

Far South Coast Region Montague Island Nature Reserve Fire Management Strategy 2004



This Map should be used in conjunction with air photos and ground reconnaissance during incidents and the development of incident action plans.
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Grid Interval: 100m
Scale: 1:1,700

Bushfire Suppression Information

| Legend | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| [Purple outline] | Montague Island NR |
| [Red dashed line] | Trails |
| [Red dashed line] | Management Trails |
| [Red dashed line] | Proposed Prescribed Burns |
| [Red dashed line] | Proposed Management Trails |
| [Red dashed line] | Temporary Management Trails |
| [Red dashed line] | Fire Control Advantages |
| [Red dashed line] | Escape Route |
| [Red dashed line] | Refuge Area |
| [Red dashed line] | Headland |
| [Red dashed line] | Fire History |
| [Red dashed line] | 1989/93 - Lightning Strike |
| [Red dashed line] | 1994/95 - Lightning Strike |
| [Red dashed line] | 2001/02 - Accidental Burn |
| [Red dashed line] | 2004/05 - Prescribed Burn |

| Contact Numbers | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| All Emergency Calls 24hrs | 000 |
| National Parks and Wildlife Service | |
| Narooma Office (Bus. hours) | (02) 4476 2888 |
| Montague Island Office | (02) 4477 9590 |
| NPWS Incident Response Answering Service | 1800 629 104 |
| NSW Rural Fire Service | |
| Fire Control Office (Moruya) | (02) 4474 2855 |
| Narooma RFS Group Officer | (02) 4476 1147 or 0427 761 147 |
| Neske Crowley | (02) 4472 3943 |
| NSW Fire Brigades | |
| Eurobodalla Shire Council | (02) 4474 1000 |
| Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol - Rescue | |
| Narooma | (02) 4476 1443 |
| Moruya | (02) 4474 2770 |
| Batemans Bay | (02) 4472 6585 or (02) 4472 3060 |
| Police | |
| Narooma | (02) 4476 2044 |
| Moruya | (02) 4474 2444 |
| Ambulance | 131 233 |

Fire Season Information

The critical fire season occurs during November and December, when the potential for large fire events is at its highest. This period may extend into the first half of January. Particular care is required during periods of negative Southern Oscillation indices, especially during dry storm events as Montague Island is prone to lightning strikes.

The end of the critical fire season is marked by wet storm activity.

From October to April, fires during dry seasons, may exhibit high intensity fire behaviour, under windy conditions, due to the presence of fine grass fuels.

