HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

MANAGING FIRE ON YOUR PROPERTY

Workshop 1- Preparing a fire management plan

NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Nature Conservation Council The voice for nature in NSW

Managing fire on your property

HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

WORKSHOP 1 - PREPARING A FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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This booklet is a publication of the Hotspots Fire Project. The Hotspots Fire Project is a partnership program jointly managed by the NSW Rural Fire Service and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

This booklet has been developed specifically for Hotspots Workshop 1.

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Disclaimer & notes

This booklet has been compiled for the Hotspots Fire Project. It serves merely as an aid to planning, and in no way provides any guarantee of fire safety. Although people living and working in fire-prone areas or areas with potential for fire can attempt to minimise risk, a degree of risk will always remain. The information contained herein reflects our understanding at the time of publication. We are learning more about fire and the environment every day and anticipate that some recommendations may change as new information comes to hand. Thus whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information presented herein is as accurate and well-informed as possible, those involved in compiling this booklet take no responsibility for any outcomes, actions or losses resulting either directly or indirectly from the booklet's interpretation, misinterpretation or implementation. The examples provided are not intended to suggest a recommended course of action. Nor is this booklet intended to be used without the help of experts, good neighbour relations, the experience of the associated Hotspots Fire Project workshops and the tools provided at those workshops. Readers should also note that the focus of this booklet is on fire management planning, as distinct from fire response planning. The NSW Rural Fire Service can assist with the latter.

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Introduction and what's involved

INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides the information you need in order to participate in Workshop 1 of the Hotspots Program. It forms part of a suite of materials designed to assist you in managing fire on your property.

The workshop will provide you with advice on managing fire on your property and will guide you through the process of developing a Property Fire Management Plan. Ecological information and fire history specific to your local area will be provided on the day of the workshop to assist you in making decisions about your property.

Your Property Fire Management Plan will include a map-based physical property fire management plan and supporting information. Fire management planning is an ongoing, evolving process and you will need to maintain and update your plan regularly once it is completed.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

PREPARATION

The Hotspots Fire Project provides landholders with the opportunity to participate in workshops which include field-based activities. Part of Workshop 1 is spent in the field discussing fire management and fire ecology, while the balance of the day is spent developing your Property Fire Management Plan.

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) has a duty of care to ensure the welfare and safety of all participants whether in the field or not. NSW RFS standards incorporate risk management into the delivery of the Hotspots Fire Project including field site visits and inspections.

The planning of this Workshop has included risk assessments, safety checks and the production of documentation which brief landholders thoroughly regarding expectations for both the delivery team and participants. Good planning is essential in ensuring that we have adequate controls in place to reduce and treat risks accordingly.

INSURANCE

The NSW RFS is a member of the Treasury Managed Fund (TMF) for insurance purposes. Its Managing Agents are GIO.

Where activities of the NSW RFS result in property damage or personal injury to a third party for which it is legally liable the TMF may provide coverage. This includes any NSW RFS activities associated with the Hotspots Fire Project.

NSW RFS staff and volunteers are insured under the Treasury Managed Fund which covers legitimate exposure to risk.

YOUR SAFETY

A risk assessment is prepared by the NSW RFS for all Hotspots events. To ensure your safety as a Hotspots participant please follow the facilitator's safety instructions and take all possible precautions when undertaking any field activities and during the presentations. For the field work component of the program you are required to be fully prepared, including wearing suitable outdoor clothing as outlined below. Your facilitator will provide a full safety briefing prior to undertaking any outdoor activities. In the event of any accident or incident (no matter how minor), please immediately inform the Hotspots facilitator as all incidents, accidents or near misses are required to be documented and investigated.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with the facilitator or a NSW RFS officer.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Please ensure you are prepared for the field component of Hotspots Workshop 1.

You will need to wear:

- Long pants and long sleeve shirt/jumper/jacket appropriate to the expected temperatures
- Fully enclosed footwear, preferably with ankle protection and heavy tread soles (such as hiking or work boots)
- Hat and Sunscreen

Being proactive with fire

Many of us perceive fire as a potentially damaging force - and understandably so. Although fire is a fact of life on this continent and has been instrumental in shaping the current vegetation, it is important that we respect fire and its potential to impact on life and property.

Rather than just 'waiting to see' what the fire seasons bring, communities can greatly benefit from being more proactive about fire and risk management. Properties with effective fire management plans in place have the potential to influence the occurrence, extent and potential damage of unplanned fires, however, it is important to be aware that even with the best of plans, risk from wildfires can never be completely eliminated, particularly during extreme weather.

WHY DEVELOP A PROPERTY FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Many landholders have actively managed fire on their properties for years, some with a kind of 'intuitive knowledge' gained through experience and learning through others. However, documenting your plan has a number of advantages:

- You can be better organised and proactive with fire management;
- You can be more objective in your decision making;
- Your documented plan provides a valuable tool for communicating with others;
- You can share your plan with co-managers, neighbours or the local fire brigade; and
- You can leave a record of fire management on your property long after you are gone.

Fire management planning is a long-term activity and the more you learn, the more informed your decisions will be. A documented plan can help keep things in perspective and can be updated and improved over time.

Note: the focus of this booklet is on fire management planning - as distinct from fire response planning (what to do during a bush fire). The NSW RFS can assist you with the latter, including completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan. To download a Bushfire Survival Plan visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or contact your local Fire Control Centre.

