

# Interagency BAER Teams Deployed To Australia

by [Fireground Communications](#) on Monday, February 23, 2009 at 1:15pm



Two United States (US) Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams arrived in Australia on Sunday, February 15, 2009, and were greeted by the U.S. Consulate General, Michael Thurston, at the Melbourne International Airport. Both teams have been requested by the Australian government to assist, supplement and support Victoria State agencies in their bushfire recovery efforts ([www.nifc.gov/fire\\_info/news/nr\\_Australia\\_Assistance020909.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/fire_info/news/nr_Australia_Assistance020909.pdf)).

The US BAER emergency stabilization–rehabilitation teams are primarily working with:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) ([www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm))
- Country Fire Authority (CFA) ([www.cfa.vic.gov.au/](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/))
- Parks Victoria (PV) ([www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/))

The main mission of the BAER teams is to work with DSE, CFA, and PV to assess public and private lands and analyze post–fire effects that may threaten assets–at–risk from potential floods, erosion, and slips. They are also sharing and exchanging methodology and procedures.

Each team is made up of a variety of specialists such as soil scientists, hydrologists, geologists, biologists, geographic information system specialists, archeologist, botanist, silviculturist, research engineer, and civil engineer. The BAER teams are very experienced specialists that are highly effective in conducting rapid assessments and analyses.

The two BAER teams are comprised of US Department of Interior (DOI) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) interagency specialists from the following federal bureaus:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- Forest Service (USFS)

The leaders of the team are Erv Gasser (NPS) and Carolyn Napper (USFS). Both are highly experienced in burned area emergency stabilization and rehabilitation efforts and have led BAER teams for complex fires in southern California in 2003 and 2007. Carolyn also led US teams in Greece in 2007.

Both BAER teams spent all day on Monday, February 16, in Melbourne receiving orientation and training specific to Australian firefighting techniques and concerns. Topics included a briefing on fire behavior in Australian fuel types, fire weather patterns, regulations specific to both Victoria State firefighting and land management, and fireline safety.

On Tuesday, February 17, both BAER teams were deployed to different Victoria State bushfires to begin their fire rehabilitation assessments.

The Napper BAER Team arrived in the town of Traralgon which is within the Gippsland region — northeast of Melbourne. The team received a briefing on the current fire situation for the Churchill–Jeeraloang Complex of fires and safety concerns by the Incident Controller (Robert Ellis), Deputy IC (Shane Mynard), and the Gippsland Regional DSE Manager (Laurie Jeremiah). The team spent the rest of the afternoon working with the local DSE, CFA, and PV officials discussing potential values-at-risk within the burned fire areas and fire suppression rehabilitation needs.

Napper BAER Team members accompanied Andrea Brumley (Rescue Operations Officer) to the Morwell Animal Clinic. At the Morwell Animal Clinic, we met with members of BADGAR, a highly skilled volunteer wildlife rescue and protection group who were delivering two injured koalas for veterinary medical care. The koalas had been rescued from the Churchill Fire and were suffering from burns to their feet and dehydration. The veterinarian and his assistants administered IV fluids and cleaned and dressed the koalas' burns. Subsequent to treatment, the animals were transported to a rescue facility to recuperate. The members of BADGAR and the veterinarian perform wildlife rescue as a volunteer service, providing a remarkable model of motivation, expertise organization ([www.wrap.org.au](http://www.wrap.org.au)).

Several BAER team members attended a community meeting at Longwarry held by the agencies working on the Bunyip Ridge fire which the Napper BAER team will begin their assessment on Friday, February 20. BAER Team Leader Carolyn Napper gave a short presentation on objectives of post-fire assessments, the type of specialists working on the BAER team and what to expect from the team and their assessments.

On Wednesday, February 18, the Napper BAER team divided into two groups and were accompanied to the burned fire areas by local field reps from CFA (Peter Barr) and Parks Victoria (Craig Campbell) to assess suppression and post fire concerns (such as fire trail closure, impacts to irrigation ditches, potential for accelerated erosion, and loss of water control) on the Delburn and Churchill Complex fires.

