

A photograph of a fire burning in a grassland area. The foreground shows reddish-brown soil with several clumps of green grass. In the middle ground, a fire is burning, with bright orange and yellow flames rising from the ground. The background is filled with tall, thin trees with green foliage. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

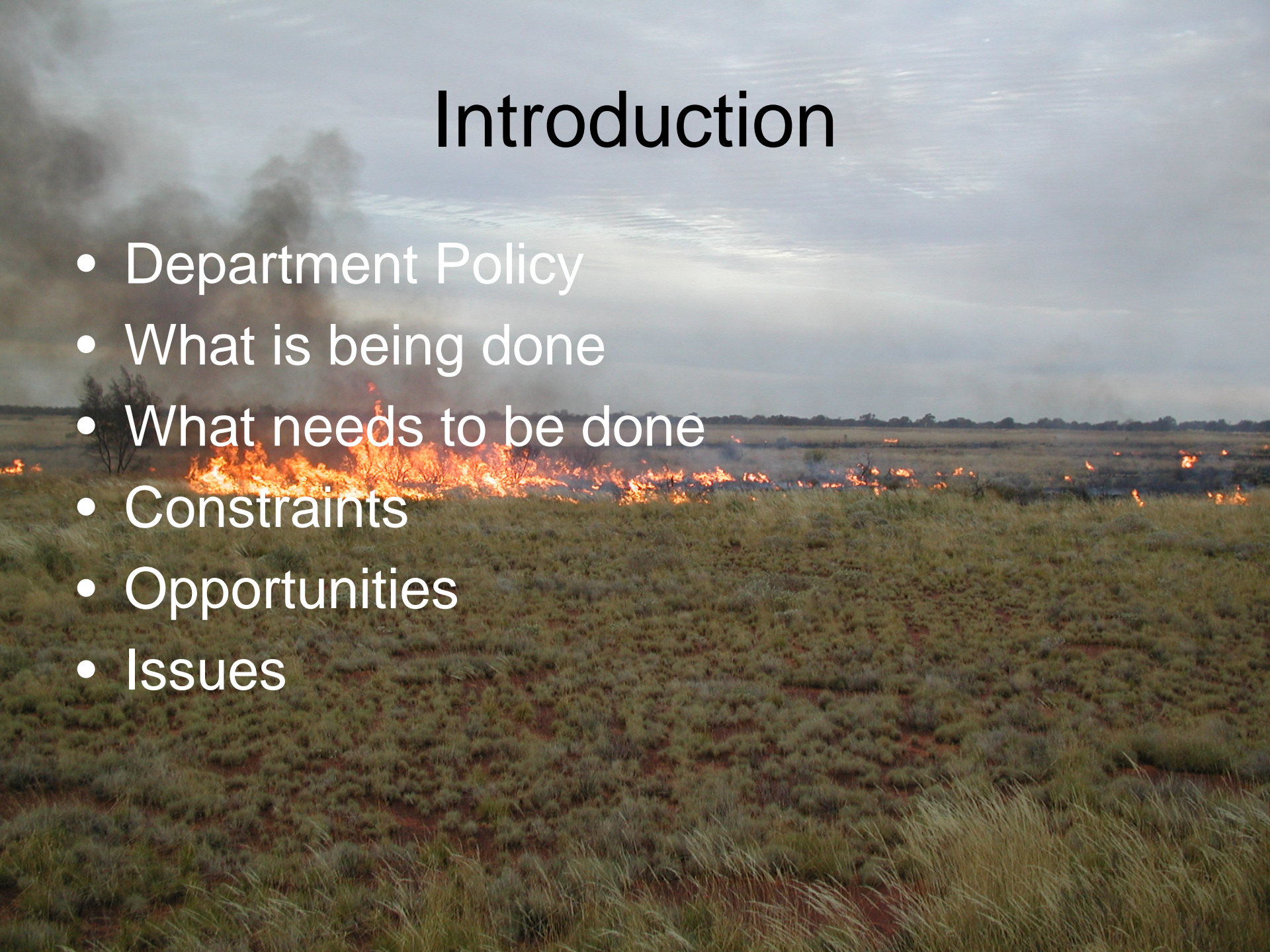
# Fire Management in the Goldfields Region

Fire Management of Spinifex Grasslands Workshop  
November 2004

By Brad Barton

# Introduction

- Department Policy
- What is being done
- What needs to be done
- Constraints
- Opportunities
- Issues



