

Assessment of Noongar Cultural Values to Inform Forest Management

Collie Region, Western Australia

Phillip Ugle Snr (Noongar Elder)

&

Dr Myles Mitchell – (Myles Mitchell Consulting)

Project commissioned by
South West Timber Hub

Project delivered by
Archae-aus





Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry
ABARES

South West Western Australia Regional Forestry Hub

- Towns
- Major roads
- ▭ Regional Forestry Hub

Data source: ABARES 2022
Map compiled by ABARES, July 2022

Scale at A4: 1:2,000,000



Projection: Albers equal-area with
standard parallels 18°S and 36°S



Project Aims

- Determine if there are correlations between Noongar and Western perspectives of measurable forest attributes
- Develop matrix of Noongar indicators to assess forest treatments
- Develop Noongar standards that align with international standards (Montreal Process)



Assessment Site - Munro Block (Kirup, Western Australia)

- Cell 1 – control cell (no treatment)
- Cell 2 – log sections cut to length, leaving bark and tops. Spray resprouts in year 1
- Cell 3 – whole tree removal with concurrent chemical application to stumps
- Cell 4 – trees felled and retained intact on site, no stump treatment
- Cell 5 – manual thinning: notching and ringbarking



Munro Block

CELL 2

LOG SECTIONS CUT TO LENGTH, LEAVING BARK AND TOPS. SPRAY RESPROUTS IN YEAR 1

NOONGAR ASSESSMENT RESULT: *VERY POOR*

- HIGH FUEL LOAD
- MESSY
- INABILITY FOR PEOPLE TO USE THE FOREST
- UNHAPPY FOREST



Munro Block

CELL 3

WHOLE TREE REMOVAL WITH CONCURRENT
CHEMICAL APPLICATION TO STUMPS

NOONGAR ASSESSMENT RESULT: *EXCELLENT*

- LOW FUEL LOAD
- HIGH FOREST CANOPY
- EASY MOVEMENT FOR ANIMALS
- VERY USEABLE FOR PEOPLE



Munro Block

CELL 4

TREES FELLED AND RETAINED INTACT ON SITE,
NO STUMP TREATMENT

NOONGAR ASSESSMENT RESULT: *VERY POOR*

- HIGH FUEL LOAD
- SAPLINGS DRINKING TOO MUCH WATER



Munro Block

CELL 5

MANUAL THINNING: NOTCHING AND RINGBARKING

NOONGAR ASSESSMENT RESULT: ***GOOD (BUT NOT QUITE AS GOOD AS CELL 3)***

- LOW FUEL LOAD
- HIGH FOREST CANOPY
- EASY MOVEMENT FOR ANIMALS
- VERY USEABLE FOR PEOPLE

Key Findings

- 'LISTENING TO COUNTRY' IS VITAL
- MEASURING FOREST HEALTH IS A DYNAMIC PROCESS BASED ON INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND COUNTRY
- NOONGAR INDICATORS ARE BASED ON CULTURAL PRACTICE
- HEALTHY FORESTS NEED PEOPLE
- HEALTHY FORESTS PROVIDE FOR PEOPLE
- THE NOONGAR STANDARDS ALIGN WELL WITH THE MONTREAL STANDARDS

The most important thing...

VISION

Teams of local Noongar people are employed under the leadership of Elders to actively manage the ecological and spiritual health of forests for commercial gain and for the direct benefit of local communities.





thank you

FULL REPORT:

www.swtimberhub.com.au

MYLES MITCHELL

myles@mylesmitchellconsulting.com

