

Towong Municipal Recovery Plan 2019-2021 Upper Murray 26 Bushfires



We pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the land in which we live, work and visit.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Adopted: December 2020

Revision: July 2021

Message from the Minister for Police and Emergency Services



The Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-2020 had a devastating impact on the Upper Murray community and the environment. I am committed to ensuring that the right support is provided to the community to help with recovery and rebuilding.

Homes were lost, farms destroyed, businesses affected, and the natural environment ravaged. Tragically, five lives were lost, and I join all Victorians in extending my sympathies to their families, friends, and work mates.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and efforts of emergency workers and volunteers, many from the Upper Murray, who over many days and nights fought to bring the fires under control, supporting residents to protect their lives and livelihoods. I also extend my thanks to the many volunteers who stepped up to provide support in response to the fires and who continue to give their support today. We have seen the best of humanity in action.

In the months since the fires, Victorians have demonstrated extraordinary strength and community spirit as they start to rebuild their lives.

The Victorian Government is dedicated to standing shoulder to shoulder with communities to ensure people can access the immediate, medium, and long-term support that will help them to recover and rebuild.

Our approach to recovery is guided by the principle that a locally led and locally-driven recovery will ensure the best outcome. The Upper Murray community and other affected communities should be confident they will be not only empowered to lead recovery efforts but also well supported over the long haul.

The road to recovery is long and while much has been done since the fires were contained there is still a long way to go. The Victorian Government has invested more than \$347 million towards bushfire recovery and established Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) as a permanent agency to support the long-term recovery journey. BRV is working closely with the Commonwealth Government and Towong Shire Council to streamline assistance and support individuals, businesses, and communities to get back on their feet.

The 2019-2020 Victorian fire season was unprecedented and caused devastation and loss in communities across North East Victoria and East Gippsland. These communities have since been subject to the compounding impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Victorian Government will continue to stand with these communities every step of their recovery.

Together we will work to ensure these communities emerge stronger, better, and more resilient in the future.

The Honourable Lisa Neville

Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Message from the Mayor

The 2019/2020 summer saw the Upper Murray face one of its biggest natural disasters. Starting near Walwa on the New South Wales border on 26 December 2019 and burning into mid-January, almost 600 properties were impacted with 38 primary residences destroyed, thousands of kilometres of fencing destroyed and more than 6,000 livestock killed or missing. The bushfires ultimately destroyed more than 225,000 hectares of land.



The impact on our beautiful, natural environment has been immense. Individuals, businesses, and communities across the municipality and particularly in the Upper Murray region, have experienced devastating losses and need to rebuild their lives and communities.

For many, it is still a long road ahead. But we know our communities are strong and resilient – it is what has defined us and continues to sustain the small townships, villages and communities of the Upper Murray.

Out of this disaster, opportunities are emerging. We know that when communities lead their own recovery and own the priorities and plans for their future, the success is greater and the outcomes achieved are more sustainable.

Council is committed to working in partnership with the Federal and State Governments and alongside our communities to support recovery and to grow stronger from this experience.

I want to say thank you to the many volunteers and agencies who have worked with us over the past 12 months and continue to support our communities in their recovery. People have come from all over Australia and the world to risk their lives fighting fires, hundreds of thousands of strangers have donated time, money, and goods to support us and the many other communities that have been impacted by the fires across Australia. From managing the relief centres, helping build fences or delivering hay, in the face of tragedy we are reminded of our shared humanity.

On behalf of the Towong Shire Council, I applaud the work of all the agencies and people committed to fulfilling the actions outlined within this recovery plan.

Cr David Wortmann

Mayor, Towong Shire Council

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Towong Shire profile

Towong Shire, positioned in far north-eastern Victoria, on the Victorian-New South Wales border, about 350 kms North East of Melbourne. It is bounded by the Murray River in the north and east, the East Gippsland and Alpine shires in the south, and the Indigo Shire and City of Wodonga in the west.

The Shire offers a diversity of landscapes that range from pastoral and agricultural farming areas to pristine national parks and state forest environments to alpine peaks and waterways.

The Shire covers one of the state's largest local government land areas of 6600 square kms. Corryong (population 1348) and Tallangatta (population 1082) are the Shire's main urban centres with other significant settlements including:

- Bellbridge and Bethanga which offer town/village living opportunities close to the larger regional centres of Wodonga and Albury
- Communities at Dartmouth, Eskdale and Mitta Mitta which are more remote and self-reliant
- Talgarno, Granya, Walwa, Tintalra and Towong which provide lifestyle choices on the banks of the Murray River
- Cudgewa, Koetong, Old Tallangatta, Bullioh and Tallangatta Valley which are nestled in fertile valleys and surrounded by scenic hills.

The Shire possesses some of Australia's most pristine environment. Unique wilderness areas, lakes, rivers, and streams create diverse landscapes.

The Shire services 6000 residents with an older than average population with a median age of 58 years, 36.2 per cent higher than the Victorian median age of 37 years. Towong Shire has lower than average local household income when compared with regional Victoria as a whole, partly due to the age profile of the population.

With the largest geographical footprint of a local government area in Victoria and the smallest population per sq. foot (>1 person) the Towong Shire is also responsible for an extensive road network with over 1000 kms of council roads and only 483 kms of arterial roads and with no public transport network the communities rely predominantly on private vehicles.

The economy of the region revolves around a rich agricultural sector, tourism and timber production and processing. Approximately two-thirds of businesses located in the Shire are in the agriculture and forestry industries. The five largest employers across the Shire are within the beef farming sector, hospitals, general practice medical services, dairy farming and other agricultural product wholesaling sector. Towong is comprised of 36 different towns, townships and villages, 19 of which are in the Upper Murray region.

Our Council vision is:

We will be a World Class small Council and Towong Shire will be the ideal place to live.

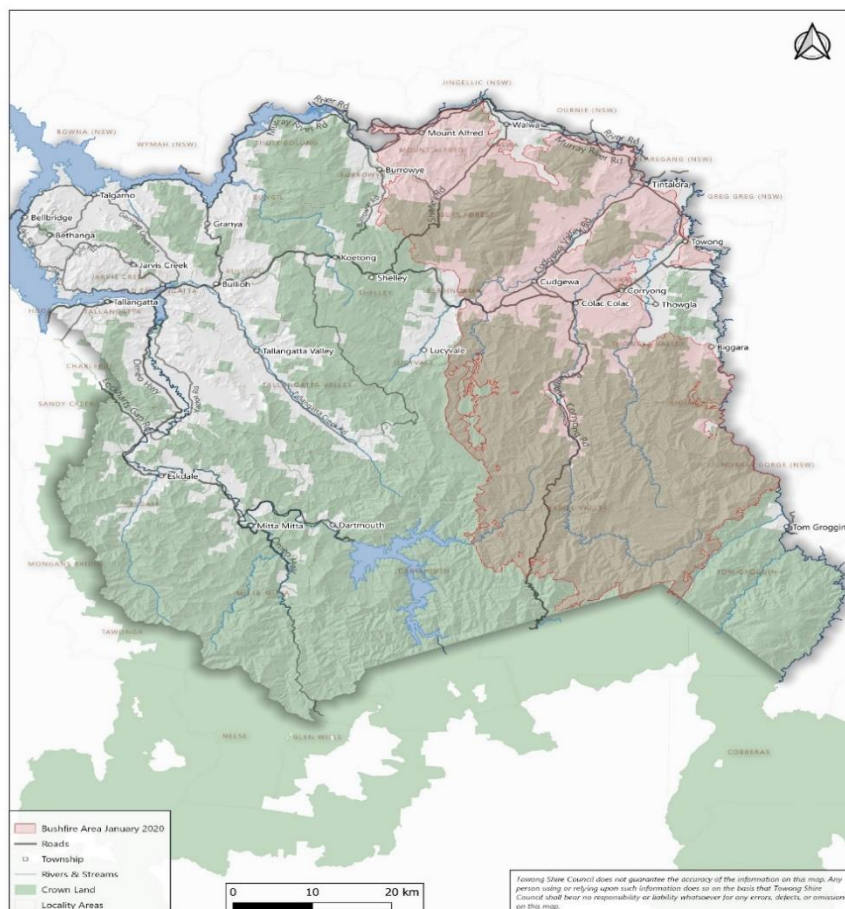
The Event – Upper Murray 26 bushfire

The 2019-2020 summer bushfire period was an unprecedented extreme event for Australia, seeing over 17 million hectares burned across NSW, Victoria, Queensland, ACT, Western Australia and South Australia, the loss of 33 lives and 3,094 homes. In Victoria alone, 1.5 million hectares of land was burnt, with approximately 218,015 hectares within the Towong Shire.

The Upper Murray 26 bushfire started in New South Wales on 29 December 2019 near Walwa. The bushfire developed quickly and could not be contained at first attack. Under deteriorating fire weather conditions, it expanded rapidly. The fire spotted into Victoria on 30 December 2019 and continued to accelerate. The fire was eventually contained on 25 January 2020.

Emergency warnings were issued for Burrowye, Cudgewa, Cudgewa North, Guys Forest, Mount Alfred, Pine Mountain, Tintalra, and Walwa. An evacuation order was issued from 6.00am on Friday 3 January 2020 for the area. A State of Disaster was declared by the Victorian Government on 3 January 2020.

The impacts of climate change will amplify the bushfire seasons in years to come. The well-established relationship between the Towong Shire, particularly the Upper Murray Region, and the neighbouring NSW communities in the Snowy Valleys Council area, are a strong foundation to build on and further embed resilience and preparedness for any future bushfires or challenges faced by the Towong Shire community into the future.



Bushfire Affected Area Towong Shire

Map scale: 1:170,000 @ A3
 Map last updated: 18 Aug 2020
 Datum/Projection: GDA84 MGA Zone 55 

Impacts

The Upper Murray 26 bushfire impacted approximately 226,000 hectares with 218,055 hectares within Victoria.

Within the Towong Shire boundary, 59,849 hectares of agricultural land was burnt including 49,808 hectares of grazing land and 8,500 hectares mixed farming.

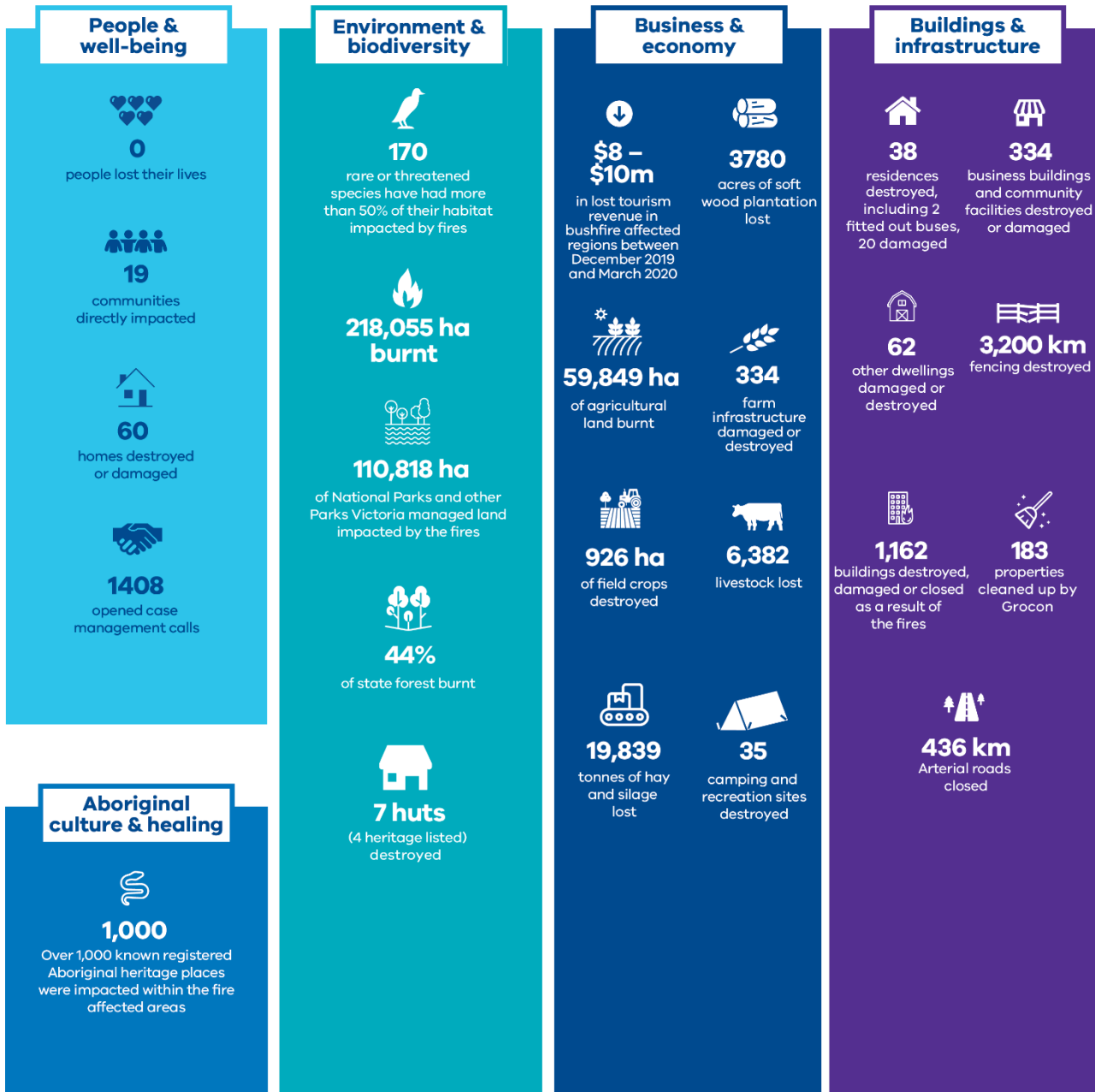
The fires also impacted significantly on the township areas causing losses to homes and businesses along main streets and community facilities and schools.