# Department Policy

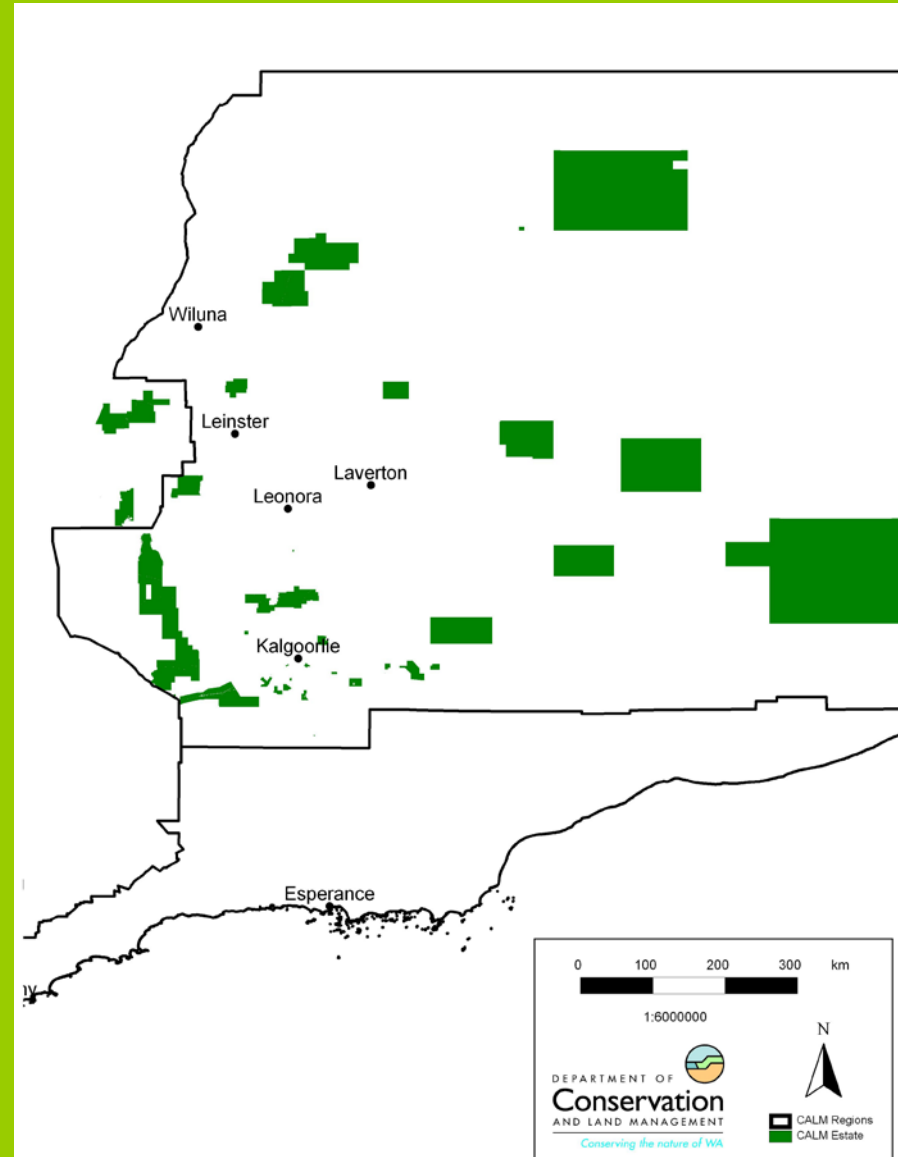
- A strategy listed in the Departments corporate plan to aid in Conserving biodiversity  
*“Use fire to promote biodiversity, to reduce fire hazards and damage to biodiversity, and to regenerate and protect ecosystems”.*



