

Goolawah Co-operative Property Inspection

On July 19th 2017, Ruth and Cherylee from the Lower North Coast Community Engagement Brigade were invited by Roger Ball to do a site/property inspection. This was to identify any possible threats to the Co-operative in the upcoming fire season and to suggest any ways these threats could be mitigated.

Our findings on the day were:

- On the whole the Co-operative is well maintained with clear identification as to where there is Static Water supplies (SWS).
- Roads are clear and can be utilized by two-way traffic in most areas.
- The majority of the houses/homes/properties are well maintained and have good Asset Protection Zones (APZ).
- The maps of the area are a great idea.
- The machinery shed is in a good location, with easy access for all.
- There is a possibility of a fire coming up from Forest Way and over the hill, impacting the homes along Ironside Drive. A low impact burn started now while the area is damp along Forrest Way/ Ironside Drive will assist in lowering the risk from fire.

However the following do present problems should another fire come through as was seen in Crescent Head/ Dondingalang/ Kundabung earlier this year.

- Not all properties have house numbers and some of those that do, the number is not clear. This makes it difficult should any first responders need to actually attend a property fire, or should an Ambulance be required.
- Some properties require mowing or slashing of long grass.
- Dam walls need slashing and possibly fire retardant vegetation grown along the dam walls. This presents the problem of trying to access a SWS that may be impacted by fire for attending fire vehicles.
- One property has many mounds of gum leaves piled up. These mounds are very combustible and can / will cause ember attacks if they ignite.
- Meshing in any area under verandas of houses raised above ground level, will prevent embers from coming in under the house and possibly igniting.
- There is a heavy load of leaf litter on the ground and across the roads. Low intensity burns will remove this and remove some risk of a major impact of fire. Low intensity burns will not impact flora or fauna.

- Some properties have a lot of “stuff” around them, with long grass growing close to the houses. A general tidy up will benefit those places and assist in the reduction of embers being caused.
- Some properties would be considered “Undefendable” given the condition they are in.

We are committed to assisting the community plan and prepare for future wildfire events. Your building resilience and personal survival can be further enhanced by having in place a Bush Fire Survival Plan.

Below is a general checklist in preparation of the bush fire season:

- keep lawns short and gardens well maintained
- cut back trees and shrubs overhanging buildings
- clean up fallen leaves, twigs and debris around the property
- have hoses long enough to reach around your house
- if you have a pool, tank or dam, put a Static Water Supply (SWS) sign on your property entrance
- check that your insurance is adequate and up to date; and
- Complete your Bush Fire Survival Plan available at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

How we can help:

Bush fire Survival Planning

If you would like some assistance with filling in your bush fire survival plan we have trained volunteers who can meet with you at a convenient time to provide you with assistance. Please call **Belinda Devine on (02) 6562 1964 to arrange an appointment.**

AIDER (Assistance for Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents)

AIDER is a once off FREE service, supporting residents to live safely and confidently in areas where bush fires may start. The property must be bush fire prone, meaning an area of land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire attack.

Who is eligible? Aged residents and residents with disabling conditions who have limited domestic support from family, relatives, friends or other services. *Call (02) 8741 4955 to request an assessment of your property*

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate

I suggest you obtain an application for a hazard reduction certificate to this letter. The application is free to lodge and will trigger an inspection by a qualified officer to assess what works are necessary to create an asset protection zone for your home. From this inspection

we will process the application and where possible issue a hazard reduction certificate with conditions to minimise the environment impact.

In conclusion, we, the Lower North Coast Community Engagement Brigade, would be happy to assist one weekend, with any property holder wanting to complete their Bush Fire Survival Plan. We are available to answer any questions. Please feel free to contact Ruth on 65617113 to make arrangements for future visits.