

WEEYN YARKEEN STRATEGY

INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA (IPA) FIRE MANAGAEMENT PLAN 2020-2022



OFFICIAL

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Background

Intent

The intent of the Weeyn Yarkeen Strategy is to provide a space for developing guidelines around restoring cultural fire back into Gunditjmara landscapes.

It has also been developed to coincide with the objectives and principles of the **Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy** and allow this document to be more applicable to the World Heritage listed Budj Bim landscape. The purpose and principles of this strategy are as follows:

Purpose: Reinvigorate cultural fire through Traditional Owner led practices across all types of Country and land tenure; enabling Traditional Owners to heal Country and fulfil their rights and obligations to care for Country.

Principle 1: Cultural Burning is Right Fire, Right Time, Right Way and for the right (cultural) reasons.

Principle 2: Burning is a cultural responsibility.

Principle 3: Cultural fire is living knowledge.

Principle 4: Monitoring, evaluation and research support cultural objectives and enable adaptive learning.

Principle 5: Country is managed holistically.

Principle 6: Cultural Fire is healing.

Partnerships

Traditional Owners and Budj Bim Rangers will lead all burns on the Indigenous Protected Areas and will engage with other agencies such as Forest Fire Management Victoria, Country Fire Authority and Glenelg Hopkins Management Authority.

Where possible, government agencies will identify opportunities to involve Traditional Owners in fire management on public and/or private land.

Definition of Cultural Fire

Cultural fire is defined here as any burning practice developed by Traditional Owners to improve the health of the land and its people. This may include Traditional Owners using contemporary equipment, or government agencies using traditional methods and techniques.

Cultural Fire Methods and Uses

All methods will be based around mosaic and 'cool burns' with the right conditions. Cool burns are low-intensity, slow moving fires that are too cool for thick fuels such as trees and large shrubs to burn and slow enough for wildlife to escape.

Uses	Examples	Recent
Fuel Reduction	Burning any area that is a fuel hazard	Grass burn at Kurtonitj
Clearing	Burning vegetation to clear an area e.g. Walking track, camp site, uncover cultural heritage etc.	Burning around Kurtonitj Smoking Tree, burning phragmites out of eel holding pond
Hunting/Harvesting	Restoring grasslands for Kangaroo grounds, shortening grass on floodplains for eeling, regenerating fibre or food species	Burning floodplains at Lake Condah pre-flood, burning of Poonyart at Kurtonitj
Ecological Restoration/Regeneration	Restoring species habitat, burning of weed species, opening up understory	Australasian Bittern Burn at Tyrendarra

Cooperatively managed National Park

One park reserved under the National Parks Act and cooperatively managed by Budj Bim Council and Parks Victoria primarily for conservation and compatible recreation in accordance with National Parks Act and the Native Title Act agreement. Included in the collective term ‘parks’

