

Durrigere State Conservation Area Fire Management Strategy 2009

This strategy should be used in conjunction with aerial photography and field reconnaissance during incidents and the development of incident action plans.

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Prepared: Australian Geographic, Sydney NSW 1585
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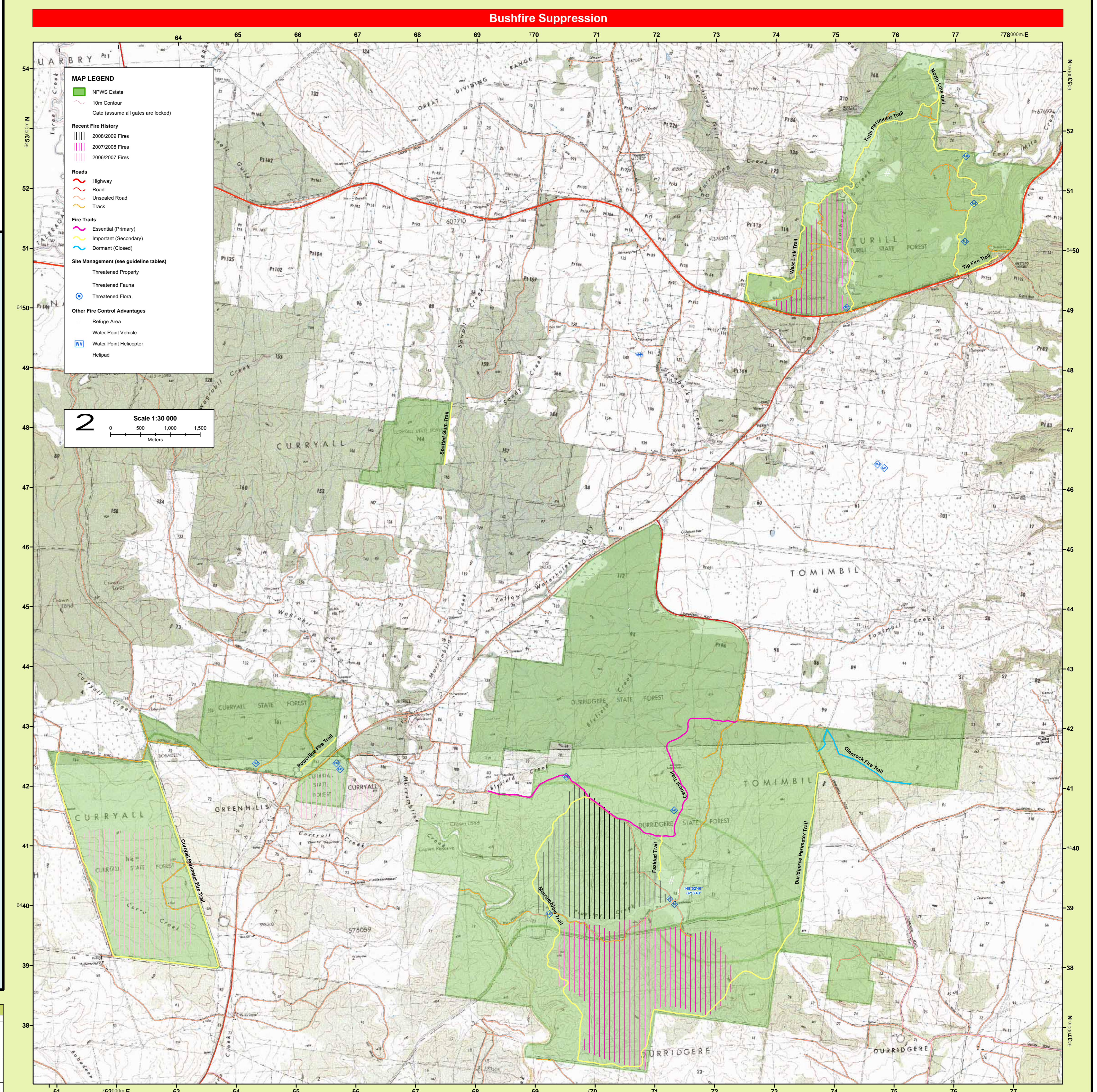
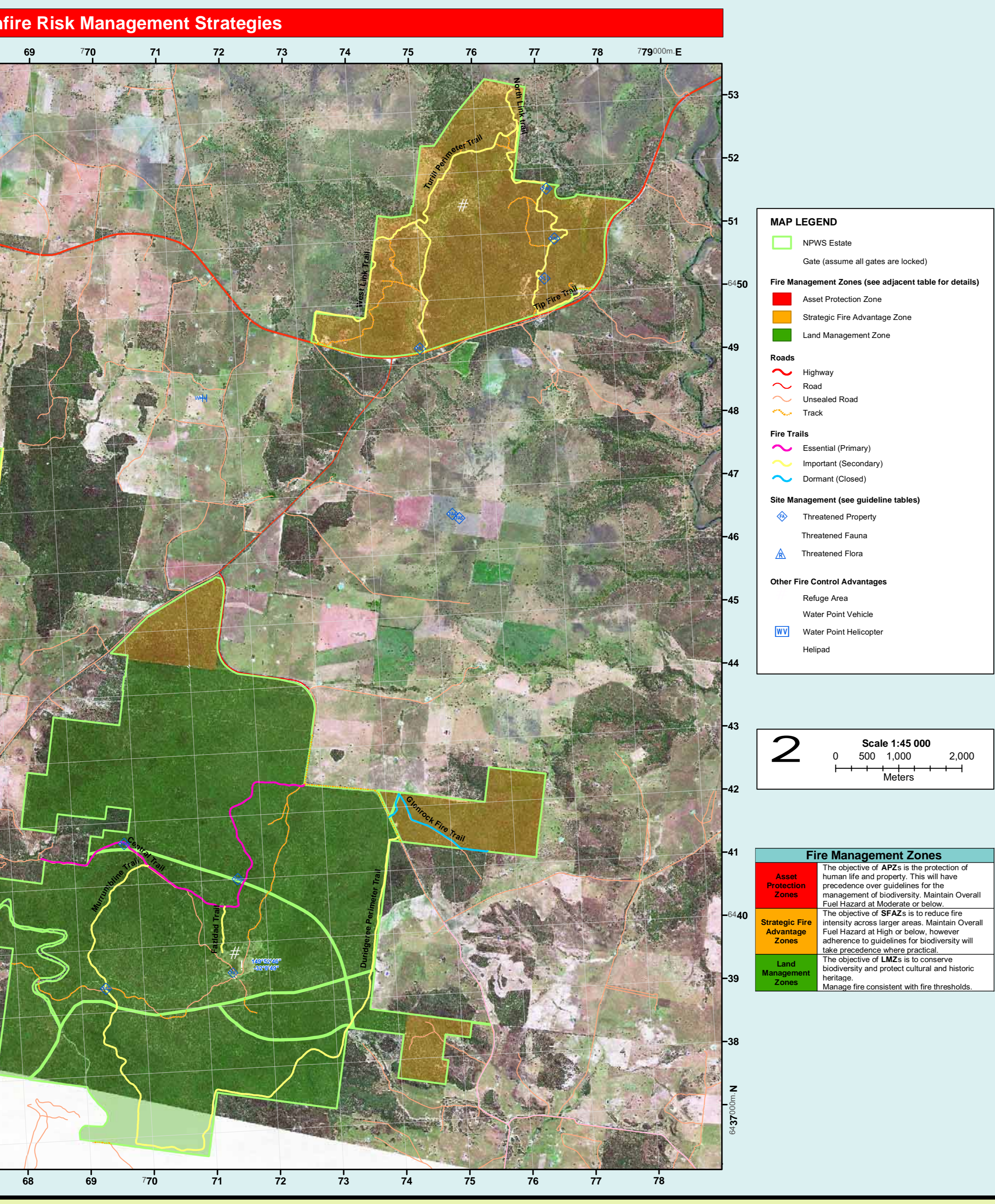
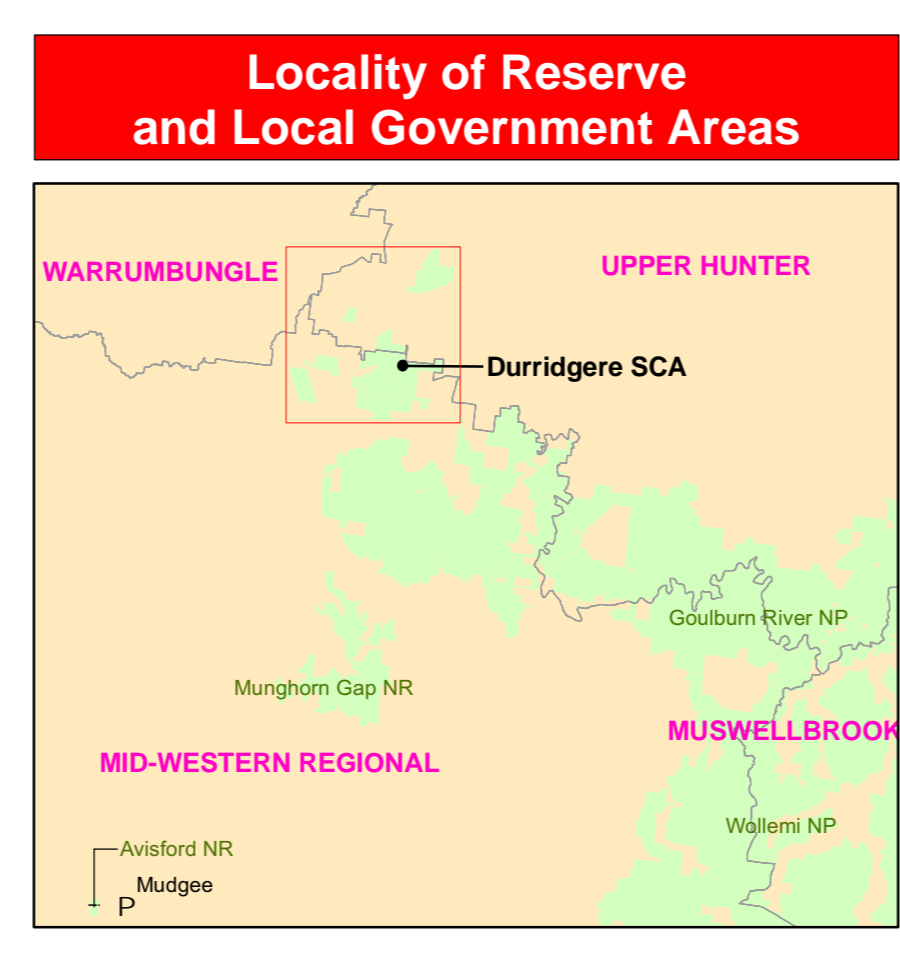
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	Police	01 471 493
	Fire	000
	Emergency	000
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	Upper Hunter	05 482 2900

