

WALPOLE-NORNALUP  
NATIONAL PARK

# management plan



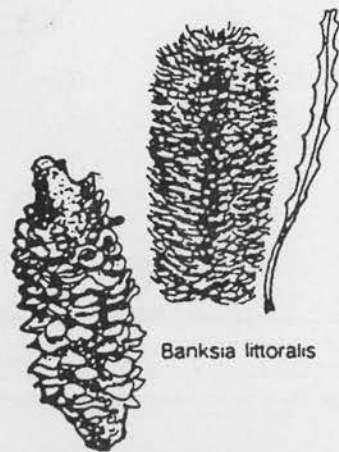
Noisy Scrub-bird

WALPOLE-NORNALUP NATIONAL PARK

DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP NO.3

- FIRE MANAGEMENT -



Banksia littoralis

Held on Tuesday 18 April 1989

Vanessa Smith  
July 1989



Red-Flowering Gum  
(*Eucalyptus ficifolia*)

Splendid Fairy-wren

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All of the participants are thanked for their involvement with this workshop, the efforts put into preparation for the day and the co-operative approach by all.

The efforts of Brian Brand in the facilitation and drawing out of ideas, views and different perspectives in a relaxed atmosphere were a major contribution to the high level of consensus achieved.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

As part of the preparation of the draft management plan for Walpole-Nornalup National Park (WNNP), a workshop on fire management was held at Walpole on Tuesday 18 April 1989. This is the third workshop conducted; the first dealt with major issues in the Park, the second dealt with zoning for access and recreation.

The Bush Fires Board (BFB) and Walpole-Nornalup National Park Association (WNNPA) were asked to draw up principles and strategies for a fire management plan for the Park prior to the workshop. CALM also did the same. These three organisations represent different perspectives on fire management. Fire has been a contentious issue in the community, and it was hoped by bringing together three major perspectives to work together on a fire plan that issues could be resolved.

Each group was supplied with the following information: an introductory guide (giving general information on the Park such as topography, soils, climate, history, adjacent land use, flora and fauna affected by fire and disturbance etc, fire history, physical resources available to CALM for fire management); draft goals for Park management; vulnerable flora and fauna, vegetation communities with relative sensitivities to fire; recreation sites in the Park classified as low, medium and high use; roads in the Park classified as highways and main roads, 1st class, 2nd class and management access; notes and tables on fire behaviour potential in major vegetation types, and response to fuel and vegetation components to different fire intensity; costs of different prescribed burns; fire regimes used in the Park; base maps of the Park plus maps of the plant communities, overlays of current fuel age, fire history, recreation sites and current roads and tracks.

Brian Brand from the Office of Industrial Relations was invited to facilitate for the day to maximise the effectiveness of the workshop in terms of co-operation and interaction.

Although there was a program for the day, this remained flexible to allow it to develop and respond to aspects that arose.

## 2.0 WORKSHOP STRUCTURE

The workshop addressed numerous aspects relating to fire management in different forums. Much of the initial stages were brainstorming sessions of the participants as a whole, while other sessions consisted of smaller groups.

Firstly in a brainstorming session participants voiced their various expectations of the day and what it was desirable to achieve. In a similar manner, participants then raised possible scenarios of the future of the Walpole-Nornalup area, generally, what changes and developments are likely in the future.

All participants then contributed ideas about the objectives for fire management in the Park, followed by constraints existing for fire management.

An informal session then followed, in which the fire plan each group had drawn up was discussed between representatives of each group, focussing firstly on areas in agreement, and then areas of disagreement.

The whole group then came together to discuss any contentious issues or differences arising from each fire plan. These were summarised, and could be divided into relating to three main areas in the Park: the Nuyts Wilderness Area/Tinglewood/Walpole townsite; Hilltop and Valley of the Giants; and Peaceful Bay. Participants then divided into three groups to deal with the issues and apply the three fire regimes to one area each.