There were critical fencing and farm infrastructure losses, such as fodder reserves, machinery, and hay sheds.

One of the most significant and devastating impacts was the recorded loss of over 6300 head of stock within Towong alone.

32.7 per cent of Towong Shire was burnt, forming 96.6 per cent of the Upper Murray 26 bushfire where 44 per cent of what was burnt was State Forest, 30 per cent private land, 24 per cent National Parks and 3 per cent Crown land.

Communications facilities requiring repair and/or rebuilding include the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) radio infrastructure and Air Services and Country Fire Authority (CFA) radio infrastructure on Mt Mittamatite.



Consequences

Secondary Impact Assessments (SIAs) were conducted by Council Relief and Recovery staff from 4 February to 25 March 2020, initially in partnership with the CFA, RedCross and ADF personnel. Some follow up and auditing continued into April 2020. These assessments occur after Initial Impact Assessments (IIA) have been conducted by emergency services staff.

The Emergency Management Manual of Victoria (EMMV) designates the roles and responsibilities of individuals who undertake SIAs following a disaster event. Local Government is responsible for completing these as well as coordinating the SIA data being collected on private and municipal property under the supervision of the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM). This requires close collaboration with relevant Commonwealth and State Government departments.

Secondary Impact Assessment (SIA) is the process for determining the impact of an emergency on the built, natural, social, and economic environments of the affected community. This assessment can commence whilst the response phase is still occurring. However, fieldwork should only be conducted when it is safe enough for personnel to enter the affected area.

A detailed assessment of the damage to the affected area is essential so that the municipal recovery team can:

- Determine what needs to occur to ensure safety to life and property
- Identify what relief and recovery requirements are needed
- Provide advice to relevant Government departments, agencies, and the community
- Effectively commence their recovery operation.

Strategies for recovery are developed from the Secondary Impact Assessment report and then implemented by the range of available agencies within the local government boundary and/or region.

A total of 573 IIAs were completed.

A total of 692 SIAs were completed.

Personal impacts

In addition to the 38 primary residences destroyed, the wider Towong Shire community has been impacted either directly or indirectly. The impacts and challenges faced have been supported by the provision of a range of services and agencies providing assistance in the following areas:

- Personal support and debriefing
- Counselling
- Family violence, crisis support and counselling
- Department of Health and Human Services financial assistance grants
- Centrelink Grants
- Salvation Army grants and vouchers for petrol, meals, hardware, clothes, and household goods

- Victorian Bushfire Appeal grants and assistance
- Case management
- Support for animal care
- Assistance with clean up
- Legal advice
- Insurance support and advice
- Financial management advice and assistance
- Rebuilding support
- Emergency accommodation provision
- Temporary accommodation provision
- Food donations
- Potable water assistance
- Landslips.

Local Area Recovery Officers (LAROs) have had a key role in supporting individuals with their personal recovery, ensuring that they are linked to the services that are best placed to assist them and facilitating “warm referrals” where appropriate. LAROs have also supported individuals to access the grants and other funding and resources available to meet their needs. This work has been conducted in partnership with BRV and relevant State Government department staff.

While defined as “case management” in the Council’s Crisisworks database to enable tracking of individual properties, it is not “case management” related to personal health and wellbeing. This work has been undertaken by specialist agencies, such as Gateway Health and Windermere, with support from DHHS through Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV).

Since February 2020, 700 cases were established and included both property owners and those renting. As of August 2020, 445 cases remain open, 227 require no further action at present. Further inspections are required at 11 properties. These inspections are currently underway. 16 cases were marked resolved with no damage recorded and no further action.

The human impacts on the community is a far more difficult assessment to make and quantify as many issues and traumas are not immediately apparent and will manifest over time. However, from January to May 2020 there were 223 referrals to the Victorian Bushfire Case Management Service, predominantly managed by Gateway Health. As at 21 August 2020, there were 226 Towong Shire households continuing to receive active case management assistance provided through the state-wide scheme.

After the onset of the bushfires, the State Government appointed and funded Windemere, a mental health support provider, to provide psychosocial support to the Upper Murray region, via a 1800 number, for an initial six-week period. During this period, there were 304 intakes, 180 referrals to Gateway Health, 16 to Corryong Health and a further 3 to the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA). While this was taking place, the Upper Murray Community Recovery Hub was established by Council.

Economic impacts

The ongoing economic losses perpetuated by the fires will be felt for decades in some cases as well as the social and psychological well-being of residents and the community in general. Coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent border closures the magnitude of the situation cannot be underestimated.

The declaration of a State of Disaster and the closure of the National and State parks and forests had an immediate impact on the economy across the entirety of the Towong Shire with the reduction in visitation. Initial data suggests that losses as high as \$5 million in the March 2020 quarter and a visitation loss of an estimated 30,000 visitors to the Shire. This equates to 50 per cent of the total visitor expenditure during this quarter. Ongoing analysis of the following quarter showed an increase in the percentage of loss by a further 25 per cent with job losses/ disruptions of 50 EFT.

HVP Plantations has several long-term plantation timber assets located across North East Victoria which includes a significant holding within the Towong Shire. HVP lost 3,019 hectares in total with 2,000 hectares of harvestable age, in addition to trees, significant damage occurred to the private road infrastructure. Ongoing challenges faced by HVP are the subsequent losses of soil.

Agricultural impacts

In comparison to other fire-affected parts of the state, Towong Shire had significant losses in the agricultural sector. The level of loss and the flow on impacts to the local economy are severe. For many, the economic recovery will take many years as farmers determine their short, medium, and long-term options.

Agricultural losses in Towong Shire included:

- 59,849 hectares of agricultural land burnt, including 49,808 hectares of grazing land and 8,500 hectares of mixed farming land.
- Agriculture Victoria identified 376 fire affected property owners/managers.
- The agricultural impacts in the Upper Murray included field crops, hay and silage, and a significant area of grazing pasture.
- Agricultural infrastructure lost included numerous shearing, dairy, machinery and hay sheds, irrigation pumps, stock yards and outbuildings.
- Stock losses at last count had reached 6,382 head.
- Bees.
- Landslips and debris flows on pasture.

Infrastructure impacts

The losses to infrastructure across the Towong Shire and the associated clean-up has been extensive. Grocon was contracted by BRV to clean-up 183 directly affected properties.

Extensive damage to fencing occurred across the fire-impacted area. A record total of 3,200 kms of fencing was damaged or destroyed. Volunteer agencies - including Blaze-Aid, Fencing for Fires and Uniting Fencers – assisted many farmers to remove and replace burnt fences.

This work was interrupted by COVID-19 restrictions. Disruptions occurred in April 2020 when Stage 3 restrictions were initially introduced. Work re-commenced in early June when Stage 2 restrictions were put in place. However, with the re-introduction of Stage 3 restrictions in July 2020, this work was again interrupted. The closure of the border between NSW and Victoria has also impacted.

When Blaze-Aid left in late April 2020, 142 properties still required assistance with fencing (as at 1 May 2020). Come October 2020, over 300 private properties had fencing work completed on them by agencies including BlazeAid, Rotary and the Uniting Church. This does not represent all completed work as not all agencies assisting with fencing have provided their data to Council. Eleven months on and agencies continue to have a presence in the Upper Murray.

Collection of fence wire is also critical. This work has been contracted by Council. However, as the contractor was in NSW, this work ceased in July 2020 with 43 properties registered for assistance. Work recommenced in September 2020 with 56 locations collected.

The loss of potable water was a significant issue for many households across the fire affected area. Many properties relied on pumping water from the river and other waterways which were polluted by ash and other debris. The loss of water tanks and property supporting feeders into tanks were also significant. More than 120 requests for potable water have been supplied to support accessibility to drinking water.

The COVID-19 restrictions impacted on households being able to access new water tanks. There were 37 water tanks destroyed with a further 20 damaged. In recognition of the high need, DELWP extended access to potable water with an agreement with Council to meet the demand. This agreement was in place until the end of September 2020. This enabled potable water deliveries to be made to households that required it, with 34 deliveries captured under this agreement.

The level of public asset damage was moderate compared with the damage on private property. Roadside vegetation, culverts, signs, and road markers made up most of the impact.

| Public infrastructure | Owner | Damaged |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Corryong Landfill | Council | Storage shed Tip liner Loader |
| Guys Forrest Tennis Courts | Council | Toilets Shed |
| Corryong Saleyards | Council | Fencing |
| Corryong Aerodrome | Council | Fencing |
| Cudgewa Playground | Council | Destroyed |
| Corryong Recreation Reserve | Committee of Management (Council insurance) | Buildings |
| Cudgewa Football Club | Committee of Management (Council insurance) | Grass on oval and fencing |

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Farren's Lookout | Council | Tourist signs x 2 Decking on boardwalk Landscaping works |
| Newman's Lookout | Council | Tourist road signs x 2 Lookout entrance sign x 1 Landscaping works |
| Touzel's Bridge | Council | Damage to decking |
| Corryong Men's Shed | Committee of Management (Council) | Shed material loss |
| Price Hill Lane Bridge | Council | Flood damage |
| Roads | Council | Guideposts Roads signs |
| Communications infrastructure – Mt Mittamatite | DELWP to supply | DELWP radio infrastructure Air services and CFA radio infrastructure |

Source: Towong Shire Council

Environmental impacts

The severity of the fire through forested areas was significant, with 70 per cent of affected forests showing canopy having been burnt or scorched. This has impeded the natural environment's ability to regenerate effectively as closed canopy forests respond poorly to having open canopies. Visual assessments have shown sections of Towong Shire's forested area as being slow to rejuvenate.

The impact of the fire on the ground vegetation and organic matter was significant which exposed the land to severe erosion. Subsequent rain falls led to land slips and erosion, with run off filling dams with debris and polluting waterways for months afterwards. Both stock and domestic water supplies were compromised with significant fish kills in streams and rivers.

The impact on wildlife has been devastating, with millions of animals, bats and insects lost directly to the fires or indirectly from lost habitat and food sources. The fires have also caused the loss of established and unique wildlife habitat, including an estimated 1,800 hectares of immature alpine ash forest. Feral animals, invasive weeds and invasive native species have the potential to become an increasing problem over the years ahead, if left unmanaged.

Challenges

Towong Shire's small population, vast geographic area, topography, and location present Council with a range of significant challenges. The population density is less than one person per square km. To add to the complexity of recovery planning, there are many smaller, isolated communities in the Shire. Some of these communities are defined by their topography and have developed their own nature and characteristics and, to a certain extent, an inherent resilience.

The small population contributes to one of the most inherent challenges facing Council – the low rate base and thus the financial constraints on Council to meet and maintain its obligations as a Local Government Authority in Victoria, while at the same time, fulfilling its ongoing commitment to provide responsive and quality services for all residents. This challenge is faced by many small rural municipalities which are also at risk of natural disaster events such as the 2019-2020 bushfires.

Cross-border impacts

All the communities of the Upper Murray region, including the NSW towns of Tooma, Khancoban, Jingellic, Ournie and surrounds operate functionally as one – the border is not relevant to day-to-day life in these townships. Indeed, the sustainability of recovery for the Upper Murray communities is dependent upon an integrated and cohesive approach to renewal and rebuilding.

This cross-border environment makes dealing with State Governments more complex, however a number of Community Recovery Committees and working groups have cross-border representation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added a further level of complexity to community recovery. At a local level, the restrictions mandated by the Victorian Government, e.g. limits to the numbers of community members permitted to attend meetings, the difficulties associated with remoteness, communication and interaction, and the NSW Government border closure, has required extra patience and flexible management.

The travel restrictions imposed by the NSW Government have not only created challenges to cross-border commerce, education and commuting, but also limit Victorian-based Upper Murray community's ability to extend support to the friends, families and residents, who were equally impacted by the fires, on the NSW side of the border and to collectively plan their future.

These impacts have meant a further loss of income to the tourism and hospitality sectors, compounding mental health issues and some restrictions or delivery modifications of service delivery from supporting agencies and the private sector.

