

FACT SHEET – Fire Management Plan



What does the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan do?

The Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan sets out the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies to be implemented by the Committee and fire management agencies in and around the Winton Wetlands.

What is the aim of the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan?

The Plan includes the following information:

- Sets fire management objectives.
- Outlines links to legislation related to fire planning within the Winton Wetlands.
- Describes the key fire management strategies and actions.
- Outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Committee, fire management agencies and other stakeholders.
- Identifies potential improvements to fire management arrangements for Winton Wetlands.



What are the objectives of the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan?

The following are the key objectives of the Plan:

- Protect human life, property and natural resources from fire and fire management activities.
- Protect wetland values from the damaging effects of wildfire and inappropriate fire regimes.
- Minimise the undesirable impacts of wildfires originating in the wetland.
- Co-operate with relevant agencies and land managers in fire management.
- Minimise the risk of fire spreading from within the wetland reserve.
- Use fire effectively and as appropriate to enhance native vegetation communities.

Who contributed to the development of the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan?

The Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan was developed in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI), the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Goulburn-Murray Water, the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, the Benalla Rural City Council and the Rural City of Wangaratta.

What activities does the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan propose?

The updated Fire Management Plan makes a number of suggestions to improve fire prevention and management, in addition to the activities already in place. These suggestions include:

- Improvements to the administrative procedures for fire management to ensure all infrastructure, such as roads, access tracks, water points and signage, is maintained in good condition.
- The development of an all-hazard emergency management plan in conjunction with the upgrades to community facilities and infrastructure.
- A feasibility study of whether the new visitor hub would be appropriate as a Neighbourhood Safer Place.
- Joint training days with all agencies and organisations involved in fire suppression to familiarise themselves with the reserve and run through fire simulation exercises.
- Reviewing health and safety guidelines to ensure it meets best practice and is consistent for all people working in the Reserve.

Does the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan allow for planned burning?

The 2011 Restoration and Monitoring Strategic Plan recommended that planned burning is not an appropriate fire management tool for use on a large scale in Winton Wetlands. Large-scale burns may have a negative impact on wetland vegetation and also have the potential to ignite dead standing trees. Instead, grazing in strategic locations is the preferred method to manage biomass.

The report does, however, suggest that planned burning may be appropriate on a small scale in specific instances to manage fire hazard fuel loads on the Winton Wetlands and in accordance with DEPI's annual Fire Operations Plan. This year, three planned burns have been submitted for approval by DEPI.

How can I obtain a copy of the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan?

Copies of the Winton Wetlands Fire Management Plan can be downloaded from the Committee's website www.wintonwetlands.com.au or obtained from the Committee's offices at **24 Church St Benalla**. Alternately contact the office on **5762 1192** or by email info@wintonwetlands.org