*Are we achieving this?*

# Goldfields Region

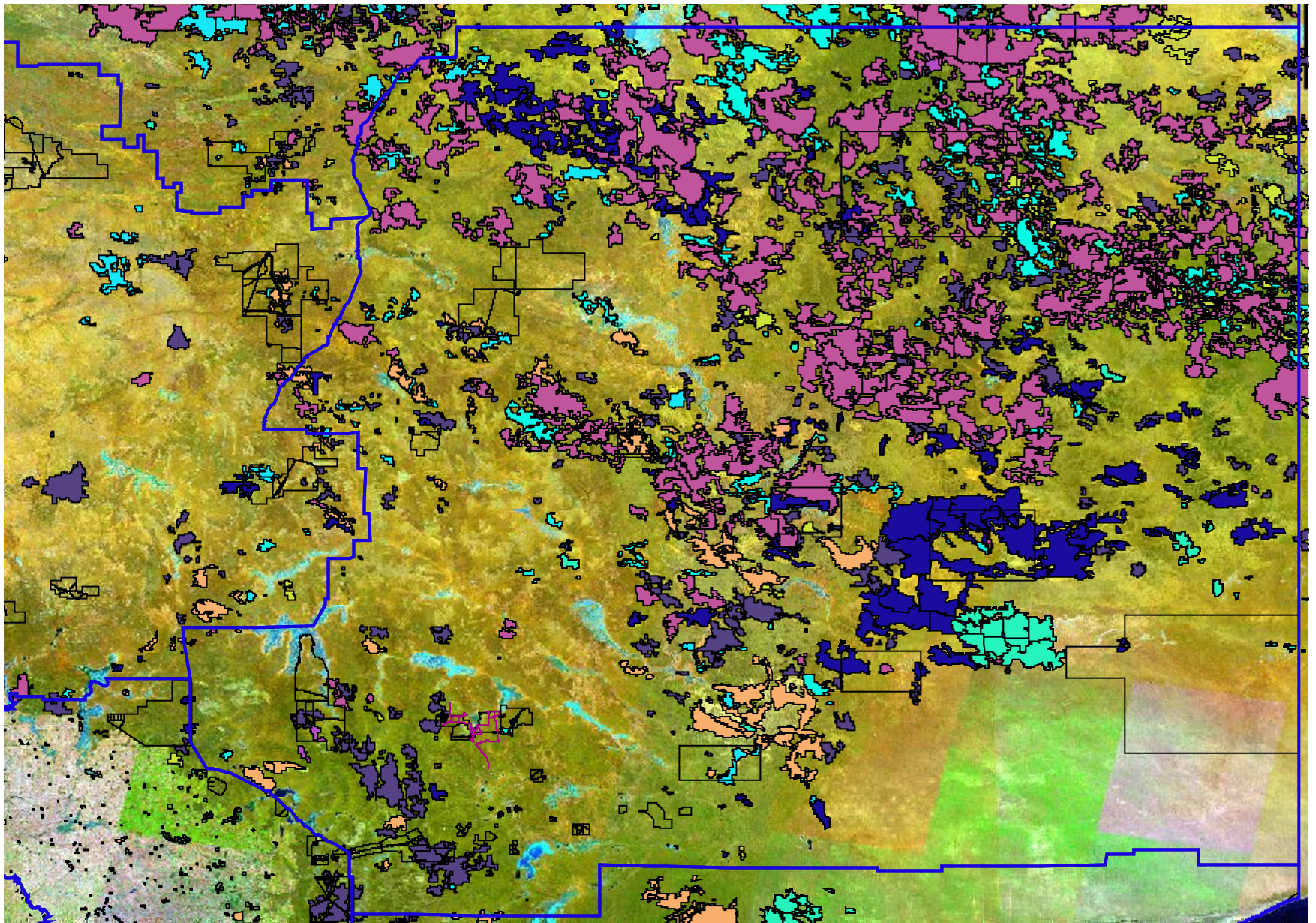
- 10 million hectares of conservation estate
- 40 million hectares of UCL
- A range of spinifex areas from desert to Mallee woodlands over spinifex



# What is being done?

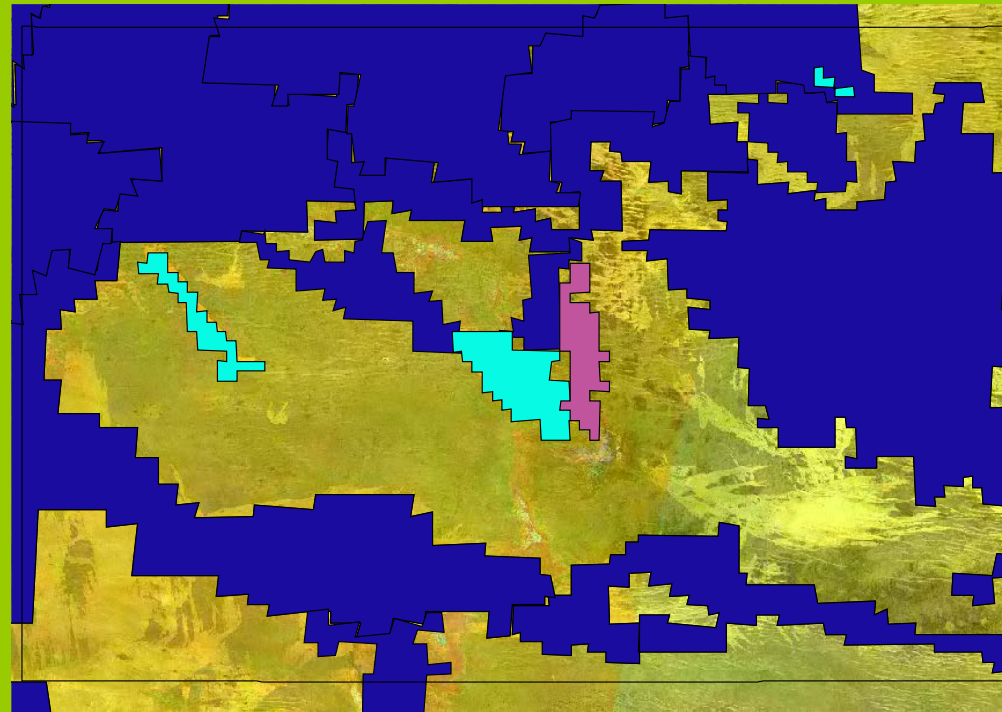
- No capacity at present, no on ground works
- Historically some research and operational burning in spinifex areas
- WTA Coolgardie area
- Planning (eg Lorna Glen)
- Some work with UCL \$
- Monitoring wildfires
- Actively seeking resources, due 2005
- Extensive Aboriginal burning along access roads and around desert communities