Fire Season Information

Wildfires
 The statutory wildfire season occurs between 1st October and 31st March. This may be extended if weather conditions lead to increased fire danger outside of this period.

Prescribed Burning
 Prescribed burning in this area is normally undertaken in late summer through to Autumn. Spring burns will only be undertaken in the Reserve under specific conditions.



Operational Guidelines

Brief all personnel involved in suppression operations on the following issues:

Resource	Guidelines
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Site Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, existing fire trails and control lines will be used during prescribed burning operations and wildfire suppression. Should construction works be required, the NPWS Aboriginal Sites Register will be used to identify site locations to avoid damage. Where sites could be impacted, consultation will be undertaken with the Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council prior to the activity. Disturbed and overgrown logging tracks will be visited where possible in preference to the construction of new control lines. Whilst no planned or ceremonial trees have been identified within the Park, where possible, all standing trees will be inspected prior to being cut down or dozed.
Historic Heritage Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no recorded Historic Heritage items within the Reserve.
Threatened Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible property owners with assets at risk from a wildfire event should be kept informed regarding the progress of the fire. The current level of protection of these assets will be determined. The use of water bombing aircraft should support containment operations by aggressively attacking hotspots and spotfires. The use of water bombing aircraft without the support of ground based suppression crews should be limited to very specific circumstances. Where practicable foam should be used to increase the effectiveness of the water. Ground crews must be alerted to water bombing operations.
Aerial Water Bombing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerial ignition may be used during back burning or fuel reduction operations where practicable, but only with the prior consent of a senior NPWS officer. Ullage responses to rapidly progress back burns eg down slope, where required. Temperature and humidity trends must be monitored carefully to determine the safest times to implement back burns. Generally, when the FDI is Very High or greater, back burning should commence once the humidity begins to rise in the late afternoon or early evening. With a lower FDI back burning may be safely undertaken during the day. Where practicable, clear an area around dead, hollowbearing or fibrous barked trees adjacent to containment lines prior to backburning, or wet down these trees as part of the backburn ignition. Avoid ignition of backburns at the bottom of slopes where a long and intense up slope burn is likely. Consider completing backburns by using spot ignition instead of line ignition to reduce rates of spread and area of head fire. The fire contained agency on site may assume control of the fire, but then must ensure the relevant land management agency is notified promptly. On the arrival of other containment agencies, the initial incident controller will consult with regard to the ongoing command, control and incident management team requirements as per the relevant EFAC Plan for the relevant area.
Backburning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of new containment lines will be avoided, where practicable, except where construction can occur with minimal environmental impact. New containment lines to the construction of new control lines. Disturbed and overgrown logging tracks will be utilised where possible in preference to the construction of new control lines. Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. All containment lines not required for other purposes will be closed and rehabilitated at the cessation of the incident. All personnel involved in containment fire construction should be briefed on the natural and cultural heritage sites in the location.
Command & Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of new containment lines will be avoided, where practicable, except where construction can occur with minimal environmental impact. New containment lines to the construction of new control lines. Disturbed and overgrown logging tracks will be utilised where possible in preference to the construction of new control lines. Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. All containment lines not required for other purposes will be closed and rehabilitated at the cessation of the incident. All personnel involved in containment fire construction should be briefed on the natural and cultural heritage sites in the location.
Containment Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of new containment lines will be avoided, where practicable, except where construction can occur with minimal environmental impact. New containment lines to the construction of new control lines. Disturbed and overgrown logging tracks will be utilised where possible in preference to the construction of new control lines. Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. All containment lines not required for other purposes will be closed and rehabilitated at the cessation of the incident. All personnel involved in containment fire construction should be briefed on the natural and cultural heritage sites in the location.