BUSH FIRE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CODE

In order to implement the actions identified within your property fire management plan, you may need an environmental approval. If you are considering undertaking works for bush fire hazard reduction purposes (either burning or mechanical), an environmental approval can be provided under the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code (the Code) by the issuing of a Hazard Reduction Certificate. These certificates are issued free of charge by NSW RFS staff at your local Fire Control Centre. For more information visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or contact your local Fire Control Centre.

LOOKING BEYOND YOUR FENCE LINE & TALKING TO NEIGHBOURS

Although a plan for an individual property will reflect individual needs, fire management planning should not be viewed as something that happens in isolation. When it comes to managing for risk, biodiversity or cultural values, what happens on one property can affect neighbouring properties and indeed the broader landscape.

Talk to your neighbours and look for ways to work together or complement one another's work. In return, you may enjoy better asset protection and other benefits such as biodiversity conservation and improved relationships with neighbours. It's a good idea to let your neighbours know that you are putting together a fire management plan for your property – and keep the lines of communication open.

Note: Neighbours are not necessarily just other private landholders like you. They can include land management agencies such as Councils, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Crown Lands and the Forestry Corporation of NSW.

LANDSCAPE SCALE BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT

Bush fire management in NSW is a shared responsibility which involves fire authorities, landowners, land managers, planning authorities and the broader community.

Fire management planning is being undertaken across the landscape - on private property, National Parks, Forestry Corporation land, Crown Land and Council owned and managed land to name a few. Additionally, local Bush Fire Management Committees consisting of fire authorities, land managers and other stakeholders, develop Bush Fire Risk Management Plans. These plans identify assets at risk from bush fire and set out planned strategic treatments that aim to reduce bush fire risk across the landscape. These works may range from a community engagement event to hazard reduction activities. Landholders and other interested parties can provide valuable input into these plans. For more information on the Bush Fire Risk Management Planning Process and bush fire management zones refer to your regional landholder booklet or visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

Developing a property fire management plan

Your Property Fire Management Plan is a map-based plan, comprised of both visual and written components. This will become your own record of property features, land management objectives, proposed actions and other critical information for fire management activities on your land.

In the workshops you will be guided through the three steps to prepare your Property Fire Management Plan. Your plan may never be 'complete' as fire management planning is an evolving process. The intention is that the information you include on the map is updated regularly. You may choose to make additional supporting notes on your property features, land management objectives or actions in the back of this workbook. See the section titled Supplementary Materials.

The flow chart below outlines the three steps to preparing your plan. Each step is described in more detail on the following pages.

Obtain map of property

Hotspots mapping kit and Hotspots materials

These are provided to landholders as part of the Hotspots Program.

Your registration details help our officers locate your property and create your map.

1. Identify your management objectives

Use these objectives to define your fire management areas

2. Identify features

Include the features within each management area (assets/ infrastructure, water, vegetation types and fire history)

3. Identify priority actions

Write these on your map

OBTAIN A PROPERTY MAP, HOTSPOTS MAPPING KIT AND HOTSPOTS MATERIALS

If you are participating in a Hotspots Program, the property map, mapping kit and materials will be provided for your property based on the Lot and DP numbers you have given in your registration. The maps will be prepared by your Hotspots facilitator ready for your first workshop.

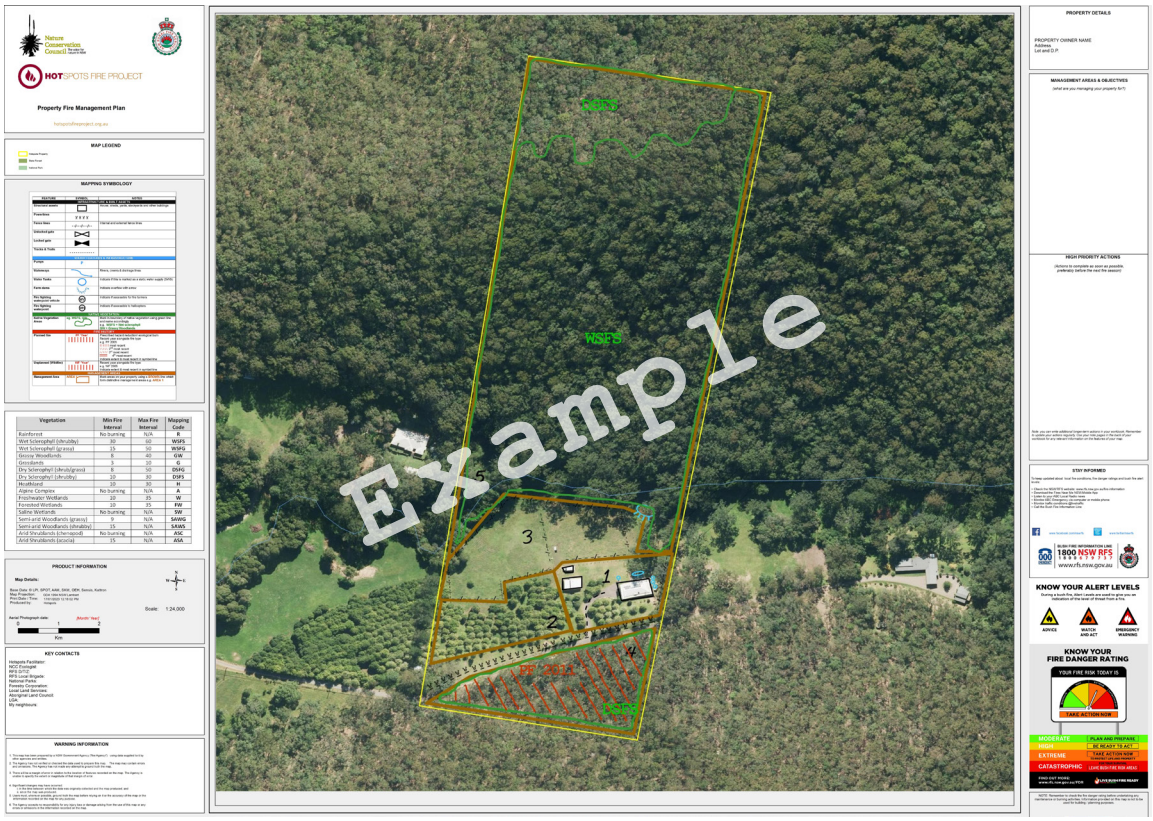
Your map will become your fire management plan as you add information to it. The map is yours to keep, refer to and update over time. The mapping kit is on loan and should be returned at Workshop 2. Your map can be a useful tool to take to your local RFS district office if you need further advice on implementing any of your management actions. The plan you make is not legally binding in any way.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MAP

