4. Community values and assets
Alpine and Greater Gippsland

Information for Communities

Managing bushfire risk requires us to first have a clear understanding of what communities and stakeholders value and want to protect in the landscape.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is tasked with managing bushfire risk on public land, as detailed in the Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land (2012). The Code's two core objectives are reducing bushfire risk to life, communities, infrastructure, the economy and the environment, and, maintaining or improving resilient ecosystems. Human life takes priority. We collated an extensive range of data on assets across the landscape to work with stakeholders and community members to categorise and prioritise assets for reducing the risk of bushfire

How did we determine priorities?

Our planning methods are based on the International Standard for Risk Management ISO31000. We prioritise an asset category for protection if it is at high risk from bushfires, and fuel management can meaningfully reduce its risk of being damaged through bushfire. We consider all assets within each priority asset category as priority assets, regardless of where they are in the landscape. We use the PIPE$S framework to group assets into categories: People, Infrastructure, Public Administration, Environment, Economy and Social Settings.

The Alpine and Greater Gippsland landscape comprises 3.3million hectares, around 70% of which is public land, most of it heavily forested. Despite having only 1.4% of the state's population, 38% of residents live in small towns and communities of fewer than 500 people in remote, rural and coastal areas, often adjacent to parks.

The landscape supports a wide variety of industries, with more than 30,000 jobs generating $5billion in the region. Oil and gas are major contributors, along with agriculture, horticulture, forestry, fishing, tourism, education and healthcare. The tourism sector alone brings $450 million to the region and supports 2,400 jobs across the East Gippsland and Wellington shires. Tourism is particularly vulnerable to bushfire – being impacted both by the warnings and actual fire threat.

DELWP and Parks Victoria (PV) have been working with two main groups, the Internal Working Group, and the Landscape Reference Group to establish the initial strategic bushfire risk management plan. These groups comprise people with extensive local knowledge and experience of fire management in the landscape.

They reviewed the assets register, determined priorities for protection and reviewed the prediction models of likelihood and consequence of bushfire. Together, these determine the risk profiles for each of those assets in our landscape.

What data was assessed?

Our planning method draws on the best available information. To manage bushfire risk, we need to firstly have a clear understanding of the predicted risk and the influencing factors.

What data was assessed?

Our planning method draws on the best available information and data, including from the Victorian Fire Risk Register, Office of the Emergency Management Commissioner, DELWP, VicForests, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, our Environmental Scan, Department of Health and Department of Education.

From these data sets, we identified more than 70,000 dwelling assets, 11,200 individual assets and over 3,000,000 ha of environmental assets across the Alpine and Greater Gippsland landscape.

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What are the categories?

These assets were classified according to the PIPE$S framework (Figure 1).

PIPE$S Class	Description	Examples
People	Asset class reflecting elements of human life	Human lives, houses, hospitals, schools, correctional facilities, camping assets
Infrastructure	Critical infrastructure consisting of utilities that service communities	Transport links and infrastructure, utility networks, water supply catchments
Public Administration	Public service assets that are necessary to support emergency management events	Administration and emergency facilities and infrastructure
Environment	Asset class consisting of biodiversity, land and water assets	Fire sensitive vegetation, habitat for selected priority flora and fauna
($) Economy	Consists of small and large businesses and resource assets	Business zones, apiary, farming, forestry, mines, tourism destinations and drives
Social/Cultural	Assets that provide for the social fabric of the community	Community meeting places, Aboriginal and European cultural heritage sites

Figure 1: PIPE$S Framework for assets

We then identified priorities for protection (Figure 2) and developed our fuel management strategy in partnership with emergency service agencies and stakeholders from across our community, including the Internal Working Group and Landscape Reference Group.

Our strategy is based on how we can reduce bushfire risk to the priority assets. Consultation will now widen to include more stakeholders and community.

The asset categories identified as priorities are

- Life and property (address points)
- Ecosystem resilience
- Utility Infrastructure
- Utility networks
- Communication infrastructure
- Emergency facilities
- Emergency infrastructure
- Nationally important transport links
- Community meeting places
- Habitat for Selected Priority Species - Flora
- Habitat for Selected Priority Species - Fauna
- Listed Community - Fire Sensitive
- Water Supply Catchment - high value areas
- Camping assetsis better when fuels are managed on both public and private land.
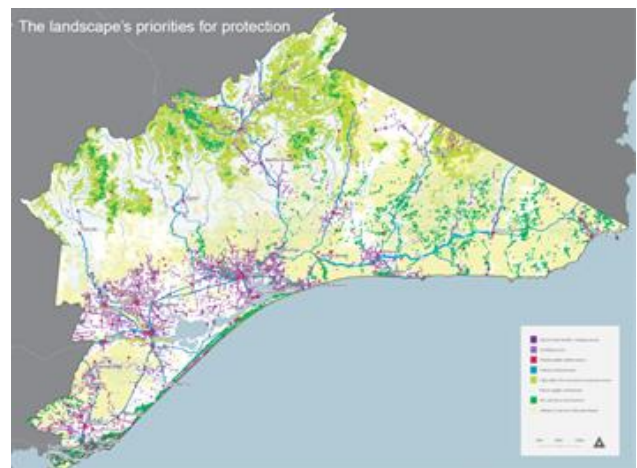

Figure 2: Priority asset locations

For further information about managing bushfire risk in the Alpine and Greater Gippsland bushfire risk landscape email *alpine.greatergippsland@delwp.vic.gov.au*, or contact the Strategic Bushfire Management Program Manager on (03) 51520600.

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