Aboriginal community owned properties

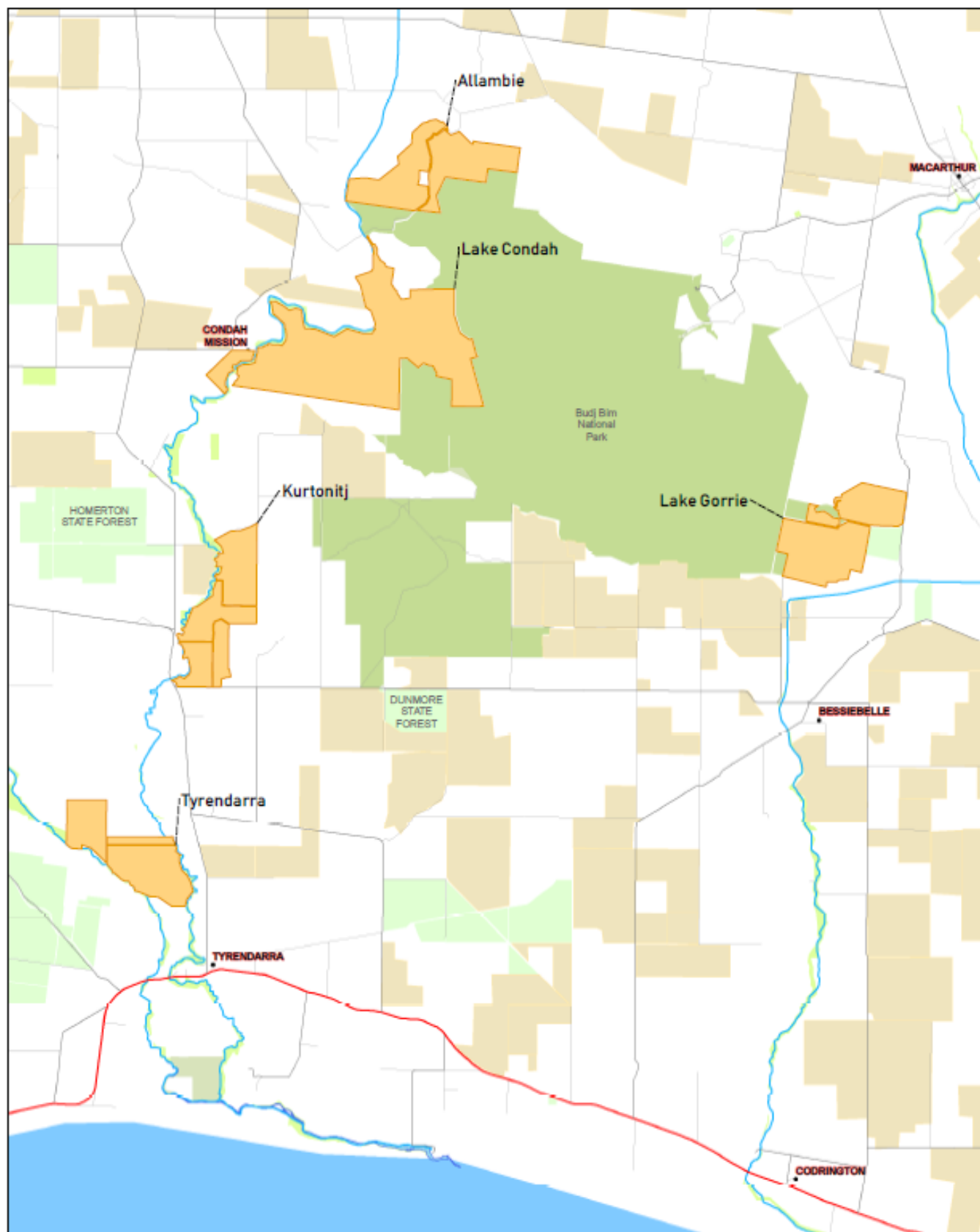
Freehold land owned by the Gunditjmara community (Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation) and declared or intended as Indigenous Protected Areas by the Gunditjmara community owners and recognized by the Australian Government. Indigenous communities are supported to manage Indigenous Protected Areas for cultural heritage, conservation, sustainable use of cultural resources and public education as part of Australia’s network of protected areas. These areas are referred to as ‘IPAs’ in the plan whether declared or proposed as an IPA.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| • Lake Condah IPA (includes the Mission, Allambie and Muldoons) | 1700ha |
| • Kurtonitj IPA | 353ha |
| • Tyrendarra IPA | 248ha |
| • Peters | 139ha |
| • Lake Gorrie | 502ha |
| • Bryants | 75ha |

Forest Park

One park reserved under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act, and managed under the Forests Act as a forest park by DELWP for conservation, recreation and sustainable resource use. The Forests Act prohibits saw log and pulpwood in the forest park. This park is referred to as ‘Forest Park’ in the plan.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| • Cobboboonee Forest Park | 8685ha |
|---------------------------|--------|