BAER team PIO Cathleen Thompson remained at the IMT's command post with IMT Media Liaison Alex Konrad and provided interviews and discussions about the BAER team's mission to 1) local TV journalist (Emma Meggs, WIN News, — Channel 9, [www.wintv.com.au/index\\_new.php?regid=12](http://www.wintv.com.au/index_new.php?regid=12)); 2) Warren Truss (leader of the national minor party, [www.warrentruss.com/](http://www.warrentruss.com/)); and 3) Russell Northe (local federal member of the parliament, [www.russellnorthe.com.au/](http://www.russellnorthe.com.au/)).

Both BAER teams are working with USGS Earth Resources Observation and Science Center (EROS) and Forest Service Remote Sensing Applications Center (RSAC) to provide Burned Area Reflectance Classification (BARC) maps which assist the BAER teams with developing soil burn severity map products.

On Saturday, February 21, the U.S. Ambassador's Chargé D'Affaires, Dan Clune, will be traveling to the bushfire burned areas near the Gippsland region where he is scheduled to visit with the Napper BAER team.

To support Victorians who lost loved ones and had their homes and communities devastated by the bushfires, the Australian and Victorian governments have announced that Sunday, February 22, will be a National Day of Mourning. Many communities around Victoria State will be observing that day with local memorial services.

The Gasser BAER Team arrived at the Beechworth–Library Road Fire on Tuesday, February 17. An initial briefing was conducted by Parks Victoria and Department of Sustainability and Environment local officials.

On February 18, an additional briefing was held with specialists from DSE and PV prior to the Gasser BAER team initiating an aerial and ground assessment. Following the briefing, the team's archeologist, Chuck James, went to the field with DSE's Indigenous Facilitator (Donna Mitsch), to stabilize a rock art site that had been damaged during suppression operations. The team's watershed group is working with members of the North East Catchment Management Authority (Adrian Cioli and Natalie Martin). The team's biodiversity group is working with DSE (Sue Berwick). DSE (Craig Hamilton) is assisting the team with locating GIS data layers that are necessary for their analysis.

Collie Grange with ABC Radio coordinated with Team Leader Erv Gasser for an interview talking about the team's objectives and work with the local Victoria State agencies on its post-fire assessments.

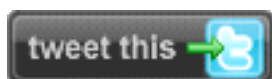
Issues identified by the Gasser BAER team so far include: rock art damage, water catchments, potential ash/sediment entering water systems, soil burn severity, vegetation mortality, threatened species habitat, suppression impacts, and invasive species.

The Gasser BAER team is coordinating with its Victoria State counterparts to collect the following GIS data layers needed to conduct its analysis: fire perimeter, fire history, ownership, vegetation, watersheds, bioregions, catchment zones, and infrastructure have been downloaded. The BAER team will continue field assessments on Thursday, February 19, and will begin report writing on Friday, February 20, and will report-out to DSE and PV on Monday, February 23.

Members of the Gasser BAER team include: Erv Gasser, NPS (Team Leader); Gavin Lovell, BLM (Assistant Team Leader); Nora Caplette, BLM; Mike Dolan, BLM; Richard Easterbrook, NPS; Kenneth Griggs, F&WS; Judy Hallisey, USFS; Chuck James, BIA; Lisa Jameson, NPS; Richard Pyzik, USFS; William Sims, BIA; and Fred VonBonin, BIA.

Members of the Napper BAER team include: Carolyn Napper, USFS (Team Leader); Todd Ellsworth, USFS (Assistant Team Leader); Bob Davidson, USFS; Michael Kellett, USFS; Tom Koler, USFS; Greg Napper, USFS; Jason Pyron, USFS; Pete Robichaud, USFS; Jim Schmitt, USFS; Liz Schnackenberg, USFS; Ed Snook, USFS; and Dave Young, USFS.