Recovery planning

The Upper Murray communities within the Towong Shire were significantly impacted during the 2019-2020 bushfires and whilst this plan reflects the recovery of the whole Shire, there is a predominance of focus on the Upper Murray as a region.

Council is committed to working alongside the community in its recovery journey, and to creating opportunities to improve local conditions beyond the bushfires by enhancing social and natural environments, infrastructure and economies. This plan will evolve over time and is designed to create a coordinated and well managed recovery that has the community at its core. Renewal and rebuilding of the region will only be successful if communities are the primary drivers of the process.

While the disaster is a tragic event and impacts the whole community, it presents an opportunity for strengthening and renewal.

Council will also work in partnership with both Commonwealth and State Governments, neighbouring Snowy Valley Council and agencies, such as BRV, as well as other community and private sector organisations. This plan has been guided by Part 4 of the EMMV, the Natural Principles for Disaster Recovery, the Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-20 State Recovery Plan and the BRV Recovery Framework. Alignment of these frameworks ensures a consistency of approach to recovery, and the clear targeting of funding opportunities and support offered by all levels of Government

The 2019-2020 bushfires directly impacted the Upper Murray region and therefore the recovery work is primarily focused on this area of the Shire. However, other areas of Towong Shire experienced secondary impacts. This is reflected in the priorities and actions outlined in this plan and in line with the following recovery principles:

- Community is at the centre and is the leader of what we do.
- We value the history and dynamics of each of the Upper Murray communities and across the Towong Shire.
- Successful recovery builds on and supports the communities' strengths and resilience.
- Community ownership of recovery strategies and actions depends on effective and inclusive engagement.

| Lead | Plan | Description |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Community | Community Recovery Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify community priorities, goals and aspirations Include initiatives that would benefit from government and other support Shaped and owned by communities, supported by BRV, departments and council Build on existing plans Could be led by a CRC or other community recovery group |
| Municipal | Municipal/Regional Recovery Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address needs, challenges and recovery activities within a Local Government Area Includes council funding decisions Developed independently at the municipal level within existing processes, with support from BRV and Victorian Government departments Recovery Framework (or key elements of) caters for complexity of recovery issues through consistency and alignment Where it makes sense to do so, planning for a line of recovery may occur across adjacent Local Government Areas |
| State | State Recovery Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on state recovery responsibilities, funding submissions and envelopes Integrates recovery plans across five lines of recovery in the Recovery Framework Input from all relevant agencies and other tiers of government |
| National | National Recovery Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on national support and coordination for affected areas Coordinated by a National Recovery Agency Developed in partnership with State, territory and local governments and communities Will inform longer-term Commonwealth funding commitments Complements the State Recovery Plan |

Community Recovery Plans (CRPs)

Successful community recovery is community-led, flexible and responsive whilst being deliberative and iterative, which means ideas and projects are considered and agreed on collectively by the community, with activities and priorities adapted and refined as required over the lifecycle of the CRC. The process is outlined below.

Iterative community-led Recovery Planning



Communities lead their recovery planning. Each community may choose to form a CRC or similar inclusive and representative community recovery group to lead its recovery planning process, with support and guidance from local government and BRV as appropriate.

Where a community decides not to establish a CRC or community recovery group, BRV works in partnership with local government to ensure the recovery needs and priorities of community members impacted by the disaster are captured and considered.

Community Recovery Committees

| CRC | Community recovery profile | CRC formation |
|--|---|---|
| Biggara | <p>Population of 49 (ABS Census 2016).</p> <p>Very strong, socially connected and cohesive, multi-generational, dairy farming community who farm a very fertile valley soils bounded by steep hills</p> <p>Agricultural lands were very affected by fire and landslips.</p> <p>Community Hall is the key gathering place for this community.</p> | <p>Council supported the development of CRC</p> |
| Cudgewa Representing Cudgewa, Cudgewa North, Bluff Falls | <p>Population of 261 (ABS Census 2016).</p> <p>Cudgewa was significantly impacted by the fires with a section of the main street lost.</p> <p>The two key meeting places (the pub and the hall) remain intact, as is the recreation centre where the CFA shed is situated. The local playground was also lost.</p> <p>CRC is working to strengthen community cohesion in the aftermath of the fires.</p> <p>The efforts of a local resident to share Cudgewa's plight has resulted in national fundraising to support the village's recovery.</p> | <p>Community-led formation</p> |
| Corryong | <p>Population 1348 (ABS Census 2016).</p> <p>Largest township in Towong Shire and key service centre for the Upper Murray communities in Victoria and New South Wales.</p> <p>Subject to changing demographics due to growth of health and education sectors in local service economy.</p> <p>Experienced significant impacts and community trauma due to being isolated for 4-5 days during the fire event, losing communications and transport access.</p> | <p>Council supported the development of CRC</p> |

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| | <p>Some positive economic impacts arising through recovery are due to influx of service providers and recovery personnel basing themselves in the town.</p> <p>Community is reporting mental health issues particularly amongst youth.</p> | |
| <p>Lucyvale/ Berringama Representing Lucyvale, Berringama, The Needles</p> | <p>Berringama – Approximate population 37 (8 families). Agriculture based. Many properties border with State Forest. Significant fencing and fodder lost during fires. Community has a close connection with Cudgewa community.</p> <p>Lucyvale – Approximate population 28. Small and isolated rural community cut off from other communities during 2019/20 fire event. Experienced large-scale economic impacts as a result of 2019/20 fire event.</p> <p>High degree of social cohesion and connectedness enables strong community-led recovery</p> | Community-led formation |
| <p>Nariel Valley Representing Nariel Valley and Stacey’s Bridge</p> | <p>Approximate population 90.</p> <p>A long narrow valley popular as a weekend getaway destination. A mix of agriculture, accommodation and holiday houses/non-residents landowners. The southern end is very isolated with very limited telecommunications. The southern end was also significantly fire impacted. The through road toward Benambra was closed for many months following the fire.</p> <p>Community experienced sustained water supply issues. Numbers of primary residences were lost or damaged. One of locations for short term modular housing.</p> | Council supported the development of CRC |
| <p>The Towong Peninsula Representing Talgarno, Bethanga, Bellbridge Granya</p> | <p>Strong focus on economic recovery for these communities.</p> | Community-led formation |
| <p>Thowgla</p> | <p>Population 82.</p> <p>Very isolated valley. Mix of multi-generational farming families and lifestyle blocks/hobby farms in the upper part of the valley.</p> <p>Entire valley significantly impacted by fire, with a number of primary residences lost or damaged.</p> | Council supported the development of CRC |

| | | |
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| <p>Tintaldra</p> | <p>Population 60.</p> <p>Situated on the Victorian-NSW border. Cohesive community that sees itself straddling the river.</p> <p>Community is made up of a mix of farmers and residents who work in Corryong.</p> <p>Popular crossing place to NSW (other nearest crossings are Towong and Jingellic). Removal of historic avenue of trees damaged by fire sparked community outcry.</p> | <p>Community-led formation</p> |
| <p>Towong, Towong Hill</p> | <p>Population 132 (ABS Census 2016).</p> <p>Village residents mostly retirees or people employed in Corryong and higher economic scale than the remainder of community members.</p> <p>Large proportion of residents live in the village which was significantly impacted by fire.</p> <p>Number of primary residences were lost or damaged.</p> | <p>Community-led formation</p> |
| <p>Walwa</p> <p>Representing Walwa, Pine Mountain, Guys Forest, Jingellic</p> | <p>Population approximately 230 (ABS Census 2016).</p> <p>Situated on Victorian/ NSW Border close to Jingellic.</p> <p>First area impacted by the fires. Works closely with Jingellic community on the other side of the border. Was a CFA staging area during the fires. Local health service delivered key services during and immediately after the fires.</p> <p>Community reports high levels of trauma from sustained exposure to large scale fire fronts and difficulties accessing the community and surrounding areas during this time.</p> | <p>Community-led formation</p> <p>First community-led CRC to form in Towong Shire</p> |
| <p>Upper Murray</p> | <p>Aim is to coordinate and advocate on issues affecting the Upper Murray region including provision of effective telecommunications and power.</p> <p>Interim Upper Murray CRC was established comprising members drawn from the local economic development group (Upper Murray Inc.) and key local service providers.</p> <p>CRC formally established in July 2020 with membership including Chairs of all Upper Murray CRCs.</p> <p>Interim Upper Murray CRC played a lead role in facilitating community and agency conversation – economic and social to inform the Towong Shire Municipal Recovery Plan.</p> | <p>Community-led formation</p> <p>Initial Council supported EoI process</p> |

Municipal Recovery Plans

Municipal Recovery Plans set out activities, funding, staffing, coordination, commissioning and partnership arrangements that address the specific needs, opportunities and challenges within council boundaries.

The plans articulate each council and/or local agency's service offering to support the recovery effort, focusing on the specific levers they can deploy and explain how each council and/or local agency will inform and engage with communities and support community-led recovery processes.

Local councils lead their own municipal recovery planning, drawing from existing processes and guidance from BRV, including this Recovery Framework. For some lines of recovery, planning may occur across adjacent Local Government Areas such as tourism initiatives in the business and economy line of recovery.

In addition to municipal plans mapping activities against the five lines of recovery, they should also describe outcomes, performance measures, reporting requirements and relationships with other levels of planning.

Lines of recovery

The Towong Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP), in line with Part 4 of the EMMV outlines four environments or lines of recovery. The State Recovery Framework has introduced an additional line of recovery, Aboriginal Culture and Healing to acknowledge the importance of advancing Aboriginal self-determination and promoting cultural safety through recovery efforts.

Social Environment / People and Wellbeing

The impacts of disasters on affected individuals and communities can be profound, long lasting and life changing.

Activities in this line of recovery address common issues and look to ensure people are safe, stable, and secure as a foundation for personal healing and growth. They also seek to help people and families feel a sense of belonging and connection to their community and encourage social participation in order to strengthen and build resilience in communities.

Desired outcomes:

- People are safe and secure.
- People are healthy and well.
- Communities are inclusive and people are connected.

Built Environment / Buildings and Infrastructure

Residential, commercial, and agricultural buildings are often damaged or destroyed in disasters. Similarly, essential utilities and infrastructure that communities access daily – running water, electricity, roads, schools, and community facilities – are also damaged or destroyed. Disasters can cause large scale damage and significant clean-up of debris may be required.

Desired outcomes:

- Utilities and transport routes are restored and resilient.
- Commercial and agricultural infrastructure is rebuilt and improved.
- Residential property is rebuilt and improved.
- Public infrastructure is relevant and of high quality.
- Infrastructure is fit for purpose and designed to address emerging new risks such as climate change including heat waves and changed flooding profiles.

Economic Environment / Business and Economy

Businesses and local economies suffer a range of setbacks after disasters including loss of business and livelihoods and impacts to supply chains and demand.

Activities in this line of recovery focus on how businesses and local economies can survive in the short term and thrive in the long term. Identifying and capturing opportunities for strategic investment in regional infrastructure to boost economic recovery and future development.

Desired outcomes:

- Industries and businesses recover and are stronger.
- Employment opportunities are created and accessible.
- Local businesses and communities are resilient.

Natural Environment / Environment and Biodiversity

Disasters can cause largescale destruction to the environment and to plants and animals through loss of life and habitat.

Activities in this line of recovery look to support the vitality of biodiversity through prioritisation of threatened species and native vegetation, and the restoration of natural habitats. In addition, this line seeks to recover the productive and accessible amenity of parks and forests for recreation and tourism and are geared towards betterment and resilience.

Desired outcomes:

- Natural environments are healthy, resilient, and biodiverse
- Natural environments have high levels of amenity.
- Natural environments are productive and accessible.

Aboriginal Culture and Healing

For Aboriginal people, relationships to Country, culture and community are not only interconnected, they are intrinsically linked and enmeshed with one's identity.

Activities in this line of recovery support the celebration of culture and knowledge, health, mental health and wellbeing, engagement with education, respect for land practices, connection to land, water and wildlife and strengthened representation in the workforce.

Desired outcomes:

- Aboriginal culture is valued and respected.
- Aboriginal trauma is addressed, and healing is supported.
- Aboriginal cultural safety is promoted.
- Aboriginal participation and ownership are promoted.

Implementation

Council is committed to working with communities and stakeholders to enable a community led approach to recovery and will consider the strengths, needs and priorities in the context of individuals, communities and the Shire as a whole.

This document is guided by the objectives in the Part 4 of the EMMV, the Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-20 State Recovery Plan, the BRV Recovery Framework and the Natural Principles for Disaster Recovery. It will evolve over time and is designed to create a coordinated and well managed recovery that has the community at its core.

The recovery process will take many years. Each individual, family, community group, town and business has been impacted and affected differently and will be on their own journey to recovery. For some, recovery will take longer, and the support services and recovery activities must be flexible enough to accommodate for people reaching various stages of their recovery over extended timelines. This may mean working with certain communities to a point where they feel comfortable to lead themselves as the context for them changes.