# Neale Junction NR

- Department carried out prescribed burning in the early 1990's
- Fires in 1996 burnt out most of the reserve



# What needs to be done

- Broad-scale, regular burning – more fire into the landscape
- Continue to increase knowledge
- Base fire on good science
- Engagement of aboriginal communities





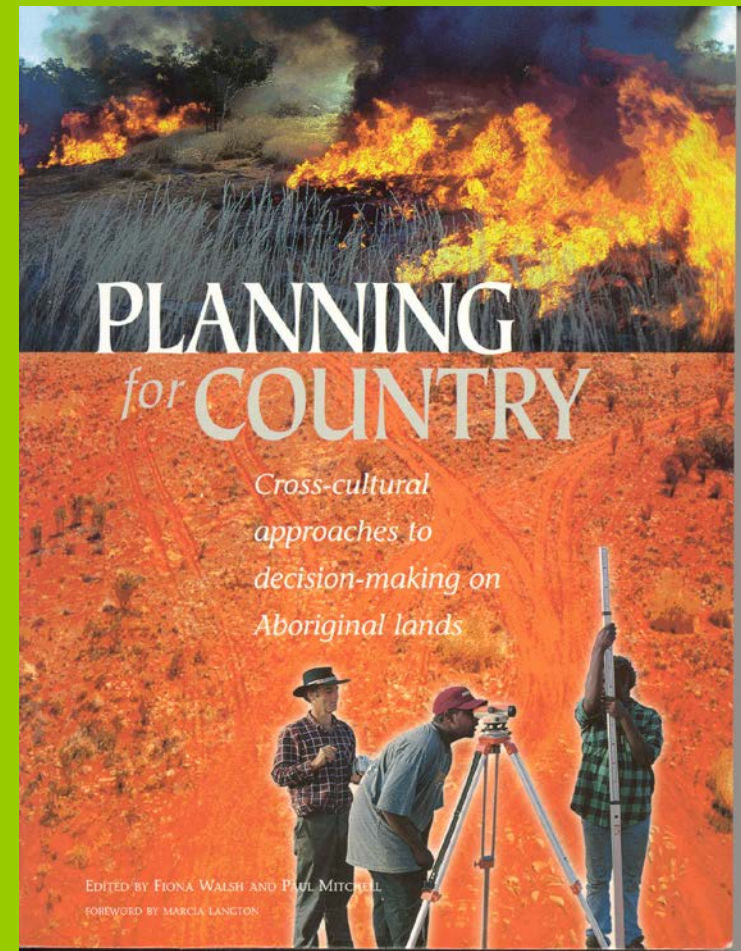


# Constraints and Opportunities

- Resources, capacity
- Size of the task
- No profile/  
understanding in the  
general community
- Politics and priority  
(Dept and Govt)
- Engaging traditional  
owners, meaningful  
employment, cultural  
and biodiversity  
outcomes
- Raise the profile,  
media articles, press  
releases etc
- Increasing resources  
and capacity

# Issues

- Aboriginal / Joint Management
- Neighbours - Pastoralists
- UCL
- Climate Change



