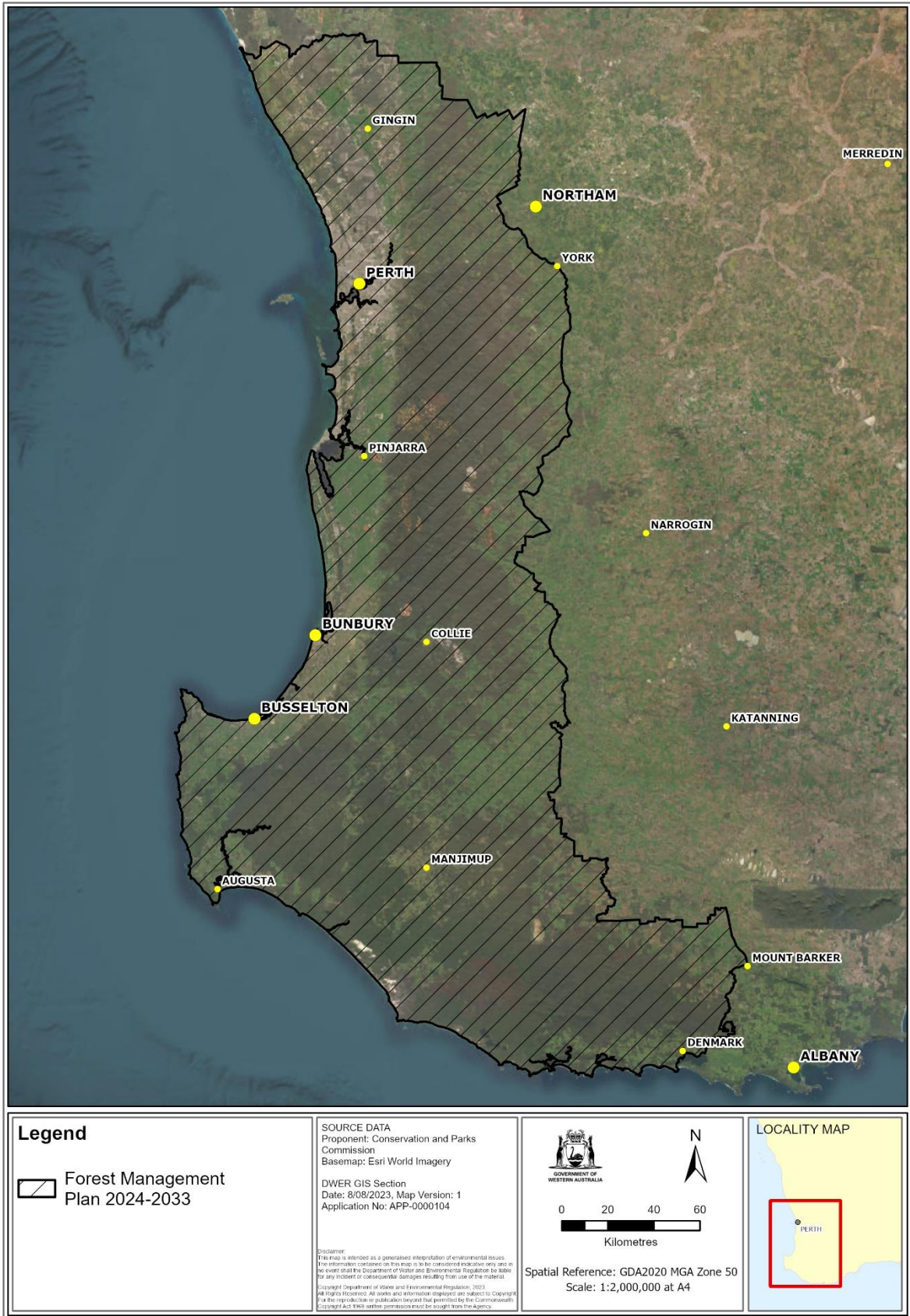
Acronym or abbreviation	Definition or term
Annual ecological thinning plan	Plans prepared ahead of implementation of the annual ecological thinning program that depict the candidate areas and the activities proposed to be undertaken in those areas.
Biological diversity	The variability among living organisms and the ecosystems of which those organisms are a part and includes: a) diversity within native species and between native species; b) diversity of ecosystems; c) diversity of other biodiversity components.
Disturbance avoidance zone	Areas within State forest and timber reserves where planned disturbance activities are to be avoided or minimised and depicted in Figure 2. The term combines the various types of informal reserves described in Appendix 1c Disturbance Avoidance Zones in State forest and timber reserves to the <i>Draft Proposed Forest Management Plan 2024-2033, May 2023</i> .
Ecological integrity	The composition, structure, function and processes of ecosystems, and the natural range of variation of these elements.
Ecological thinning	An active forest management tool that involves the selective removal of individual trees to improve or maintain ecological value and reduce current and future moisture stress of a given area.
Forest health monitoring program	A monitoring program designed and implemented to achieve the aims and objectives stated in section 6.2.2 of the <i>Draft Proposed Forest Management Plan 2024–2033, May 2023</i> .
ha	Hectare
Independent review/ Independently reviewed	A review undertaken by a person that can demonstrate their relevant qualifications, knowledge, expertise, and working experience in ecological sciences. The reviewer should act independently using their balanced professional judgement of proposal-specific data and information, consistent with national and international policies, guidelines, and best available information. The reviewer should be able to demonstrate their independence to avoid any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise.
Periodic performance assessments	Refers to the <i>Conservation and Land Management Act 1984</i> responsibility of the Conservation and Parks Commission to conduct periodic assessments of the implementation of management plans by those responsible for implementing them.

