

National Fire Conference

MANAGEMENT MAJOR THEME

By LACHLAN McCAW

FIRE management on nature conservation lands was the focus of a five-day workshop hosted by CALM and organised by Manjimup Fire Research, in October.

The session attracted participants from all States and territories, representing conservation land management agencies, rural fire authorities, the voluntary conservation movement, CSIRO and tertiary institutions.

In the first two days of the workshop, speakers addressed a number of important fire management themes including: setting fire management objectives; deciding critical data requirements; selecting ap-

propriate management strategies, cooperational considerations and constraints; requirements for monitoring; social factors and public involvement.

Speakers provided examples from a wide range of environments throughout Australia.

Executive Director Syd Shea gave the opening address and also spoke on the role of public participation in fire management.

A field trip in the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Na-

tional Park provided a focus for discussion of a number of issues including protection requirements for coastal settlements, rabbit grazing in coastal vegetation following fire, and the specific problems posed by the large number of caves in the area.

For the final two days of the workshop, the participants were put into syndicates of six to eight people to examine the procedures involved in preparing fire management plans for nature conservation lands.

As part of this exercise each syndicate was given a case study based on a conservation reserve in WA.

The reserves chosen were Walpole-Nornalup National Park, Dryandra Forest, Fitzgerald River National Park and Hamersley Range National Park.

CALM staff with experience in each of these were on hand to provide detailed local knowledge, and a wide range of other resource information was also available.

Workshop convenors Neil Burrows and Lachlan McCaw were generally pleased with the outcome of the workshop.

Neil said: "The syndicate exercise highlighted a number of important steps in the fire management planning process, and these should for a useful checklist for planners in the future."

The workshop proceedings will be published by CALM following editing of the papers and collation of results from the syndicate exercise.

In addition to the formal programme, the workshop also provided a chance for CALM staff to discuss issues with counterparts from elsewhere in Australia.

A slide show by Pilbara Regional Manager Tony Start, a limerick competition, and a poem by after-dinner speaker Tony Mount contributed to a successful conference din-

Lyric for our five fighters

By TONY MOUNT, Tasmanian
Forestry Commission

*BECAUSE the winter weather kept them office-bound
together*

*The Manjimup Researchers had nothing much to do
So they all jumped to attention when they heard
somebody mention*

*That "Sydney wants a workshop to bring the experts
to".*

*So they sent to each a letter saying "If you've got
nothing better*

*To do in '87 why not come to our fair land
Together we will fashion with skill and art and passion
An everlasting method of how fires should be plann-
ed."*

*The leaders of the party, under watchful eye of Smarty
Were Neil, Lachie, Michelle Prie and all their motley
band*

*They gathered us together with promises of weather
With sun forever shining — far too hot for us to stand
So when the sun shone brightly — they schooled us
day and nightly*

*In a stuffy room near Busselton beside the tempting
beach*

*But when it started hailing outside they took us sailing
To every fire problem that the old school bus could
reach*

*Thus when the rain stopped falling, 'twas then we heard
them calling*

*"It's time to start the syndicates so fire can be planned"
So seven experts wrangled over fire problems tangled
Up with people, parks and politics all up and down
the land*

*Side by side we worked together juggling fauna, fuel
and weather*

*Into one united document to deal with every fire
Each group, its task completed, eight times to all
repeated*

*The measurable objectives to which we should aspire
But now our task's completed and your problems we've
defeated*

*Home we now must wander back to bother and to fuss
Adieu, CALM, you've collected, four park plans all
corrected*

Now you must come back our way and do four for each