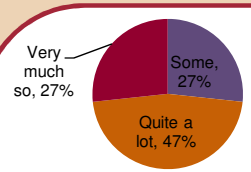
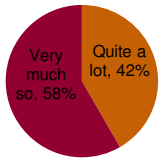
Objectives for the Mount White workshop series

- Discuss strategies to manage fire to reduce risk whilst improving biodiversity and cultural values
- Introduce landholders to fire management planning for their own property
- Address the fear of fire and potential barriers for landholders to conduct planned burns
- Address any confusion regarding procedures and regulations for planned burns

Workshop Evaluation Results

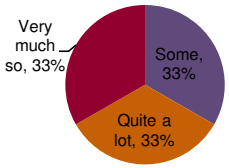


Did this workshop improve your understanding of fire management, and how to manage fire on your property?

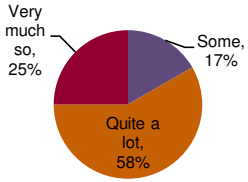


Has this workshop increased your understanding about fire behaviour in the landscape?

Did this workshop improve your understanding of how to plan for and conduct a safe burn?



Did this workshop give you a better understanding of how to plan for fire in different vegetation types on your property?



Did this workshop inform you about who is involved with fire management around your area, and what they do?

85 percent of landholders plan to use fire for biodiversity after attending Hotspots

Workshop achievements

- As a result of the Hotspots workshop series, residents of Mount White have planned property fire management plans, and actions to implement these plans.
- Six residents who attended the workshop series have formed a Community Fire Unit. Working together with the local brigade, these participants have been undertaking hazard reduction activities identified in their property fire management plans.
- The local RFS District office at Gosford will be working closely with landholders to implement their plans, and achieve outcomes identified in the areas bush fire risk management plan.

Under the guidance of the nine project partners in the Advisory Committee, Hotspots is delivered through the coordinated efforts of the NSW Rural Fire Service and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

MOUNT WHITE WORKSHOP SERIES REPORT*

Workshop 1 (14/04/2012) and Workshop 2 (12/05/2012)

"I learnt how to go about a proper hazard reduction over properties with consideration to biodiversity"
Mount White Hotspots participant

Mount White is an elevated plateau located in the Sydney Basin. It is located immediately north of the Hawkesbury River in the hinterland of the Central Coast.

Mt White is within the traditional lands of the Darkinjung people. The Darkinjung nation stretches from a small coastal strip between Gosford and Wyong to the Hawkesbury River, the Hunter River watershed, the Watagan Mountains and the western parts of what is now Wollemi National Park.

Most of the Mt White Plateau is cleared, but it is surrounded by extensive areas of native vegetation. Equestrian facilities are the primary landuse and the area has a considerable number of rural residential and "treechange" properties.

To the west and northwest are the extensive forested areas of Dharug and Yengo National Parks, to the east is Brisbane Water National Park and the estuary of the Hawkesbury River, to the south is the smallest section of Popran National Park and the Hawkesbury River and to the north are the largest sections of Popran National Park and Mangrove Mountain. Mt White is an important wildlife corridor linking the coastal habitats of Brisbane Water National Park with the Greater Blue Mountains and the Great Dividing Range.

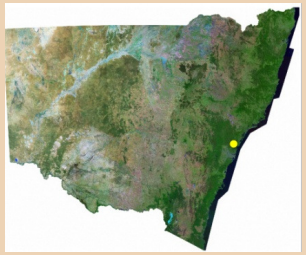
This Hotspots workshop series attracted a mix of participants with 22 residents of Mount White attending. As a group, this community collectively explored ways in which they could undertake management actions to reduce fire risk whilst also maintaining the biodiversity values of the Mount White landscape.

* This project was funded by the NSW Rural Fire Service

HOTSPOTS FIRE PROJECT

Fire Management for the Mount White Area

Content developed April 2012



This fire management landscape overview has been compiled by the Hotspots Fire Project. It serves merely as an aid to planning. The information contained herein reflects our understanding at the time of planning. 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 plan take no responsibility for any outcomes, actions or losses resulting either directly or indirectly from the interpretation, misinterpretation or implementation. This plan is intended to be used in conjunction with the help of experts and good neighbour relations. For further information on the Hotspots Fire Project:

Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Email hotspots@rfs.nsw.gov.au
Or visit www.hotspotsfireproject.org.au
This map has been created by NSW RFS in April 2012

FIRE HISTORY

IDENTIFIED MANAGEMENT ACTIONS*

Actions identified in the workshop series include:

1) Prescribed mosaic burning;
   1. To reduce risk from Wildfire
   2. For enhancement of biodiversity
   3. To improve agriculture/reduce weeds
   4. Pile burning to remove existing hazard
2) Mechanical Clearing
   1. To improve access (to and from property and to water supplies)
   2. To create fire breaks
   3. To maintain Asset protection zones
   4. To improve/clear/create fire trails
3) Increase Fire Fighting Capability
   1. Purchasing new or additional fire fighting equipment
   2. Join the local brigade to obtain training in fire fighting
   3. Establish a local community Fire unit
4) Co-operation with neighbours
   1. To manage fire across tenures with an aim to reduce hazard and reduce excess clearing on individual properties.
   2. NPWS
   3. Darkinjung LALC
5) Improve survivability
   1. By completing Bush Fire Survival Plans
   2. By assessing existing structures for their ability to withstand bush fire attack by embers and radiant heat

* **Please note:** This is a listing of the types of follow up actions that participating landholders have identified as part of their individual fire management plans.