Indigenous Protected Areas

Legend

IPAs

+ Townships

1:125,000

0 1 2 4 6 8 Kilometers

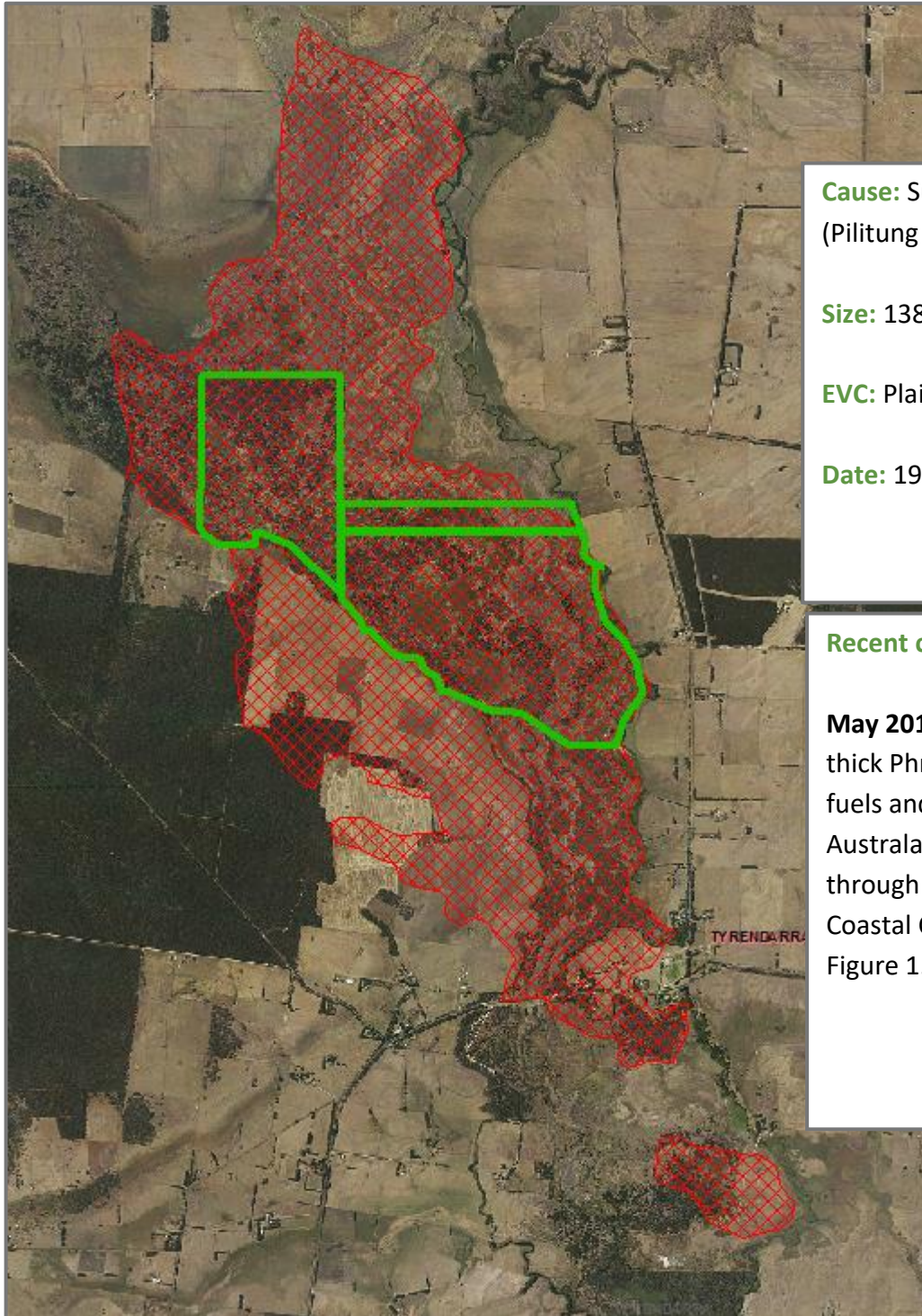


Map Grid of Australia 1994 (MGA94)
Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) Projection
Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)



Recorded fire history throughout IPA's

Tyrendarra IPA



Cause: Suspected lightning strike
(Pilitung MarndaIngat Kankera)

