

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 3 November 2020

REDUCING BUSHFIRE RISK FOR GREAT OCEAN ROAD COMMUNITIES

The Victorian Government is investing \$1.5 million to deliver practical on-ground actions that will reduce the risk of bushfires for communities along the Great Ocean Road.

Approximately 35 kilometres (108 hectares) of new permanent Strategic Fuel Breaks as well as targeted hazardous tree removal will be completed near the coastal townships of Lorne, Aireys Inlet and Anglesea.

The new 40-metre-wide breaks will build on existing tracks in the area, and effectively complete a ring of fuel reduced land around the towns from where fire management activity can be undertaken, including back-burning, planned burns, mulching and slashing.

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) is working in partnership with the Surf Coast Shire Council and private landowners whose properties the new breaks will go through to deliver the works. They will be regularly maintained to resemble a healthy open woodland and, in some areas, will support native grasses to thrive.

In 2020, one fuel break will be established near each township to provide the community with an opportunity to see firsthand what they will look like, with all works expected to be completed by early 2021. Planning is also underway to expand the project to other townships along the coast.

Regional Roads Victoria will be conducting critical hazardous tree removal along 45 kilometres of roadsides in the area, including from Torquay to Lorne and the Lorne-Deans Marsh Road.

Removal of hazardous trees makes these roads safer by reducing the risk of falling limbs that can block roads for emergency services and residents during storms and fires.

Strategic fuel breaks and hazardous tree removal are part of FFMVic's active year-round work to manage bushfire risk in the landscape that includes partnering with other agencies, councils and communities.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Lily D'Ambrosio

"This work will improve the safety of our fire crews and boost their ability to fight, contain or reduce the impacts of bushfires on the environment and local communities."

"With the safe window to conduct planned burning getting smaller, practical on-ground initiatives like this are vital to make sure we continue to reduce risk in what is a very bushfire prone landscape."

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

"This is important work to allow continued road access for our emergency services and residents - and I want to thank landowners for their willingness to work together to reduce bushfire risk for the entire community."

Quote attributable to FFMVic Chief Fire Officer, Chris Hardman

"This is a great example of our Safer Together approach to bushfire management working on the ground. We're involving other agencies and the local community in decision making about bushfire management to get real results."

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