Monitoring and reporting

The Towong Municipal Recovery Committee monitors and evaluates the progress and success of recovery activity according to the long-term outcomes for each of the lines of recovery.

An outcomes-based approach to monitoring and evaluation will be used to determine the impact of recovery activity.

Three key elements underpin this approach:

1. **Long term recovery outcomes:** as clear, unambiguous statements about what long-term recovery looks like for each recovery line with criteria for assessing the success of recovery programs against these outcomes.
2. **Evaluation:** collating data collected through ongoing monitoring processes, gathering additional data and information to draw insight and conclusions about the impact of the recovery programs.
3. **Monitoring:** as the regular and ongoing assessment of efforts, for example execution of key activities within time and budget, and delivery of key outputs.

A lead agency has been outlined for each action within the Action Plans. The lead agency has the principal responsibility for oversight of the action implementation and informing the reporting processes of the MRP. The lead agency may or may not be directly involved in the delivery of the action.

Appendix 1: Action Plans

| | |
|------------|---|
| AIA | Australian Institute of Architects |
| BRV | Bushfire Recovery Victoria |
| CFA | Country Fire Authority |
| CRC | Community Recovery Committee |
| CSU | Charles Sturt University |
| DA | Dairy Australia |
| DELWP | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning |
| DET | Department of Education and Training |
| DHHS | Department of Health and Human Services |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Authority |
| GH | Gateway Health |
| G-MW | Goulburn-Murray Water |
| HIA | Housing Institute of Australia |
| MBA | Master Builders Association |
| MDBA | Murray Darling Basin Authority |
| MEMPC | Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee |
| MLA | Meat and Livestock Australia |
| MUM | Marketing Upper Murray |
| Murray PHN | Murray Primary Health Network |
| NBRA | National Bushfire Recovery Agency |
| NEBAG | North East Blackberry Action Group |
| NECMA | North East Catchment Management Authority |
| NFF | National Farmers Federation |
| NSW DPI | New South Wales Department of Primary Industries |
| NSWFF | New South Wales Farmers Federation |
| NSW LLS | New South Wales Local Land Service |
| PV | Parks Victoria |
| RRV | Regional Roads Victoria |
| SBV | Small Business Victoria |
| SES | State Emergency Service |
| SVC | Snowy Valleys Council |
| TSC | Towong Shire Council |
| UoM | University of Melbourne |
| UMCRH | Upper Murray Community Recovery Hub |
| VACCA | Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency |
| VBT | Victorian Blackberry Taskforce |
| VFA | Victorian Fisheries Authority |
| VFF | Victorian Farmers Federation |
| VICPOL | Victoria Police |

Social Environment / People and Wellbeing

The impacts of disasters on affected individuals and communities can be profound, long lasting and life changing.

Activities in this line of recovery address common issues and look to ensure people are safe, stable, and secure as a foundation for personal healing and growth.

They also seek to help people and families feel a sense of belonging and connection to their community and encourage social participation in order to strengthen and build resilience in communities.

| Desired outcomes | Priority areas |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are safe and secure. • People are healthy and well. • Communities are inclusive and people are connected. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and accommodation • Individual and household financial assistance • Psychosocial recovery • Health and medical assistance • Children, youth and families • Community connection and resilience • Volunteerism |

Monitoring and evaluation of this section of the plan is undertaken by the People and Wellbeing Working Group.

| Objective | Action | Lead Agency | Responsible agencies | Community Stakeholders | Performance indicators | Timeframe/ status |
|--|--|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Priority: Housing and accommodation | | | | | | |
| Every person has access to safe, secure and appropriate temporary accommodation to enable time to heal, reflect and explore their longer-term accommodation needs. | Develop temporary accommodation options for fire affected residents who are unable to independently access suitable short to medium term housing. | BRV | DHHS | Fire affected residents | All fire affected residents have access to suitable accommodation. | Complete |
| | Develop process for assessment of applications for temporary accommodation and temporary storage solutions (caravans, cabins, shipping containers etc. for up to three years). | BRV | TSC | Fire affected residents | Application process developed and implemented. | Complete |
| | Support households to access a range of accommodation options including social housing, providing financial assistance for bonds and rental arrangements. | GH | DHHS, VACCA | Fire affected residents | Household access accommodation that meets their needs. | Ongoing |
| | Facilitate the ordering and establishment of moveable units / caravans where required. Include anticipatory impacts of weather and site conditions, eg. landslip. | BRV | DHHS, TSC | Fire affected residents | Moveable units and caravans available for those residents desiring them. | Ongoing |
| | Complete active outreach program to connect with, assess and track individuals and families affected by bushfires, and coordinate appropriate supports. | DHHS | TSC, GH, VACCA | Fire affected residents | All individuals and families contacted and advised of services available. | Ongoing |

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|--|--|-----|--|------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| | | | | | Maintain shared data base of details and outcomes. | |
| | Utilise the UMRH to coordinate sharing the information regarding supports, grants and services for timely referrals as required. | TSC | BRV, GH, VACCA, DHHS, mental health services, NFP sector representatives | Upper Murray residents | Information updated and easily available. | Ongoing |
| | Support and promote http://givit.org.au/ to maximise access to external donations to meet local needs. | TSC | BRV | Upper Murray residents, CRC's, CNC | Website is updated regularly to identify offers of assistance. | Ongoing |
| | Develop a process to match offers of assistance with needs identified or requested via Compass, Case Managers and/or other organisations. | TSC | BRV, DHHS, GH | Upper Murray residents | Offers of assistance responded to in a timely manner. | Ongoing |
| | Identify and report broader housing issues to be addressed by the Municipal Recovery Committee, for referral to BRV, DHHS etc. for action/resolution. | BRV | TSC, DHHS | Fire affected residents | Issues identified and forwarded to appropriate organisation for action. | Ongoing |
| | Monitor housing with insecure accommodation to assess and assist with any ongoing needs. | GH | DHHS, GH, VACCA | Fire affected residents | Vulnerable housing needs are responded to and data base maintained. | Ongoing |
| | Investigate short-term and long-term options for the use of bushfire modular housing to address housing shortage needs – eg. Trades supporting recovery projects | BRV | TSC, DHHS | | Options analysis undertaken. | December 2021 |

Priority: Individual and household financial assistance

| Priority: Psychosocial recovery | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----|--|------------------|---|-----------|
| Priority: Health and medical assistance | | | | | | |
| Service sector has capacity to respond to and provide appropriate trauma counselling and psychosocial support for fire affected individuals. | Map existing services to identify service capacity, location, gaps and resource. | BRV | DHHS, TSC, Murray PHN, CHS | UMCRC | Service capacity identified. Information on services available. | July 2021 |
| | Develop and deliver training in psychosocial support for agencies across the municipality. | BRV | Murray PHN | | Training delivered. | Ongoing |
| | Maintain UMCRH information as a central point of contact for agency information and Basecamp as a source of information for service providers. | TSC | DHHS, all service providers | | Consistent and timely transfer of information between agencies and residents. | Ongoing |
| Every person who needs it can access a well-coordinated service offering, reducing the number of contacts they have from services. Every person can access specific supports when they need them, for as long as they need. Every person who accesses a | Exchange of service information between case support, mental health, financial counselling service providers, DHHS and LAROs regarding referral pathways, identification of vulnerability and service themes to improve service coordination. | BRV | All agencies engaged in recovery work | | Information widely available for agency use. | Ongoing |
| | Identify individuals and groups requiring more intensive levels of support and refer to relevant services. | GH | VACCA, mental health services, all agencies engaged in recovery work | | Services can meet demands for intensive support. | Ongoing |
| | Develop consistent referral processes to ensure referrals are responded to in a timely and appropriate manner. | BRV | DHHS, GH, VACCA | | Referrals and responses are timely and appropriate. | Ongoing |
| | Determine appropriate personal support available at the UMCRH, | TSC | GH, CH, AWH, Red Cross, BRV | Event organisers | Appropriate psychosocial supports | Ongoing |

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|--|---|------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|----------|
| service finds it contributes to their recovery. | Corryong Health and at community events. | | | | are available at UCMRH and events. | |
| | Review and evaluate the support service offerings to ensure they are assisting in meeting recovery. | BRV | All agencies engaged in recovery work | | Effectiveness of service. | Ongoing |
| Adequate provision of case management services with requisite skills and competencies. | Recruit staff within agencies to be Bushfire Case Managers. | GH / VACCA | BRV | | Adequate staff to meet identified demand. | Complete |
| | Identify information needs of case managers and develop processes to ensure their information needs and those of fire affected residents are met. | GH / VACCA | BRV | | Case managers are well informed of services available. | Complete |
| Vulnerable groups or groups with particular needs in fire affected areas are included in planning of strategies to include their particular needs. | Identify vulnerable groups or groups with particular needs through feedback from counselling and support agencies and representatives on events and projects working group. | BRV | TSC, DHHS, GH, VACCA | | Vulnerable groups and needs identified. | Ongoing |
| | Consult with and be inclusive of groups identified. | BRV | TSC, DHHS, GH, VACCA | | Consultation undertaken. | Ongoing |
| | Plan and implement project-based initiatives that include the needs of vulnerable groups. | BRV | TSC, DHHS, GH, VACCA | | Number of diverse participants in activities. | Ongoing |

| Priority: Children, youth and families | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------|
| Children and youth have a voice and are supported to recover and be resilient. | Empower and support young people to identify projects and programs that will support their recovery. | TSC | CNC, BRV | Upper Murray Youth Group Local schools | Programs identified and delivered. | Ongoing |
| | Communicate importance of child welfare and support parents, carers and teachers to identify and support good childhood recovery. | DET, Headspace, health services, TSC | Case support agencies | Local schools UMCRC | Information prepared and communicated to community. | Ongoing |
| | Liaise with and identify programs that have worked in previous bushfire communities, such as Dixons Creek and Strathewen, King Lake West Primary Schools. | Principals | DET | | Number of programs identified, developed and conducted. | Complete |
| | Develop a framework that supports Upper Murray children to recover and build resilience | UMCRC | ACF, BRV, health services, headspace, TSC | | Framework developed | December 2021 |
| Priority: Community connection and resilience | | | | | | |
| Local communities identify and plan for the delivery of community-based projects, programs and events aimed at enhancing and re-establishing | Convene CRCs with representation from fire affected communities. | TSC | BRV | | Committees convened with wide community representation and meeting regularly. | Complete |
| | Consult with fire affected communities, community groups and relevant local agencies to determine priorities and need. | CRC's | BRV, TSC | Fire affected community members | Level of contact with community members, community groups and organisations. | Ongoing |

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|---|--|-------|--|--|---|----------------|
| community connection and resilience. | CRCs consult local working groups to establish priority projects for funding. | CRCs | TSC, BRV, Recovery working groups | | Identified six monthly priority list of projects endorsed by CRC. | Ongoing |
| | Support community-based initiatives that address the longer-term recovery needs of fire affected communities. | CRC's | TSC, BRV, mental health services, local health services | | Support provided. | Ongoing |
| | Identify and access funding for community-based recovery events and projects. | CRC's | BRV, TSC, DELWP | | Grants identified and applied for. | Ongoing |
| | Establish suicide prevention network to support long term suicide prevention | CH | TSC, BRV, AWH local health services, mental health services, | All community members | Suicide prevention network established | September 2021 |
| Community events and projects are widely communicated to the broader community. | Recruit an events coordinator to support CRCs in event development and promotion. | TSC | BRV | CRC's Event organisers | Events coordinator recruited | Complete |
| | Provide opportunities for the local community to celebrate and publicise good news and achievements. | TSC | BRV | CRC's Local community organisations | Number of media stories, website information. | Ongoing |
| | Contribute/coordinate the bushfire recovery and cross border events calendar on the TSC's website to maximise community awareness and provide opportunities to participate in events and activities. | TSC | SVC | CRC's, CNC, UMI | Calendar of events developed and updated regularly. | In progress |
| | Produce monthly Bushfire Recovery Community Newsletter. | TSC | BRV | CRC's, Upper Murray community | Number of newsletters produced. | Monthly |

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|--|--|-----|--------------------------------------|---|---|---------------|
| | Provide assistance to individuals, groups and organisations in promoting community driven projects and events. | TSC | | Event organisers | Information and assistance given. Mechanisms for communication in place. | Ongoing |
| | Consult and engage with local community networks and organisations to enhance awareness of recovery projects and events. | TSC | BRV | CRC's, CNC, UMI, Traders association, UMCRC | Level of awareness of recovery projects. | Ongoing |
| Local sporting, art, culture and community groups and supported and sustainable. | Map recreation, arts and community groups and any relevant infrastructure to understand how to maximise and leverage their strengths through tourism or other programs (and identifying any groups at risk as a result of bushfires and COVID-19). | TSC | Regional or State Associations | Recreation and arts community groups | Review conducted. | June 2022 |
| | Encourage community groups to access small business and other training programs on offer. | TSC | SBV | UMI | Attendance of these groups at sessions. | Ongoing |
| | Link to existing or establish new programs that support the sustainability of local community groups and sporting clubs including supporting a culture of volunteering. | TSC | AFL North East Border, Lions/ Rotary | Local community groups, CNC | Traffic light assessment of each community group. | Ongoing |
| | Support community groups to access any relevant grants or economic recovery funding programs. | TSC | BRV | CRC's, Community groups, CNC | Increase in funding secured. | Ongoing |
| | Support the development of a strong arts and cultural offering throughout the Shire. | TSC | Regional or State Organisations | Arts and Cultural organisations and individuals | Arts and Culture Strategy developed. | December 2021 |
| | | | | | | |

| Priority: Volunteerism | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|------------------|--|--|---------------|
| Provision of services by voluntary organisations in the recovery effort are coordinated. | Develop a volunteer led preparedness and recovery model for community to build resilience. | TSC | Red cross, MEMPC | Towong Shire community | Model developed. | December 2021 |
| | Identify opportunities for a collaborative effort to coordinate volunteers in delivery of recovery services. | TSC | MEMPC | Towong Shire community | Opportunities identified and work coordinated. | December 2021 |
| Individuals and groups willing to volunteer within the recovery process are recruited and trained. | Connect with and identify people willing to volunteer within the preparedness and recovery model. | TSC | | Community organisations | Contact made with volunteers. | December 2021 |
| | Undertake a range of additional measures to recruit and train individuals and groups willing to volunteer within the recovery process. Utilise means such as advertising, liaison with community groups and working with key groups such as schools. | TSC | | Local schools, Community organisations | Recruitment process publicised. Number of volunteers recruited. | December 2021 |
| | Undertake regular activities and publish communications through media channels to acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of volunteers to the community. | TSC | BRV | CNC, CRC's | Efforts publicised. | Ongoing |

Built environment / Buildings and Infrastructure

Residential, commercial, and agricultural buildings are often damaged or destroyed in disasters.

