

**Showcasing
the NGO- landholder- science interface in
action**

**'Hotspots': A science-based,
community driven approach to
sustainable fire management**



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Fire management

- A highly emotive issue
- Emotions heightened as risks increase (climate change, changed land uses & management)
- Divisive in many communities – especially as new settlers (sea-changers or tree-changers) change the social dynamic of local communities



Enter: The 'Hotspots' Fire Project

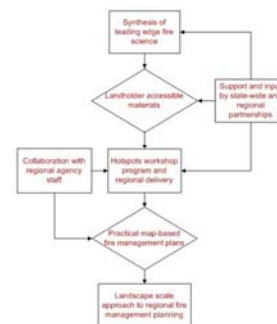
Taking fire management planning into the bush, onto the farm, and into the community.

Planning to conserve biodiversity as well as lifestyles and land uses valued by different landholders.

Bringing the people dimension into fire policy & programs for sustainable outcomes



The 'Hotspots' approach in summary



PROJECT

The 'Hotspots' Fire Project

- Building shared management, based on:
 - Leading-edge fire science
 - Presented in landholder-accessible formats
 - Through an interactive program tailored for local communities or target groups
 - In collaboration with regional agency staff
 - Producing map-based fire management plans



Managing to conserve biodiversity

- Fire as an active management tool

Integrating biodiversity needs

with

life & asset protection,

while

respecting lifestyles



Building shared understanding of fire behaviour & preferred fire intervals

Fire ecology:

- Preferred fire intervals, for
- Different vegetation types



No burning



5-50 year intervals



7-30 year intervals

Translating & interpreting science for management



Using landholder accessible formats

Fire ecology (frequency, intensity, season & extent) messages regionally focused



Through locally tailored consensus-building programs

- 3-session, independently facilitated program:
- i) Introduces fire ecology, relevant legislation & asset protection
 - ii) Map-based fire management planning – economic, social & environmental assets
 - iii) RFS-led – implementation of fire management plans through demonstration of planned burning



Involving regional agency staff

- A key resource in delivery
- Coming together from several agencies, each with their own legislative & policy obligations
- Facilitating dialogue & shared understanding - within agency, between agencies & with the community



To produce community-driven, map-based fire management plans



X hectares of local landscape managed for fire & biodiversity



Hotspots outcome

- Local communities 'in tune' with fire & biodiversity in the landscape in which they live
- Collaborative input from all agencies and organisations partnering in Hotspots



None of this happens spontaneously

- The 'Hotspots' consortium
 - NGO-hosted (NCC NSW)
 - Involving several key agencies – RFS, DECCW/NPWS, CMAs, LGSA
 - Landholder representation (NSW Farmers' Assoc)
 - Fire ecology in from the start (Uni of Wollongong Centre for Env. Risk Management of Bushfires)



None of this happens spontaneously (2)

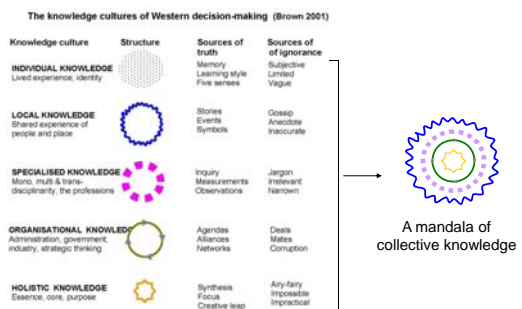
- Selecting focus communities
- Active community networking & recruitment – involving the influencers
- Building buy-in – timing, addressing needs & values, location etc
- Consensus-building & conflict resolving strategies – agendas, format, activities etc
- Including different learning styles & 'ways of knowing' – both in communities & in project teams
- Building up to shared outcomes



- Sustainable fire management has to bring together many different needs, perspectives, expectations and values.
- The 'Hotspots' fire project is as much a collaborative social learning project as a fire management project.



Acknowledging different 'ways of knowing'



Accommodating different ways of learning

- Using 4 (or is it 5) senses:
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Kinaesthetic
 - Tactile, and
 - Intuitive



Different ways of learning (2)

From temperament theory (Keirsey):

- Guardians** (40% of population, MBTI SJs) – practical learners, systematic & stepwise, like order & routine
- Artisans** (30-35%, MBTI SPs) – practical spontaneous learners, hungry for pleasure & stimulation, like physical involvement
- Idealists** (15-20%, MBTI NFs) – conceptual global learners, insightful, imaginative & appreciative, like to learn by working with people
- Rationalists** (5-10%, MBTI NTs) – conceptual learners, interested in predictive models, exploring ideas and systems, like to learn through exploring possibilities & principles



Understanding different ways of doing

- Different personality types often attracted to different types of work
 - eg. scientists are most often internally focused; use intuition; live in a world of ideas & strategic planning; value intelligence, knowledge & competence.
- What about :
 - Fire Management Officers?
 - landholders/primary producers (many types?),
 - environmental activists?
 - policy-makers?



The process needs investment...

If the outcomes are to be built
and
sustained into the future.

Getting the 'Hotspots' approach to a point where it is an integral part of other NRM activities



Thanks to...

- The core 'Hotspots' project team based at NCC NSW & in the NSW RFS
- Fellow independent facilitators Julie Woodroffe, Jane Elix & Valerie Brown
- My own assistant Heather Pearce
- The many agency staff & local community members with whom I've worked