Your map (see example below) has an information pane on the left. The standard symbols and colours for mapping have been compiled by Hotspots, with most of the symbols and colours being those commonly used in developing property plans in New South Wales.

On the right hand side of the map you will find:

- Your property details
- Space to write down your management objectives
- Space to record your priority actions
- Key contacts (some of which are provided for you)
- General bush fire information

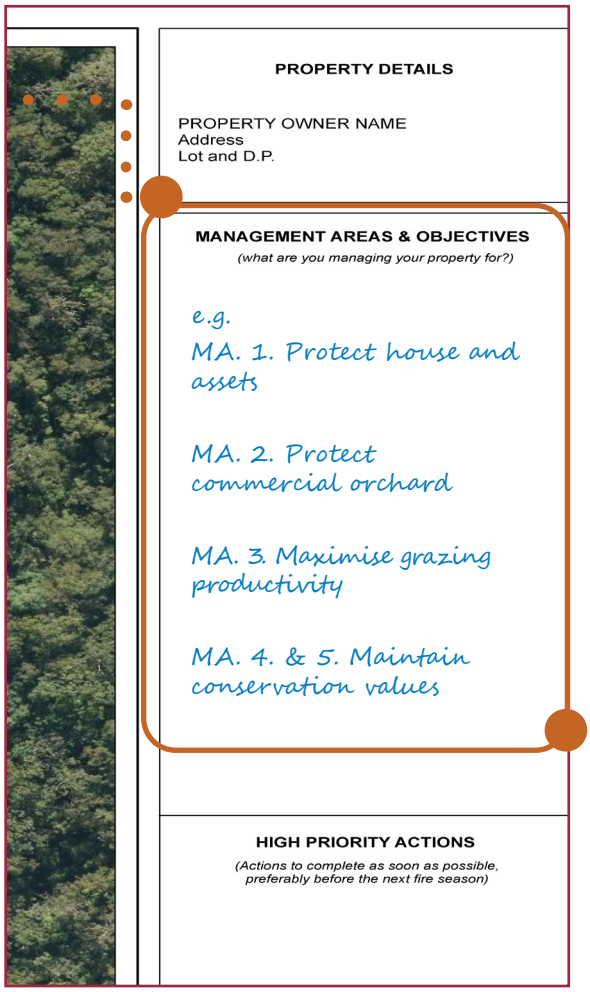


STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The following steps in this workbook will take you through an example property, providing guidance to enable you to complete your own fire management plan.

a) Identify your management objectives:

Write these down in the space provided on your map and number them.



To help you determine your management objectives you may wish to ask yourself what it is you want to achieve in terms of fire management.

Fire can be used in many ways to achieve a variety of outcomes. It is easier to plan fire management activities by grouping areas of your land that share common management aims. You may already have areas assigned to various land practices which may be appropriate areas for fire management or there may be natural boundaries in the landscape.

These areas that share common management aims are termed fire management areas. For more information on fire management areas see Box 1.

Need some inspiration?

Some example objectives are provided on Pages 25 and 26.

b) Define your Fire Management Areas:

Using a **BROWN pen**, map and number your respective fire management areas onto your aerial photograph.

Example of a fire management area: This house has an Asset Protection Zone (APZ). The boundaries align with the edge of the landscaped garden area but they may also align with natural boundaries in the landscape. They don't need to be fence lines. The objective within this fire management area is to reduce the bush fire risk to the house and any occupants.

Box 1. WHAT IS A FIRE MANAGEMENT AREA?

This is land which has a particular fire management objective. For the purposes of developing a Hotspots Property Fire Management Plan, the focus is on two key types of Management Areas. The first is your Asset Protection Zone (Management Area 1). This is a fuel reduced area around assets such as houses, machinery sheds, cellar doors etc. The focus on this area is reducing the risk to life and property from bush fire. The appropriate width of an APZ will vary with slope, vegetation, Australian Fire Danger Rating (AFDR) and the building construction level.

The second type of Management Area is usually based on areas where a particular land use occurs or a broad land management objective can be identified, while still considering bush fire risk. For example, they could be areas managed for winter grazing, conservation or cultural purposes.

The boundaries of these areas will often align with natural boundaries in the landscape including changes in soil type, slope, and vegetation cover. Natural features such as drainage lines and ridge lines may also define your Management Area/s and can be used for planning fire management activities. Other features that can define your management areas may be infrastructure and assets such as access tracks or fence lines.