Size: 1384 ha

EVC: Plains Woodlands or Forests

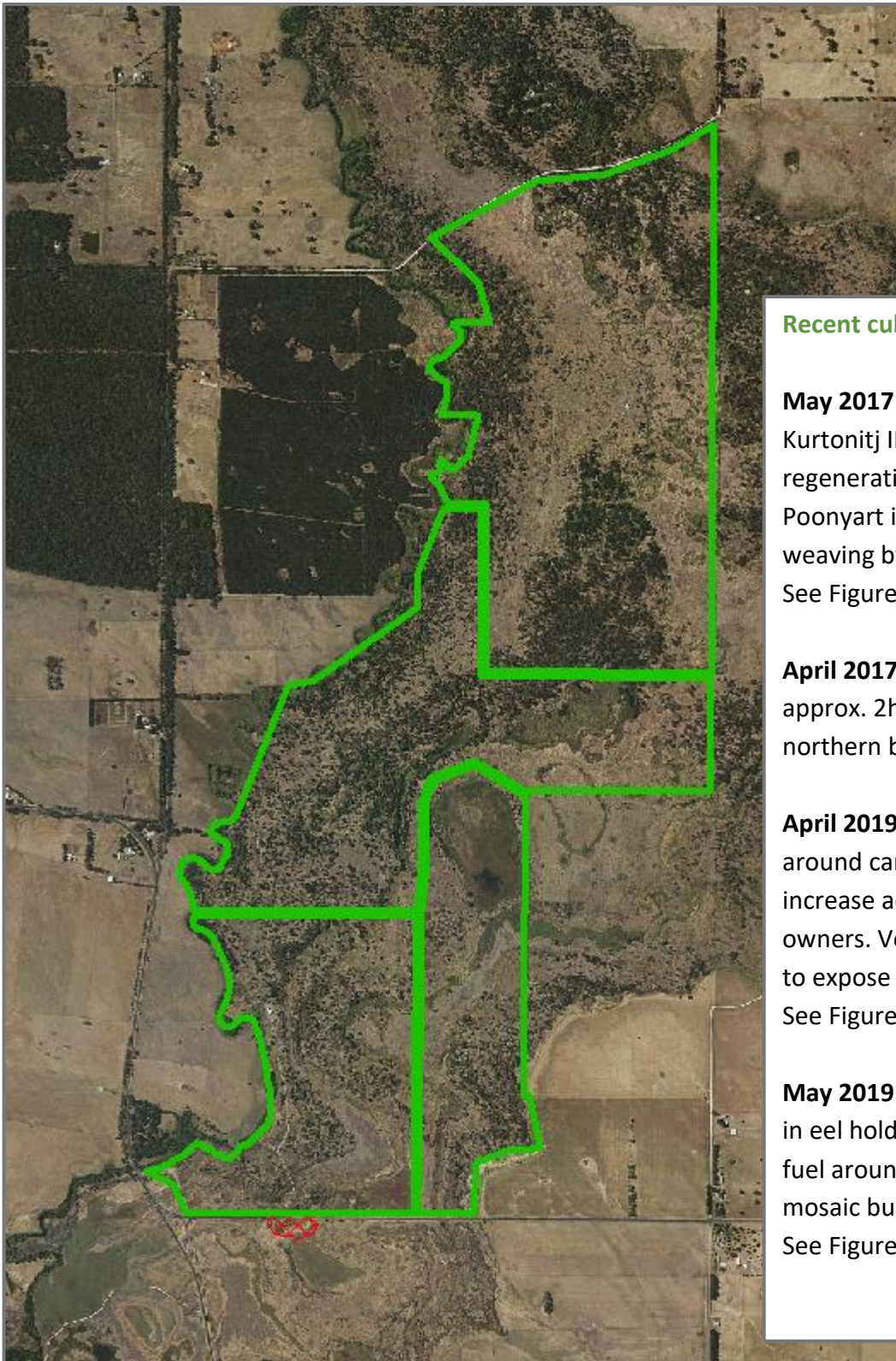
Date: 19th January 2006

Recent cultural burning:

May 2019: Approximately 1-ha of thick Phragmites burnt to reduce fuels and open habitat for the Australasian Bittern. Burn funded through Glenelg Hopkins CMA Coastal Connections project. See Figure 1.6. below.

Figure 1.1. red hatching highlights the fire that burnt a large majority of the Tyrendarra IPA.

Kurtonitj IPA



Recent cultural burning:

May 2017: Burning of Poonyart on Kurtonitj IPA in, to encourage regeneration of this species. Poonyart is used for traditional weaving by Gunditjmara women. See Figure 1.9. below.

April 2017: Fuel reduction burn approx. 2ha in size along the northern boundary of property.

April 2019: Burning vegetation around camp site and toilet to increase access for traditional owners. Vegetation was also burnt to expose potential cultural site. See Figure 1.7. below.

May 2019: Burning of Phragmites in eel holding pond, removal of fuel around smoking tree and mosaic burn for regeneration. See Figure 1.8. below.

Figure 1.2. No recorded fire history within the Kurtonitj IPA.

Lake Condah IPA



Figure 1.3. red outline with black hatching highlights the fire history on the Lake Condah IPA.

