

Brigalow Belt (South)

Fire Management Guidelines

Appropriate fire management practices to help land managers plan hazard reduction burning and undertake planned burns to improve production and conservation outcomes



Workshop Invitation - Brigalow Belt South Fire Management Guideline

The Brigalow Belt South (BBS) Fire Management Guideline aims to work with volunteer rural fire brigades, government and landholders to balance and optimise hazard reduction, primary production and biodiversity outcomes of fire management. These guidelines are the culmination of extensive discussions with experienced members of the volunteer rural fire brigades and other respected fire managers and fire scientists. These guidelines are intended to be used by volunteer rural fire brigades and landowners who are on the front line in managing fire in rural communities.

The workshop provides an opportunity for a discussion on collective outcomes and for participants to provide input and further refinement to the guidelines. The workshop discussion will focus on:

- **Fire frequency** – how often should an area be burnt
- **Fire intensity** – how hot does the fire need to be
- **Season** – what time of year will usually provide the desired conditions for a planned burn?
- **Burning mosaic** – the percentage of ground cover remaining unburnt after a fire



Australian Government



Locations

Monday 25th May – Mundubbera, 6pm at the Royal Hotel Mundubbera

Wednesday 27th May – Monto, 6pm at the Function Room, Shire Chambers (Newton St)

Thursday 28th May - Durong, 6pm at the Durong Bowls Club

RSVP 2 days before the event is essential, please email or phone Vikki Evans, BMRG Wondai Office. Ph: 4169 0720 or on Vikki.Evans@bmrq.org.au

To find out more about the workshops please contact Rod Buchanan, Maryborough Office, at Ph.: 4181 2999 or rod.buchanan@bmrq.org.au

Who we are:

The **Burnett Mary Regional Group** is a community based, not for profit organisation that delivers targeted natural resource management outcomes for the Burnett Mary Region. The Burnett Mary Regional Group aims to protect and enhance the agricultural and natural environment of the Burnett Mary Region for future generations.

For more information on the Burnett Mary Regional Group visit our web page www.bmrq.org.au

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About the Consultant:

Andrew Houley – Fire and Landscape Strategies.

Andrew has a long association with fire in the landscape-from planning the proactive use of fire across many parts of Queensland, to bushfire suppression in a range of roles. He specialises in developing strategies, tools and plans that guide the use of fire in a particular landscape for the purposes of hazard reduction, primary production and conservation across many land tenures. Andrew has more than 25 years' experience in fire management, observing fire and its affects across many different landscapes and ecosystems.

Beefwood, Bull-oak, Sandalwood Woodlands and Cypress on Alluvial Flats Landscape 4

Beefwood, Bull-oak, Sandalwood woodlands often in association with Scribbly Gum and/or smooth-barked Apple and Cypress on alluvial flats.

DISTRIBUTION

BURNING MOSAIC (UNBURNT) (10%)

FIRE INTENSITY °C

12

Beefwood, Bull-oak, Sandalwood Woodlands and Cypress on Alluvial Flats

Hazard Reduction

This vegetation type generally has a very sparse ground layer except where exotic grasses have established. The canopy trees do not shed much leaf litter so there is little buildup of fuel. Exotic grass establishment within this landscape increases the fuel load exponentially and results in an increase in fire intensity that can damage mature trees. Areas of exotic grasses like buffel grass, should be burnt as soon after the wet season as a fire will carry. The aim of hazard reduction in this landscape is to have a variation in the time since last fire to protect the landscape type and adjacent fire sensitive vegetation communities from wildfire. However, fire should not be used more frequently than twice in a ten year period. Fire adapted eucalypt communities adjacent to this landscape type should be included in broad scale protection burns.

Conservation

Where practical, established exotic grasses should be removed from the vegetation prior to burning as these fuels can generate enough heat to kill mature trees. Patchy mosaic burns of low intensity, early in the dry can provide protection from later wildfires. High fire intensities will kill parent trees in bull oak stands. A low intensity fire several years later maybe required to reduce the stem density. Bull-oak is an important food source for Glossy black-cockatoos who favour returning to certain trees and stands rather than feeding across available resources. In areas bounded by Millman, Cecil Plains, Goodwindi and Leyburn there is a rare species of butterfly known as the Bull-oak Jewel Butterfly (*Hypochrysois piceatus*), that inhabits old aged stands of bull-oak in association with an ant. The butterfly's larvae shelter in the daytime in holes formed by the xylocid moth larvae and feed at night in the fresh upper branches of the bull-oak tree. The ant provides protection for the Bull-oak Jewel Butterfly larvae from wasps and spiders in return for nutritious secretions produced by glands on the larvae's back. Low intensity fires remove the leaf litter crucial for the ants and can damage the ant's nests. Moderate or high intensity fires will kill the adult trees and remove the butterfly altogether. Road reserves and any common land with mature bull oak stands should be checked for Bull-oak Jewel habitat prior to any planned burns.

Production

This landscape has been extensively cleared for agriculture and grazing. Fire is generally used for removing old grass and therefore is best used when soil moisture is high so grasses can recover quickly. Good spring storms with the likelihood of follow up rain or early dry season after the wet are suitable opportunities. Much of the landscape has significant areas of introduced grasses, particularly buffel grass, so the choice of burning season should reflect the pasture characteristics. A low to moderate intensity fire with good soil moisture should provide a rapid response from pasture grasses, reducing the opportunity for woody weed invasion.

Regional Ecosystems

11.3.13 11.3.32 11.3.33
11.3.18

13



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