

## URGENT REQUEST FOR HAZARD REDUCTION BURN AND CLEARANCE AND MAINTENANCE OF ASSET PROTECTION ZONE FOR THE MOYRAN PARADE GRAYS POINT SECTOR OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

The Community Fire Unit Teams (CFU MHP 303, 304 and 305) and residents of Moyran Parade, Grays Point, being in a Sutherland Shire Council Bushfire Prone Land area, Figure 1, urgently request that a hazard reduction burn (HRB) be undertaken in the Royal National Park (RNP) in the area identified on the aerial photograph, Figure 2. We also request that an asset protection zone (APZ) of at least 50 metres be created and maintained annually, as highlighted in Figure 2. With carefully planned burning techniques the much-valued tree canopies within both the HRB and the APZ will be retained.

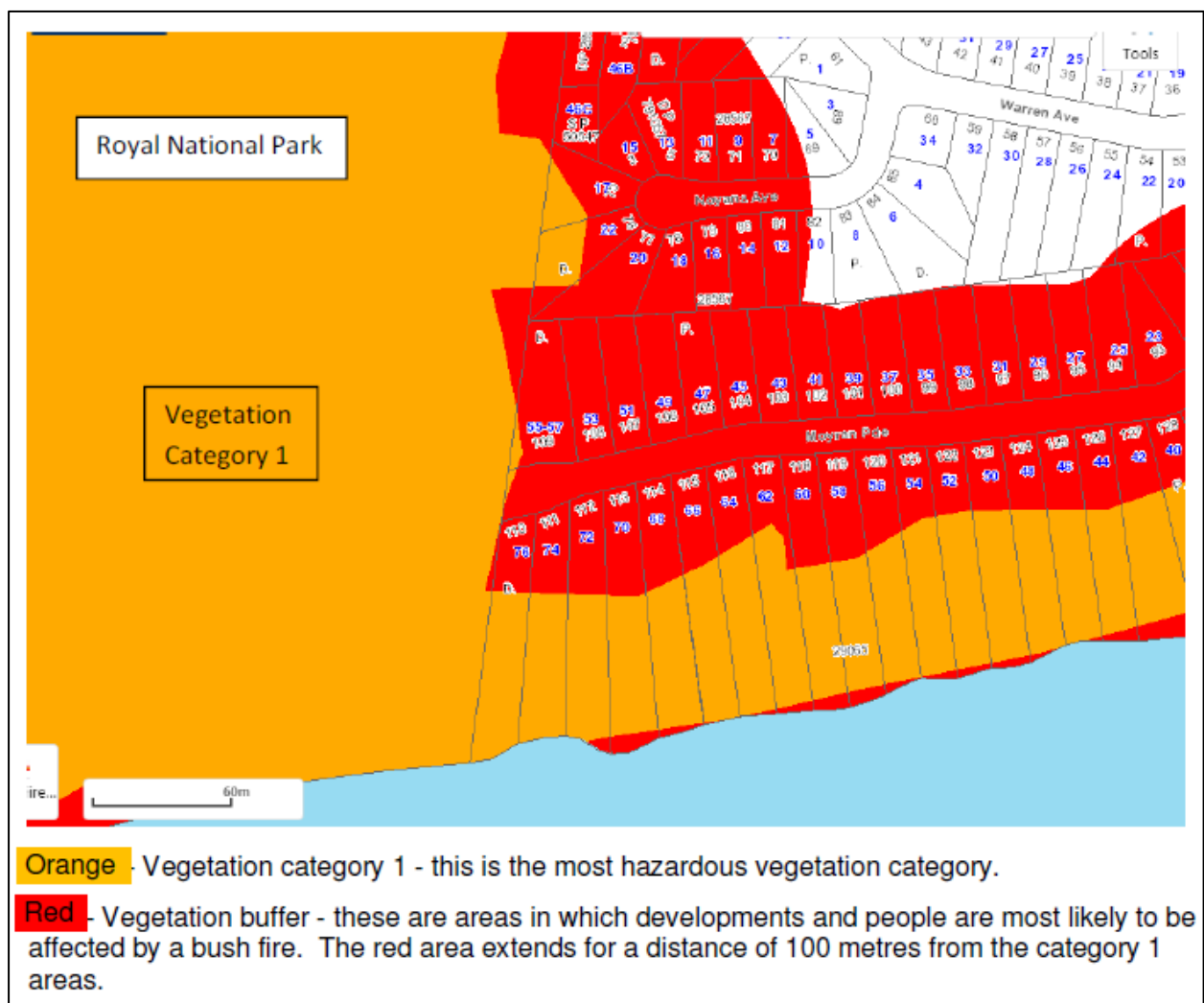
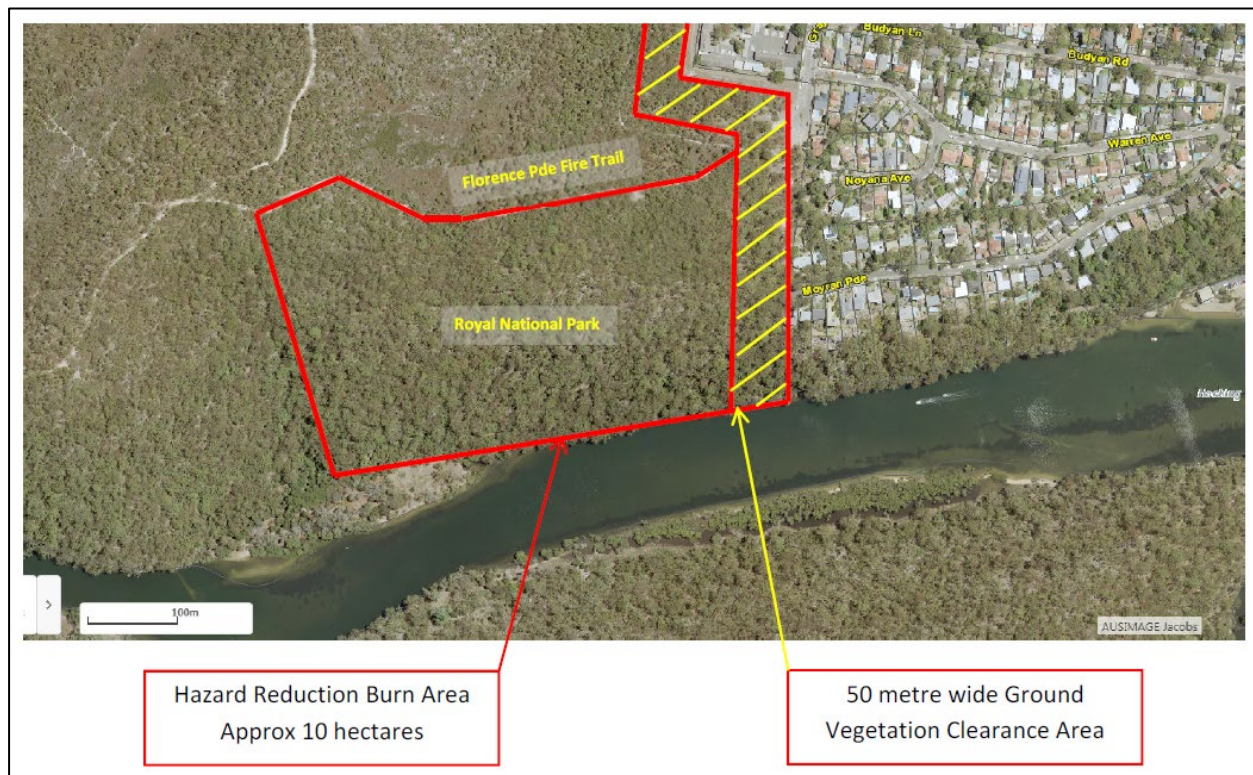


Figure 1. Sutherland Shire Council Map of Moyran Parade Bush Fire Prone Land



**Figure 2. Hazard Reduction Burn and Ground Vegetation Clearance Areas**

Further, we recommend that the thick load of vegetation in the APZ be removed and that this process be an annual exercise in helping to reduce fuel loads, to protect human and animal life and the homes of those in the community of Grays Point.