Some smaller properties may consist of only two Management Areas. Larger properties may consist of more Management Areas, but most are likely to have an APZ.

Remember, if you wish to create an APZ or undertake other bush fire hazard reduction work you may be required to obtain a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate or other environmental approval. Contact your local RFS Fire Control Centre for further information.

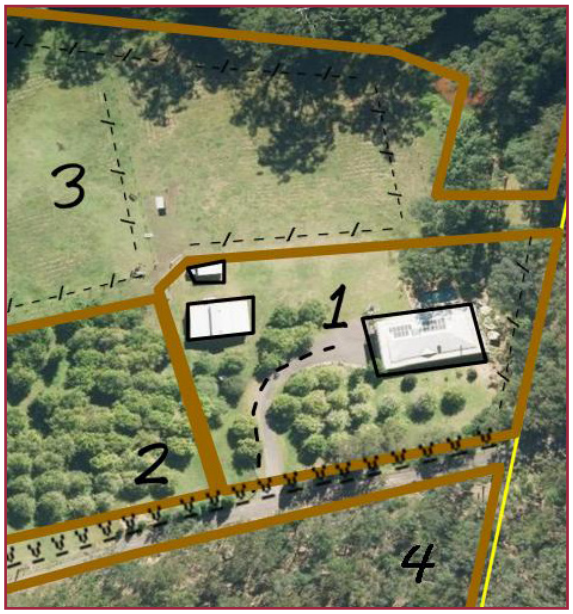
STEP 2: IDENTIFY FEATURES

In these next steps identify and map structural assets, water features, vegetation types and fire history.

a) Identify structural assets:

Using a **BLACK pen**, map the assets and infrastructure within your Fire WManagement Areas including any:

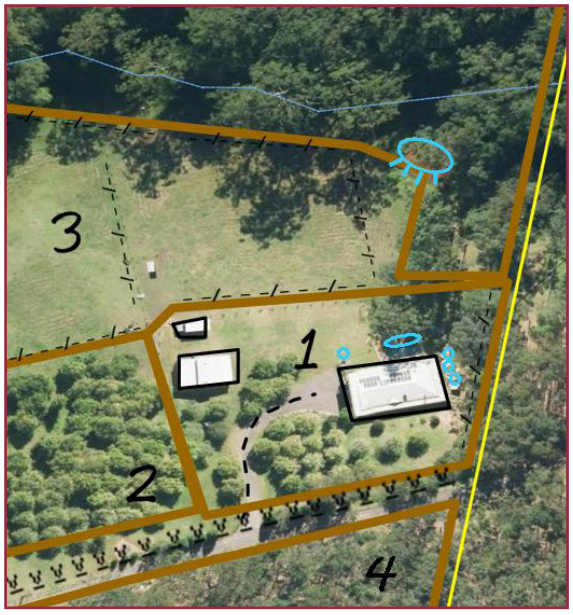
- Buildings
- Power lines
- Fences
- Tracks/ trails



b) Identify water features:

Using a **BLUE pen**, map water features within your Fire Management Areas including any:

- Permanent rivers & creeks
- Intermittent (temporary) rivers & creeks
- Major water pipes
- Water tanks
- Water troughs
- Farm dams
- Permanent irrigation lines
- Pumps



c) Identify vegetation:

Using a **GREEN pen**, map the boundaries of the native vegetation types within your Fire Management Areas.

Label each native vegetation area using the mapping codes in Table 1. The codes are also on your map for quick reference.

See Box 2 on page 14 for more information about mapping vegetation types.

Table 1. Vegetation mapping codes and corresponding recommended fire intervals

Vegetation Type	Mapping Code	Min Fire Interval SFAZ#	Min Fire Interval LMZ*	Max Interval SFAZ & LMZ
Rainforest	R	No burning	No burning	N/A
Wet Sclerophyll Forest (shrubby)	WSFS	25	30	60
Wet Sclerophyll Forest (grassy)	WSFG	10	15	50
Grassy Woodlands	GW	5	8	40
Grasslands	G	2	3	10
Dry Sclerophyll Forest (shrub/grass)	DSFG	5	8	50
Dry Sclerophyll Forest (shrubby)	DSFS	7	10	30
Heathland	H	7	10	30
Alpine Complex	A	No burning	No burning	N/A
Freshwater Wetlands	W	7	10	35
Forested Wetlands	FW	7	10	35
Saline Wetlands	SW	No burning	No burning	N/A
Semi-arid Woodlands (grassy)	SAWG	6	9	N/A
Semi-arid Woodlands (shrubby)	SAWS	10	15	N/A
Arid Shrublands (chenopod)	ASC	No burning	No burning	N/A
Arid Shrublands (acacia)	ASA	10	15	N/A

Note: Prescribed burning is not permitted in the freshwater wetland classes of montane bogs and fens, coastal freshwater lagoons or montane lakes.

Box 2. HOW DO I IDENTIFY AND MAP VEGETATION?

Mapping vegetation type for fire management is important as each type is made up of an assemblage of species that tolerate different fire intervals. That is, some vegetation types can tolerate being burnt more frequently than others.

Areas of vegetation can include native forest, wetlands, grasslands, vegetated creek lines, plantings, remnant vegetation and regeneration. When you look at areas of vegetation on your aerial photograph you may be able to see where the vegetation type clearly changes across the landscape. These are your vegetation type boundaries.