Cause: Lightning

Size: 6369 ha

EVC: Plains Woodlands or Forests

Date: Dec 2019

Recent cultural burning:

June 2019: Burning of flood plain near boat ramp (northern entrance to the lake) prior to flooding. This burn shortened grasses and assisted traditional owners with hunting eels for a food source. See Figure 1.13. below.

Allambie IPA

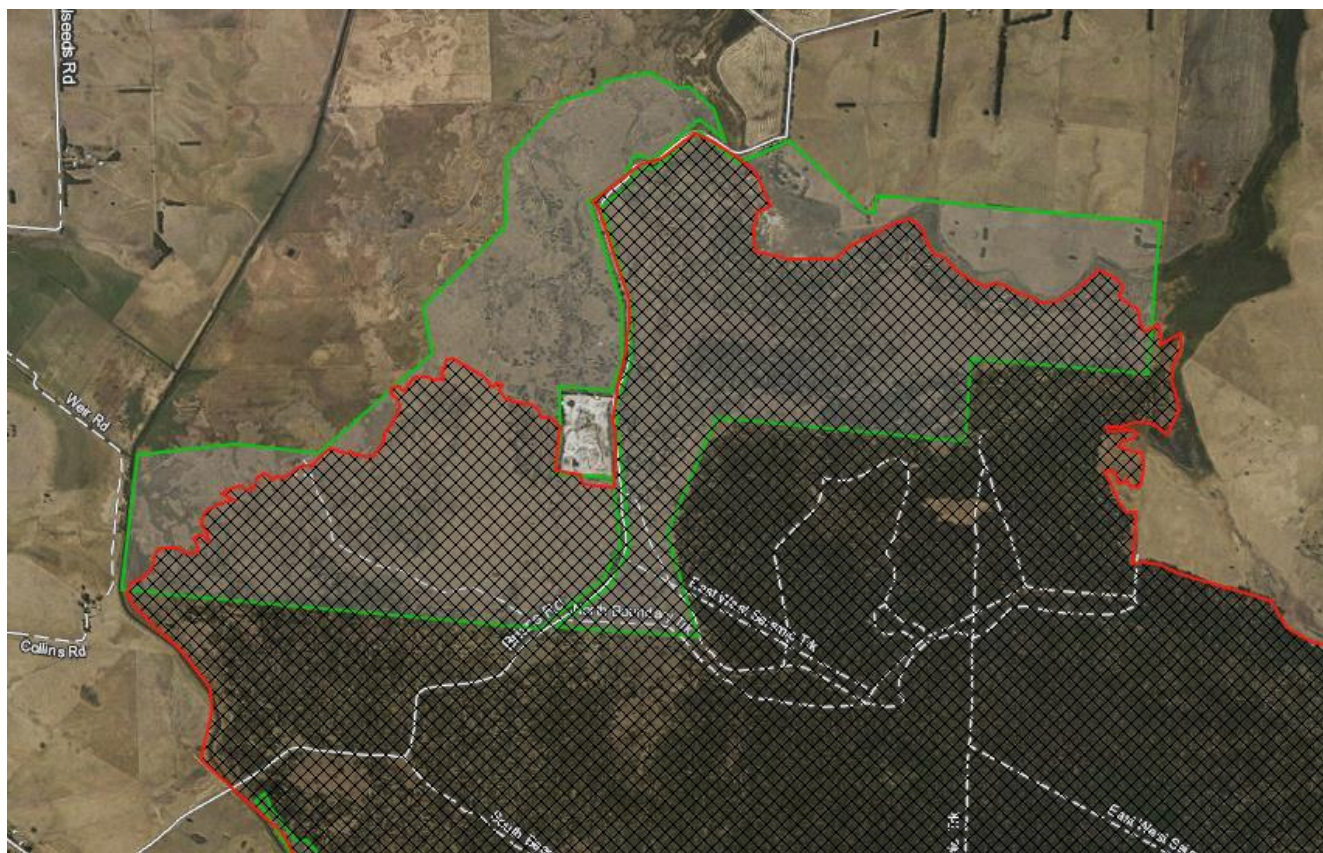


Figure 1.4. the red outline with black hatching highlights the recent fire history on the Allambie IPA.