Both US BAER teams are supported by Rich Schwab, NPS (BAER Team Field Liaison) and Cathleen Thompson, USFS (BAER Team Information Officer).



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# **US BAER Teams Update – March 4, 2009**

**Incident:** Australia 2009 Support Wildfire

**Released:** 3/9/2009

## **Related Information**

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**Interagency BAER–Emergency Stabilization & Rehabilitation Teams**

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**Australia Support 2009**

## **US INTERAGENCY BAER TEAMS**

**3rd Edition Update – March 4, 2009**

Two United States (US) Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams continue to assist, supplement and support Victoria State agencies in Australia in their bushfire post–fire rehabilitation assessment efforts working primarily with:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) ([www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm))
- Country Fire Authority (CFA) ([www.cfa.vic.gov.au/](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/))
- Parks Victoria (PV) ([www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/))

Both BAER teams were deployed to different Victoria State (VIC) bushfires to conduct rapid assessments and included specialists from DSE, CFA, PV, and other Australia state agencies.

A third US Interagency BAER team (Hardy BAER team) has been requested by the Australian government to continue the post–fire recovery efforts on the remaining Victoria bushfires. The third BAER team, with team leader Terry Hardy, US Forest Service (USFS), Boise, Idaho, is scheduled to arrive in Melbourne on Saturday, March 7. Additional members of the third team are: Harold Luedtke (Deputy Team Leader), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), New Mexico; Regina Rone, USFS, Idaho; Will Reed, USFS, Utah; Amy Nowakowski, USFS, Wyoming; Dave Kennell, USFS, Idaho; Frank Partridge, National Park Service (NPS), Florida; Eric Schroder, USFS, Colorado; Carl Hardzinski, BIA, Minnesota; Tony Luxon, BIA, New Mexico; Scott Lambert, Bureau

of Land Management (BLM), Idaho; Jeffrey O'Connell, BLM, Colorado; and Dana Butler, USFS, Colorado.

## **Photo of 3rd US BAER Team Arrives in Australia**

**March 7, 2009**

### **Erv Gasser's Interagency BAER Team**

**Photo of Gasser US BAER Team Members include: (Front Row) Fred vonBonin, BIA; Lisa Jameson, USFWS; Chuck James, BIA; Judy Hallisey, USFS; Bill Sims, BIA; Mike Dolan, BLM; Richard Easterbrook, NPS; Ken Griggs, USFWS; Rich Pyzik, USFS; Doug Beckers, NSW-NPWS; (Back Row) Margaret Kitchin, ACT-DTMS; John Costenaro, VIC-DSE/Univ. Melbourne; Nora Caplette, BLM; Erv Gasser, NPS, Team Leader; Ned Kelly, VIC-DSE; and Gavin Lovell, BLM, Deputy Team Leader.**

The Gasser BAER team coordinated and worked with the following VIC-DSE employees: Tony Long, Donna Mitsch, Andrea Joyce, Geoff Lodge, David Cheal, Lisa North, Matt Holmes, John Steer, Russel Smith, Steve Smith, and Peter Menkhrost; Victoria State (VIC) Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) employees: Mark Turner, and Meegan Davies; Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) employees: Nick Bray, and Ben Ives; New South Wales (NSW) State employees with the National Parks and Wildlife Service department: Doug Beckers, Geoff Kalwy, and Ian Jackett; Australian Capital Territory (ACT) employee with the Environment and Recreation department, Margaret Kitchin; and John Costenaro (with DSE and the University of Melbourne).

**Photo of Bill Sims (US BIA), Judy Hallisey (USFS), Photo of Doug Beckers (NSW-NPWS) Photo of Andea Joyce (VIC-DSE)**

**Photo of John Constanaro (VIC-DSE, Unv Melbourne), Rich Pyzik (USFS)**

## **Photo of Steve Smith (VIC-DSE) Photo of Margaret Kitchin (ACT-DTMS), Mike Dolan (US BLM)**

For the Kilmore East-Murrindindi Complex North fire near the town of Alexandra, Gasser BAER team members began their preparation for post-fire field assessments on February 25, 2009, by meeting and coordinating with several of their VIC State, NSW State, and ACT Territory counterparts.