LOCAL & WORKSHOP SERIES CONTACTS

NSW Rural Fire Service: Rolf Poole and Talone Higgins 4340 2911	**Hotspots Facilitator:** Bruce Hansen 8867 7972
Hotspots Ecologist: Mark Graham mgraham@nccnsw.org.au	

THE LANDSCAPE

- *Mt White is an elevated plateau above the Hawkesbury River*
- *A major corridor between coastal habitats and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area*
- *Infertile soils derived from Triassic sandstones and shale, with small areas of Tertiary Volcanics*
- *Major equestrian area along with grazing, lifestyle, conservation and rural residential*
- *Over 80 known threatened species.*

THE VEGETATION & STATE WIDE FIRE INTERVAL GUIDELINE

Vegetation Formation	Vegetation Class	Ecosystem types (Species dominance)	Min Fire Interval	Max Fire Interval	Comments
Rainforest	Northern Warm Temperate	*Acmena smithii* (lilly pilly), *Doryphora sassafras* (sassafras)	n/a	n/a	No Fire
Wet Sclerophyll Forest (shrubby subformation)	North Coast	*Eucalyptus saligna* Sydney Blue Gum *E. punctata* grey gum *Syncarpia glomulifera* turpentine	25yrs	60yrs	Crown fires should be avoided in the lower end of the interval range
Dry Sclerophyll Forest (shrubby subformation)	Sydney Coastal	*Angophora costata* (Sydney red gum), *Corymbia gummifera* (red bloodwood), *E. haemastoma* (scribbly gum), *C. eximia* (yellow bloodwood) *E. capitellata* (brown stringybark	7yrs	30yrs	Occasional intervals greater than 25yrs may be desirable
Freshwater Wetlands	Coastal Freshwater Lagoons	*Ranunculus inundatus* (river buttercup), *Triglochin procera* (water ribbons), *Eleocharis* spp. (spike rushes)	n/a	n/a	No Fire
Heathlands	Sydney Coastal	*Banksia ericifolia* (heath banksia)	7yrs	30yrs	Occasional intervals greater than 20 years may be desirable
Blakely's Micromyrtus *Micromyrtus blakely* (Vulnerable)					No fire more than once every 7 years. No slashing, triterring or tree removal
Spreading Guinea Flower *Hibbertia procumbens* (Endangered)					No fire more than once every 7 years. No slashing, triterring or tree removal
Black-eyed Susan *Tetratheca glandulosa* (Vulnerable)					No fire more than once every 7 years. Slashing only to 100cm, no triterring or tree removal.
Glaucous Darwinia *Darwinia glaucophylla* (Vulnerable)					No fire more than once every 10 years. No slashing, triterring or tree removal

THREATENED SPECIES

STATUS	FIRE ECOLOGY (management requirements)*
Green and Golden Bell Frog *Litorea aurea* (Endangered)	No burning within 50 metres of wetlands and other large water bodies.
Giant Burrowing Frog *Heleioporus australiacus* (Vulnerable)	No fire
Red Crowned Toadlet *Pseudophryne australis* (Vulnerable)	No burning adjacent to streams, and no burning in and around ephemeral drainage lines at the headwaters of creeks
Glossy Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* (Vulnerable)	No burning of *Allocasuarina* thickets. Reduce the impact of burning to retain understorey species, in particular to permit the regeneration of she-oaks. Protect existing and future hollow-bearing trees for nest sites.
Barking Owl *Ninox connivens* Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua* Masked Owl *Tyto novaehollandiae* (Vulnerable)	No burning around known nesting sites at any time. Apply low intensity, mosaic pattern fuel reduction regimes. Retain large areas of native vegetation, especially those containing hollow-bearing trees that are used as nest sites.
Eastern Pygmy Possum *Certcartetus nanus* (Vulnerable)	No slashing, trittering or tree removal.
Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby *Petrogale peniccilata* (Endangered)	No slashing, trittering or tree removal.
Long Nosed Potoroo *Potorous tridactylus* (Vulnerable)	No slashing, trittering or tree removal.
Yellow Bellied Glider *Petaurus australis* Squirrel Glider *Petaurus norfolcensis* (Vulnerable)	No slashing, trittering or tree removal. Retain den trees and recruitment trees (future hollow-bearing trees), retain food sources, particularly sap-feeding trees and nectar producing species, retain and protect areas of habitat and maintain connectivity between habitat patches.
Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus* -(Vulnerable)	Apply low intensity, mosaic pattern fuel reduction burns in or adjacent to Koala habitat. Retain suitable habitat, especially areas dominated by preferred feed-tree species. Avoid crown fires.
Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus* (Vulnerable)	Avoid known roost sites.
Large-eared Pied Bat *Chalinolobus dwyeri* (Vulnerable)	No burning around known roost sites. No slashing, trittering or tree removal around roosting sites.
Golden-tipped Bat *Kerivoula papuensis* (Vulnerable)	No slashing, trittering or tree removal. Protect rainforest from fire.

* ***Please note:*** *Fire management recommendations are based on the assumption that the species are being managed in an intact or near intact landscape. Variation in management requirements will be necessary when dealing with disturbed landscapes. It is important to follow up on local knowledge in support of better management decisions. Black text is derived from RFS Codes of Practice. Blue text is derived from expert input.*