Cause: Lightning

Size: 6369 ha

EVC: Plains Woodlands or
Forests

Date: Dec 2019

Recent cultural burning:

None recorded

Lake Gorrie IPA

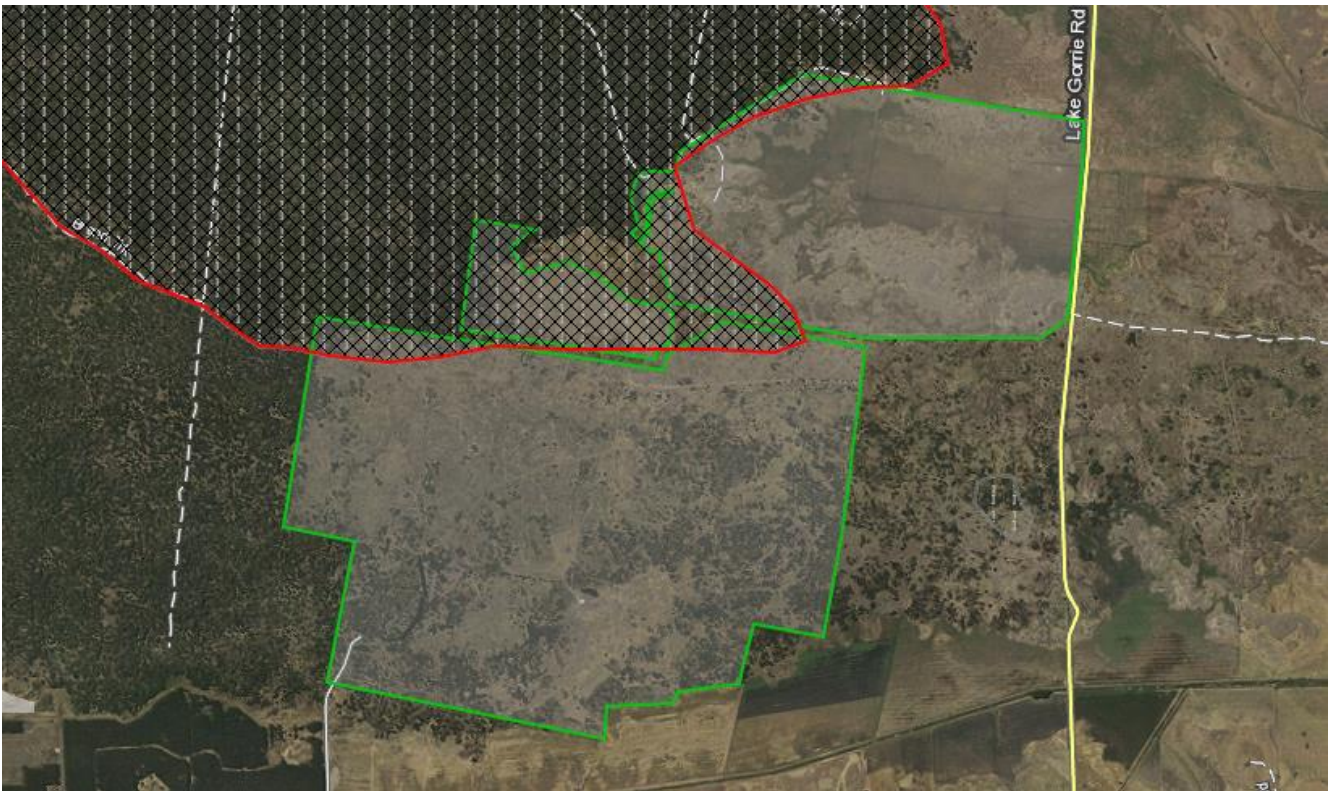


Figure 1.5. the red hatching highlights a fire that impacted the Lake Gorrie IPA from the Budj Bim National Park. There is also recorded fire history from 1979 and 1993 in the western section of the IPA.

<p>Cause: Lightning strike (pilitung marndalngat Kankera)</p> <p>Size: 1409 ha</p> <p>EVC: Plains Woodlands or Forests, Riparian Scrubs or Swampy Scrubs and Woodlands</p> <p>Date: 20th January 2006</p>	<p>Recent cultural burning:</p> <p>None recorded</p>
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Recent Burns



Pre-Burn



Post-burn



**6-months
post-burn**

Figure 1.6. Burning of Phragmites at Tyrendarra IPA for the Australasian Bittern, May 2019.