Similarly, essential utilities and infrastructure that communities access daily – running water, electricity, roads, schools, and community facilities – are also damaged or destroyed.

Disasters can cause large scale damage and significant clean-up of debris may be required.

| Desired outcomes | Priority areas |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilities and transport routes are restored and resilient. • Commercial and agricultural infrastructure is rebuilt and improved. • Residential property is rebuilt and improved. • Public infrastructure is relevant and of high quality. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling planning and rebuilding • Restoration and resilience of transport infrastructure • Drinking water and sewage • Support the restoration and resilience of telecommunication and energy services • Building and assets • Fencing |

Monitoring and evaluation of this section of the plan is undertaken by the Buildings and Infrastructure Working Group.

| Objective | Action | Lead Agency | Supporting agencies | Community Stakeholders | Performance indicators | Timeframe/ status |
|--|--|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Priority: Enabling planning and rebuilding | | | | | | |
| Bushfire damage to structures on private land is accurately documented. | Implement program of Secondary Impact Assessments (SIAs) of bushfire affected properties, utilising building surveyors, EHOs and arborists. Update Crisisworks with information and provide accurate mapping of house/structure loss/damage to State Government. | TSC | | Fire affected property owners | Successful completion of SIAs. Information provided to BRV. | Complete |
| Support through timely advice, information and internal building and planning services that don't hold people up unnecessarily is available. | Provide telephone and over the counter advice and support to property owners and residents in response to bushfire related enquiries. Establish one stop shop service to offer co-ordinated advice across building, planning, health and engineering. | TSC | BRV | | TSC has staff in place. Shared services arrangements are in place. Relevant information provided to affected community by appointment. | Ongoing |
| | Record bushfire rebuilding enquiries and applications in relevant database/s. | TSC | Rebuild task force | | Enquires and applications are accurately captured into database. | Ongoing |
| | Assist in business reestablishment if fire affected. | SBV | TSC | Fire affected business owners | Permits granted for reestablishment and fast tracked where possible. | Ongoing |

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|--|---|-----|------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| | A system is in place for community to provide feedback that improves the building and planning processes. | TSC | BRV, DELWP | | A system is in place and communicated. Feedback is being received from community. Changes are being put in place. | February 2020 – ongoing |
| | Information is provided on rebuilding via fact sheets and on web site, explaining requirements for different approvals and streamlined processes. | TSC | BRV | | Suite of fact sheets, links and information is communicated and available to residents. | Complete |
| | Enable a service to issue, monitor and enforce Emergency and Building Orders where required to address safety issues. | TSC | | | Service established. Orders implemented according to statutory requirements. | Complete |
| Streamlined planning provisions for rebuilding are implemented. | Work with the State Government to introduce streamlined planning provisions that enhance capacity to fast track rebuilding proposals. | TSC | DELWP, BRV | | Streamlined planning controls introduced. VC179 (bushfire reconstruction). | Complete |
| Programs that support people to rebuild are established. <i>(Note: Buildings should be sustainable,</i> | Considerations and strategies are established to assist the transition of people from temporary accommodation to permanent dwellings. (Aim is to limit number of people in temporary arrangements by June 2023). | GH | BRV, TSC | Fire affected residents | Considerations, risk assessment and mitigations undertaken. | Ongoing |

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|---|---|-----|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <p><i>affordable and resilient. Programs should allow for people at the same stage of rebuild to link and work together.)</i></p> | <p>Conduct workshops, events and support networking that assists residents with the rebuilding and reconstruction process.</p> | TSC | BRV, DELWP | Fire affected property owners | Events conducted and well attended. | June 2022 |
| | <p>Explore and create pathways to support communities in the development and promotion of a suite of affordable bushfire prone house designs.</p> | BRV | HIA, AIA, MBA | | Designs explored and made available to the public. | Late 2020 |
| | <p>Work with existing industry groups to promote and support builders and the community to access information, training and products to support resilience in rebuilding. Eg help residents navigate and meet Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL), support awareness and programs that meet the sustainable development goals.</p> | BRV | TSC, HIA, AIA, MBA | | Residents have information that supports the navigation of the BAL. Sustainable Development Goals are being established for Towong and are being measured. | First round of assessments complete. Ongoing |
| <p>Strategic land use planning is leveraged to support recovery.</p> | <p>Undertake strategic planning (land use planning) process with identified impacted townships and communities as part of bushfire recovery.</p> | TSC | DELWP | Upper Murray community | Communities engaged. Structure plans in place for townships. | June 2023 |
| <p>The level of social housing available within Towong Shire is improved.</p> | <p>Explore options to transition temporary accommodation being established for bushfire impacted residents to social housing.</p> | BRV | TSC, DHHS | Fire affected residents | Options have been explored. Temporary housing transitioned to social housing where possible. | June 2022 |

| Priority: Restoration and resilience of transport infrastructure | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|--------------------|---|---|
| Initial access to fire affected areas for Emergency Services and residents is provided. | Remove, repair and clean-up all roads including hazardous trees and tree debris from roads and roadsides after fire impact. | TSC (local roads), RRV(arterial roads), DELWP/ PV (public access roads) | | Private landowners | All hazardous trees and tree debris removed; roads open to traffic. | Complete |
| | Carry out emergency bridge works. | TSC | | | Temporary make safe works carried out. | Complete |
| | Manage traffic on dangerous roads until emergency response tree and road works carried out. | VICPOL | | | Dangerous road areas closed. | Complete |
| Public road assets in fire affected areas are assessed, reinstated and maintained. | Ongoing assessment and reinstatement of fire affected roadsides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging hazardous trees Blocked drainage features due to sedimentation and erosion Associated environmental works | TSC (local roads), RRV (arterial roads), DELWP (public access roads) | | | All fire affected roads inspected in line with respective Road Management Plans. | Complete |
| | | | | | Responsive management of emerging hazardous trees, drainage and sedimentation issues. | Ongoing 3-5 years Response will be dynamic dependent upon climate conditions – wind, rainfall, drought |
| | Inspection and audit of road related infrastructure (signs, markers etc) in fire affected areas. | RRV | TSC | | All fire affected local road assets inspected and report provided to meet DRFA claims | Complete |

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| | | | | | process through EMV. | |
| | Undertake a replacement program for damaged signs and markers. | RRV | TSC | | All damaged signs replaced | September 2021 |
| TSC road assets are protected from damage by Grocon due to large/ heavy machinery) from bushfire clean-up. | Complete dilapidation assessment of TSC road network in bushfire damaged areas to confirm asset condition pre-clean-up by Grocon. | TSC | | | Dilapidation survey carried out. | Complete |
| | Enter into agreement with Grocon for use of road network. | TSC | | | Agreement with Grocon. | Complete |
| | Complete post clean-up condition report of road network to identify damage caused by Grocon during clean-up, and request defects be addressed including removal of debris. | TSC | RRV, DELWP | | Defects identified and rectified by Grocon as part of handover. | Complete |
| Public environmental health risks, needs and priorities are identified. | Develop a public environmental health risk assessment. | TSC | | Fire affected property owners | Risk assessment developed. Mitigation actions included into recovery plan. | Complete |
| | Grocon to provide certification of clean-up following completion removal works, particularly in relation to asbestos and Copper Chromium Arsenate timber. | Grocon | TSC, DHHS | | All certificates received. Information input into database. | Complete |
| | Set up service to provide up-to-date, relevant and consistent messaging related to public environmental health issues (site | TSC | DHHS, BRV, NECMA, G-MW, DELWP, Ag Vic | | Coordinated information provided to affected community. | Ongoing |

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|--|--|-------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------|
| | contamination, soil contamination, tank water, waterways, septic tanks etc). | | | | | |
| Priority: Drinking water and sewage | | | | | | |
| Potable water supply to fire affected landholders is provided. | Procedures and agreements between authorities and organisations are in place to support the interim supply of potable water to those in need. | DELWP | TSC, Foodshare | Fire affected residents | Procedures and agreements in place. Funding of a program. Water being delivered. | Complete |
| | Consider how to build long term water resilience into community and property and new building developments. Eg tank replacement program, discussions with community to consider options for creek pumping for domestic water supply, mandatory water bypass systems for new builds, bushfire risk assessment, discuss scope of a community program, discuss appetite for 'water access resilience program'. | TSC | DELWP, BRV, Ag Vic, NECMA | Upper Murray community | Community forums to discuss willingness to future proof (potable domestic and stock creek access) for post fire water quality issues. | December 2021 |
| Wastewater management in fire affected areas is provided. | Identify fire-damaged septic tanks (include information undertaken during secondary impact assessments). | TSC | | Fire affected property owners | Sites identified. | Complete |
| | Set up service to provide guidance and support to | TSC | | Fire affected property owners | Service established. | Complete |

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| | effectively manage septic tank applications. | | | | | |
| Priority: Support the restoration and resilience of telecommunications and energy service | | | | | | |
| Communications infrastructure (temporary and permanent) is in place to support with recovery efforts. | Identify and execute strategies and actions that will assist in the provision of better communications into the region. Address blackspots and known communication challenges to mitigate future emergency management risk. | TSC | BRV, SVC, NBRA, TSC, Telecommunication providers | UMI, UMCRC, Energy Working Group | Strategies and actions are identified Actions are executed. Improved communications are in place. | December 2021 |
| Increase energy resilience, security and sustainability, while reducing emergency management power risk exposure. | Complete a review of the power needs and gaps across the Shire. | TSC | SP Ausnet | Energy Working Group, CRC's | Funding for suitable energy supply secured | December 2021 and ongoing |
| | Work with local groups to explore opportunities for renewable energy microgrids, community energy initiatives, or similar options that meet needs. Develop a series of proposals for appropriate energy solutions. Cross Border Public Infrastructure Hub Fund. | Energy Working Group | TSC, SVC | UMI, UMCRC | Funding for suitable energy supply secured | In progress and ongoing |
| | Pursue any relevant opportunities for energy rebates or funding for sustainable rebuilds to reduce costs to residents | TSC | Sustainability Vic, RDV | Fire affected property owners | Grants available Community is informed and has access to information regarding rebates | Ongoing |

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| | Explore integrated cross-border power solution | Energy Working Group/Cross Border Commissioner | RDV, TSC, Sustainability Vic, SVC, EMV, BRV | UMCRC | Suitable cross border solution installed to reduce emergency management risk | December 2021 |
| | Explore options for 3 phase power supply to more businesses | RDV | TSC, Sustainability Vic, SVC, SP Ausnet | Energy Working Group | Businesses who need access to 3 phase power can access it | December 2021 |
| Priority: Building and assets | | | | | | |
| Priority: Fencing | | | | | | |
| Support is provided to residents in the coordinated clean-up of structural damage on properties. | Liaise with the BRV, EPA, Worksafe and Grocon regarding site clean ups. | TSC | Grocon, EPA, Worksafe, BRV | Fire affected property owners | Information obtained from authority is relevant and up-to-date. Grocon clean-up process established and commenced. | Complete |
| | Establish clear processes for referral and work with Grocon to enable the clearing of sites, issuing of permission for people to return onsite and a schedule for clearance works. | BRV | TSC | Fire affected property owners | Processes are clear and available for residents and staff. | Complete |
| | Ensure support and advice is available to communities to support timely decisions regarding clean-up of properties. | TSC | Grocon | Fire affected property owners | Community well informed and landowners signed up to participate in clean-up. | Complete |
| | Provide support, advice and systems to manage effective waste disposal options from | EPA | BRV, TSC | Fire affected property owners | Bushfire waste disposed of at approved landfills. | Complete |

