

# Program to protect conservation areas and pines



*Perth District fire crew Miguel Valladares, Mel Price, Jason Bowie, Brian Inglis, Sam Greer and John McKenzie prepare to light up another block in the Pinjar pines.*

CALM's Perth District has begun a 12-months program to reduce the threat of wildfires in conservation areas and pine plantations throughout the Wanneroo region.

Between now and the end of next autumn, district crews will create strategic fuel reduced buffers which will help slow down the rate at which wildfires spread, and give firefighters a chance to mount a direct attack on the headfire and flanks.

CALMfire's Perth district co-ordinator, John McKenzie said that although the past fire season had been among the quietest he had known, the fuel reduced buffers were the single biggest factor that prevented fires escalating to a stage where they threatened or even destroyed private homes.

"CALMfire's records show we attended 60 wildfires

between September and May in the Perth district, mainly around Wanneroo," John says.

"The vast majority of these were less than 1 hectare. Some of the fires, that unfortunately were the result of torching stolen cars, were only a few square metres because the surrounding area had been prescribed burned within the past few years."

Most of the prescribed burns will be within the Yanchep, Pinjar and Gnangara pine plantations. Other burns are planned for banksia woodland areas, including national parks and nature reserves.

"The banksia woodland burns are also important as they help protect areas of high conservation value, such as Parrot Ridge to the east of Jarrahsend where botanists have begun a series of intensive studies of the native flora," he said.



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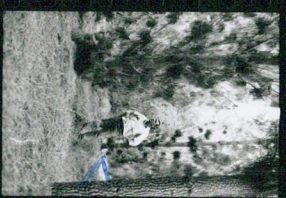
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