Figure 1.7. Burning around campsite to open up country, create access to Darlots Creek and expose potential cultural heritage sites on Kurtonitj IPA, April 2019.



Figure 1.8. Burning of Phragmites in eel holding pond, removal of fuel around smoking tree and mosaic burn for regeneration on Kurtonitj IPA, May 2019.



Figure 1.9. Burning of Poonyart on Kurtonitj IPA in May 2017, to encourage regeneration. Poonyart is used for traditional weaving by Gunditjmara women.



Figure 1.10. Fuel hazard reduction burn on the northern boundary of the Kurtonitj Property, 19th April 2017.

Future burning

Year 1

Tyrendarra IPA - Burning of wetlands for the Australasian Bittern

As seen in Figure 1.11, remaining sections of Phragmites will be targeted to further enhance suitable nesting habitat for the Australasian Bittern. This burn will most likely take place in late Autumn/early Winter. Middle to late season winter burns are avoided due to potential impacts on frogs and eels that utilize the wetlands when inundated.



Figure 1.11. remaining sections (approx. 6-ha) of Phragmites on the Tyrendarra IPA will be targeted to further enhance suitable nesting habitat for the Australasian Bittern

Kurtonitj IPA – Burning for multiple outcomes

Burning throughout the Kurtonitj IPA will aim to remove fuels in targeted areas, with the hope of exposing new cultural heritage sites such as stones houses and eel traps, this is explained further in Figure 1.12 and 1.13. Sections of Phragmites and Carex grass will also be targeted to further enhance suitable nesting habitat for the Australasian Bittern.



Figure 1.12. approximately a 5-ha area that will be burnt to reduce fuels. The area will then be surveyed for potential stone house structures.



Figure 1.13. the burning of phragmites and other grass species will be undertaken in this area with the intent of exposing an eel trap that has previously been registered.



Figure 1.14. approximately 10-ha of Phragmites on the Kurtonitj IPA will be targeted to further enhance suitable nesting habitat for the Australasian Bittern

Lake Condah IPA – Floodplain burns for hunting access

The burning of native and non-native grass species on the flood plain of Lake Condah through early winter, increases access for eeling and hunting when the lake is flooded between June and November.



Figure 1.13. mosaic burning undertaken on the flood plains of Lake Condah.

Allambie IPA –

No burns identified to date.

Lake Gorrie IPA – Burning to reduce fuel loads

Larger scale areas on the Lake Gorrie IPA will be targeted to reduce fuel loads adjacent to the Budj Bim National park and private properties.