The fire regimes applied were:

1. Fuel reduction (FRR) - involves cyclic, regular burning (usually 6-8 years) to maintain litter and scrub fuels at levels which can contain fires, in order to protect areas of value from wildfire.
2. Flexible burn rotation (FBR) - involves longer rotation burns, usually 10-20 years, in order to regenerate an ecosystem, and maintain diversity. Sometimes it is also necessary to burn for protection reasons.
3. No planned burn (NPB) - no prescribed burning for any purpose for the life of

the plan (10 years).

A representative of each group then reported back the results of their considerations.

Discussion between participants was encouraged throughout the day. There was much discussion dealing with specific issues arising from each organisation's fire management plan, and these were encouraged to run their course to allow emotions, points of view and relevant facts to be fully expressed and understood.

#### **TABLE 1. WORKSHOP FORMAT**

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Expectations (brainstorming)
3. The Future of the Walpole-Nornalup area (brainstorming)
4. Fire management objectives (brainstorming)
5. Constraints on fire management (brainstorming)  
Morning Tea
6. Individual fire management plans (informal discussions in small groups of each plan)
7. Issues (arising from discussion of each fire plan - discussion by all participants)  
Lunch and a game of bowls
8. Fire management plan (3 groups)  
Afternoon Tea
9. Reporting of the main strategies (by each group)
10. Final remarks

### **3.0 RESULTS**

#### **3.1 EXPECTATIONS**

**What are your hopes and expectations for the workshop (brainstorming session).**

- . lots
- . sanity prevails
- . consensus is achieved
- . a fire plan results that is manageable and affordable

- . we learn more about the Park
- . that the fire plan recognises the values within and outside of the Park
- . that agreement is reached on fire management objectives
- . differences are identified.

### 3.2 THE FUTURE OF THE WALPOLE/NORNALUP AREA

**How do you think the Walpole-Nornalup area will change in the future?**  
(brainstorming session).

- . increase in its population
- . increase in the number of visitors to the area
- . increased pressure on Park facilities
- . increased awareness in the community generally of the natural and unique values of the area
- . increased pressure on management resources to deal with the above
- . increased knowledge and understanding of conservation requirements
- . increased pressure on the conservation values
- . wider range of recreation demands on the area
- . increase in government funding
- . greater demand for residential areas along the coast
- . changes in zoning to cater for changing land use demands
- . there will be conflicts between pressures for change and a reluctance to change
  - greater exposure to change
  - a loss of identity for the area as new people settle and long term families become less prominent
  - expansion of townsites or new townsites established
- . greater range of services provided
  - increased employment opportunities
- . large tourist areas will be established
- . Walpole will become a regional centre of greater importance
- . climate changes with many consequences
- . greater pressure for use of the estuaries
- . marine park status for estuaries
- . demand for aqua culture production
- . professional fishermen will continue in the area

- . increase in craft industries associated with forest products
- . continuation of existing levels of milling
- . increased pressure for plantations and mineral sands
- . a bad wildfire will occur
- . conflicts of interests in some areas

### 3.3 FIRE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

**What do we want to achieve in fire management in the Park?** (brainstorming session).

- . protection of life and property
- . protection of unique features
- . protection of conservation values
- . that a reduction in the conflict between life and property values and conservation values is achieved
- . protection of landscape values
- . maximisation of diversity - confine fires to limited areas
- . flexibility - take into account changing conditions
- . that no further degradation of natural values occurs eg. spread of weeds, dieback and erosion
- . that fire can be managed safely
- . takes into account possible future changes in fire suppression techniques eg. new technology
- . a plan that is achievable
- . that the plan is contiguous with plans for neighbouring areas
- . recognition of its role in a regional fire management plan
- . that education of Park users and neighbours occurs to reduce accidental and deliberate lighting, and improve safety awareness.