General Guidelines

Equipment	Guidelines
Earthmoving Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earthmoving equipment may only be used with the prior consent of a senior NPWS officer, and then only if the probability of its success is high. Earthmoving equipment must be always guided and supervised by an experienced officer, and accompanied by a support vehicle. When engaged in direct or parallel attack this vehicle must be a firefighting vehicle. Containment lines constructed by earthmoving equipment should consider the protection of drainage features, observe the Threatened Species and Cultural Heritage Operational Guidelines, and be surveyed, where possible, to identify unknown cultural heritage sites. Earthmoving equipment should be washed down, where practicable, prior to it entering NPWS estate. All earthmoving equipment operators engaged in fire management operations must wear appropriate safety equipment.
Fire Advantage Recording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All fire advantages used during wildfire suppression operations should be mapped and where relevant added to the database.
Fire Suppression Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wetting and foaming agents (surfactants) are permitted for use in wildfire suppression. The use of fire retardant is only permitted with the prior consent of the senior NPWS officer, and should be avoided where reasonable alternatives are available. Exclude the use of surfactants and retardants within 50m of watercourses, dams and swamps. Areas where fire suppression chemicals are used should be mapped and the brand of chemical recorded. The Threatened Flora Management Guidelines are to be observed. Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. All containment lines not required for other purposes will be closed and rehabilitated at the cessation of the incident. The potential impacts of smoke and possible mitigation tactics must be considered when planning for wildfire suppression and prescribed burning operations. Close roads if smoke or fire fighting operations are likely to become a hazard. Display signs at entry to the Park. Noddy neighbours of potential smoke hazard. The Park may be closed to the public during periods of extreme fire danger, during wildfire suppression operations or during fire management burns. Notify media and all relevant authorities of any closures. Check and evacuate non fire fighting areas, dry use areas and walking tracks within and adjacent to the fire area. Close roads if smoke or fire fighting operations are likely to become a hazard. Display signs at entry to the Park.
Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. All containment lines not required for other purposes will be closed and rehabilitated at the cessation of the incident. The potential impacts of smoke and possible mitigation tactics must be considered when planning for wildfire suppression and prescribed burning operations. Close roads if smoke or fire fighting operations are likely to become a hazard. Display signs at entry to the Park. Noddy neighbours of potential smoke hazard. The Park may be closed to the public during periods of extreme fire danger, during wildfire suppression operations or during fire management burns. Notify media and all relevant authorities of any closures. Check and evacuate non fire fighting areas, dry use areas and walking tracks within and adjacent to the fire area. Close roads if smoke or fire fighting operations are likely to become a hazard. Display signs at entry to the Park.
Smoke Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where practicable, clear an area around dead, hollowbearing or fibrous barked trees adjacent to containment lines prior to backburning, or wet down these trees as part of the backburn ignition. Avoid ignition of backburns at the bottom of slopes where a long and intense up slope burn is likely. Consider completing backburns by using spot ignition instead of line ignition to reduce rates of spread and area of head fire. The fire contained agency on site may assume control of the fire, but then must ensure the relevant land management agency is notified promptly. On the arrival of other containment agencies, the initial incident controller will consult with regard to the ongoing command, control and incident management team requirements as per the relevant EFAC Plan for the relevant area.
Visitor Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where practicable, clear an area around dead, hollowbearing or fibrous barked trees adjacent to containment lines prior to backburning, or wet down these trees as part of the backburn ignition. Avoid ignition of backburns at the bottom of slopes where a long and intense up slope burn is likely. Consider completing backburns by using spot ignition instead of line ignition to reduce rates of spread and area of head fire. The fire contained agency on site may assume control of the fire, but then must ensure the relevant land management agency is notified promptly. On the arrival of other containment agencies, the initial incident controller will consult with regard to the ongoing command, control and incident management team requirements as per the relevant EFAC Plan for the relevant area.

