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# Media Release

## Planning for more burning – your input wanted

While it's too wet for planned burning at the moment, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) has been doing work to plan for future burns.

Fire Prevention Coordinator, Alison Kerr said the early planning for the next three years' burning has been done and the maps of proposed burns and other fuel reduction works are now available for viewing and comment.

"These plans are created by looking at areas that haven't been burnt in recent years, deciding which areas will best provide protection from future bushfires and incorporating local input from the many conversations we have had around the community about burning," Ms Kerr said.

"Thanks to everyone for taking the time to give us your thoughts so far and we look forward to going over the plans with you, so that when the weather dries out a bit more we can get the works for the next three years underway.

"We're also displaying proposed new fire management zones for public land. These changes will help decide where, when and how often to burn to give the best protection from bushfires.

"We'll be holding sessions to discuss the plans across East Gippsland during August, so come and talk about planned burning with the DSE and Parks Victoria fire staff or drop into your local DSE or Parks Victoria office. Maps of the proposed burns and works will also be available to view on the DSE website.

**Community information sessions** will be held in each of the East Gippsland fire districts (Heyfield, Bairnsdale, Swifts Creek and Orbost) during August. Details will be published soon in local papers, or contact your nearest DSE office.

DSE and Parks Victoria staff will be available at each session to discuss DSE's Fire Operations Plans and burns planned for your area.

"We really value local knowledge and expertise from residents when we're doing our fire planning so we can get the burns done in the places that will give the best protection from fires and will help the bush too," Ms Kerr said.

"We are particularly interested in comments or feedback on specific burns or specific locations

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- is there an area of public land near you that you would like to discuss with DSE in relation to planned burning?"

"We want to increase the amount of burning we do and our priority is protecting communities."

DSE has burnt almost 55,000 hectares in planned burning across the East Gippsland region in 2010-11.

The draft East Gippsland Fire Operations Plan for 2011/12 – 2013/14 is available for public comment and viewing at DSE and Parks Victoria offices from **Monday 1 August until Friday 26 August 2011**.

If you would like to, speak to someone about planned works near you, or view and comment on the draft plan for your district, contact Alison Kerr, East Gippsland Fire Prevention Coordinator at 574 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875.

Or you can talk to local Fire Management staff at DSE and Parks Victoria offices in Bairnsdale, Bendoc, Cann River, Heyfield, Nowa Nowa, Orbost, Swifts Creek and Yarram.

View the district plans and comment online at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires) or call DSE's Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Input to DSE's fire operations plans is welcome all year around. Together we can make Victoria FireReady.

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