

FILE 8.1.

DE/RAFT FIRE PROTECTION PLAN FOR FOXES LAIR

INTRODUCTION:

The following is an assessment of the present fire protection situation existing within the Foxes Lair and adjacent reserves. The aim of the plan is to present proposals that may assist the council in formulating a policy as to the fire protection of the area.

The theme behind the plan is not for broadscale burning, but to establish strategic buffers and breaks within the area to hopefully, halt the spread of wild fire, into and out of the reserves. Also to minimise the intrusion of exotic grass and weeds further into the reserves.

FOXES LAIR - PROTECTION PLAN:

1. Description:

The area shown on the attached plan is represented by a number of vested reserves:-

<u>TITLE:</u>	<u>NOS:</u>	<u>AREA:</u>	<u>VESTING:</u>
A Class Reserve	23152 & 20605	28 ha.	Council
Gravel Reserves	17739 & 25676	4.4 ha	Council
Rifle Range	14608	36 ha	Council
Com	12610	71 ha	Council
A number of Road Reserves		2 ha approx	
Railway Reserve	16316	9.7 ha	W.A.G.R.?
Water Supply	28100	.5 ha	
Native Welfare	29317	.2 ha	
Location	285	9.1 ha	P.P. not fenced within the reserve.

Total Area excluding Private Property 151.8 ha.

The area is bounded by Road Reserve and W.A.W.A. land to the west, Narrogin, Williams main road to the N.W., Town suburban location adjacent Narrakine and Moss Streets to the N.E. and N, Railway line to the S.E. and semi rural locations to the South.

The eastern section, i.e. east of the continuation of Floreat Street an be best described as upland with granite outcrops throughout. The cover being mainly *Accacia accuminata* (Jam) *Euc. Wandoo*, *Euc. loxephleka*, *Casurina heugeliana* and a very thick stand of grass and wild oats. To the west is mainly forested upland and plateau area, covered mainly by wandoo, *E. astringens* (brown mallet), *E. calophyla* (marri), *Casurina heugiliana* and some *E. accedens* (powder bark wandoo). The scrub being mainly *gastroblum* species associated with the ridgetops and plateaus. ^{*dryandra*}

2. Burn History:

The area shown in pink on the plan was burnt by a wild fire in February, 1985. The area between Floreat and Glyde Streets and the railway line was burnt by a wild fire in December, 1982. The area adjacent location 723 was burnt in a wild fire in December 1983.

I also understand quite a large section of the reserve was control burnt in 1973/74.

3. Protection Plan Objectives:

- 3.1 To protect the reserve from fires entering from neighbouring land.
- 3.2 To protect neighbouring properties from fire leaving the reserve.
- 3.3 To protect the biotic communities within the park from exotic weeds and disease infestation.

4. Plan Strategies:

- 4.1 To direct attack where possible any fire occurring within the reserves to minimise the area burnt.
- 4.2 To put in place strategic buffers by burning and herbicide control to break up the area as shown on attached plan.
- 4.3 To upgrade boundary breaks to improve protection to the private property in the south.
- 4.4 Minimize access to foot only, except boundaries and to the recreation area by successfully physically blocking many of the minor tracks.
- 4.5 To position burn buffers to allow for an unburnt area adjacent the boundary to buffer against further weed and grass infestation.

IMPLEMENTATION/RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Within the western area, i.e. west of Floreat St., fuel accumulation of the natural species is not very high. Where grass is not present, control of wild fires directly under mild to warm conditions should be possible. Even if vehicle access with water is not possible hand tool attack should be contemplated e.g. packsprays and rakes. Eucalyptus astringens is very fire sensitive and should be protected accordingly. The species is mainly associated with the ironstone breakaways and in most cases contain low fuel loads.
- 2. The eastern section has a very high grass and wild oat content. Control of fires is made even more difficult because of the rock outcrops. Speed of attack is essential. If allowed to spread uncontrolled, back burning is then the only means of suppression. Good breaks are then required to burn off. The re establishment of Euc. and jam regeneration is quite prolific throughout the eastern area. this should be protected at all cost. If allowed to develop, it will eventually assist in lessening the grass problem.
- 3. The positioning of buffers is shown on the attached plan in green (i.e. Burn Buffers). The internal boundaries in particular should be up graded and maintained.

