



Hobden Hill National Park Type-1 Reserve Fire Management Strategy

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1. Fire Management Principles

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) manages about nine per cent of the land area of NSW. These areas have been reserved to conserve their natural and cultural values. These values include biodiversity, landscapes, Aboriginal sites, historic structures and recreational settings.

Under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, the NPWS is a fire authority and is responsible for the management of fire on all lands under its control. This includes the detection and suppression of fires and the implementation of risk prevention programs to protect life and property from fires. The NPWS also assists with the suppression of fires on adjacent lands, as may be required under plans prepared under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

Cooperative arrangements are derived from the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee and implemented through local Bush Fire Management Committees. The other three agencies that participate in cooperative fire management across NSW are the Department of Primary Industries, the NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire Brigades.

NPWS is an active member of the Tamworth District Bush Fire Management Committee.

The management of fire is a critical component of land management across the NSW landscape. As both a fire authority and conservation agency, NPWS plays an important role in protecting life and property and conserving natural and cultural heritage.

2. Fire Management Objectives

The primary objectives of fire management by the NPWS are to:

Protect life, property and community assets from the adverse impacts of fire;
Develop and implement cooperative and coordinated fire management arrangements with other fire authorities, reserve neighbours and the community;

Manage fire regimes within reserves to maintain and enhance biodiversity; protect Aboriginal sites known to exist within NSW and historic places and culturally significant features known to exist within reserves from damage by fire;

Assist other fire agencies, land management authorities and landholders in developing fire management practices to conserve biodiversity and cultural heritage across the landscape; and,



The maintenance of biodiversity to avoid the extinction of natural species, populations and communities within the landscape underpins fire management activities within the NPWS.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service OEH *Fire Management Manual, Living with Fire in NSW Parks and OEH Strategy for Managing Bushfires in National Parks and Reserves 2011-2012* details the policies and procedures for all fire management planning and fire operations on lands reserved under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and any land managed by DEC on behalf of the Minister for the Environment.

This strategy is a Relevant Plan under Section 38(4) and Section 44(3) of the Rural Fires Act 1997.

3. The Fire Environment

3.1 Fire history

Fire history in this reserve is mostly unknown. There was a lightning strike in January 2007 which burnt approximately 35 ha adjacent to and outside the northern boundary of the Reserve (approx GR 264150 6620230).

3.2 Topography

The Reserve is gently undulating with a few peaks approaching 1100 metres (Hobden Hill Trig near SW corner 1094 masl). This generally falls to no less than approximately 850 masl on some creek lines. There is a steep westerly facing escarpment on the western side of the Reserve which roughly trends north-south. The slope of this escarpment ranges from approximately 25° towards the south to 48° towards the north.

3.3 Vegetation

A comprehensive site assessment has not been undertaken. On ground observation together with API interpretation suggests that the Reserve comprises three (3) main vegetation communities including:

Box – Gum grassy woodlands (Grassy dry sclerophyll forest)

This community occurs on areas of higher fertility with less topographical relief, and is comprised of a mosaic White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*) dominated areas and areas of White Box growing with Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*) and/or Yellow Box (*E. melliodora*). The understory is generally grassy / herbaceous, however sparse and isolated areas of shrubs may be present.

This community comprises approximately 35% of the Reserve, and it is rare to find intact areas this large of this community. This community is a Critically Endangered Ecological Community under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and an Endangered Ecological Community under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*.

White Box – Pine – Silver-leaved Ironbark shrubby open forest (Shrubby dry sclerophyll forest)



This community occurs on mid and upper slopes, and is dominated by White Box (*Eucalyptus albens*), White Cypress Pine (*Callitris glaucophylla*) and Silver-leaved Ironbark (*E. melanophloia*). The midstorey is generally shrubby, including species such as Sticky Daisy-bush (*Olearia elliptica* ssp. *elliptica*) and Sticky Wallaby-bush (*Beyeria viscosa*).

Stringybark – Blakely’s Red Gum – Rough-barked Apple open forest
(Sclerophyll grassy woodland)

This community occurs in moister sections of the mid and upper slopes, and is dominated by Stringybark (most likely Red Stringybark *Eucalyptus macrorrhyncha*), Blakely’s Red Gum (*E. blakeleyi*) and Rough-barked Apple (*Angophora floribunda*). The midstorey is generally a mosaic of grassy and shrubby areas.

Two other vegetation communities occur in smaller patches, being White Box – Stringybark shrubby woodlands and Derived Grasslands (i.e. areas previously grazed). The Derived Grasslands are most likely relict of Box – Gum woodland, and even in an altered state still fit the Endangered Ecological Community description.

Table 1: Suggested Fire Regimes for defined vegetation communities

Community	Suggested Fire Regimes
Sclerophyll grassy woodland	Min. Interval 5 years Max. 40 years.
Grassy dry sclerophyll forest	Min. Interval 5 years Max. 40 years.
Shrubby dry sclerophyll forest	Min.Interval 7 years/ Max.Interval 35 years

3.5 Built assets vulnerable to fire

There are no contemporary built assets within or near the reserve. The nearest structures outside the reserve (being houses and farm buildings and associated assets) are approximately 1 km to the west and approximately 4 kms to the east.