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| | impacted properties and public land. | | | | Properties cleaned-up by Grocon. | |
| Support is provided to private landowners through the provision of extended waste services. | Replace burnt bins that were lost or damaged during the fires. | TSC | | Fire affected property owners | Bins replaced. | Complete |
| | Provide free tipping of green waste for all Shire residents. | TSC | | | Service provided. | Complete |
| Priorities for the reestablishment of public assets affected during the fires are established with input from the community. | Prepare and collate a co-ordinated list of public fire damaged assets for discussion with CRCs. | TSC | DELWP, PV | CRC's | Detailed list of proposals and budget prepared. | Complete |
| Buildings and facilities that were damaged as part of the emergency response to the fires are reinstated. | Reinstate sites used for temporary relief facilities. | TSC | DET | | Sites reinstated. | Complete |
| | Repair and reinstate sportsgrounds and sporting facilities used as staging areas. | Facility managers | TSC, DELWP | | Sites reinstated. | Complete |
| | Replace lost/damaged fencing in open space reserves. | DELWP | TSC | | Fencing replaced | Complete |
| Waste management facilities | Carry out fencing repairs to Corryong Landfill. | TSC | EPA | | Fences reinstated. | In progress |
| | Assess and replace damaged infrastructure at Corryong Landfill. | TSC | EPA | | Equipment reinstated. | In progress |

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| damaged by fire are reinstated. | Remove damaged and hazardous trees at Corryong Landfill. | TSC | | | Trees removed. | Complete |
| | Ensure short to mid-term waste options for private and public clean-up works are coordinated to support community. | TSC | EPA, BRV | Fire affected property owners | Waste option are in place that support community, eg. wire, trees etc. | Complete |
| | Re-conduct hard waste collections as needed, eg. wire collection. | TSC | | | Hard waste collection carried out. | August 2021 |
| Public assets are protected by managing erosion. | Compile data from NECMA, DELWP and TSC to map potential erosion areas, catchment systems and waterways affected. | BRV | NECMA, DELWP, PV, TSC | Private landowners UM Landcare | Data mapped. | November 2020 |
| | Undertake a program of additional table drain and culvert inspections and clearing in fire affected areas to remove silt and debris. | TSC, NECMA – public land, RRV | DELWP, PV, | | Inspection program developed and commenced. | Ongoing |
| | Assess and remove debris blockages in waterways where they will impact on assets or waterway function. | NECMA | TSC, RRV, | Private landowners | Debris blockages assessed and removed where appropriate. | Ongoing |
| Community and assets are protected from flash flooding and debris flows. | Develop cumulative rainfall modelling and flash flood warning systems. | BRV | SES, NECMA, NRM Regions Australia | Private landowners | Modelling developed and warning systems in place. | December 2021 |
| Enhance and improve the resilience of | Map community infrastructure and identify any additional investment to install or upgrade as required. | CRC's | TSC, BRV, | | Priority infrastructure needs identified. | September 2021 |

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| community facilities to support community need. | Undertake planning, scoping and design works for priority recovery projects. | CRC's | BRV, TSC | | Scoping and design work complete | June 2022 |
| | Seek funding to support priority recovery projects | CRC's | BRV, TSC | | Funding sought | Ongoing |
| UMCRH is stood up and maintained for as long as needed. | Develop and maintain the Corryong Junior Campus Site as the UMCRH. | TSC | BRV, DET | | UMCRH operating. Information provision. Regular users not inconvenienced. | Complete |
| | Change street signage/parking in hub precinct and coordinate maintenance and cleaning contractors. | TSC | | | Signage amended. | Complete |
| Long term usage of the hub precinct is explored. | Engage with community on the long-term use of the community recovery hub site as an ongoing community asset. | BRV | TSC | UMCRC Corryong CRC | Site plan developed. | December 2021 |
| Strategic infrastructure that is used for fire and emergency management is reviewed. | Review the strategic importance of all road assets (strategic breaks, access and exit routes) as part of Towong Municipal Fire Management Committee process | MEMPC | TSC | | All roads reviewed as part of a risk-based assessment of strategic fire breaks | December 2021 |
| | Review the appropriateness of all Places of Last Resort, Emergency Relief Centres, MECCs and staging and marshalling points taking into consideration a range of emergency scenarios. | MEMPC | TSC, CFA | Towong Shire residents | Emergency Management assets register updated. | November 2021 |

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| | Undertake a review of critical/important infrastructure within the Shire and look to mitigate impacts by disasters. | MEMPC | TSC | | Critical Infrastructure assets register developed Critical infrastructure resilience plan developed | November 2021 |
| | Undertake fire preparedness and community emergency management planning to support future emergency events. | TSC | MEMPC, BRV | CRC's | Community Fire Plans developed and endorsed | October 2021 |
| Fire hazard reduction is considered for roadsides, parks, forests and reserves. | Investigate and implement options for the management of roadside vegetation for fire mitigation (eg. contracted roadside grazing, slashing at town boundaries) | BRV | RRV, TSC | Private landholders | Options analysis completed and considered | June 2022 |
| | Implement Strategic Fuel Break Program along road networks within DELWP/PV managed land to support suppression of future fire events. | DELWP | PV | | | June 2024 |
| Public assets in fire affected areas are assessed, reinstated, | Inspection and audit of TSC buildings, facilities and open space assets in fire affected areas. | TSC | | | All building assets in fire affected areas inspected and report provided to meet DRFA claims process through EMV. | Complete |
| | Inspection and audit of DELWP buildings, facilities and open space assets in fire affected areas. All assets on Crown land. | DELWP | | Committees of Management | All open space assets in fire affected areas inspected and report provided to meet | December 2021 |

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| | | | | | VMIA, DRFA and/or budget bid processes. | |
| | Assess and undertake the reinstatement of burnt/ damaged boardwalks/ paths within open space areas. | TSC | PV | | Paths/ boardwalks reinstated. | TSC - Complete PV – In progress |

Economic Environment / Business and Economy

Businesses and local economies suffer a range of setbacks after disasters including loss of business and livelihoods and impacts to supply chains and demand.

Activities in this line of Recovery focus on how businesses and local economies can survive in the short term and thrive in the long term, by identifying and capturing opportunities for strategic investment in regional infrastructure to boost economic recovery and future development.

| Desired outcomes | Priority areas |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industries and businesses recover and are stronger. • Employment opportunities are created and accessible. • Local businesses and communities are resilient. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Business • Economy • Tourism |

Monitoring and evaluation of this section of the plan is undertaken by the Agriculture Working Group, and Business and Economy Working Group.

| Objective | Action | Lead Agency | Responsible agencies | Community Stakeholders | Performance indicators | Timeframe |
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| Priority: Agriculture | | | | | | |
| Impacts to the agricultural sector (short medium and long term) are understood. | Collate the direct impacts and loss associated with the fire across the various industries (dairy, forestry, beef, lamb etc). | Ag Vic | Landcare, TSC, SVC, industry organisations, Milk processors, Wodonga Meats, JBS/ Teys, stock agencies, NSW LLS, NSW DPI | | Data available. Reports published. | Complete |
| | Undertake an extensive review of the consequences (medium to long term) across the various agricultural industries. | Ag Vic | BRV, RDV, SVC, NSW DPI/ LLS | | Scope established. Report published. | Complete |
| | Work with current support programs to determine need and if required undertake a needs analysis (phone call) of the farming sector to understand concerns, short, medium and long term and seek guidance on what support is considered necessary. (address any short-term needs – 9 months). <i>Notes for project brief:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current data collection by other support programs etc Determine appropriate approach | Ag Vic | TSC, BRV, SVC | UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairies, UM Beef Group. | Phone survey conducted. Information reviewed, actioned and published. | Initial impact assessment complete Follow up referrals ongoing Other engagement processes complete. Community feedback continues to inform support programs and |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scope timeline</i> • <i>Components of this will be picked up by the Towong Recovery Team LAROs.</i> | | | | | onground delivery. |
| | Understand impacted farming family demographics for the purpose of identifying family support programs and specialised support, eg. families expecting children or with children under the age of three, aging families, succession of farming businesses. | TSC | SVC, Ag Vic, Social working group | Uniting Church, Anglican Church, UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairies, UM Beef Group. | Statistics associated with demographics is available. | Ongoing |
| Programs are in place to enable the agricultural sector (and its families and communities) to recover, adjust, plan and or diversify while long term recovery takes place. | <p>Agricultural community can access financial support and financial guidance.</p> <p>Pick up short term, medium and long term.</p> | Ag Biz Assist | Ag Vic, DPI NSW | Uniting Church, Anglican Church, UMI, Ag Working Group | <p>Financial advisors are in place.</p> <p>Financial and welfare support guidance is present and available.</p> <p>Statistics are provided to CRCs.</p> | Ongoing |
| | <p>Ensure coordinated support and programs including outreach are in place for the mental health, relief and welfare of farming families (men, women, young, old and children).</p> <p>Note for project brief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group to check case management systems and counselling to provide feedback on working. | BRV | DHHS, GH, Windermere | Uniting Church, Anglican Church, UMI, Ag Working Group. | <p>Welfare and relief support are in place.</p> <p>Programs are in place to build connectedness.</p> <p>Outreach programs are in place.</p> <p>Statistics are provided to the CRCs.</p> | Ongoing |

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| | <p>Develop and empower community programs that support the agricultural sector to recover and be resilient. Ideally these programs would aim to strengthen connectedness, social cohesion, empowerment and wisdom.</p> <p>Notes for project brief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally these programs would be in response to community demand, using IAP2 principles when engaging • Ag group to provide guidance on approaches. | Ag Vic | TSC, SVC, Ag NSW, Landcare, Better Beef Network, Murray Dairy Networks, DPI NSW | <p>UMCRC, Uniting Church, Anglican Church, UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairys, UM Beef Group.</p> <p>All producers</p> | <p>Attendances to programs is well supported.</p> <p>Ensure other recovery working groups are linked to programs and information.</p> <p>Feedback from programs is positive.</p> | Ongoing |
| | <p>A range of personal and business support programs (coaching, webinars, mentoring, information sessions, expert panels and workshops) are planned to help farming businesses to plan and consider possible future options. Ideally leveraging of local expertise.</p> | Ag Vic | NSW DPI, NSW LLS, TSC, SVC, Landcare, industry, MLA, SBV, Ag Biz Assist, Young Producers, NFF / VFF / NSWFF | All producers | <p>Information on support programs published through Ag Vic newsletter.</p> <p>Consolidated list of support programs published in Ag Vic Recovery Guide.</p> <p>A range of support mechanisms are in place and being utilised.</p> | Ongoing |
| Ideas that raise the awareness and solutions to individual and group | <p>A series of information sessions and workshops are planned to help farming businesses and landscapes to recover effectively.</p> <p>Note for project brief:</p> | Ag Vic | NSW DPI, Landcare, TSC, SVC, MLA, Murray Dairy | All producers | <p>Information series is conducted.</p> <p>Statistics of attendees are submitted.</p> | Ongoing |

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| <p>agricultural challenges (eg. blackberries, fences, waste, erosion) are supported.</p> <p>'Community to community' support is empowered.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of current programs and groups that the Ag Working Group can support/ collaborate, leverage off and provide value add | | | | Attendees rate sessions positively. | |
| | <p>Programs are established which address COVID-19 requirements and support continued programs of work to support farmers, eg. identify options for working groups of two to be activated/ empowered while social distancing is still maintained.</p> | All agencies | Ag Vic, Landcare, NSW LLS, TSC, SVC, Murray Dairy, BlazeAid | All producers | Programs and strategies established and communicated. | Ongoing |
| | <p>Mechanism (resources, funding) are in place to encourage and assist 'community to community' empowerment and support.</p> <p>Recognising that there are a range of programs already in place and can they be supported and built upon.</p> | | TSC, SVC, Landcare, NSW LLS | UM Landcare, All producers | <p>Mechanism in place to identify community needs.</p> <p>Grant funding programs in place.</p> | Complete |
| | <p>Provide accurate information, advice and support via grants, donations and volunteer organisations to re-establish fences damaged during the fires.</p> | DELWP / BlazeAid | BRV, TSC, SVC, Ag Vic, NECMA | All residents | All fencing asset loss is documented and funding streams identified and made available to community. | Ongoing |
| <p>Agricultural community is well informed and has the ability to</p> | <p>Agriculture working group actively contributes recovery information through a range of communication mediums and methods including a coordinated and respected newsletter.</p> | Ag working group | TSC, SVC, Ag Vic, NSW DPI | Ag Working Group, UMI | <p>Information is made available for ag sector.</p> <p>Newsletter appeals to community.</p> | Ongoing |