To complete the vegetation mapping exercise, you will need to identify what types of vegetation occur on your property. For help with identifying your vegetation types, refer to 'MANAGING FIRE ON YOUR PROPERTY: A booklet for landholders' in the section titled '*Managing fire for different vegetation types*' or speak to the Hotspots ecologist at the workshop.

Once you have identified what type of vegetation occurs in each of the vegetation areas you have mapped, label each native vegetation area with a unique mapping code e.g. DSFS, WSFG, GW etc. A list of the mapping codes is provided in table 1 on page 13 and on your map. If there is more than one area of the same vegetation type you can add a number to the labelling, e.g. DSFG1, DSFG2, particularly if there are other differences to the areas such as weed invasion or fire history.

If you have modified vegetation such as a garden, cleared home paddock, established lawn etc. you do not need to map this.

NOTE (from page 13):

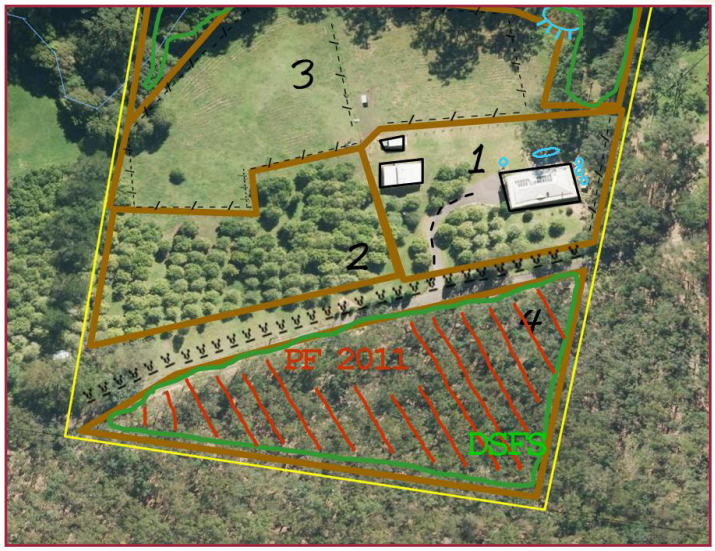
[#] SFAZ (Strategic Fire Advantage Zone) – strategically located fuel reduced areas to provide a mosaic of age classes within vegetation to reduce the potential for wildfires to develop or spread and reduce the vulnerability of assets which are susceptible to fire.

[*] LMZ (Land Management Zone) – areas in the landscape where the management objective is to provide optimum fire frequencies for the maintenance of biodiversity.

d) Identify fire history:

Using a **RED pen**, map any known wildfires or planned burns within your Fire Management Areas on your map.

Label wildfire (i.e. unplanned fire) with '*WF*' and the year if known. Label planned fire with '*PF*' and the year. For more information on mapping fire history see Box 3.



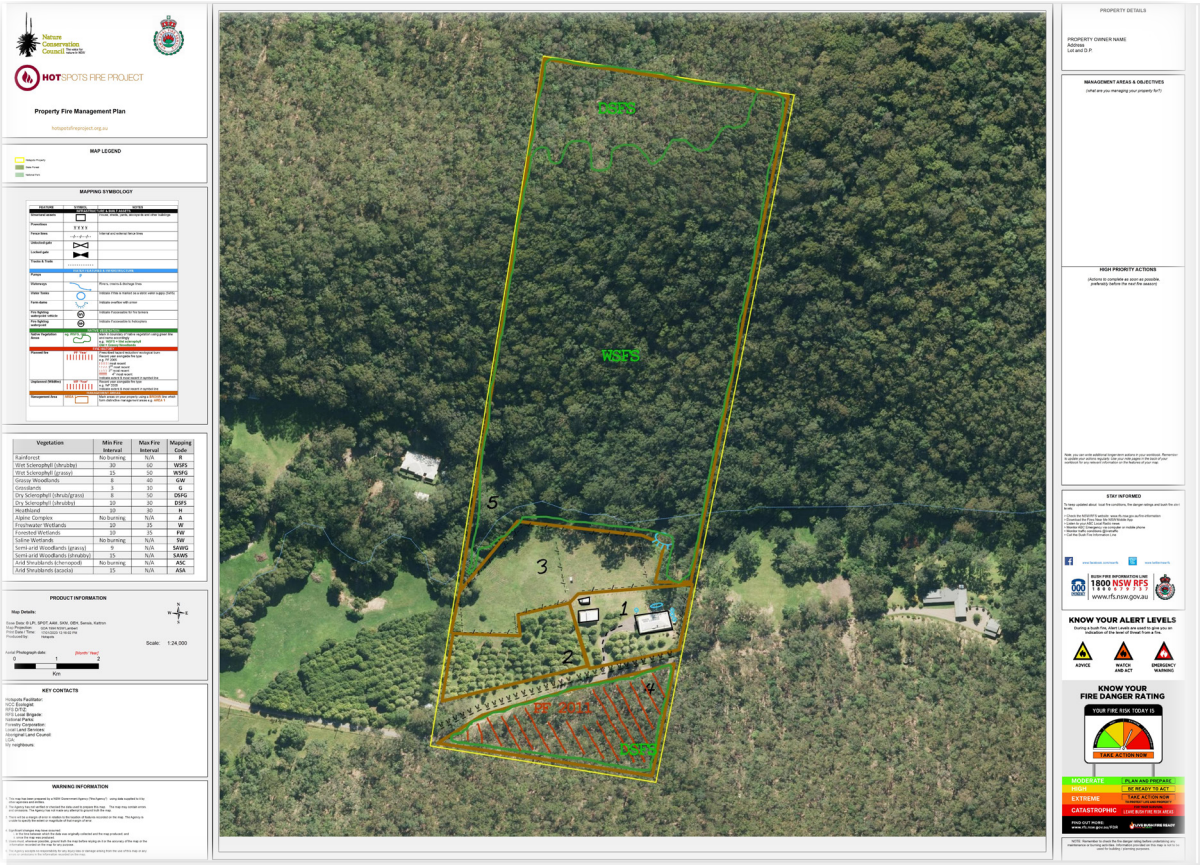
Box 3. FIRE HISTORY

Knowing the fire history on your property is important for guiding decisions regarding planned burns, as well as how you might respond to unplanned fire (wildfire).