3.6 Natural assets vulnerable to fire

No natural assets are currently known that are vulnerable to fire.

While the fire history is not known, visual evidence on the ground would indicate that extensive fire has not been through the Reserve for in excess of 10-15 years.

Given that fire is not a regular occurrence within the Reserve, most plants and animals would not appear to be at risk from excessive fire at this stage

3.7 Cultural Heritage values vulnerable to fire

No Aboriginal or Historic sites are known to exist in this Reserve.

3.8 Bushfire risk

The Tamworth Bush Fire Risk Management Plan, classifies the Reserve as providing an extreme bushfire risk.

3.8 Bushfire zoning

The 'NPWS Fire Management Manual' (2012) uses a system of bushfire management zones for bushfire management in NPWS reserves. These zones are compatible with the system adopted by the Bushfire Coordinating Committee for use in District Bushfire Management Committee (DBFMC) bushfire risk management plans.

The approach divides reserves into fire management zones. These zones are management areas where specified fire management operational objectives, strategies and performance indicators have been developed to militate against the threat of a wildfire.

NPWS has assessed the reserve for fire management planning purposes and has zoned the reserve as a Land Management Zone (LMZ). The primary fire management objectives for this zone are to prevent the extinction of all species that are known to occur naturally within the reserve, and to protect culturally significant sites. The reserve has been designated as a LMZ because it is not adjacent to built assets which would be exposed to a high level of bushfire risk, and does not have a history of bushfire ignitions or known areas of high bushfire potential.

The LMZ does not require intensive management and focuses on those actions appropriate to conserve biodiversity and cultural heritage including exclusion of fire from the reserve.

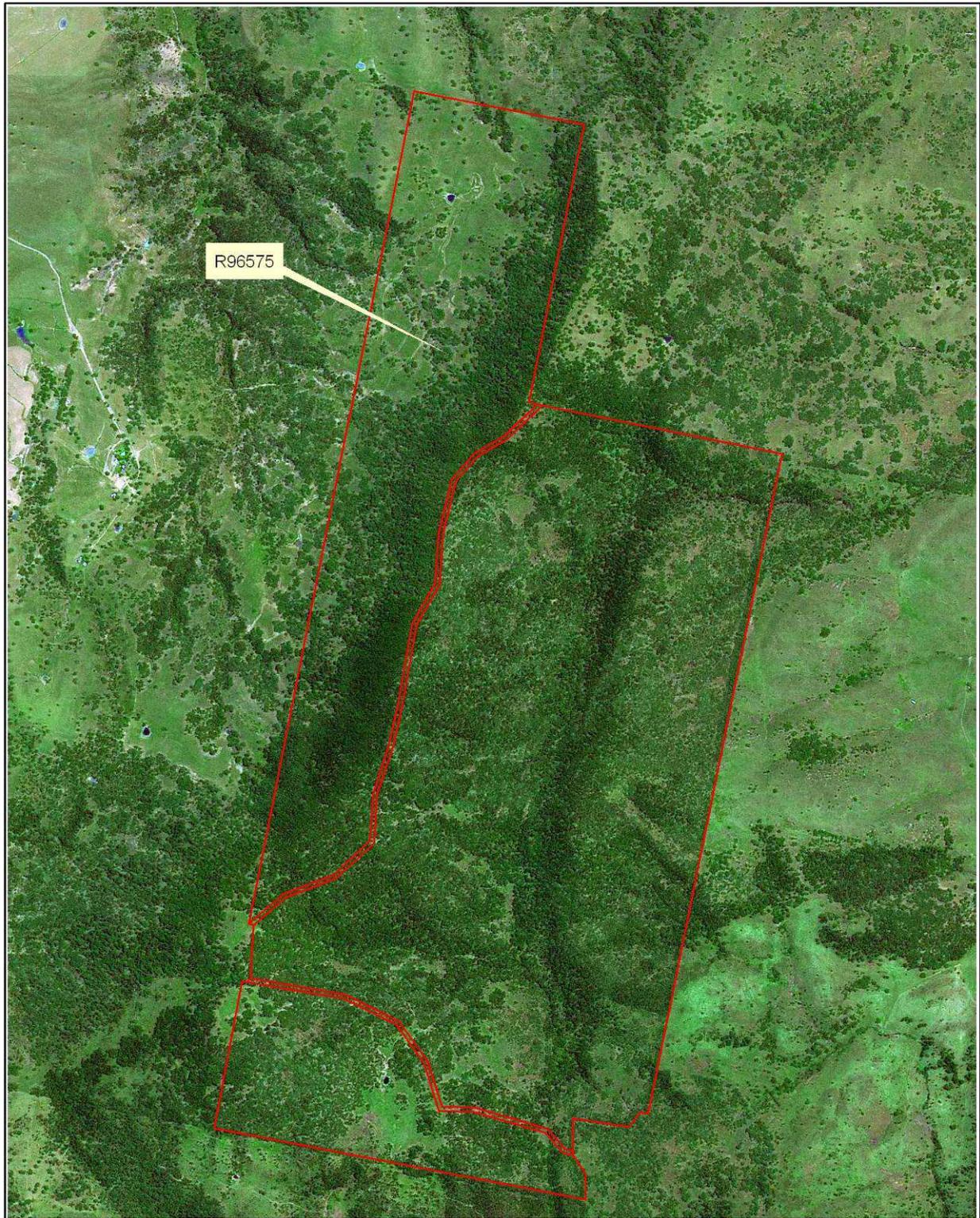
Current Situation	Desired Outcomes	Strategies	Priority
Fire access trails are maintained to variable standards.	Fire trails assessed and made safe and trafficable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current trails will be mapped and assessed for compliance with standards. Trails to be maintained annually to mapped standard 	Medium
Variable response to unplanned fires.	Rapid, safe and appropriate first attack of all unplanned fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trails and land generally might not be trafficable for up to 4 weeks following 100 mm of rain. Back burning from existing trails or boundary breaks is the preferred suppression method. Given the low levels of fire through the Reserve, the entire reserve can be allowed to burn if necessary. Given the slope of the western escarpment, it is important not to be on sections of the main trail along the top of the ridge if a fire is approaching from a south-west to north-west direction. 	Medium