### 3.4 CONSTRAINTS

**What are the constraints on fire management in the Park?** (brainstorming session)

- . funding
- . lack of research
- . existing high values that need protecting eg. townsites
- . existing roads and tracks

- . nature of fuel types and resulting fire behaviour
- . days available in the burning season
- . difficult access
- . high susceptibility of much of the Park to dieback, erosion etc
- . restricted species occurring in the Park
- . unique flora and fauna
- . inability of tingle trees to withstand severe fire
- . the size and shape of the Park ie. long and narrow
- . existing legislation
- . future planned and unplanned developments
- . staff - paid and voluntary
- . lack of consensus on the issue
- . general public knowledge of fire risks and behaviour
- . wide dispersal of users in the Park in the event of a fire.

### 3.5 INDIVIDUAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Informal discussions of each plan drawn up by WNNPA, BFB and CALM. Notes taken by each group are as follows:

#### 3.5.1 Bush Fires Board

Summary of approach:

Aim : Protect life and property - this requires a 4-8 year burn rotation for areas of the Park which adjoin -

- i) towns
  - a) Walpole townsite
  - b) Private property enclaves eg. Tinglewood
  - c) Nornalup
  - d) Peaceful Bay

ii) Neighbouring farms

For the remainder of the Park there are a number of options for flexible rotations and no planned burns.

Guidelines - No planned burns in forest fuels must be greater than 5 km from towns and property; therefore Hilltop area requires 4-8 year rotation; Giants and Blue Holes area

can have 10-20 year rotations; Ficifolia and Nuyts areas are possible no planned burn areas.

#### Discussion of BFB plan -

##### Agreement

- towns need protection (though may need to be more flexible)
- Nuyts, Blue Holes and Ficifolia are potential no planned burn areas
- a range of burn sizes and times are needed to produce a mosaic of burn ages
- closer liaison is needed between all involved (including stakeholders/property owners)
- more public information and education is needed for greater prevention of fire
- neighbours need to use their own estate as part of the fire protection plans - we should not only rely on the national park for fuel reduction.

##### Concerns

- 4 to 8 year burns in fuel reduction areas
- size of fuel reduction areas - identify high risk areas and relate buffers to these rather than the broad fuel reduction areas
- lack of 'other value' considerations
- need management to protect private property near Nuyts Wilderness
- to have the whole of the Nuyts area to be burnt in one wildfire is not desirable
- the need for no planned burns - examine requirements of each vegetation association
- don't use riverine areas as fuel reduced buffers (when and where practicable).

### 3.5.2 Walpole-Nornalup National Park Association

Summary of approach:

Objectives - similar to CALM's

Regimes - no alternative suggestions

- consider more flexibility in regimes in areas adjoining the Park.

Responsibilities/liabilities - adjoining landowners take more responsibility for themselves so some pressure can be taken off the Park to carry out protection burns.

#### Main points of plan -

- a burning rotation of less than 15 years in coastal heaths will lead to loss of some species

- . a fixed rotation buffer in coastal areas using small scale methods (as per methods used by Lionel Gunson - former Ranger in Charge)
- . a buffer burn is needed along Mandalay Beach Road to reduce risk of initiation of fire
- . granite outcrops - need to have short rotational fires excluded
- . Tinglewood - Mt Clare - 10-20 year rotation
- . Peppermints area - very frequent source of fire; south-east winds would spread a fire to Nuyts, therefore a buffer strip is needed
- . Giants - people enjoy areas which are unburnt; flexible regimes are needed
- . protective burning around townsites - have some flexibility to include different regimes for special areas eg. Karri knoll at Rest Point; areas of high landscape value; boronia areas.

#### Other points -

- . adjoining landowners - need joint agreement on protection measures
- . research and trial measures to protect landscape values
- . don't prioritise objectives
- . protection of Tinglewood from east and north-east (owner not concerned)
- . north-west of Nornalup - would like a NPB area but look to CALM for advice
- . would like to keep river banks unburnt, concerned about sensitive species eg. ferns
- . concerned about size of buffers  
(no areas of agreement and disagreement were recorded).

