



Contact Information					
Agency	Position / Location	Phone	Agency	Position / Location	Phone
National Parks & Wildlife Service	Branch Duty Officer (24 hour)	02 6275 1742	Emergency Services Fire & Rescue NSW	Police, Fire, Ambulance NSW Op 24 or Duty Officer	000 (112 if no mobile service) 9318 7000 or 0408 621 207
	Area Manager	02 6738 9117 or 0428 504 525			
	Armidale Office Walcha Office	0738 9100 0777 4700 0427 792 902		SES or Statewide	Armidale Unit, Walcha Unit or Statewide
Rural Fire Service	Manager	0771 4700	Police	Armidale Station or Walcha Station	0771 0699 or 0777 2244
	Duty Officer	0732 4473	Council	Armidale Dumaresq Council or Walcha Council	0770 3800 or 0774 2500
New England Team NSW	Armidale Fire Control Centre	0771 2400	Hospital	Armidale or Walcha	0770 9500 or 0777 4200
	State Duty Officer Walcha	0662 4370 0777 4104	Local Aboriginal Land Council	Armidale LALC or Armadale LALC (Walcha)	0772 2447 or 0777 1100
Forests NSW	Coils Harbour Office	0652 0111	Access contacts	Any access issues and/or contacts are marked on individual map sheets.	
	State Duty Officer Walcha	0666 4370 0777 4104			



Strategy Information	
Fire Season Information	
<b>Wildfires</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wild fires have been known to start as early as late August. However the critical fire season is generally October to December where both large fire events and numerous fires caused by multiple lightning strikes can occur.</li> <li>During winter than average years the critical fire period can extend from September through to January.</li> <li>During this period, fires may exhibit high intensity behaviour under windy conditions, in steep terrain or in high fuel loads (RBSI values are high).</li> <li>The preferred prescribed burning period is autumn to late winter when there is a higher probability of fires self-extinguishing overnight and less impact on critical life stages of biodiversity.</li> <li>Hazard reduction burning is possible with great care in early spring, however the potential for fires to continue burning overnight is increasing in this period, and self containment options such as creek lines may not be available.</li> <li>When a proposed burn has containment lines that have weaknesses such as zones of high fuel loads or reliance on natural containment lines, consideration should be given to multiphase operations with vulnerable sections burnt under very mild winter conditions.</li> </ul>
<b>Prescribed Burning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prescribed burning is possible with great care in early spring, however the potential for fires to continue burning overnight is increasing in this period, and self containment options such as creek lines may not be available.</li> <li>When a proposed burn has containment lines that have weaknesses such as zones of high fuel loads or reliance on natural containment lines, consideration should be given to multiphase operations with vulnerable sections burnt under very mild winter conditions.</li> </ul>
Suppression Strategies	
<b>Fire Danger Rating</b>	<p>(based on experience of previous fire behaviour in the park and similar areas)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low - Moderate</li> <li>High</li> <li>Very High</li> <li>Severe - Catastrophic</li> </ul>
<b>Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake direct, parallel or indirect attack along existing containment lines.</li> <li>Where practicable, consider maintaining the fire area in accordance with the requirements of any proposed prescribed burns.</li> <li>Pay particular attention to the flank on the next predicted wind side.</li> <li>Undertake indirect attack along existing or newly constructed containment lines on boundary of cleared country.</li> <li>Parallel or direct attack and/or mop up of fire edge may be an option at night depending on weather conditions.</li> <li>Secure and deepen containment lines along the next predicted downwind side of the fire.</li> <li>If applicable, consider broader than normal containment strategies to avoid directed effort and high risk of failure.</li> <li>Aerial support may be required to manage spot covers and hotspots and monitor direction and rate of spread of fire.</li> <li>Warning: The Macleay Gorges Reserves are remote and feature steep escarpment country where wildfire behaviour can be unpredictable and very quickly. Incident Controllers should ensure fire crews contain staff with good local knowledge and exercise extreme caution when fire danger ratings are very high.</li> <li>Firefighter safety is the paramount consideration in deployment.</li> <li>Undertake broad containment strategy with indirect attack by falling back to cleared country.</li> <li>Minimise use of backburning until conditions moderate.</li> <li>Ensure tactics include property protection.</li> <li>May require aerial support to manage spot covers and hotspots and monitor direction and rate of spread of fire.</li> <li>Parallel or direct attack and/or mop up of fire edge may be an option at night depending on weather conditions.</li> <li>Warning: Conservative fire management strategies should be employed when fire danger ratings are severe or catastrophic.</li> </ul>

Operational Guidelines - General	
General	Each "bushfire suppression map" has its own map specific operational guidelines appended to the map sheet. The following are general principles that apply to the reserves within the Macleay Gorges group.