Threatened Fauna Fire Ecology

Label	Name	Fire Ecology
	FA1 Glossy Black Cockatoo (Vulnerable)	Avoid high intensity fires within potential habitat, to prevent damage to nesting sites (tree hollows). Avoid sprawling large areas prescribed burns. Avoid burning Allocasuarina thickets to avoid loss of seed food source. Protect known nest sites. Maintain density of age structure over wide area.
	FA2 Barking Owl (Vulnerable)	Low intensity burns will ensure that sufficient prey resources remains for the short-term interval. Potential for inappropriate fire regimes to reduce habitat and prey diversity. Protect known nest sites.
	FA3 Brown Treecreeper (Vulnerable)	Hollows in standing dead or live trees and tree stumps are essential for nesting and need to be protected prior and post fire activity. Maintain fire frequency suitable for management of western slope Dry sclerophyll forest and western slope Grassy woodlands (preferred vegetation assemblages).
	FA4 Diamond Firetail (Vulnerable)	Fire ecology unknown.
	FA5 Hooded Robin (Vulnerable)	Likely to be detrimentally affected by frequent fire, due to its requirement for large areas of complex habitat (well-developed shrub and ground layers). Maintain mosaic low intensity burning pattern.
	FA6 Spangled Warbler (Vulnerable)	Fire can increase predation of this species. Low intensity burns will impact on this species in breeding season of Sept-Jan and when young are in nest. Fire will reduce food sources in short-term.
	FA7 Eastern Long-eared Bat (Vulnerable)	Avoid high intensity fire within known roost locations. Felling of known roost trees (potential roost trees) should be avoided during mop-up operations. Implement low intensity fire, with a low flame height to preserve roost sites. Fire of moderate intensity may encourage formation of tree hollows however, could be detrimental to breeding season.

Suppression Strategies

Current FDR	Forecast FDR	Strategy
Low - Mod	Low - Mod	As far as possible, undertake indirect, parallel or direct attack along existing control lines.
Low - Mod	High	As far as possible, undertake indirect, parallel or direct attack along existing control lines. If direct attack is necessary to minimise the time taken to contain the fire, identify and carry out a direct attack.
High	High	Undertake indirect, parallel or direct attack to minimise the time taken to contain the fire. Identify and carry out a direct attack.
High	AI	Undertake indirect attack along existing or newly constructed control lines. Identify and carry out a direct attack.
AI	AI	Ensure there is sufficient time to secure control lines before the fire gets to them. If there is insufficient time to secure control lines, fall back to the next potential control line. As far as possible, implement threatened species and cultural heritage management guidelines.

Vegetation Communities and Biodiversity Thresholds

Unit	Vegetation Community	Biodiversity Thresholds	Fire Behaviour	Year Burnt	Area (Ha)
Durrigere	Open Ironbark on sandstone	Suggested fire regime 10-30 years. Avoid fire regimes < 10 years. Dry climate could limit post fire regeneration.	Very light	1997-2001 (State Forests)	<200
Turill	Open Ironbark on sandstone	Suggested fire regime 10-30 years. Avoid fire regimes < 10 years. Dry climate could limit post fire regeneration.	Light - Moderate	2008	170
Curryall	Open Ironbark on sandstone	Suggested fire regime 10-30 years. Avoid fire regimes < 10 years. Dry climate could limit post fire regeneration.	Light - Moderate	2008	500