It has become blatantly obvious that the damage done, lives lost and homes destroyed in “The Black Summer of 2019-2020” has highlighted that insufficient resources have been committed to reducing significant and dangerous fuel loads in many National Park areas adjacent to residential areas. This is particularly so in the RNP area bordering the residential streets of Moyran Parade, Noyana Ave. and Warren Ave., Grays Point. Indeed, “our little school in the bush”, Grays Point Public School, is also at significant risk, being surrounded by thick bushland. These residential areas are classified as “high risk” from bushfires emanating from the RNP. We are greatly concerned that these particular areas are ready to explode. We believe that urgent action needs to be undertaken to protect residents and their homes.

From our records and recollections of long-time residents in the area, very little effective reduction burns have been undertaken in the area highlighted in the attached map. The bushfire crisis of 1994 burned the bush right up to the end of the cul-de-sac end of Moyran Parade, destroying much wildlife and vegetation and creating terror for residents. However, it did, after the crisis had abated, provide great protection for residents for a number of years but that was 26 years ago!!!

Fuel loads have since amassed significantly and any ignition would result in a dangerously high level of fire intensity with all the accompanying fearful fire-storm and rampant damage and destruction that we have recently witnessed in other parts of NSW. Our inspection of the sector has revealed that the fuel loads are as follows:

*Surface Fine Fuel Hazard* – well in excess of 35mm and in many areas exceeding 125mm; therefore, fuel load classified as **EXTREME**



*Near Surface Fine Fuel Hazard – EXTREME*

*Elevated Fine Fuel Hazard – EXTREME* in most of the sector however some areas were assessed as VERY HIGH. The photos below, Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, taken on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020, are within close proximity (10 metres to 125 metres) of houses in Moyran Parade. They clearly confirm the **EXTREME** fuel loads as indicated above.



**Figure 3 Ground Fuel Load**



**Figure 4 Ground Fuel Load**



**Figure 5 Ground Fuel Load**



**Figure 6 Ground Fuel Load**



**Figure 7 Ground Fuel Load**



**Figure 8 Ground Fuel Load**

A very limited and, we believe, totally inadequate reduction burn (approximately 400 square metres) was undertaken 6 years ago at the end of Moyran Parade. More significant action is urgently required! **RNP is a member of our community and must act the same as other members by maintaining the land they hold at least to the level expected of a responsible citizen of our community. The RNP therefore needs to urgently take responsibility for allowing fuel loads to amass in these areas.**

The somewhat cooler months from May-September 2020 would be ideal to safely conduct reduction burns to reduce these fuel loads and to set up an effective APZ in this area.

For maximum effectiveness these burns would need to extend down to the waterline of the Hacking River. During the 1994 Bushfire crisis Navy personnel were able to create a valuable APZ to the Hacking River by clearing fuel loads and providing greater safety for Grays Point homes and grateful residents.

This could be undertaken again, this time using RNP resources or contractors. Perhaps the use of Bushcare Volunteers could assist in annual maintenance.

Indeed, as you are probably aware, many Moyran residents regularly undertake approved reduction burns on their properties during the winter months to reduce fuel loads as they have done for many years. Responsible residents are committed to working together to ensure the safety of this tight little community.

Our CFU Moyran teams are also very willing to provide support in any reduction burns undertaken by the Fire and Rescue NSW, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), Sutherland Shire Council resources and Royal National Park resources.

**In summary:**

**We need effective action plans, NOW, for keeping homes and residents safe in the Moyran Parade sector.**

**We need urgent action on reduction burns and an APZ to be cleared in this sector, without fail, during the May/September 2020 period. Such an outcome would provide greater protection of human and wildlife, and reduce the ever- increasing anxiety of residents fearing the already predicted catastrophic fires.**

On behalf of all CFU team members and residents of Moyran Parade

Team Co-Ordinators, Peter Poppett (MHP305), Bob Ramsey (MHP 303) and Andrew Royall (MHP304)

17 February 2020