### 3.5.3 CALM

#### Agreement -

- . autumn burns for coastal areas
- . most no planned burned areas
- . private property to be burnt to complement the fire plan for the Park
- . generally roading to remain as is.

#### Differences

- . area west of private property north-west of Nuyts - no planned burn
- . area in Giants - no planned burn
- . Blue Holes - flexible rotation.

### 3.6 ISSUES ARISING FROM DISCUSSION OF EACH FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

These can be conveniently divided, pertaining to different management blocks of the Park.

#### 1. Nuyts Wilderness, Tinglewood and Walpole Townsite -

- . need to define wilderness - does any management (eg. fuel reduction) occur, or is it left completely alone to allow 'natural' processes to occur?
- . if a fuel reduction area is introduced, details required to ensure 'wilderness ethic' is maintained eg. no use of machinery
- . details associated with protection of private property (particularly enclaves)
- . maintenance of landscape quality, visual amenity, particularly around the town (involves WAFB)
- . use of walk trail in the 'wilderness' for management purposes
- . Tinglewood - access in and out in case of a wildfire.

#### 2. Hilltop, Giants area - some details required:

- . buffer areas (size etc) and/or strategy of blocks of fuel reduced areas
- . narrowness of buffer along north of Park around (Circular Pool)
- . maintaining visual amenity in areas of high tourist visitation.
- . burning of heaths ie. no planned burn of entire area and allow natural process to occur or introduce some flexible burns to diversify habitats
- . define no planned burn.

### 3.7 FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Participants divided into three groups, with each group examining one section of the Park. They were asked to consider the following:

1. Define issues
2. Apply a full range of strategies (or regimes), and select the best
3. Advantages and disadvantages of the strategies
4. Constraints - how to deal with them

5. Time lines - including review
6. Review process : representation/monitoring - to check if conditions are still the same, if the strategies are still right
7. Communication - formal and informal.

Each group applied fire regimes to their section (refer to Appendix B for a map which combines the results of each section), and discussed the above points. Notes taken are as follows:

### 3.7.1 Nuyts Wilderness/Tinglewood/Walpole Townsite

#### i) Re-defined issues:

1. Protection of private property
2. Protection of Park values, therefore conservation values eg. noisy scrub bird
3. What is an acceptable loss in the Nuyts from a single fire?
4. Access in and out of Tinglewood in the event of wildfire
5. Acceptable level of management in the wilderness area regarding:
  - access
  - burning
  - suppression
6. Definition of no planned burn.

#### ii) Strategies - Nuyts

a) Acceptable loss - it is not acceptable for the whole of the area to be burnt at once; therefore fuel reduction is required. Use the existing burn along the track as a buffer for future burns to effectively divide the Nuyts in case of a wildfire. This can be done with no use of machinery. This provides a balance between maintaining a wilderness concept and having some management to protect conservation values.

b) Protection of private property:

Options -

land swap with some of the private property to decrease protection

requirements

- . property owners to co-operate with CALM burn plans and allow burning on their properties
- . wind-driven buffer along the boundary of the private property and Landers Gully to link up with the existing buffer (burn) area along the Nuyts track, to produce a continuous buffer. This will need closer investigation on the ground
- . use of slashing
- . bulk of the wilderness area not to be burnt within the 10 year life of the plan, except the buffers
- . a level of acceptable disturbance to the visual resource needs to be determined.

c) Tinglewood:

- . negotiate with owner
- . concern about blocks on the eastern side, in terms of a risk to Tinglewood should a wildfire occur in the block
- . need to upgrade alternative access to allow exit in case of wildfire.

d) Walpole townsite:

area surrounding is fuel reduction regime (4-8 years); however maximise the variety of times and years of burns so that landscape values can be maintained - liaison will be necessary with BFB and WAFB. In the Walpole flats vegetation areas greater flexibility in burning is possible.

