



bushfire&natural  
**HAZARDS**CRC

# HAZARDS, CULTURE AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Dr Timothy Neale, Alfred Deakin Institute, Deakin University

Dr Jessica Weir, Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University

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Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Innovation and Science

**Business**  
Cooperative Research  
Centres Programme



**WESTERN SYDNEY**  
UNIVERSITY



## THE CONTEXT

- As for centuries, majority of Aboriginal people today live in southern Australia
- Increasing formal land holdings
- Diverse intercultural communities
- Sector = increased enthusiasm + variable policies and practices
- Wider interest in TEK
- Complexities of identity, knowledge and authority

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- 1) Investigate current priorities and engagement
- 2) Conduct collaborative research to improve engagement
- 3) Synthesize results for broader policy and practice utilisation

→ Intercultural Focus

## EXAMPLE: DISCOURSES AROUND 'CULTURAL BURNING'

### VALUES AND PRACTICES

- Why should they be supported?
- What is their purpose?
- What *should* their purpose be and who decides?
- How are they done?
- Who can do them?
- What knowledge and/or support is needed?
- What happens when management aims collide?

# PLANNING AND ENGAGEMENT TO DATE



- Meetings and workshops
- Vic team and end user meeting

## Proposed case studies:

1. ACT
2. Loddon-Mallee Region



Top: Dja Dja Wurrung working with DELWP and CFA at grassland burns on Barapabarapa Country (Carter, 2017). Bottom: Krystal Hurst and Dean Freeman (ACT Parks and Conservation service) explaining Aboriginal fire management with ANU students (Weir, 2017).

## KEY UTILISATION PRODUCTS

- Case-study interactions and findings
- ‘State of play’ reporting – insights and comparative analysis
- Social-institutional diagrammatic maps
- Factors for success
- National and sub-national networks

## NEXT STEPS

- Ethics application
- Continue case study and end user engagement
- Literature review
- Principal Researcher recruitment
- AFAC co-presentation

## PROJECT TEAM

Dr Jessica Weir, Western Sydney University  
Dr Timothy Neale, Deakin University  
Mr Oliver Costello, Firestick Farming  
Dr Brian Cook, University of Melbourne  
Mr Jeremy Dore, Aboriginal Carbon Fund  
A/Prof Tara McGee, University of Alberta  
Prof Jeremy Russell-Smith, Charles Darwin University  
Principal Researcher to be appointed  
Research Assistant to be appointed

## ASSOCIATED PHD STUDENTS

Daniel May, The Australian National University  
Another position currently advertised, Deakin University

## QUESTIONS/FEEDBACK?

Timothy Neale [t.neale@deakin.edu.au](mailto:t.neale@deakin.edu.au)  
Jessica Weir [j.weir@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:j.weir@westernsydney.edu.au)

## END USERS

John Schauble, Emergency Management Victoria  
Rodney Carter, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans AC  
Simon Curry, NSW Rural Fire Service  
Mark Eccleston, Aboriginal Victoria  
Dean Freeman, ACT Parks and Conservation Service  
Stuart Gunning, WA State Emergency Management Committee  
Adams Leavesley, ACT Parks and Conservation Service  
Lyndal Mackintosh, Department of Land, Water and Planning  
Marcus Stewart, Taungurung Clans AC  
Kate White, State Emergency Services Victoria