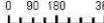
Legend for priorities

High priority activities are those imperatives to achievement of the objectives and desired outcomes. They must be undertaken in the near future to avoid significant deterioration in natural, cultural or management resources.

Medium priority activities are those that are necessary to achieve the objectives and desired outcomes but are not urgent.

Low priority activities are desirable to achieve management objectives and desired outcomes but can wait until resources become available.



<p>Legend</p> <p> Reserve Boundary</p>	<p>Hobden Hill CCAZ1 NP</p>	<p>0 90 180 360 Meters</p>  <p>This map was prepared in October 2009</p> <p>by the Reserve Establishment and Land Administration Unit Western Branch, Parks and Wildlife Group, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, NSW</p>  
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Attachment A

Threatened fauna known or predicted to occur locally and within vegetation types of the Reserve

Scientific Name	Common Name	Known/Predicted
<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>	Bush Stone-curlew	Predicted
<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	Gang-gang Cockatoo	known
<i>Cercartetus nanus</i>	Eastern Pygmy-possum	Predicted
<i>Chalinolobus dwyeri</i>	Large-eared Pied Bat	known
<i>Climacteris picumnus victoriae</i>	Brown Treecreeper (eastern subspecies)	known
<i>Dasyurus maculatus</i>	Spotted-tailed Quoll	known
<i>Falsistrellus tasmaniensis</i>	Eastern False Pipistrelle	known
<i>Grantiella picta</i>	Painted Honeyeater	known
<i>Hoplocephalus bitorquatus</i>	Pale-headed Snake	known
<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	known
<i>Litoria booroolongensis</i>	Booroolong Frog	known
<i>Lophoictinia isura</i>	Square-tailed Kite	known
<i>Melanodryas cucullata cucullata</i>	Hooded Robin (south-eastern form)	known
<i>Melithreptus gularis gularis</i>	Black-chinned Honeyeater (eastern subspecies)	known
<i>Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis</i>	Eastern Bentwing-bat	known
<i>Neophema pulchella</i>	Turquoise Parrot	known
<i>Ninox connivens</i>	Barking Owl	known
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Powerful Owl	known
<i>Nyctophilus timoriensis</i>	Greater Long-eared Bat (south eastern form)	known
<i>Petaurus australis</i>	Yellow-bellied Glider	known
<i>Petaurus norfolcensis</i>	Squirrel Glider	known
<i>Petrogale penicillata</i>	Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby	known
<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>	Brush-tailed Phascogale	Predicted
<i>Phascolarctos cinereus</i>	Koala	known
<i>Pomatostomus temporalis temporalis</i>	Grey-crowned Babbler (eastern subspecies)	known
<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	Grey-headed Flying-fox	known
<i>Pyrrholaemus saggitatus</i>	Speckled Warbler	known
<i>Saccolaimus flaviventris</i>	Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail-bat	known
<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>	Diamond Firetail	known
<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>	Masked Owl	known
<i>Underwoodisaurus sphyrurus</i>	Border Thick-tailed Gecko	known
<i>Xanthomyza phrygia</i>	Regent Honeyeater	known

Threatened flora known or predicted to occur locally and within vegetation types of the Reserve

Scientific Name	Common Name	Known/Predicted
<i>Chiloglottis platyptera</i>	Barrington Tops Ant Orchid	Predicted
<i>Dichanthium setosum</i>	Bluegrass	known
<i>Digitaria porrecta</i>	Finger Panic Grass	known
<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i>	Narrow-leaved Black Peppermint	known
<i>Monotaxis macrophylla</i>	Large-leafed Monotaxis	known
<i>Thesium australe</i>	Austral Toadflax	known
<i>Tylophora linearis</i>	<i>Tylophora linearis</i>	known