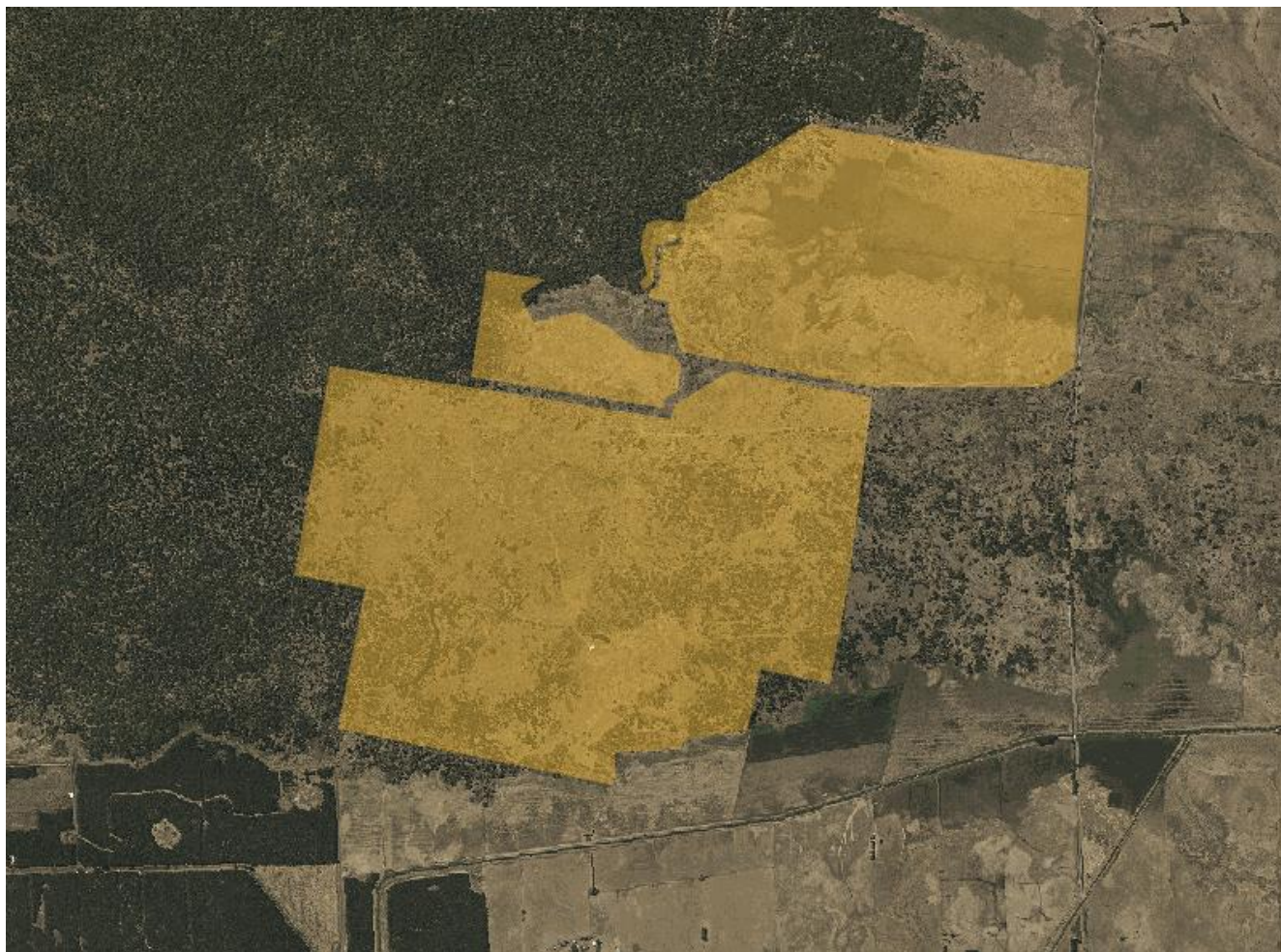


Figure 1.16. Lake Gorrie IPA is highlighted in yellow, with Budj Bim National Park and private bush blocks to the north-east.

Appendix 1. Burn-off Notification



Burn-off Notification

To:	ESTA Ballarat	From:	
Att:	Team Leader	Pages:	1
Fax:	03 5337 3501	Date:	
Re:	Burn-Off Notification	CC:	

ESTA Telephone: 1800 668 511 (For burn offs only) Email burnoffs@esta.vic.gov.au

The following information relates to a planned burn-off

Location (include cross Road) (this helps to identify the exact location in Victoria)	
Start Date (Intended day to light up)	
Have you looked at the weather forecast?	
Start Time (Are the weather conditions calm for the burn)	
End Date (Intended day fire extinguished)	
Consider the weather forecast 2 days after?	
End Time (How long will the fire burn for?)	
Size (sq meters) (Pile large) (Pile small) (bonfire how high & how wide)	
Fuel Type (grass & branches) (farm land) (private bush land)	
SV Map Reference (residential address) (location where burn will be) (Please indicate Region)	
Permit number (if applicable) (Shire) (DSE) (CFA)	
Site contact (name) & (number) (if differs from above)	
Do you require further information regarding burning off (requirements / actions for burning off)	

This facsimile contains confidential information intended only for the person named above. It may also be subject to legal privilege. If you are not the named recipient, any disclosure, copying or use of the contents of this facsimile is prohibited. If you have received this facsimile in error please notify this office by telephone immediately.



Appendix 2. SMEACSQ template

BURN NAME: DATE:		LOCATION:	
SITUATION Current Situation Details of Burn Property at risk Location Weather			
MISSION What are we trying to achieve? Burn Objectives			
EXECUTION How do we plan to achieve objectives? Sectorisation Strategies Tactics Resource Deployment Resource Movement Details Timings			
ADMINISTRATION Logistics of Operation Water points Catering			
COMMAND/COMMS Incident Management Structure Communications Plan Radio Channels Strategic Telephone Numbers			
SAFETY Escape routes Fall back lines Weather Known/Anticipated Hazards Watch out Scenarios e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falling trees Snakes/Insects/PPE (Tasking suited to personnel)			
QUESTIONS			

DRAFT