Other Strategies:

Surrounding State Forest to be fuel reduction to protect the town.

- . area between Mandalay Beach Road and Long Point track - FBR
- . Shedley Drive area - FBR
- . Tinglewood (east) - FBR
- . Isle Road (east) - FBR
- . between Landers Gully and the private property - maybe a flexible rotation; depending on the results of the buffer burn in the Nuyts
- . Knoll Drive - no planned burn except small burns between the road and the water to:

- . protect picnic sites
- . protect landscape values
- . allow for some viewing from scenic lookouts

Vantage points need to be identified, both from Knoll Drive looking out and other sites looking at Knoll Drive.

### 3.7.2. Hilltop/Giants

**Issue** - balance the extension of buffer areas with a reduction in NPB areas and flexible rotation zones.

#### Discussion

1. Basic acceptance of the extension of buffer areas by utilising blocks, however
  - . there was some caution about the extension
  - . need to liaise with neighbours to minimise the Park buffer areas.
2. The area to the south of the buffer (along northern boundary) not to be burnt during the life of the plan (ie. 10 years) (this was burnt in the wildfire in 1987).
3. Douglas lookout block : to be burnt on a 6-8 year rotation (FRR) for Nornalup town protection. Block to be burnt on a split phase to minimise visual impact.
4. Small area of river flats in Giants to be no planned burn.
5. Buffer adjoining Giants, to protect private property : 6-8 year rotation (FRR). To be effective, neighbours need to be co-opted by BFB to secure better buffers.
6. Giants along Pedro fire line : FBR, but not to be burnt within the life of the plan (10 years).
7. Giants recreation area : FBR, to be burnt within the life of the plan.
8. Eastern block of Giants : FBR, with visual resource management, to be burnt on a flexible rotation.

#### Other points raised:

- . the hilltop area is an important visual resource for the town of Normalup, so sensitive treatment is needed
- . Monastery Road east to the river - not to be burnt all at once; divide and burn flexibly. No planned burn area along river needs protection; this area has a steep slope, so a fire would spread quickly; could escape to the no planned burn area
- . regular burning of tourist roads conflicts with their purpose of providing scenic quality; develop techniques to have sensitive burn treatments eg. burn one side of the road at a time; burn wildflower areas after main flowering period; burn out of main tourist seasons (Autumn); vary amount of roadside to be burnt at one time; use the most sensitive treatment (scrub rolling?)

#### Valley of Giants -

- . maintain a range of burn ages from 5 to 20 years and make use of firebreaks;
- . blocks will be created always with some low fuel areas present
- . larger buffers are needed (Bush Fires Board)
- . values that need to be protected are: regeneration areas; tourist areas; tingle trees (can be sensitive to fire)

Combined with the Hilltop area there are large areas which will be burnt, and also remaining unburnt; therefore a low fuel area is needed to divide Hilltop from Giants so the whole area is not burnt in one fire.

#### 3.7.3 Peaceful Bay

In coastal areas of the Park we do not plan to do any burning during the period of this plan. If research findings requires some burning for habitat maintenance in the future such burning shall be prescribed. It should be noted considerable recent fires have occurred. Exceptions to this will be those buffer areas required to give protection to life and property, ie:

1. buffer area south and west of Peaceful Bay in a line along existing tracks; some additional track construction necessary near Peaceful Bay

2. buffer area bordering Loc 1428 needs to be defined in the field
3. short rotation (FRB) north of Peaceful Bay rubbish tip (Loc 1422) with maintenance of landscape values along Ficifolia Rd and Peaceful Bay Rd
4. establish protection buffer (open edge burn) along the eastern side of Peaceful Bay Rd.

Nut Lookout Area across to Loc 1244 and 1022 flexible patch burns with good edges, during this plan period (about 1990). Next burn after this will be reviewed in the light of further research.

Bellanger Beach Area - establish protective buffer west of Loc 700. Liaise with property owners, combined burn.

