

Marnie Leybourne

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27 August 2024

Re: Bennett Resources Valhalla Targeted Significant Vertebrate Fauna Survey

Dear Marnie,

Ecologia Environment (ecologia) undertook a targeted significant vertebrate fauna survey for the Threatened bilby (*Macropis lagotis*), northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) and ghost bat (*Macrodermas gigas*) at the Valhalla Project Area (Petroleum Exploration Permit EP 371) in the Canning Basin for Bennett Resources. The following is a brief summary of the outcomes of the field assessment:

Field Survey

- The targeted significant fauna survey was conducted by two *ecologia* zoologists from July 22-29, 2024.
- Ten proposed drill pads and associated access tracks within the disturbance footprint were traversed on foot at 20 m transect intervals searching for secondary sign of bilbies in accordance with Guidelines for Surveys to Detect the Presence of Bilbies, and Assess the Importance of Habitat in Western Australia (DBCA, 2017). Secondary sign of northern quoll and ghost bat
- Motion cameras and autonomous recording units were deployed at each pad for a minimum of four nights to passively recorded species present in the area.
- Habitats at each pad and access track were assessed for their likelihood to be suitable for significant species.

Results

- The habitat in the south-east between Proposed Well 3-Proposed well 4 is considered the most suitable for bilbies. We found some potential old bilby diggings at the base of shrubs at Proposed Well 4 and Proposed Well 3. These potential old diggings suggest that bilbies have previously foraged within the area. According to the guidelines, old diggings on their own do not confirm presence and are considered as “potential bilby activity, presence not confirmed”. To confirm presence, we would need to find scats, active burrows or tracks (fresh, very distinctive). After considerable survey effort in the vicinity of the diggings, none of those were found.
- The remaining eight pads did not provide suitable habitat for bilbies.

- No rocky habitats considered as critical habitat (roosting or denning) for the ghost bat and northern quoll were identified and no major drainage lines considered as dispersal habitat were identified. It is considered unlikely that northern quolls and ghost bats will utilise any of the habitats found within the disturbance footprint.
- Camera traps did not record any northern quolls. Analysis of autonomous recordings for ghost bat calls is pending.

The draft report for this package of work is in preparation and is expected to be delivered by the end of October 2024.

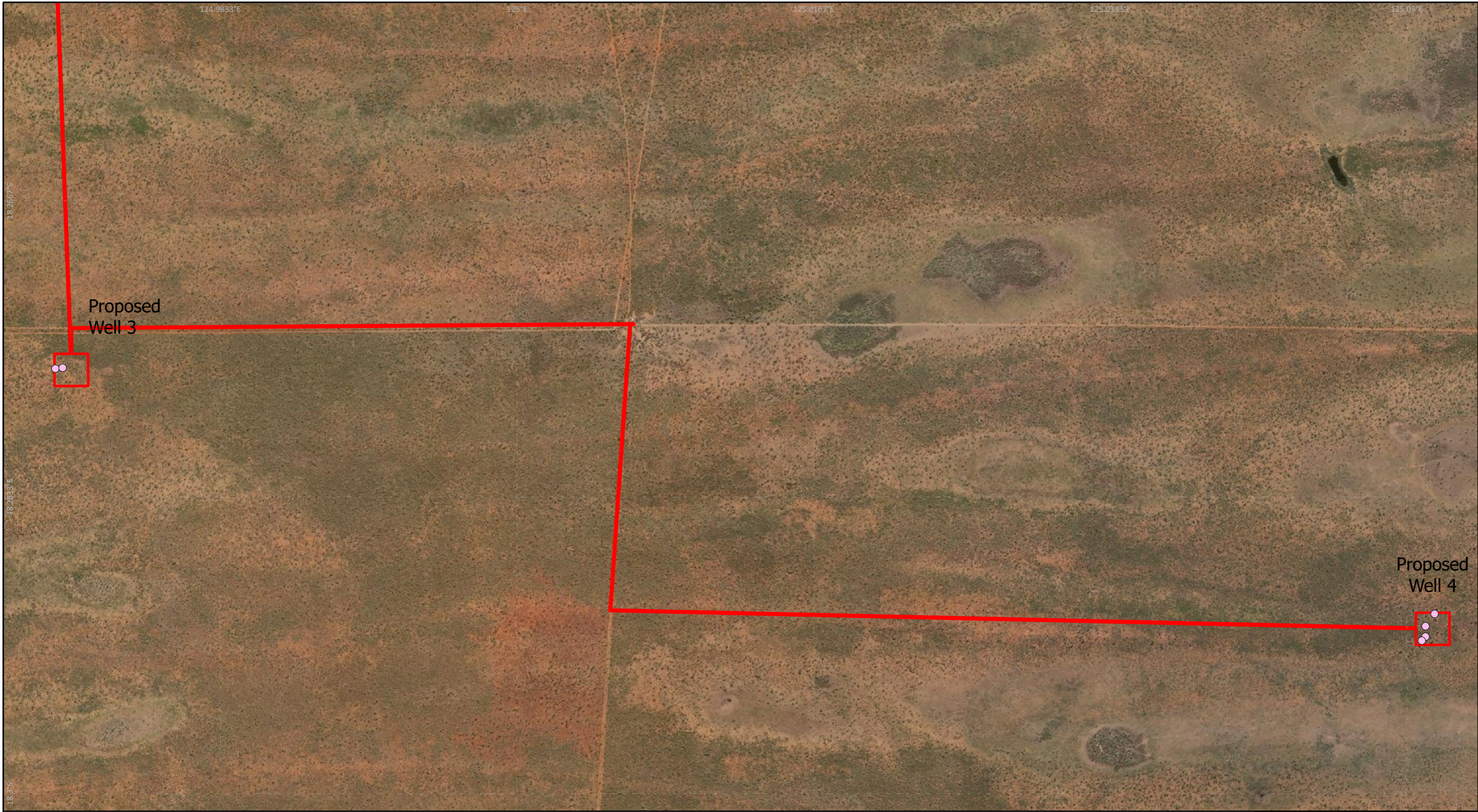
Best Regards,



Tim McCabe

Principal Zoologist





Proposed Well 3

Proposed Well 4

 Disturbance footprint  Bilby digging

Map: Location of significant fauna evidence within the survey area.