# Joint Management



## Draft Management Plan for the

### Ngaanyatjarra Central Ranges Indigenous Protected Area

Prepared by:  
Keith Noble  
*People & Ecology*

on behalf of:  
Ngaanyatjarra Council  
Land Management Unit

June 2002



- Issues around the involvement of Traditional owners include
  - Access to country
  - Who can burn, who do you consult with, how do you burn
  - Tjukurrapa – cultural heritage
  - Consultative, cooperative or joint management – State IPA's
  - Planning and Training
  - Resourcing



# GMS

- New initiatives that have brought their own series of issues
- Prohibited burning seasons – Bush Fire Act
- Competing issues/values
  - spinifex or buffel grass
  - fences and other infrastructure
  - Stock - grazing
- Good neighbor policy re fire management



# UCL

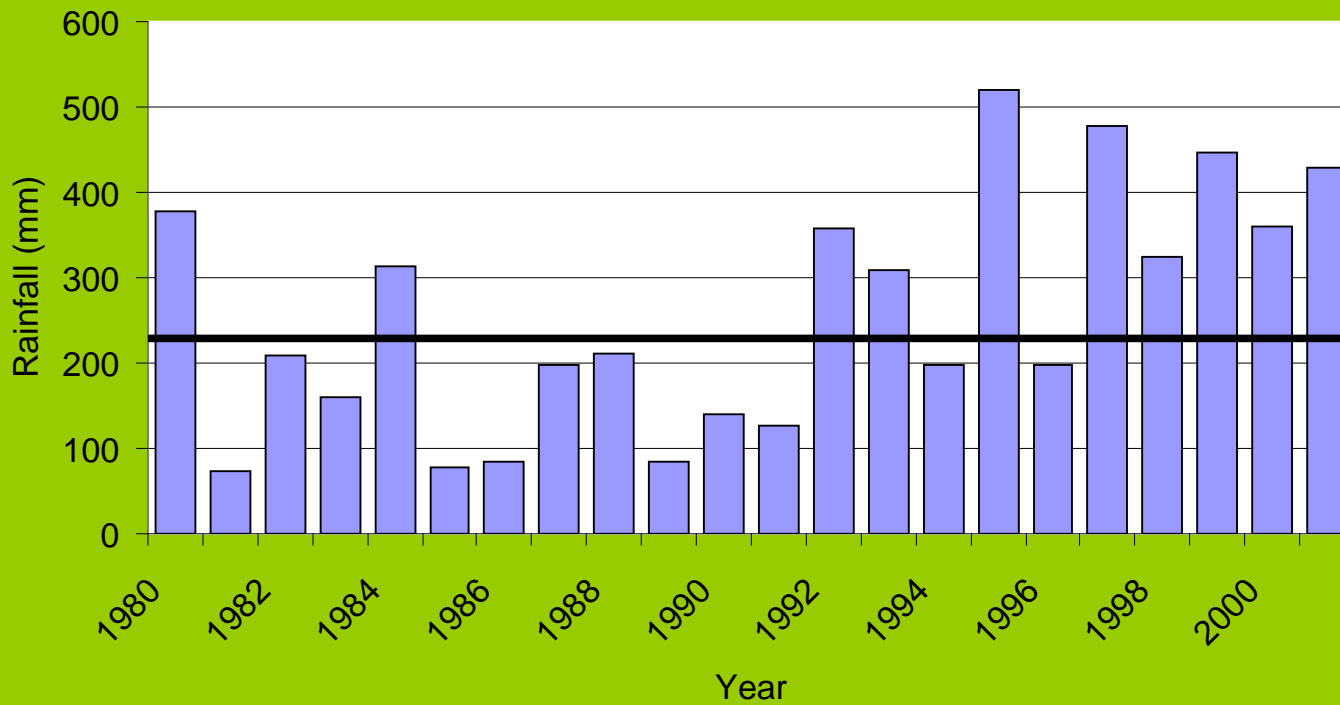
- Relationship with FESA
- WTA for Coolgardie
- Resourcing issue – 40 million hectares
- We cant do it all, what are the priorities?



# Climate Change

- Increased rainfall over past 10 years in desert areas
- Are we fighting a losing battle?

Figure 3: Average annual rainfall from three locations in the vicinity of the Gibson Desert Study area. The dark line is the long term average.









The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, red, and pink, transitioning into a pale blue at the top. In the foreground, there is a dark silhouette of a tree with bare branches on the right side. The ground appears to be a field of tall grasses, also in silhouette. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# In Conclusion

- Major challenge to
  - Raise profile
  - Secure resources
  - Develop partnerships
  - Develop capacity
- Significant impacts on biodiversity



# Acknowledgements and Thanks

- Neil Burrows
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