<b>Aerial Operations</b> FM 4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aerial operations will be managed by trained and competent personnel. This includes directing aerial bombing and aerial ignition operations.</li> <li>The use of bombing aircraft without the support of ground based suppression crews should be limited to very specific circumstances.</li> <li>All aerial ignition operations require the consent of the IC, or the Section 44 Approver.</li> <li>Ground crews must be alerted to aerial bombing operations.</li> <li>All personnel must be fully briefed before back burning operations begin.</li> <li>Back burning in areas of Low - Moderate OFI will require the use of slope, or wind, or low humidity to maximise effectiveness.</li> <li>During periods of very high or greater fire danger the use of back burning should be confined to support important containment objectives and generally conducted during those periods where environmental conditions are aligned to the objectives of the burn (i.e. favourable winds or strong SW), or during the late afternoon or at night.</li> <li>Where practicable, clear a 1m radius around dead and broken barked trees adjacent to containment lines prior to back burning, or weed down these trees as part of the back burn ignition. This will reduce mop-up efforts.</li> <li>Avoid ignition of back burns at the bottom of slopes where a long and intense up slope burn is likely.</li> </ul>
<b>Back burning</b> FM 4.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first containment agency on site may assume control of the fire, but then must ensure the RFS and the relevant land management agency is notified promptly.</li> <li>On the arrival of other containment agencies, the initial Incident Controller will consult regarding the ongoing command, control and incident management team requirements as per the relevant BFM Plan of Operations.</li> <li>Standard Incident Management Systems are to be applied.</li> <li>Construction of new containment lines should be avoided, where practicable, except where they can be constructed with minimal environmental impact. New containment lines require the prior consent of a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. If not required for management purposes, they should be made safe and closed.</li> <li>Hand tool lines may be used to contain wildfires to smaller areas, according to listed suppression strategies.</li> <li>Where practicable, containment lines should consider the protection of drainage features.</li> <li>All personnel must be notified of the location of the fire, and must consider both natural and cultural heritage sites in the location.</li> </ul>
<b>Command and Control</b> FM 4.1, 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of new containment lines should be avoided, where practicable, except where they can be constructed with minimal environmental impact. New containment lines require the prior consent of a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation. If not required for management purposes, they should be made safe and closed.</li> <li>Hand tool lines may be used to contain wildfires to smaller areas, according to listed suppression strategies.</li> <li>Where practicable, containment lines should consider the protection of drainage features.</li> <li>All personnel must be notified of the location of the fire, and must consider both natural and cultural heritage sites in the location.</li> </ul>
<b>Containment Lines</b> FM 4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earthmoving equipment may only be used with the prior consent of a Senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>Earthmoving equipment must always be guided and supervised by an experienced officer, and accompanied by a support vehicle. When engaged in direct or parallel attack, the vehicle must be a fire fighting vehicle.</li> <li>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 any cultural heritage sites.</li> <li>At the start of a shift, all operators and guides must be briefed on safety considerations and sites of sensitive natural and cultural heritage. Earth moving equipment is excluded from zones marked on the Bushfire Suppression Map.</li> <li>Earthmoving equipment must be washed down, where practicable, prior to entering NPWS estate and again on exiting NPWS estate.</li> </ul>
<b>Earthmoving Equipment</b> FM 4.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water points may not be reliable during prolonged dry periods.</li> <li>Consider the equipment of bulk water containers to support fire operations.</li> <li>All fire advantages used during wildfire suppression operations must be mapped and where relevant added to the Assets Database.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The use of foaming &amp; wetting agents (surfactants) will be permitted on the reserve.</li> <li>The use of retardants requires the approval of the Regional Manager or delegate.</li> <li>Fire suppression chemicals are not to be applied within 50m of watercourse, dam, or swamp.</li> <li>All areas where fire suppression chemicals are used must be mapped (excluding wetting agents), and the product name recorded.</li> <li>Threatened Species Operational Guidelines are to be observed.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Suppression Chemicals</b> FM 4.12 FMC 2010/05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where practicable, containment lines should be stabilised and rehabilitated as part of the wildfire suppression operation.</li> <li>Adequate drainage structures must be constructed prior to earth moving machinery leaving the fire ground.</li> <li>Potential smoke impacts and mitigation tactics will be assessed during the planning of fire operations.</li> <li>If smoke becomes a hazard on local roads and highways, the police and relevant media must be notified.</li> <li>If smoke becomes a hazard on nearby highways, management must be in accordance with relevant RFS traffic management guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Rehabilitation</b> FM 4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reserve, or parts of the reserve may be closed to the public during periods of extreme fire danger or during fire operations.</li> <li>The Macleay Gorges group of reserves are remote, contain rugged terrain, and have variable and often poor road conditions. Visitors to the reserves should ensure they have appropriate transport and equipment for their proposed journey. Visitors should also ensure their travel plans are communicated to a responsible person who will monitor fire weather.</li> </ul>
<b>Smoke Management</b>	
<b>Visitor Management</b>	
<b>WARNINGS</b>	

First Response Communications Plan			
Service	Channel	Incident	Location and Comments
NPWS - VHF	340		Vote to NTR South - Point Lookout 341, Porters Camp 342 or Little Divil 343 are each utilised in different parts of the Reserves.
