

Otway District

Autumn 2015

Working along The Great Ocean Road

Each year Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), together with Parks Victoria and the Country Fire Authority, carries out a fuel management program in Victoria's public parks and forests to reduce the risk of bushfire.

Together we carry out a range of works to reduce bushfire risk to human life, communities, essential and community infrastructure, industry, the economy and environment.

The works include the maintenance of strategic fuel breaks along major roads through our parks and forests and site preparation works for planned burning. Works include the assessment and management of hazardous trees and the maintenance and creation of control lines. During these works you may see our firefighters and hear machinery working.

There are several burns planned around your area. These include:

- **Eastern View; Golf Links Road – 330.4ha**
- **Big Hill; Big Hill Track – 379.9ha**
- **Separation Creek; Jamieson Track – 1157.1ha**
- **Wye River; Kennett Wye Jeep Track – 304.1ha**

These burns will help to reduce the spread of bushfires to the Great Ocean Road and surrounding settlements.

There are a number of people, industries and communities around this burn, and whilst we consider the potential impacts on them of burning, the decision to burn is always driven by the need to reduce the real risk of damaging bushfires.

Burn Monitoring

Biodiversity monitoring assists our understanding of the short and long term impacts of planned burning on biodiversity. DELWP has a long term biodiversity monitoring project in the Otways that is led by an ecologist who informs our burn program.

When will this happen?

The Fire Operations Plans are designed to be flexible, allowing the timing of proposed activities over the three-year period to change in response to weather and other conditions. Although burns are scheduled to take place in a certain year and sometimes in a particular season, this can change at short notice according to conditions. This means that burns may be carried out at any time over the next three years when conditions are suitable.

Please note – DELWP provides information about when burns are proposed to be carried out up to seven days ahead. However, the final decision to proceed can only be made on the day of the burn. This is usually in the morning, following monitoring of weather conditions and local fuel moisture levels.

DELWP is therefore unable to give you a date that a burn will go ahead. It is recommended that you regularly seek information about proposed burns near you in order to stay informed about when the burns may occur.

Be Aware. How You Can Help.

The Great Ocean Road is popular destination for local and interstate visitors. While burns are being undertaken, road travel, including along the Great Ocean Road, may be hazardous due to low visibility from smoke. It is likely that key regional and local road, traffic conditions may change or that some roads may be closed on a temporary basis. Please drive to local conditions and obey all traffic signs and instructions from Firefighters near the burn.

For safety reasons, where recreation trails, tracks or campsites are within or nearby to burns, they will be closed for the duration of the burn operation and until a full risk assessment can be undertaken. We urge people to obey signs and barriers preventing access to the trails and remain outside exclusion zones.



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Smoke in the area

Smoke is likely to be visible from the surrounding townships and settlements. Smoke from planned burning can affect people with respiratory conditions.

If you or someone you care for experiences symptoms that may be due to smoke exposure, seek medical advice or call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24.



How can I find out about a burn near me?

Information about planned burning, road, track and camp site closures can be found on the DELWP, Parks Victoria

Visit www.delwp.vic.gov.au/burns-map www.parkweb.vic.gov.au or

Call Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 240 667.

If you see smoke and don't know if it is from a planned burn or a bushfire - you can get more information here

Visit Vic Emergency www.emergency.vic.gov.au or

Download the FireReady app.

Information around monitoring and reporting

Visit <http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/fire-and-emergencies/managing-risk-and-learning-about-managing-fire/monitoring-evaluation-and-reporting>

If you require further information please contact the DELWP Otway District team on 5233 5565

Thank you for your patience and understanding while we do this important work to better protect communities, property and the environment from the impacts of bushfire

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