



Media Release

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PRIVATE LAND PLANNED BURNING PILOT PROJECT

A pilot project aims to assist landholders in rural areas of Tasmania implement safe planned burning of native vegetation while addressing ecological outcomes.

This project is timely given considerable discussion around fuel management and planned burning on private land after the recent tragic bushfires in Tasmania.

Case study burns and training for participating farmers will happen between April and September this year. The project will also see the production of property-scale fire management plans, a manual for planned burning on private land, and a training package, ready for roll out to the wider community.

The project is being funded by NRM North through the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country Program delivered by Macquarie Franklin and has the involvement of key fire and land management agencies - Tasmania Fire Service, Forestry Tasmania, Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

The first stage of the project has involved a survey of landholder attitudes and experience with planned burning. The results of the survey are being used to assist the project team develop practical tools to support safe and effective planned burning on private land.

Leanne Sheriff from Macquarie Franklin said the results from the survey clearly showed that private landholders had a reasonable understanding of bushfire risk, and were aware they had a responsibility for managing the risk of fire on their own land.

"However, there are some major barriers that limit the extent to which landholders undertake planned burns. These are risk of fire escapes; potential liability from fire escapes; access to good weather/forecast information; labour to manage the burn; and equipment to safely manage the burn."

NRM North Chief Executive Officer, James McKee, also recognised the significance of this project in light of the current discussion around fire management.

"This project is a practical approach to supporting private landholders with fire management on their properties, however the on-going support of the outcomes from this trial will be critical to success.

"The project is about exploring the complexities of fire management on private land, with issues from biodiversity and natural resource impacts to fuel loads and fire protection to consider.

"We are hoping this partnership project will support an increased opportunity for ecologically sound and practical fire management to become part of day to day management on private land."

The pilot project is working with a group of 10 farmers based in the north east and the Northern Midlands areas to ensure that what is developed is practical and meets the needs of private landholders.

Wider roll out will require ongoing commitment from the agencies already involved and potentially further funds to support landholders participate in the planned burning program.

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