NPWS - VHF (Voting Channel)			Therefore the voting channel is best utilized.
Clarity of Radio Signal			Spokes Mtn (181 voting 180) may be required in some southern areas. The frequency is monitored by Port Macquarie (Contact Kempsey Office for Channel)
NPWS - VHF	641, 642, 643	Fire ground	Transmits (Simplex) on local fire ground. Monitors (Duplex) (Simplex) channel in comms. section of IAP (Tower Channel + 200)
NPWS - VHF Isolated Tower	941, 942, 943	Network Congestion	Best for ground channel is split from the network to reduce radio congestion. Specify channel in comms. section of IAP (Tower Channel + 400)
NPWS - VHF (Portable Repeater)	25	Fire ground	Stored at Walcha. Source and display as required. Transmits locally while monitoring repeater. (Repeater Ch + 10)
RFS - PMR Digital Voting	N209 NW ENG	RFS IMT to RFS Div Com	Primary RFS system comms activated in 2015/16.
NPWS / RFS Comms	41-40		Within fire ground comms only (Simplex). NPWS and RFS talk direct and are isolated from Towers and Repeaters. (NPWS - 40)
180 MHz VHF	129		Forests Corp of NSW - VHF 80MHz
NPWS 80MHz corresponding channel	83		Forests has 2 Comms. vehicles with NPWS & RFS Radios. Handheld 80MHz radios stored at Armidale Regional Office. Porters Trig requires programming in NPWS handhelds - closest tower currently programmed in handhelds is Pt Lookout
CB - UHF		Fire ground	Channel as appropriate - 9, 10, 12, 21, 24, 30, 39, 49-60, 64-70, 79, 80. (Div Com. CL by Contractors)
Aircraft - VHF	134.70	IMT - Aircraft	NPWS allocated frequency, alternative may be allocated.
Mobile Phone	Variable		Signal strength is variable depending on the phone and any associated use. Most sections of the reserves generally have service that can be accessed from high points. In the event of a fire, a phone coverage assessment should occur as part of the communications plan in the IAP. Satellite phones may be required to establish adequate communications in some areas.
Satellite Phone	0147 142 605 0147 146 687 0147 146 353	IMT - Div Com	Stored at Walcha Stored at Armidale

Operational Guidelines - Natural & Cultural Heritage and Threatened Property	
Resource	Each "bushfire suppression map" has its own map specific natural and cultural heritage guidelines appended to the map sheet. The following are general principles that apply to the reserves within the Macleay Gorges group.