As part of the Hotspots Program, a regional map showing Fire History for your local area will be provided. This is just one source of knowledge and it's important to ascertain from a variety of sources what fire history there has been on your property.

Knowledge of fire history could come from:

- **Personal knowledge** - you know about fires that have happened over time and know exactly where they have been.
- **Personal observation** - you have observed the effects of fire:
  - Trees showing scorch marks
  - Burnt out fenceposts
  - A dominance of plant species that regenerate after fire e.g. native peas or blady grass.
- **Interpretation** - you have looked at records from the previous landholder, old photos etc.
- **Neighbours & fire brigade** - other people have experienced fires in your area and may be able to show you where they occurred.
- **Official information** - Talk to your district NSW Rural Fire Service representatives or other land management agencies about your local Bush Fire Risk Management Plan or copies of fire history maps from fire authorities.



Your map should now show the following components:

- Your overall fire management areas reflecting your management objectives
- Mapped assets/ infrastructure
- Mapped water features
- Mapped and labelled vegetation types
- Mapped and labelled fire history (if known).

Want to make some notes on anything you have mapped?

There are note pages provided on pages 22-24 of this book.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY PRIORITY ACTIONS

Your map is designed to include and display the most critical information of your plan, including your highest priority actions.

The power of goal setting lies in writing them down. Committing to your objectives and actions by writing them down and reviewing them regularly can help you achieve your desired outcome.

a) Record your highest priority actions in the space provided on your map.

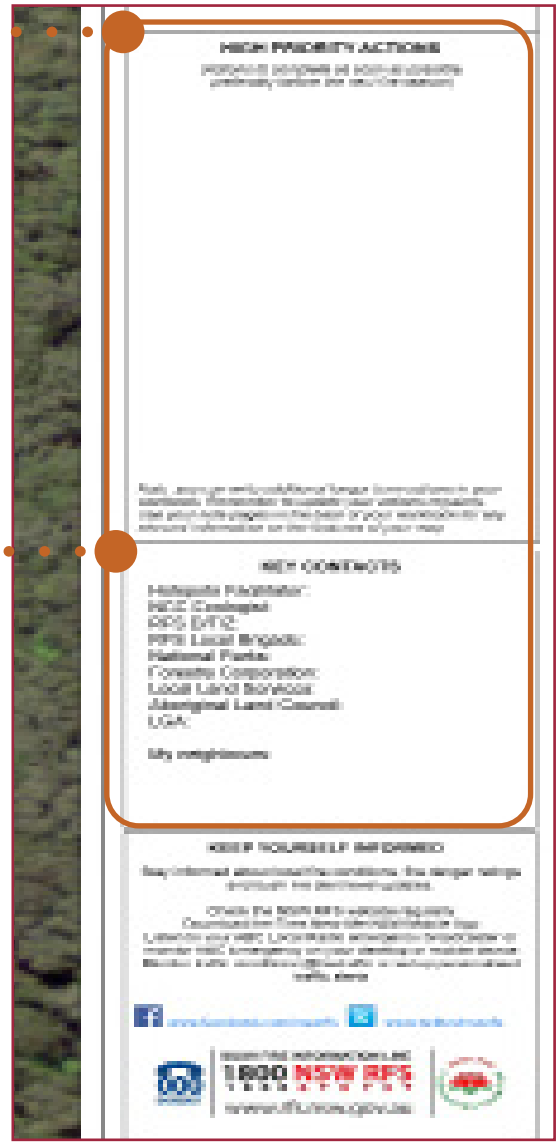
Note: These may be actions that you wish to achieve before the next fire season or within the first year.

b) Identify other longer-term actions on page 27 of this workbook.

Try and make your actions targeted and achievable. You can always revisit your map and make updates to your objectives, actions and contacts as you make progress.

c) Record useful contacts.

Some of these have been provided for you.



Let your neighbours know about your plan. Working together to complement each other's efforts can strengthen resilience to fire at personal, property and neighbourhood levels.

Need some help getting started on your actions?

Some example actions are provided on pages 25 and 26.

IMPLEMENT & REVIEW YOUR PLAN

Congratulations! You have now completed a property fire management plan for your property.

You can think of your plan as being made up of your map along with your management objectives, priority actions and emergency contacts.

If you have planned any fire activities you need to ensure you have obtained the appropriate approvals and that your activities are carried out correctly and safely. Contact your local Fire Control Centre about the operational aspects of your fire management plan and familiarise yourself with the relevant literature and your responsibilities.

GAIN PRACTICAL KNOW-HOW

The more you learn, the better you will be able to refine and improve your plan, particularly if it involves the use of planned fire. Day 2 of the Hotspots training program is designed to increase landholder confidence in the practical use of fire. This workshop will be spent in the field and provide you with the opportunity to participate in activities relating to planning and conducting a safe prescribed burn.

