

# Native Vegetation Clearing by Stealth

## What's the issue?

A total of **819** different native vegetation associations are recognised in WA. Unfortunately extensive clearing over the past 45 years has substantially reduced some of these associations. **119** vegetation associations have been **reduced to <30% of their pre-European extent** and of these, **48 has <10% left** and **2 are presumed extinct**.

Unfortunately native vegetation is continuing to disappear bit by bit all the time on private land and land managed by the Shires and Infrastructure companies (roads and rail). Who is responsible for monitoring these disappearances? What are the laws regarding native clearing?

These issues are happening State wide. More information regarding the laws and responsibilities for land managers needs to be available and communicated.

## Roadside native vegetation - what's the value ?



There one day...  
gone the next.....



### 😊 Ecological

- continuous corridors linking native habitat; habitat for rare/threatened fauna

### 😊 Hydrological

- prevents/inhibits salinity; slows down water to reduce erosion; wind breaks to reduce dust

### 😊 Safety

- intercepts rising and setting sun glare

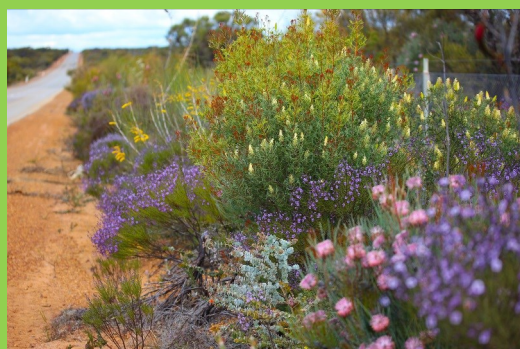
### 😊 Economic

- Australian and overseas visitors come to view WA wildflowers and majestic, stately trees; ecotourism on the rise = \$\$\$\$\$\$

- inhibits weeds; pest control and pollination services, nutrient interception, climate moderation

### 😊 Aesthetic

- Cathedral effect, vegetation is calming
- addresses monotony fatigue; psychological health



Which road  
would you rather  
drive down ??



## Alternatives to clearing to create 'safe' roads

Road barriers



Reduce speed limits



Audible edge lining



Vary roadside environment



Wider pavements



## Other disappearing native vegetation issues



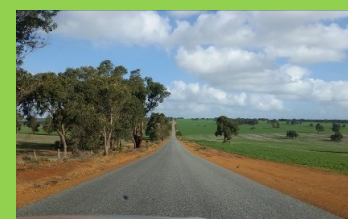
Paddock trees



Clearing power lines



Out of control stubble fires



Fence line removal

## Help WA's native vegetation



The Australian Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) recognises the disappearance of WA ecological communities and flora/fauna. There are currently **628** threatened flora & fauna species and **69** Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs). Some TECs are registered as 'critically endangered' such as the Wheatbelt's Eucalyptus Woodland ecological community.

**Land managers need to protect what remnant vegetation is left and also restore native vegetation to ensure conservation of WA natural assets into the future.**

### 3 steps to save WA native vegetation

- 1) Retain paddock and fence line trees
- 2) Move boundary fencing in 5m when replacing fence; don't cut down road reserve trees
- 3) Report suspected unlawful/excessive clearing done by others

## Clearing laws - are you confused?



Both State and Commonwealth laws regulate land clearing in Western Australia: (Environmental Protection Act 1986 (WA), Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth))

**It is an offence to clear native legislation unless authorised or exempt under the law**

Check the laws and exemptions here:

<https://www.der.wa.gov.au/our-work/clearing-permits>

*Exempt clearing law currently stands at **5ha per year** - too much ?*

*Let your local and state governments know this has to slow down. An email to your local shire or to Dept. Water & Environmental Regulation and/or Dept. Biodiversity Conservation & Attractions **DOES** make a difference. Make a stand and be counted...*

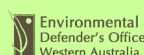
## Need independent advice?



Contact the **Environmental Defenders' Office WA** [www.edowa.org.au](http://www.edowa.org.au)

- A community legal centre, operating since 1996; Specialises in public interest environmental law

- Non-governmental, non-profit that relies on private support to provide services



Contact the **Wildflower Society WA** [www.wildflowersocietywa.org.au](http://www.wildflowersocietywa.org.au)

- established in 1958 to promote the value of our natural bushland

- Knowledgeable WA flora community group who can give comprehensive ecological advice



**Don't let WA native vegetation habitats become just memory**



Flyer designed by Moore Catchment Council  
(with help from Eddy Wajon & Natalie Vallance)

Facts sourced from: Native vegetation in WA: extent, type and status report by DAFWA 2002, and Federal & State Environmental departments

*A community landcare group serving the Moore River Catchment since 1995*

[www.moorecatchment.org.au](http://www.moorecatchment.org.au)