<b>ALL</b> FM 4.2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief all personnel involved in containment line construction &amp; fire fighting operations.</li> <li>Numerous cultural heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>AH1 - As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>AH2 - As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>AH3 - Avoid all ground disturbance. Avoid water bombing. Site may be burnt by bushfire, backburn or prescribed burn without damage.</li> <li>If fire sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>Ensure close liaison with the relevant Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Officer in order to check for &amp; identify new sites.</li> </ul>
<b>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage</b> <b>Site Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous historic heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect habitat areas and trees from the fire if the effects of the resulting fire, season &amp; fire intensity will have a significant or adverse impact.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp. All existing threatened frog records are displayed as an exclusion zone (50m exclusion of surfactants and other fire suppression chemicals).</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>A multitude of threatened flora records exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves. Most native flora are mobile and adapted to survive fire. Those records that require protective actions in the event of fire are shown on the Bushfire Suppression Maps.</li> <li>As far as possible, avoid fire-line intervals of 10 years when these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of earth moving machinery in locations where these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of hand tool construction in locations where these species are known to occur.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect populations or individuals from fire if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category).</li> <li>Where possible, protect old growth habitat trees.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp.</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located, consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> </ul>
<b>Historic Heritage Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous historic heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect habitat areas and trees from the fire if the effects of the resulting fire, season &amp; fire intensity will have a significant or adverse impact.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp. All existing threatened frog records are displayed as an exclusion zone (50m exclusion of surfactants and other fire suppression chemicals).</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>A multitude of threatened flora records exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves. Most native flora are mobile and adapted to survive fire. Those records that require protective actions in the event of fire are shown on the Bushfire Suppression Maps.</li> <li>As far as possible, avoid fire-line intervals of 10 years when these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of earth moving machinery in locations where these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of hand tool construction in locations where these species are known to occur.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect populations or individuals from fire if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category).</li> <li>Where possible, protect old growth habitat trees.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp.</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located, consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> </ul>
<b>Threatened Fauna Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous historic heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect habitat areas and trees from the fire if the effects of the resulting fire, season &amp; fire intensity will have a significant or adverse impact.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp. All existing threatened frog records are displayed as an exclusion zone (50m exclusion of surfactants and other fire suppression chemicals).</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>A multitude of threatened flora records exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves. Most native flora are mobile and adapted to survive fire. Those records that require protective actions in the event of fire are shown on the Bushfire Suppression Maps.</li> <li>As far as possible, avoid fire-line intervals of 10 years when these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of earth moving machinery in locations where these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of hand tool construction in locations where these species are known to occur.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect populations or individuals from fire if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category).</li> <li>Where possible, protect old growth habitat trees.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp.</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located, consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> </ul>
<b>Threatened Flora Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous historic heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect habitat areas and trees from the fire if the effects of the resulting fire, season &amp; fire intensity will have a significant or adverse impact.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp. All existing threatened frog records are displayed as an exclusion zone (50m exclusion of surfactants and other fire suppression chemicals).</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>A multitude of threatened flora records exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves. Most native flora are mobile and adapted to survive fire. Those records that require protective actions in the event of fire are shown on the Bushfire Suppression Maps.</li> <li>As far as possible, avoid fire-line intervals of 10 years when these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of earth moving machinery in locations where these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of hand tool construction in locations where these species are known to occur.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect populations or individuals from fire if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category).</li> <li>Where possible, protect old growth habitat trees.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp.</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located, consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> </ul>
<b>Threatened Property</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numerous historic heritage sites are known to exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves and include all categories listed below. The approximate location and protection category are shown on the internal version of the fire suppression maps. Appropriate protection of these sites should be included in the suppression planning.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Do not cut down trees.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>As far as possible, protect site from fire. Avoid all ground disturbance including the use of earthmoving machinery, hand tool construction and driving over sites. Avoid water bombing which may cause ground disturbance.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect habitat areas and trees from the fire if the effects of the resulting fire, season &amp; fire intensity will have a significant or adverse impact.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp. All existing threatened frog records are displayed as an exclusion zone (50m exclusion of surfactants and other fire suppression chemicals).</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> <li>A multitude of threatened flora records exist within the Macleay Gorges Reserves. Most native flora are mobile and adapted to survive fire. Those records that require protective actions in the event of fire are shown on the Bushfire Suppression Maps.</li> <li>As far as possible, avoid fire-line intervals of 10 years when these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of earth moving machinery in locations where these species are known to occur. If possible, avoid the use of hand tool construction in locations where these species are known to occur.</li> <li>Where practicable, protect populations or individuals from fire if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category), or if the fire frequency threshold for the species is an obligate seeder (fire response category).</li> <li>Where possible, protect old growth habitat trees.</li> <li>Surfactants may be used except where location is within 50m of watercourse, dam or swamp.</li> <li>If new threatened species sites are located, consult with a senior NPWS officer.</li> </ul>