In addition to the workshops, it can help to talk to your local RFS and fire brigade or other land managers about their experiences with fire. You might want to consider joining your local fire brigade. In doing so, you will gain access to fire training and support which will provide an excellent basis for any planned fire efforts on your property.

Make a commitment to reviewing your plan annually, before the fire season or as required - for example in the event of a fire or change in land use. Think of it as an evolving document that can be updated as new information comes to hand, and as you gain more experience, knowledge and a clearer idea of your objectives - including what you hope to achieve for biodiversity.

Fire management planning is partly a matter of observation and responding to the needs of the bush. Keep a record of when fires occur and what areas they cover. Observe what happens to the vegetation and to different species. Plan to be flexible.

Fire management planning needs to be flexible in order to accommodate unplanned fire as well as variability in landscape and weather patterns. Prevailing weather conditions and natural landscape patterns will influence fire season, intensity and extent.

Vary your fire management actions over time, talk to people with knowledge in your region, and try different things based on your own observations of how your vegetation responds to fire.

Supplementary Materials

PROPERTY MAPPING SYMBOLS

FEATURE	SYMBOL	NOTES
INFRASTRUCTURE & BUILT ASSETS		
Structural assets		House, sheds, yards, stockyards and other buildings
Powerlines	V V V V	
Fence lines	- -/- - -/- - -/- -	Internal and external fence lines
Unlocked gates		
Locked gate		
Tracks & Trails	- - - - - - -	
WATER FEATURES & INFRASTRUCTURE		
Pumps	P	
Waterways		Rivers, creeks & drainage lines
Water Tanks		Indicate if this is marked as a static water supply (SWS)
Farm dams		Indicate overflow with arrow
Fire fighting waterpoint vehicle	WV	Indicate if accessible for fire tankers
Fire fighting waterpoint helicopter	WH	Indicate if accessible to helicopters
NATIVE VEGETATION		
Native Vegetation Areas	eg. WSFS GW	Mark in boundary of native vegetation using green line and name accordingly e.g. WSFS = Wet sclerophyll GW = Grassy Woodlands
FIRE HISTORY		
Planned fire	PF 'Year'	Prescribed hazard reduction/ ecological burn Record year alongside fire type e.g. PF 2005 Indicate extent & most recent in symbol line most recent 2nd most recent 3rd most recent 4th most recent
Unplanned (Wildfire)	WF 'Year'	Record year alongside fire type e.g. WF 2005 Indicate extent & most recent in symbol line
MANAGEMENT AREAS		
Management Area	Area 'no.'	Mark areas on your property using a BROWN line which form distinctive management areas

VEGETATION FIRE INTERVAL GUIDELINES

Vegetation Formation	Min. Fire Interval for LMZ (years)	Max. Fire Interval (years)	Mapping Code	Notes
Rainforest	N/A	N/A	R	Fire should be avoided.
Alpine Complex	N/A	N/A	A	Fire should be avoided.
Wet Sclerophyll Forest (shrubby subformation)	30	60	WSFS	Crown fires should be avoided in the lower end of the interval range.
Wet Sclerophyll Forest (grassy subformation)	15	50	WSFG	Crown fires should be avoided in the lower end of the interval range.
Grassy Woodland	8	40	GW	Minimum interval of 10 years should apply in the southern Tablelands area. Occasional intervals greater then 15 years may be desirable.
Grassland	3	10	G	Occasional intervals greater than 7 years should be included in coastal areas. There was insufficient data to give a maximum interval; available evidence indicates maximum intervals should be approximately 10 years.
Dry Sclerophyll Forest (shrub/grass subformation)	8	50	DSFG	Occasional intervals greater than 25 years may be desirable.
Dry Sclerophyll Forest (shrub subformation)	10	30	DSFS	Occasional intervals greater than 25 years may be desirable.
Heathlands	10	30	H	Occasional intervals greater than 20 years may be desirable.
Freshwater Wetlands	10	35	FW	Occasional intervals greater than 30 years may be desirable.
Forested Wetlands	10	35	FW	Some intervals greater than 20 years may be desirable.
Saline Wetlands	N/A	N/A	SW	Fire should be avoided.
Semi-arid Woodlands (grassy subformation)	9	N/A	SAWG	Not enough data for a maximum fire interval.
Semi-arid Woodlands (shrubby subformation)	15	N/A	SAWS	Not enough data for a maximum fire interval.
Arid Shrublands (chenopod subformation	N/A	N/A	ASC	Fire should be avoided.
Arid Shrublands (acacia subformation)	15	N/A	ASA	Not enough data for a maximum fire interval.

PROMPTS AND NOTES

NOTES ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

What structural assets are present on your property, e.g. house, machinery sheds, other significant buildings?

What fire management do you already do for these assets, if any?

What is the condition of any tracks and trails, are they 2WD or 4WD?

Are there any gates? Are they locked or unlocked?

Are there are fences? Are they internal property fences or boundary fences?

NOTES ON WATER FEATURES

Do you have any permanent or intermittent creeks, streams or rivers on or bordering the property?

How often do intermittent waterways run?

Are there any dams on the property, where are they and how often are they full? Are they accessible by fire tankers? Are there pumps available? If so are they petrol/diesel or electric?

Are water tanks available? Are these fitted with stortz outlets? Are they accessible by fire tankers? Are there pumps attached? If so are they petrol/diesel or electric? Are the tanks dedicated fire fighting supplies or registered under the Static Water Supply (SWS) program?

