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Name: Notice of Intent to Mine – Tutunup South Project
Date: 10/05/2006
Capture Author: Thomas Leong

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the information presented and after talking to Bronwen it would appear that there are no significant fauna
h this project.
he role of the Williamson Road vegetation in providing an ecological linkage is probably understated,
as the linkage between the State Forest and the Abba River along the southern portion of Loc 1810 appears
o security. Any linkage in a largely cleared environment has some value. Rehabilitating this roadverge with
ative flora species as outlined in Management should be supported.

Section 3.8 Fauna

Studies of fauna for the proposed Tutunup South site have been restricted to assessments of habitat value by botanical and environmental staff and a review of the previous fauna survey conducted by consulting specialists at the nearby Tutunup minesite. Due to the degraded nature of the Tutunup South site and lack of habitat to be disturbed, further fauna surveys were not warranted.

Tutunup Fauna Survey

The Tutunup mining area was surveyed by Hart Simpson and Associates in October 2001 (HSA, 2001). Due to its close proximity and similar land use and geography it is reasonable to assume results from this survey would provide a reasonable indication of the fauna likely to utilise the Tutunup South site.

The survey found that the site has almost no value for terrestrial fauna species because the remnant vegetation was so limited and scattered. Although some rare species may pass through, the value of the habitat was considered too small to be significant.

A considerable bird fauna was present, and 22 native species and one introduced species (the Kookaburra) were recorded on a single visit. All recorded bird species are commonly found throughout the region. Many other species would be recorded over a longer time. These bird species can be grouped into:

- Wetland species which will make use of any wet area including within pasture (Australian Wood Duck and White-faced Heron, and many others will be present at times).

- Species which are tolerant of and often favour highly disturbed environments (Emu, Kestrel, Crested Pigeon, Kookaburra, Singing Honeyeater, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Woodswallow, Magpie, Raven, Pipit and Welcome Swallow). Some of these species such as the Crested Pigeon and probably the Magpie would not have been present at all before clearing since European settlement, and others would have been much less common.

- Species which occupy or feed in trees including those isolated in paddocks (Western Ring-neck, Red-capped Parrot, Horsfield's Bronze-cuckoo and Rufous Whistler).

- "Bush birds", mainly the smaller species which make use of the shrub stratum and to a lesser extent trees (most of the honeyeaters, Grey Fantail and Silvereye, but many others could be present).

Kangaroos (Macropus fuliginosus) are also known to visit the pastured areas, before returning to the adjacent State Forest.

Habitat Value

The potential for the Tutunup South proposal to impact on fauna values has been assessed on three points:
- impacts on habitat

- impacts on distribution of populations (habitat connectivity)
- impacts on food resources

- Impacts on habitat

The proposal will only physically affect 0.3 ha of native vegetation that may serve as habitat for fauna. The significance of this impact is considered negligible on the basis that there are good areas of habitat in the adjoining State Forest and along the banks of the Abba River. The dominant plant species present in the clearing area are also present in these other two locations. Note that the mine will not extend into the riparian zone of the Abba River, being 50 m away at its closest point and 1 km away at its furthest.

The area of State Forest immediately adjacent to the proposed mine has previously been used for sand extraction and a base rehabilitation effort implemented on completion. This has resulted in relatively poor plant cover, with the understorey dominated by weeds and an overstorey dominated by Eastern States eucalypts. This area therefore has low habitat value but would provide some visual/light screening between mine operations and the good quality State Forest further upslope. This factor in combination with a short duration of mining should ensure habitat values of the greater State Forest are not unduly affected.

- Impacts on connectivity

While the vegetation growing alongside Williamson Road may provide a vegetated linkage between the State Forest and the Abba River, its value as such is diminished by its physical characteristics. The corridor is relatively long compared to its width (typically less than 5 m on each side of the road), so is severely influenced by edge effects (Wilson 1995; RIRDC 2000). Additionally, a far more substantial linkage between the State Forest and the river exists along the southern portion of Loc 1810, 600 m from the roadway.

but how secure is this linkage?

- Impacts on food resources

As for the assessment of impacts on habitat, the overall physical loss of native vegetation is relatively insignificant. The same applies for the area of the proposal that is currently cleared agricultural land, which is utilised by some native animals as a food source.

Summary

In summary the proposed mine area has almost no value for terrestrial fauna species because the remnant vegetation is so limited in extent and of generally poor quality. Although some species may utilise the site for grazing or foraging from time to time it is unlikely to provide critical or unique habitat for any species.

Management

Rehabilitation will focus on re-instating the road verge vegetation with a suite of representative flora, therefore replacing any habitat values of this minor corridor in the longer term. As no further fauna habitat will be disturbed, no other management initiatives are proposed for this factor.

References

HSA, 2001. Tutunup Minesite Vertebrate Fauna. Unpublished report for Cable Sands (WA) Pty Ltd. Hart Simpson and Associates, Perth.

Wilson, A.M. and Lindenmayer, D.B. (1995). The role of wildlife corridors in the conservation of biodiversity: a review. A report prepared for the National Corridors of Green Program, Greening Australia.

Determining the Effectiveness of Vegetation Management Programs - Measures and Methodologies. RIRDC Publication no 99/130, pp 32 - 33, January 2000.

MONITORING OF QUADRATS, TRANSECTS AND RARE FLORA AT TUTUNUP March 2005

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10th April 2005

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