



Your details

Ms

Title

First name

deborah

Last name

padroth

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A resident in a bushfire-affected area

Submission type

I am making a personal submission

Consent to make submission public

I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

late October 2019 lightning caused a bushfire to start at Yerranderrie NSW, this was to be known as The Green Wattle Creek Fire. Crews were sent and had this fire contained at a size of app 40 hectares , they were then stood down, this fire then and was allowed to spread. It grew and grew in size consuming hundreds of hectares of National Park, this was made simple due to the fact of 30 years of mismanagement by the National Parks and Wildlife Service . The fuel load had been allowed to build up over the decades through neglect of maintenance , fire trails allowed for undergrowth to take place, locked gates forbidding anyone in there, nil hazard reduction. Approximately the beginning of December 2019 new fire trail and the clearing of existing fire trails began using heavy machinery from Perigrine Lane Buxton through Balmoral to Colo Vale, it was then proposed to use this to back burn to protect the villages as the rfb had 4 days and 4 nights of favorable weather to do so, the back burn never happened, they were again stood down and

instructed not to do so. I joined other community residents in attending meetings held by the RFS at Hill Top and Bargo, I found these meetings very ill informed as did other residents. I attended a community meeting held by Balmoral RFB, at this meeting we were told the true extent of the Green Wattle Creek Fire. On the 18th December 2019 a public broadcast was announced for catastrophic weather forecasted for the 19th December 2019, despite this warning, a backburn was lit in Seabrook Road Balmoral on the 18th December, this was the fire that ripped through Balmoral, Buxton and Bargo. Saturday 21st December 2019 Balmoral and Buxton volunteer fire brigades were instructed by head office to leave their base, thankfully they defied these orders as Balmoral was hit again by fire.

1- why was this fire allowed to spread when it was app 40 hectares in size and contained?

2-why were the crews who had prepared the fire trails with sufficient time to back burn stood down and hence the back burn did not proceed?

3-why were crews instructed to back burn the day before it was well known to be a catastrophic fire day the next day?

4-why were Balmoral and Buxton crews ordered out of area on 21st December 2019 when fires were inevitable in their area?

5- Why were there no aerial support on 19th December 2019 ?

6- Why has there been no management / hazard reduction of National Parks and Conservation Areas?

The Fires Near Me App is not efficient and slow to update. I find the person/persons responsible for these fires are the people that sit in an office using computer models and NOT listening to local brigade Captains who have many years of local knowledge and know the lay of the land. I stayed and fought the fire on the 19th December, we saved our home, if we had not been here it would have burnt to the ground, we prepared, we had a plan, only because Captain Brendon O'Conner of Balmoral Rural Fire Brigade was honest, I owe him. Local brigades need more control. I sincerely hope those who were responsible are held accountable as not only thousands of hectares of fauna were destroyed, thousands of native animals were destroyed, people lost their homes and have been traumatized and tragically people lost their lives. There have been many bush fires in the past and many coronial inquests but sadly we never learn and history repeats itself over and over again, as for the ferocity of these fires, it is not climate change, it is the mismanagement of our National Parks.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#).

Supporting documents or images