### 3.8 COMMON THEMES

- . it is important that the three townsites, Walpole, Nornalup and Peaceful Bay be protected from wildfires.
- . in order to reduce the protection burning requirements in the national park, a greater role needs to be taken on by private property owners adjoining the Park for fuel reduction measures to be carried out on their land
- . the coastal heath areas are to be mainly, if not all, no planned burn
- . prioritizing of objectives for fire management is inappropriate. All of the objectives are a high priority, but there are different priorities for different areas across the Park. The objectives need to be flexible to cater for different circumstances across the Park
- . an alternative to extensive buffer areas around the perimeter of the Park, is blocks of strategically burnt areas (using different years for burning). Buffers are usually not wide enough to stop ongoing fires, they usually only stop an initiating fire; blocks are more effective at stopping ongoing fires.

### 3.9 ISSUES STILL OUSTANDING

- . whether there should be any burning in coastal heath areas in order to maintain a diversity of habitats (check with Research). It is inevitable there will be a fire

in the heath areas at some stage; do we plan to burn some areas, or do we allow it to happen? Do we then stop a fire? Should fuel reduction measures be carried out to limit the extent of any single fire?

an appropriate regime for: the area around the mouth of the Deep River; Isle Road west (which relates to protection of Tinglewood); the area around Landers Gully; the area alongside and north of Irwin Inlet.

### 3.10 DETAILS TO FOLLOW-UP

liaison and agreements with adjacent landholders regarding co-operative fuel reduction measures

the maintenance of visual quality in high visitation tourist areas and around the towns while still protecting them from wildfire; identify areas to be treated as such

Nuyts wilderness - acceptable level of access, burning, suppression; details of fuel reduction need to be examined; will fuel reduction encourage greater access?; acceptable level of impact on the visual resource; use of walk trail for management purposes.

### 4.0 FINAL REMARKS

Bush Fires Board:

would like to see some agreements with adjacent landholders regarding co-operative burn practices included within the management plan.

would like a working plan for the first one or two years of implementation produced with the management plan

the Wilderness Area needs an evacuation strategy and information given to users regarding evacuation

presentation of information, particularly maps, needs to be clear in the plan; a

small scale map of the fire plan (including fuel age plans), with the management plan, given to the BFB would be useful

WNNPA: ongoing review of the fire management plan will be important, together with monitoring. The role of the community in this process needs to be recognised.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

This workshop brought together a range of perspectives on what has been a most contentious issue in the Park. The day was marked by a sense of collaboration rather than compromise; and was remarkable in that about 95% consensus was achieved. The expectations of workshop participants were met - sanity prevailed; a full range of issues emerged; everyone learnt more about the Park; values of the Park were recognised; differences have been identified and discussed; there was agreement on objectives for fire management; and a draft plan has resulted which should be manageable and affordable (obviously this will be looked at in greater detail).

There will be further discussions of the draft fire management plan resulting from this workshop, within and between each group, particularly to discuss any areas of uncertainty.

## APPENDIX A

### WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Rod Annear	Ranger In Charge WNNP
Colin Anning	Western Zone Bush Fires Brigade
Peter Bidwell	CALM Walpole
Brian Brand	Office of Industrial Relations
Neville Brass	Eastern Zone Bush Fires Brigade
Geoff Fernie	Walpole-Nornalup National Park Association
Lee Fernie	Walpole-Nornalup National Park Association
Peter Hanly	CALM Walpole
Bill Jackson	Walpole-Nornalup National Park Association
Chris Jackson	Manjimup Shire Council
Alan Lush	CALM Manjimup
Greg McKay	Bush Fires Board Bunbury
Alan Pepper	Bush Fires Board Albany
Alan Sands	CALM Manjimup
Rick Sneeuwjagt	CALM Protection Branch
Vanessa Smith	CALM Planning Branch
Jeff Stoltze	CALM Planning Branch

APPENDIX B