Which of these waterways or water bodies are you likely to use for fire management?

NOTES ON VEGETATION TYPE

What types of vegetation are present on your property? E.g. Forest, Woodland, Heath, Grassland etc.

Is the vegetation healthy? E.g. Is there obvious dieback/mistletoe infestation etc

Are there any weeds present? If so, what are the main species?

Are there any areas of vegetation that you know you want to protect from fire?

Are there any areas of vegetation that would benefit from fire and you want to burn?

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NOTES ON THREATENED SPECIES AND CULTURAL VALUES

Do you know of any threatened species or threatened ecological communities on your property?

Are any of these species particularly sensitive to fire?

Will these species or areas potentially benefit from a burn?

What is the size of the area providing habitat? Is it connected with other native vegetation? Does it form a habitat corridor? Or is it fragmented and isolated?

Are there any trees with hollows that need to be protected from fire?

Is the proposed fire regime (frequency, intensity, extent, season and type of treatment) appropriate for the threatened species or threatened ecological community?

Do you know of any Indigenous or non-Indigenous objects, items or places on your property that may need protecting?

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NOTES ON FIRE HISTORY
What fires have occurred on your property in the past? For each fire: *What year did these fires occur (also note month or season if known)?* *Were these planned fires or wildfire?* *What was the intensity of the fire? I.E. what burnt? Tree canopy, shrubs, ground layer vegetation/ grasses and or leaf litter.* *Did the whole area burn, or were some areas left unburnt?* *What other fire management, if any, has taken place on your property? E.g. Slashing fire breaks, grazing for hazard reduction, tree removal etc.* *Are there any other areas that you want to protect from fire?* *Are there any other areas that you want to burn?* ....

EXAMPLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Fire Management Objectives	Action
Reduce bush fire risk to life and property in APZ	*Establish and maintain APZ*
	Undertake mechanical hazard reduction work
	Undertake home maintenance such as clearing gutters
	Develop Bush Fire Survival Plan
	Register water tanks under the SWS program
	Review Bush Fire Survival Plan and practice required actions
	Upgrade bush fire survival capacity of house. e.g. enclose under floor areas or upgrade to metal flyscreens
Reduce bush fire risk to life and property	*Undertake hazard reduction burn to reduce fuel loads*
	Undertake mechanical hazard reduction work to break up the landscape e.g. along fencelines
	Graze area to reduce fuel loads
Manage for conservation within fire thresholds	*Assess fire intervals and manage for more appropriate fire regimes (interval, extent, patchiness, season)*
	Minimise chance of unplanned fire burning into the nearby rainforest gully
	Exclude Fire
	Undertake biodiversity assessment
	Undertake weed management
	Plant native species
Manage for Grazing	*Assess and maintain fencelines*
	Undertake green pick burn
	Undertake weed management
	Stock rotation plan

Fire Management Objective	Action
Reduce bush fire risk;	*Assess fire interval requirements and fuel loads*
Burn to reduce fuel load;	*Develop burn proposal- consider size season year of burn location of control lines, mosaics, subsequent burns*
Improve biodiversity;	*Ensure burn proposal considers neighbouring proposals and best available control lines etc. discuss options with neighbours where appropriate*
Increase fire frequency to bring in line with recommended fire interval range	*Contact the RFS to discuss burn proposal, capacity for assistance, timing and apply for an environmental approval if required (most likely a Hazard Reduction Certificate unless there is no hazard reduction benefit then you may need to undertake another assessment process)*
	Once all approvals in place, produce a burn plan (RFS will do this if assisting with/undertaking burn)
	Construct control lines as per burn plan and Hazard Reduction Certificate
	Conduct burn
	Monitor regrowth (vegetation and weeds) post burn
	Plan for subsequent burns
Improve biodiversity;	*Identify weed species present and investigate management options*
Weed management;	*Contact Local Land Services to discuss management options*
	Develop weed management plan- manual/chemical removal, follow up and monitoring process
	Implement weed management plan
	Weed monitoring
Manage cultural values	*Contact the Office of Environment and Heritage to discuss management options*

NOTE: the steps for planning and undertaking a burn may be very similar no matter what the fire management objective.

LONGER-TERM PROPERTY ACTION PLAN

Action	Management area name/no.	Timing (now, medium, long-term)
Ongoing Actions *Example: clean out gutters, mow home paddock and review bush fire survival plan prior to fire season*		

NOTE:

Now actions are those to complete as soon as possible or at least before the next fire season. These are essential and/or provide immediate fire protection benefit. (e.g. service the fire fighting pump, ensure hoses are in good condition or, apply for hazard reduction certificate).

Medium-term actions may be those that provide significant benefit but require more planning or are more expensive (e.g. purchase a new fire fighting pump with 400 litre water tank and box trailer, upgrade mesh on windows from nylon to aluminium or steel, or implement a planned burn).

Long-term actions may be less essential for immediate fire protection but are not necessarily less important. These may improve longer term fire protection or ecological resilience or are scheduled for when funding becomes available. (e.g. burns at longer fire intervals, sprinkler system on the roof, providing hard access for fire trucks to farm dam).

- Some actions may fit in different priorities or time frames depending on your own circumstances.
- Ongoing actions may be in several categories. Mowing and cleaning gutters for example may be both now and ongoing actions.
- Add specific time frames such as the year or date to your actions if you wish.
- Don't forget to update your map and amend your priorities and timeframes as you complete actions. It is important that your plan is a living document and you review it regularly.

HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

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NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Nature Conservation Council The voice for nature in NSW