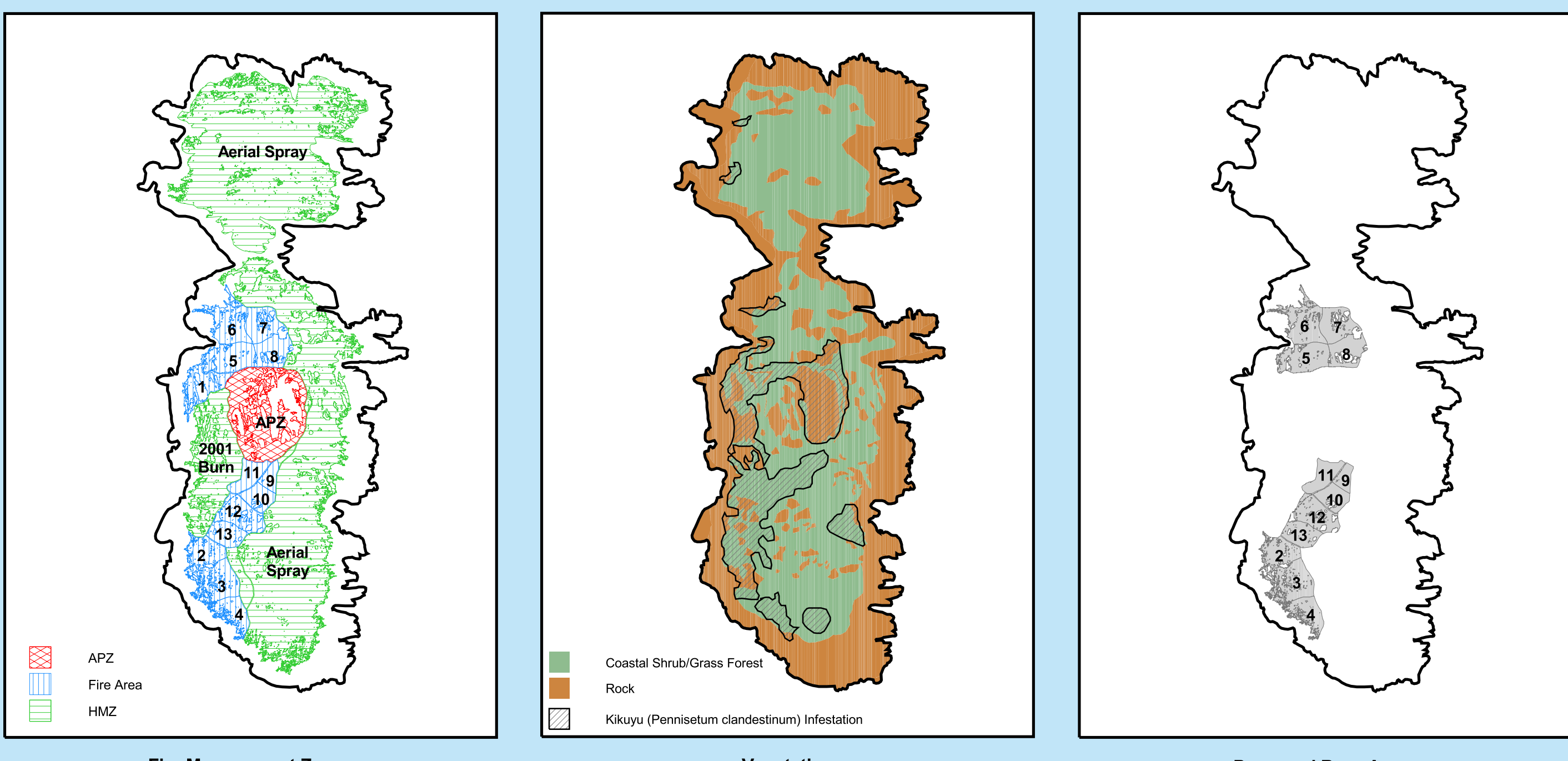
All staff to carry full PPE during the bushfire season whilst on the island.

| Communications Information | |
|--|---|
| Service | Assessment and Guidelines |
| VHF Communications (NPWS Two Way Radios) | Narooma Channels 21, 24, 27 & 30 Merimbula Channels 23 & 25 Nova Channel 52 Reception is usually good for all channels |
| UHF - PMR (RFS Two Way Radios) | Channels 31 & 47 Reception is usually good for all channels |
| Mobile Phone Coverage | CDMA - generally 95% coverage GSM/Digital - coverage is variable and best in open locations |
| UHF CB | All channels available |
| HF Marine | All Australian Channels |
| VHF Marine | All International Channels |