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| influence and lead its recovery. | | | | | Agricultural community feels well informed. | |
| Agricultural community is well connected with high levels of social cohesion. | Systems and structures are in place to enable the agricultural community to provide feedback and advocacy to influence decisions, programs and direction in recovery. Actively support, seed and encourage ideas and projects that build and maintain connection within the agricultural community. (Work to progress and communicate solutions in the midst of COVID-19 restrictions) | Ag Vic | TSC, SVC, CRCs | All producers | Evidence that community is influencing direction, decisions and programs. | Complete |
| Bushfire debris and waste management associated with agriculture is actively coordinated and supported. | Identify programs and support coordinated approaches to waste management, eg metal recycling. | Industry organisation/s | TSC, SVC, industry organisation such as MLA, DA, VFF/ NFF/ NSWFF | | Community programs are conducted. Social cohesion is strong. Farmers know their 10 closest neighbours. | Ongoing |
| Develop and implement a strategy that capitalises on | Addition of an agriculture industry support resource within TSC to coordinate industry strategy, development and training. | TSC | SVC, Landcare | Ag Working Group | Waste programs are in place. Bushfire debris is minimal. | Staff member appointed. August 2021 |

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| the unique agricultural strengths of the region. | Engage consultant to research existing industry, industry gaps, and growth opportunities for agriculture sector. Articulate projects for further funding. | TSC | Consultant, DPI NSW, Ag Vic, | All producers. UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairys, UM Beef Group, UMCRC | Industry Analysis completed and Strategy developed. | August 2021 |
| | Identify existing and future skills, labour and education gaps for agriculture and related industries to improve long-term resilience of agriculture sector | TSC | Consultant, DPI NSW, Ag Vic | All producers. UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairys, UM Beef Group, UMCRC | Paper developed. | August 2021 |
| | Work with local sector to identify and fill gaps in local processing and production supply chain. Prepare investment attraction prospectus / proposals for major infrastructure required | TSC | Consultant, SVC, Ag Vic, RDV / Invest Victoria, DPI NSW | All producers. UMI, Ag Working Group, Alpine Dairys, UM Beef Group, UMCRC | Opportunities for new businesses are articulated. Prospectuses developed. | September 2021 |
| | Seek funding and partnerships to deliver training for key issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • succession planning • land management to reduce climate and fire risk • Aboriginal fire management practices. | Ag Vic / DELWP | TSC, SVC, Ag Vic, Rural Skills Connect | Ag Working Group | Information and support available to local industry. | Ongoing |
| | Seek funding to undertake feasibility studies for new and emerging agricultural businesses. | TSC | RDV, Ag Vic | UMCRC, UMI, Ag Working Group | Projects identified Funding sourced for feasibility studies | June 2022 |

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| | Seek funding to support branding and marketing of Upper Murray producers as one associated with quality produce | UMCRC | TSC, Ag Vic, RDV, Industry organisations | Ag working group, All producers | Funding sourced Branding and marketing undertaken | June 2022 |
| Establish Local Agriculture Training Facility. | Embed agricultural training in local school programs. Explore opportunities for local registered training organisation in agriculture and related industries. Corryong Agricultural Centre of Excellence. | TSC | Ag Vic, Ag Biz Assist, TSC, RDV, TAFEs, universities, apprenticeships, Ovens Murray RP, NELLEN | | Concept Paper and prospectus developed. Funding and delivery partnerships secured. | June 2021 By 2022 |
| Work with agriculture and business groups to diversify businesses via agritourism. | Develop and implement Agritourism strategy with consideration of opportunities captured by Tourism and Agriculture strategies. | TSC | Agriculture Working Group, Ag Vic, tourism partners, SVC | All producers. UMI, UMCRC | Strategy prepared and being implemented. | September 2021 |
| | Develop a program to guide and market existing (farm) businesses to encourage higher value product. | TSC | Agriculture Working Group, Ag Vic, tourism partners, SVC | All producers. UMI, UMCRC | | June 2022 |
| Priority: Business | | | | | | |
| Priority: Economy | | | | | | |
| Build a vibrant network of businesses to support shared learning, collaboration and innovation. | Addition of a small business support resource within TSC to deliver small business coaching, and curate / highlight other training and resources available. | TSC | SBV, AgBiz Assist, Aus industry, Melb Innovation centre | Local businesses | Staff member appointed. | Ongoing |
| | Support the establishment of a Shire wide network of chambers of commerce / business interest groups | TSC | RDV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. | Groups established and meeting regularly. | June 2022 |

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| | with representation from across the whole business sector. | | | Berringa Peninsula Community Network | | |
| | Support the development of a series of business networking and development events via a mix of online and in person delivery methods. Topics to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> business innovation diversification and risk management growing businesses through employment digital business opportunities. | TSC | AVCLP, Ovens Murray RP, RDV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network | Key stakeholder relationships developed. Programs developed and delivered. Attendance is strong and feedback from attendees is positive. | In progress |
| | Support businesses to access grants and funding opportunities for business growth and development. | SBV | TSC, RDV, BRV, Ag Vic | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. All local newspapers for distribution. | Increased understanding of support available to small businesses. Increased awareness of specific grant programs. Business support in grant application writing and preparing | Ongoing |
| Leverage the increase in activity and local investment to promote local | Scope opportunities for major public or private investment and develop a suite of prospectuses outlining the strengths of starting a business in the Shire, particularly in priority areas of: | TSC | RDV, Invest Vic, Ag Vic, SBV, BRV | UMCRC, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula | Prospectuses developed and available via key stakeholders. | August 2021 Ongoing |

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| business establishment and new market offerings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farming diversification or supply chain • adventure tourism product or services • health and aged care services • building / trades small businesses for rebuild (refer below) • education and community services. | | | Community Network. | Alignment with TSC Economic Development Strategy. | |
| | Work with the business community to explore opportunities for diversification, value-added products, alternative paths to market for existing businesses, and investment required. | TSC | RDV, Invest Vic, Ag Vic, CNC/ GoTafe | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | Delivery of workshops. Business engagement conducted to identify and advance opportunities. | Ongoing |
| | Promote opportunities for small businesses to be established to support the outsourcing of key small business skills to specialists, building businesses for rebuild. | RDV | TSC, Invest Vic, Ag Vic | | Business opportunities promoted | Ongoing |
| | Identify vacant premises that could be activated for collaborative initiatives including co-working, renewal initiatives, events etc. | | TSC, BRV | | Premises used for events, etc. | Not proceeding due to priority of delivering Economic Development Strategy |
| | Develop a program to guide and market existing (farm) businesses to | Ag working group | TSC, RDV, Ag Working Group, SVC | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. | | June 2021 |

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| | broaden the value chain / encourage higher value product to support individual businesses or groups of businesses. | | | Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | | Ongoing |
| Create a more liveable and attractive region for businesses, residents and visitors. | Map current community infrastructure and identify any additional investment required to install or upgrade to preserve liveability of vulnerable communities. | CRC's | TSC, BRV, RDV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network | Priority list developed. Project funding options identified. | September 2021 |
| | Address blackspots and known communication challenges to mitigate future emergency management risk and unlock opportunities for businesses in the Shire. | TSC / BRV | RDV, EMV, Ovens Murray RP, Telecommunication providers | UMCRC, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | Advocacy Strategy implemented, improvements made | Ongoing |
| | Survey new residents to understand their needs in terms of community integration and connection. | TSC | Real Estate agents, Schools | | Program developed – population increases at next census. | June 2021 |
| | Communications campaign and media activity to attract carpenters / builders to establish small businesses and contribute to rebuild in the Shire. | TSC | RDV, BRV | UMCRC | Sufficient levels of trades available locally for rebuild. | Ongoing |

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| Develop and implement a tourism strategy that leverages the strengths of the region. | Strategic Review and Evaluation of active tourism brands to ensure they are fit for market (including Upper Murray, Mitta Valley and Towong Tourism and Tourism North East brands). Tourism Strategy developed. | TSC | TSC / consultant | UMCRC, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula, Community Network, Tourist associations. | Tourism Analysis completed and Strategy developed. | September 2021 |
| | Conduct a review of existing tourism products and infrastructure and identify any significant gaps or overlap with a view to private and public investment attraction. | TSC | TSC / consultant | UMCRC, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | New strategy developed / in place. | September 2021 |
| | Undertake feasibility into the opportunities for the Upper Murray to become a key adventure tourism destination in Australia. | UMCRC | TSC, SVC, RDV | UMI, MUM, MFRSTA | | June 2022 |
| | Ensure Towong Shire businesses are well represented on programs designed to encourage patronage of bushfire affected tourism businesses (including Virtual Country Market, High Country Come Back, ADTW listings). | TSC | TNE, RDV, BRV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. | High level of representation of Towong businesses. | Ongoing |
| | Consider town entry, road signage upgrades and streetscaping with tourism strategy and goals. | TSC | RRV, RDV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa | Upgrades completed in line with Tourism strategy. | June 2022 |

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| | | | | Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. | | |
| | <p>Developed detailed project plans and funding proposals and a tourism investment advocacy strategy for major tourism development projects, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Elliot Hang-gliding – feasibility study 80K • Mt Elliot Hang-gliding – infrastructure 2M • High Country Hall of Fame – feasibility study 40K • Colac Colac Caravan Park – 2.4M • Corryong Town Trails – 750K • Mitta Mountain Bike Park – 2.3M • Tallangatta Holiday Park – 3M • Tallangatta VIC + Heritage Museum – 400K. | TSC | RDV, Invest Vic, DELWP | UMCRC, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. | <p>Funding proposals prepared and advocacy strategy underway.</p> <p>Investment secured for series of projects.</p> | June 2022 |
| Develop a proactive program of events and promotion to encourage | Addition of a tourism and events support resource within TSC to curate and promote events and seasonal visitation, including consideration of education and corporate tourism market. | TSC | | | Staff member appointed. | Complete |

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| visitation to the region. | Work with business sector to develop collaborative tourism products / offerings to ensure maximum value from visitors. | TSC | SBV, RDV, TNE | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations, MUM. | Increase in visitor spend. | December 2021 |
| | <p>Work with neighbouring Councils to highlight touring route opportunities, and link to a range of seasonally appropriate products and promotional strategies for markets including motorcycle, cycle, grey nomad and car tourism.</p> <p>Seek funding to support touring throughout the Shire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corryong-Benambra Road Touring Route – 45.5M • Omeo Highway – 300K • Towong GRR Roadside Stop – 250K • Great River Road West development – 250K • High Country Rail Trail – 80K • Great River Road Stage 2 marketing – 600K • Existing Snowy Valleys Way funding | TSC | SVC, East Gippsland SC, RDV, Cross Border | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. | Increase in numbers of visitors. Prepare business cases for funding. | Ongoing |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross Border Hub funding - NSW • Regional Partnership funding • Short trip attraction from Albury-Wodonga. | | | | | |
| | Work with tourism groups and businesses to create a program of events to support visitor attraction. | TSC | TNE | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. | Increase in numbers of visitors. | August 2021 Ongoing |
| | Secure funding to safeguard the future of major events throughout the Shire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man from Snowy River Festival • Mitta Valley Gravel Grinder • Tallangatta Fifties Festival • Mt Lawson Women's Ride. | TSC | BRV | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. Tourist associations. MFSRBF Committee | Funding proposals prepared and advocacy strategy implemented. | Ongoing Ongoing |
| Leverage the investment in rebuilding to grow local businesses and industry for the long term. | Seed and support joint and local procurement initiatives throughout rebuild. | BRV | TSC, RDV, Built Private Working Group, BRV | | Increase in GDP and jobs retained locally. Community members rebuilding have access to low interest loans. | Ongoing throughout rebuild program |

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| Ensure appropriate whole of life health and wellbeing services are available to attract and retain both young families and retirees looking to “age in place”. | Complete a whole of life health and wellbeing industry / services gap analysis to ascertain any public needs or private business opportunities from maternal and child health and child care, through to home care and residential aged care. | TSC | DHHS, Towong Alliance, RDV / Invest Vic | | Analysis completed. | June 2022 |
| | Develop business cases or prospectuses for any business opportunities or projects requiring major investment. | TSC | RDV / Invest Vic | UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | Business cases developed | Ongoing |
| | Develop an Ageing in Place Strategy to attract residents looking to live in the area in later life and determine the level of support from TSC and other public services to do so. | TSC | DHHS, Towong Alliance | Corryong Health, Tallangatta Health, Walwa Bush Nursing Service, UMI, Mitta Valley Inc. Tallangatta NH. Berringa Peninsula Community Network. | Access and Inclusion Strategy developed. | December 2021 |
| | Identify and support the establishment of small businesses to meet service needs. | TSC | RDV, SBV | | New businesses established. | Ongoing |

Natural Environment / Environment and Biodiversity

Disasters can cause largescale destruction to the environment and to plants and animals through loss of life and habitat.