Acronym or abbreviation	Definition or term
Prescribed burning	Prescribed burning is the process of planning and applying fire to a predetermined area under specific environmental conditions to achieve a desired outcome. Prescribed burns follow a 'prescription' with a number of conditions that need to be met.
Previously proposed additions	Approximately 320,000 ha of additions to the conservation estate proposed in forest management plans previous to the <i>Draft Proposed Forest Management Plan 2024–2033</i> , May 2023.
Proposed conservation reserves	Areas proposed for conservation in the Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 and from subsequent land acquisitions and area management plans consistent with Map 13 of the <i>Draft Proposed Forest Management Plan 2024–2033</i> , May 2023.
Reserve proposals	Proposed and indicative additions to the conservation estate consistent with Map 13 and Appendix 7 of the <i>Draft Proposed Forest Management Plan 2024–2033</i> , May 2023.

Figures (attached)

Figure 1 Proposal area (This map is a representation of the co-ordinates referenced in Schedule 1)

Figure 2 Disturbance Avoidance Zones



Path: S:\projects\EA\36\2022_APP0000104_ForestManagementPlan2024_2033\1_Rebroad\Acc25_Pro\2022_APP0000104_ForestManagementPlan2024_2033.aprx

Figure 1 - Proposal area

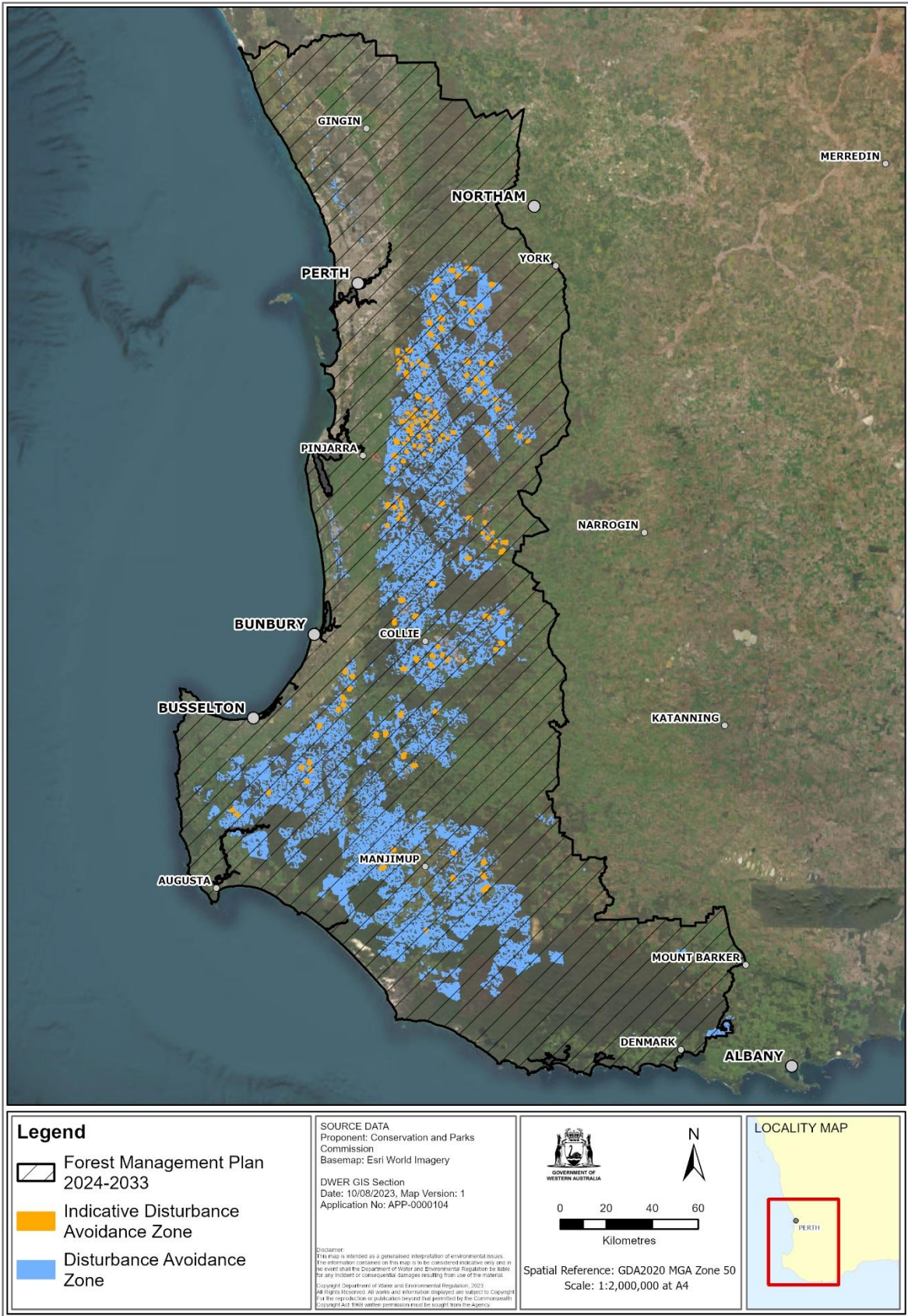


Figure 2 - Disturbance avoidance zones

Schedule 1

All co-ordinates are in metres, listed in Map Grid of Australia Zone 50 (MGA Zone 50), datum of Geocentric Datum of Australia 2020 (GDA2020).

Spatial data depicting the figures are held by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation. Record no. DWER-801164602-9255.