4. The buffers adjacent Narrakine Road are controlled by drainage lines. Prior to burning they should be regraded. The position of the buffer on Narrakine road has allowed for an unburnt strip adjacent the road gutter, hopefully, to reduce the further intrusion of grass and weed seed, onto the burnt buffer.
5. This is not necessary on the western edge because of the water supply reserve adjacent. When burning the western buffer, protection should be afforded the fence and the area between the reserve break and W.A.W.A. break could be burnt under mutual co operation.
6. Existing unburnt pieces on the main Williams Narrogin road should be maintained. The area burnt in February 1985 provides for an interesting comparison for the road users. Future buffers should be positioned back off the main road.
7. The buffer associated with the power line south of Floreat Street would only be attainable if an accessible break was maintained down the power line. Wild oates etc. will re establish under the power line if not controlled (e.g. herbicide).
8. The access road through to location 724 from Floreat Street provides for a break as it stands. If necessary to burn back off from threats from the north or south.
9. The arboretum adjacent No. 3 buffer will be maintained by the Dept. of Conservation and Land Management and will provide additional area to that buffer.
10. A buffer should be extended around the Native Welfare reserve either by herbicidal application or by burning.
11. The southern boundary west of Floreat Street - Powerline clearing, at this stage provides for a minimum standard of protection for both fires leaving or entering the reserve. The Private Property location 285 is not protected at all by both parties. There is no boundary access at all west of P.P. location 286 along 724 and 723 to the W.A.W.A. reserve.

The whole southern boundary does pose a serious problem re access, terrain and width of break.
12. An attempt should be made to establish a break along the southern boundary, even if it is walking access only. A buffer could be then established on the southern boundary Without having to burn all the area between private property access from Floreat Street and the P.P. Boundaries.

13. The area between the McBeth Road, continuation of Floreat Rd. and an established track through location 285 along its south boundary could be burnt under mutual co operation with the property owner if acceptable. This would afford acceptable protection to his location and the reserve until such time that the council wish to enforce the firebreak orders on the owner of location 285. Alternatives could be that the council take steps to re purchase to allow for easier management of the whole reserve.
14. The break constructed along the boundaries of 723 and 724 would be suitable for protection without extending burn buffers into the reserve. Once again break requirements should be enforced onto the P.P. owners adjacent the reserve.
15. The area east of Floreat Street can be broken into two sections.
 - i. Floreat to Glyde Streets.
 - ii. Glyde to Federal Streets.
16. A Burn Buffer (5) could be established along the Moss Street road alignment south to the existing drain, or alternately the track running parrell to the drain to Earl Street. Further constructed or herbicidal break should be established from Earl Street to track onto Federal Street to allow for the extension of the Burn Buffer, along the Moss Street alignment to eventually meet up with Federal Street.
17. A parallel break should be established if possible, along the S.E. Boundary along the access track and around locations P.P. 1552 and 1251 to allow for a burn buffer (6). Alternately because of the terrain a side delivery herbicidal application could be used to extend the effectiveness of the track width, to control the grass and allow for a wider break.

It could also be applied to the section between Floreat and Glyde Section boundaries. The burn buffer (7) could be extended along the southern boundary east to location 1251 readily, if a break was constructed along location 289 to the railway line reserve.

Signature

CONCLUSION:

The above is a guide to the council as alternatives for the protection of the Foxes Lair and adjacent reserves, so as to provide for a level of protection to protect both the reserve and adjacent Private Property owners. The main theme obviously to reduce the annual broadscale burning that has been the case in the past. Hopefully, with the abstinence of Broadscale burning the indigenous flora will have a chance to re establish fully both the upper story (tree cover) and the scrub layer once the exotic annual grasses are eliminated with time.

The only tracks that should be maintained are the gazzetted roads, boundary and buffer access tracks. Physical closing should be contemplated else where to reduce the vehicle access to the reserves. Foot access should be encouraged, the recreation site should be upgraded to separate the vehicles from the B.B.Q. site with simple barricading.

One way access should be suitably sign posted to the B.B.Q. site. Informative walk trails could be established radiating from the picnic site to include the whole reserve, even to as far as the other developed site at the railway dam.

The whole area has the potential to provide the Narrogin towns people and visitors a conveniently wonderful, passive recreation area. Rehabilitation is another story, but should be considered on the denuded access e.g. Gravel pits, clay pits, rifle range etc. The whole resere area should be maintained, rehabilitated where possible and more importantly protected to promote the continual existance of the natural landscape, for the enjoyment of future generations.

*Report
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