Activities in this line of Recovery look to support the vitality of biodiversity through prioritisation of threatened species and native vegetation, and the restoration of natural habitats.

In addition, this line seeks to recover the productive and accessible amenity of parks and forests for recreation and tourism and are geared towards betterment and resilience.

| Desired outcomes | Priority areas |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural environments are healthy, resilient, and biodiverse. • Natural environments have high levels of amenity. • Natural environments are productive and accessible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and wildlife • Natural environment, land and waterway |

Monitoring and evaluation of this section of the plan is undertaken by the Environment and Biodiversity Working Group.

| Objective | Action | Lead Agency | Responsible agencies | Community Stakeholders | Performance indicators | Timeframe |
|--|---|-------------|--|------------------------|---|-----------|
| Priority area: Biodiversity and wildlife | | | | | | |
| Biodiversity recovery actions, including those outlined in <i>Victoria's Bushfire Emergency: Biodiversity Response and Recovery Plan 2020</i> , are implemented. | Conduct Spotted Tree Frog surveys & potential collection for captive insurance population (under BEBRR Plan Theme 1: Assess fire-affected public land for impact to biodiversity, including critical fauna, flora and habitat, to inform targeted actions). | DELWP | PV, UoM, Arthur Rylah Institute, Zoos Victoria | | Project plan developed. On-ground activities undertaken. | Complete |
| | Implement immediate wildlife welfare activities on public land, including supplementary feeding and emergency extraction to limit species decline. | DELWP | PV | | Welfare and emergency extraction activities undertaken. | Complete |
| | Manage pest animals by undertaking predator and herbivore (deer, goat, pig) control programs to reduce impact on threatened species and communities. | DELWP/ PV | NECMA | Landcare | Project plan developed. On-ground activities undertaken. | Ongoing |
| | Convene deer control forum. | NECMA | DELWP | | Forum held. Information shared. Collaboration opportunities across tenure identified. | Complete |
| | Manage flora and fauna values at Pheasant Creek Flora Reserve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install frog call recorders and conduct surveys Mapping | PV | CSU | Koetong Landcare | Total hectares of weed control. Total kilometres of deer fencing installed. | Ongoing |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invasive Animal Management Plan Install two additional deer enclosures and cameras Install deer fencing in high conservation areas of the reserve | | | | | |
| | <p>Reassess threatened species status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise threatened flora and fauna taxa Reassess threatened flora and fauna taxa status to determine whether fire impacted status and therefore there is a need to update the status | DELWP/PV | CFA | | Threatened species status updated. | Ongoing |
| Priority area: Natural environment, land and waterways | | | | | | |
| Fire-affected roadsides, parks, forests and reserves are monitored for natural regeneration and actively revegetated (where necessary). | Monitor forests, parks and reserves in fire affected areas for natural regeneration, including Murray River Reserves. If required, undertake surveys to determine whether active revegetation work is needed. | DELWP / PV | Landcare | | Surveys completed. | Ongoing |
| | Monitor waterway reserves in fire affected areas for natural regeneration. If required, undertake surveys to determine whether active regeneration is required. | NECMA | | | Surveys completed. | Ongoing |

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| Undertake community revegetation works on roadsides and reserves, in conjunction with Friends Groups, Landcare and local community. | Landcare | TSC, RRV, NECMA | Friends of Groups Residents | Community revegetation days held | Spring 2020 – 2023 |
| Identify area of land for TSC acquisition for native vegetation offsets, to enable implementation of recovery projects identified in the MRP. | TSC | NEMCA | | Land acquired. | June 2022 |
| Undertake revegetation along waterways to support waterway recovery. | NECMA | Landcare | Private landholders | Revegetation works carried out on agreed/priority properties | 2020-2023 |
| Revegetation, enhancement plantings and fencing of native vegetation remnants on private property to support recovery. | NECMA | Landcare | Private landholders | Revegetation works carried out on previously funded project sites and new priority sites. | 2020-2023 |
| Update roadside conservation areas and high vegetation value zones to maximise revegetation of indigenous species in roadside areas. | TSC | | | Protection zones identified in roadside management plan and TSC's mapping system. | July 2022 |
| Rehabilitate firebreaks in forests and parks to prevent erosion and encourage natural regeneration. | DELWP | PV | | Total kilometres of firebreak rehabilitated. | Complete |
| Revegetate land alongside Colac Colac bike path. | UM Landcare | RRV, NECMA | Local schools, Community volunteers | Total hectares planted. | Ongoing for 3 years |

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| | Undertake an Alpine Ash reseeding program in areas where immature Ash trees haven't produced adequate seed for natural regeneration. | DELWP | PV | | Total hectares reseeded. | Complete |
| Compliance with native vegetation removal regulations is encouraged and monitored. | Monitor and enforce compliance with native vegetation removal regulations. | TSC | DELWP Conservation Regulator | Private Landholders | Compliance activities undertaken. | Ongoing |
| | Develop a communications program to inform landholders of their responsibilities in protecting native vegetation. | TSC | DELWP | | Communications program completed. | Ongoing |
| Waterways, including flood warning sites are rehabilitated and stabilised. | Remove barriers to natural fish recolonisation in the Cudgewa and Nariel Creeks. | NECMA | | Nariel CRC, Cudgewa CRC, Recreational fishing groups | Barriers removed. | June 2022 |
| | Restocking of fish throughout affected waterways. | VFA | ARI, NECMA | Recreational fishing groups | Fish restocking programs undertaken. | June 2022 |
| | Installation of in-stream habitat and engineering works in waterways to allow for water quality and aquatic species recovery. | NECMA | | | Habitat and engineering works undertaken. | Ongoing |
| | Undertaken short to medium term waterway rehabilitation works, including immediate post-fire priority works to protect public assets. | NECMA | | Nariel CRC | Waterway assessments. Engineering designs. Works undertaken. | July 2021 |
| | Water Quality Monitoring in Upper Murray and Corryong Creek. | EPA | | | Community health advice to recreational users of the | Ongoing |

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| | | | | | waterways impacted areas provided. | |
| | <p>Restore water monitoring gauging stations damaged by fire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install continuous WQ monitoring as several sites identified by DELWP, NECMA and G-MW/ MDBA. • Repair, reinstate and improve monitoring sites, including Flood Warning sites that were damaged as a result of the fires. | NECMA | DELWP, G-MW, MDBA | | Stream gauges/assets restored. | Ongoing |
| | Produce and disseminate waterway and erosion management videos on best practice and Works on Waterway processes. | NECMA | Ag Vic, SoilCon | UM Landcare | Production of digital communication resource. Distribution and views. | Complete |
| | Liase with G-MW and MDBA to facilitate community involvement and collaboration for Murray River rehabilitation works. | TSC | MDBA, G-MW, NECMA, TSC | Residents | Communications undertaken. Information provided to the community. | September 2021 |
| Firewood sources are safe and accessible for the community. | Coordinate Autumn and Spring firewood collection seasons for community, ensuring work continues to open roads and deal with any hazards around collection sites. | DELWP | TSC | | Firewood accessed by community. | Complete |
| | Provide additional community firewood depots stocked with timber felled during hazardous tree removal for road | DELWP | TSC, VicForests | | Firewood accessed by community. | Complete |

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| | openings (eg. Benambra-Corryong Road). | | | | | |
| | Manage any illegal firewood collection, ensuring community are aware of where, when and what firewood can be collected to avoid significant penalties. | DELWP | PV | Private landowners | Illegal firewood collection minimised. | Ongoing |
| Weeds in public and private land are managed. | Develop and implement plans for weed management on public and private land, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of likely weed issues • Mapping of weed infestations • Strategies to combat spread of weeds • On-ground works at private/ public land interface and in waterways. | DELWP – public land | TSC, PV, RRV, NECMA, Landcare, | Private landholders | Weed management programs planned and implemented. | 2020-2023 |
| | Treat blackberries on private property. | Private landowners | UM Landcare Network, NEBAG, VBT | | Total hectares of blackberries treated. | March 2020 Ongoing |
| | Continue to implement the Good Neighbour Program across Towong Shire | DELWP | | Private landowners | Total hectares of weeds treated. | Ongoing |
| | Provide advice to private landowners on weed control on private land; including within pastures where introduced fodder was distributed. Provide information on weed disposal options for private landholders. | Landcare | Ag Vic | Private landowners | Communications program developed targeting private landholders. | Ongoing |

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|---|---|-------------|-------|--|--|----------------------|
| | Fund a Community Service Announcement to be filmed at Burrowye focusing on the benefits of early blackberry management, post fire. | VBT | | | Production of digital communication resource. Distribution and views. | December 2021 |
| Landholders are assisted with other elements of fire recovery impacting private land. | Provide accurate information and advice to landholders on the management of hazardous trees on private land, including the identification and removal of hazardous trees impacting on identified private assets where they are linked to available funded programs. | TSC | | | Landholders are provided with accurate information and advice on government funded hazardous tree removal programs. Relevant programs to remove identified hazardous trees are implemented to agreed standards. | Complete |
| | Undertake UM Landcare - water quality project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate land management response process and immediate priorities (water quality, erosion control, emerging weeds). Purchase erosion control materials for distribution to landholders once a property inspection is completed. | UM Landcare | NECMA | | Improved water quality outcomes. | July 2021 Ongoing |

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|---|--|----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------|
| | Contribute to TSC's regular communication materials for private landholders in partnership with land management agencies. | TSC | Ag Vic, Landcare, NECMA, EPA, DELWP | | Communication materials produced and distributed to landholders. | Ongoing |
| | Partner with Ag Vic for Erosion Control Field day Cudgewa – 12 February 2020. | Ag Vic | Landcare | Private landholders | Landholder attendance. | Complete |
| | Partner with Ag Vic for Pasture Management Field Day in Cudgewa – 25 February 2020. | Ag Vic | Landcare | Private landholders | Landholder attendance. | Complete |
| | Conduct a 'Restoring your Garden After Fire' event with Jane Edmanson Gardening Australia – 11 March 2020. | Landcare | | Private landholders | Landholder attendance. | Complete |
| | Conduct a Pasture Management paddock walk in response to request by Walwa Landholders. | Ag Vic | Landcare | Private landholders | Landholder attendance. | December 2021 |
| | Conduct a Farm Planning Workshop in partnership with Ag Vic, in response to landholder interest. | Landcare | Ag Vic, Ag Biz Assist | Private landholders | Landholder attendance. | December 2021 |
| Protection of environment and natural landscapes while considering recovery, livelihoods and future community resilience is considered. | Provide carefully considered communications that promote the protection and management of native vegetation, the environment and natural landscapes. | TSC | DELWP | | Communications are in place. | Complete |

Aboriginal Culture and Healing

For Aboriginal people, relationships to Country, culture and community are not only interconnected, they are intrinsically linked and enmeshed with one’s identity.

Activities in this line of recovery support the celebration of culture and knowledge, health, mental health and wellbeing, engagement with education, respect for land practices, connection to land, water and wildlife and strengthened representation in the workforce.

Identification of Aboriginal Culture and Healing Recovery Priority Actions

An Engagement Plan is being implemented from April 2021 – March 2022, to identify bushfire recovery priorities of local Traditional Owner groups. This work is being led by BRV and supported by DELWP. Several Traditional Owner groups have indicated geographic interests in Towong local government area and all will be invited to participate in this process. The Engagement Plan involves each group undertaking a series of six workshops (independently of each other) designed to enable active and genuine participation in recovery planning and processes.

Note: This model is also being applied simultaneously to Alpine local government area.

Incorporation of Priorities into MRP. As relevant information is identified during the workshops, it will be reported through the existing pillar reporting mechanisms at the Municipal Recovery Committee for inclusion into the Municipal Recovery Plan. It is anticipated this process will be finalised by March 2022, and all known priorities for the Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery will be identified and included in the Municipal Recovery Plan. This includes a profile of each Traditional Owner group that has geographic interests in Towong local government area.

| Desired outcomes | Priority areas |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal culture is valued and respected. • Aboriginal trauma is addressed, and healing is supported. • Aboriginal cultural safety is promoted. • Aboriginal participation and ownership are promoted. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage • Aboriginal community support |

| Objective | Action | Lead Agency | Responsible agencies | Community Stakeholders | Performance indicators | Timeframe |
|---|---|-------------|------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| Priority area: Cultural heritage | | | | | | |
| Invite and include indigenous knowledge and expertise is invited and included in the restoration of fire-affected landscapes. | Include local Traditional Owner groups in the implementation of natural environment recovery actions by inviting local groups to participate and inform recovery-related land management practices. | DELWP / PV | TSC, DELWP, RRV, NECMA | Local Traditional Owner Groups Landcare Private landholder | Local groups invited to participate and inform recovery practices. Potential programs identified and explored. | Ongoing |
| | Assist local Traditional Owner groups to perform cultural heritage assessments and surveys in fire-affected public land. | DELWP / PV | | Local Traditional Owner Groups | Cultural heritage assessments and surveys performed. | 2020/2021 |