| Fire Management Operation Guidelines | | |
|---|--|---|
| General | | |
| Area/Resource | Operational Guidelines | |
| Aerial Bombing (NPWS FMM 4.1 / NSW Fire Agencies Aviation SOPs O2 / NPWS Guidelines for Effective Aircraft Management) | The use of fixed wing bombing aircraft for fire suppression will not be practical due to island size and aircraft response time. The use of rotary wing bombing aircraft could support containment operations by aggressively attacking spot-overs. Broad scale retardant drops will generally be impractical due to the small size of the island and aircraft response time. Aerial incendiary operations are not considered practical for fire suppression due to the size of the island and aircraft response time. | |
| Aerial Ignition (NPWS FMM 4.2.16 & 4.4 / NSW Fire Agencies Aviation SOPs O24 / NPWS Guidelines for Effective Aircraft Management) | Resources required for burning operations should be programmed to take full advantage of the short period of time available for burning operations. Temperature and humidity trends must be monitored carefully to determine the best times to implement backburns. However the decision to backburn will be time critical due to the fuel types on the island. Thorough briefings must be conducted with Sector Commanders and Crew Leaders on the backburning/prescribed burning guidelines. | |
| Backburning (NPWS FMM 4.8) Prescribed Burning | NPWS will assume control of all fires on Montague Island, and will ensure other agencies have been contacted. Assistance may be sought from other agencies where deemed appropriate taking into consideration the remoteness of the place, tides, sea conditions and suitable transport. On arrival of the other fire agencies, the initial incident Controller will consult these agencies regarding the command structure and requirement for an Incident Management Team. | |
| Command and Control (NPWS FMM 4.2) | Given the size of the island, its exposed nature and fuel type, containment line construction by slashing or earthmoving is not a viable option. Successful fire suppression will largely rely on response speed and the containment of fire using existing trails and outcrops. The advantage of these trails and outcrops may be increased by direct attack or backburning. | |
| Containment Line Construction (NPWS FMM 2.3 & 3.9) | Not permitted for fire suppression or fire management. | |
| Earth-moving Equipment (NPWS FMM 4.2.16 & 4.3) | Foam and wetting agents permitted in all areas of the Park. | |
| Fire Fighting Chemicals (NPWS FMM 4.2.16 & 4.10) | Crews should be allocated to soil erosion control works and remedial restoration works before standing down from the fire operations. | |
| Rehabilitation (NPWS FMM 3.4) | Prescribed burning should be conducted when weather conditions will blow smoke away from the mainland. | |
| Smoke Management (NPWS FMM 3.4) | Public access to the island should not be permitted whilst fire suppression or prescribed burning is occurring. | |
| Visitor Management (NPWS FMM 3.6 & 4.14) | | |
| Cultural Sites Management | | |
| Area/Resource | Operational Guidelines | |
| Aboriginal & Historic Heritage Sites (NPWS FMM 4.12 & 4.13) | Control to be restricted to existing trails and routes. Maintenance of Asset Protection Zone surrounding lighthouse and buildings to be carried on a regular basis. | |
| Threatened Species Management | | |
| Area/Resource | Operational Guidelines | |
| Rare or threatened flora species - known sites (NPWS FMM 4.13) | Brief all personnel involved in fire suppression management operations regarding the location of the sites and the appropriate actions to protect the species. | |
| Rare or threatened fauna species - known sites (NPWS FMM 4.13 & 5.2) | Brief all personnel involved in fire suppression management operations regarding location of the sites and the appropriate actions to protect the species. Avoid burning during seabird breeding seasons. | |
| Shearwater Colonies | Brief all personnel involved in fire suppression management operations regarding the location of the sites and the appropriate actions to protect the species. Exclude all fire from known locations of Shearwater colonies. | |
| Fire Suppression Strategies | | |
| Current FDR | Forecast FDR | Operational Guidelines |
| Low - Moderate | Low - Moderate | Undertake direct, parallel or indirect attack along existing trails, using backburning to increase the suppression advantage of these trails. Where practicable consider maximising the fire area in accordance with the requirements of any proposed prescribed burns. |
| Low - Moderate | => High | In order to minimise the fire area and secure the flanks as soon as possible, undertake direct, parallel or indirect attack along the closest trails. Pay particular attention to the fact that under High FDR the fine fuels will have a high percentage of cure and given the fast loads fire behaviour may exceed known models. |
| High | All | Undertake indirect attack along existing trails. Secure and deepen containment lines along the next predicted downwind side of the fire. If applicable consider broader than normal containment strategies to avoid wasted effort and high risk of failure. Under these conditions experience has shown that immediate backburning from existing trails will be the most effective suppression tactic. |
| All | All | Ensure there is sufficient time to secure containment lines prior to the fire impacting upon them; otherwise fall back to the next potential line and backburn. |

Note: Due to the severe level of disturbance to the vegetation community on the island, it is not possible to classify the community and therefore determine Biodiversity Thresholds for the NR. The Zones are based on 13 areas that require prescribed burning for weed management purposes. The invasive nature of the Kikuyu is considered to be the single greatest threat to the Seabird habitat. Prescribed fire is being used as part of the Seabird Habitat Restoration Project (SHRP).

Risk Management Information



| Proposed Prescribed Burns | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Burn Zone | Description |
| Zone 1 | |
| Zone 2 | |
| Zone 3 | |
| Zone 4 | |
| Zone 5 | |
| Zone 6 | |
| Zone 7 | |
| Zone 8 | |
| Zone 9 | |
| Zone 10 | |
| Zone 11 | |
| Zone 12 | |
| Zone 13 | |
| Zone 14 | |

Prescribed burns will be conducted over 7 years in Zones 1 - 13. Zone 14 (Aerial Spray Zone) will be sprayed over the same period. The Fire Management Strategy will be reviewed and updated in 5 years time (2009).