The following initial concerns were established by the Gasser BAER team and their Victoria State counterparts:

- Flora
  - Potential impacts to specialized habitat
  - Listed Buxton gum species
  - Mountain ash forest impact
  - Invasive weeds
  - Potential for peat to be burning
  - Invasive riparian weeds
- Fauna
  - Leadbeater possum
  - Two galaxia species
  - Sooty Owl and Powerful Owl
  - Spotted Tree Frog
- Cultural
  - Utilize burn to survey
  - Add historic sites
  - Connect with local tribe
- Hydro
  - Sedimentation in the water supply
  - Increased run off driving sedimentation
  - Importance of Sunday and King Parrot catchments
  - Provide speculation for high risk areas
  - Riparian weeds
  - Fishing and trout rearing industries
- Operations
  - Survey for public safety hazards
  - Assess recreational site damage
  - Cumulative totals for track and fence damage

Tony Long (DSE) raised several points: 1) the BBCMA is already looking at infrastructure; 2) make use of information sharing to be more thorough and avoid duplication; 3) local forestry personnel may be

available to the team soon; 4) established that BAER analysis will cover all land ownerships and clarified the area of analysis to be north of the divide; and 5) the Mt. Disappointment area.

On February 26, the Gasser BAER team broke into disciplines and headed to the

field for ground reconnaissance. The team expected to be conducting their field work and gathering inventory data for several days.

On February 27, the Gasser BAER team concentrated their field assessments to the fire area north of the Divide and the watersheds to the east of the area near the towns of Buxton and Marysville. John Steer (DSE) expressed a priority for the assessment of the Buxton / Marysville watershed, and aided in scheduling a third day of local guides for Flora and Fauna groups. The team further expanded their areas of concern with their VIC, NSW, and ACT counterparts.

On February 28, and 29, the Gasser BAER team continued their field assessments and data acquisitions.

On March 1, Pete Robichaud (USFS BAER Research Scientist) accompanied Gasser BAER team members during their field assessments. Pete spoke of the differences he sees between the Kilmore East–Murrinidindi Complex North fire and the fire areas he has been to for his last assessments. At this complex, he is concerned about the high percentage of severe burn severity upon the municipal water supplies.

On March 2, Pete Robichaud, BAER Team Field Liaison Rich Schwab, and BAER Team Leader Erv Gasser, attended a Post–Fire Water Quality Protection and Remediation Techniques and Strategies seminar at the University of Melbourne. Pete and Erv both gave presentations on the processes, modeling, and treatments that the BAER team members utilize to prevent soil erosion and protect water quality, and their recent experience in the application within the Victoria bushfire areas.

On March 3, the Gasser BAER team identified their assessment progress and areas of concern with as follows:

- Fauna – the fauna group expected no changes in their previous specs. DSE personnel raised a concern about fish loss from retardant contamination due to debris movement into the riparian zone. NSW State–NPWS employee Ian Jackett will share fauna/vegetation utilization data in GIS format for the team's utilization.
- Forestry – the forestry group continues to analyze data, intersecting slope with species, and soil burn severity, to arrive at logical salvage units. The fauna layers from Ian Jackett will aid analysis.
- Hydro – the hydro group met with GVW at the Sunday Creek Reservoir to review pumping and storage capacity and tributaries. The hydro group performed Erosion Risk Management Tool (ERMiT) modeling, and expects additional specs by tomorrow.
- Operations – the operations group submitted a recreation spec for asset assessment, as well as the public safety spec.
- Cultural – the cultural group may combine some specs. The group is looking at management recommendations to foil wrap scar trees for fire protection, and creating a standardized tape color for protecting scar trees from hazard tree cutting – perhaps to work around the scars. The group worked with Patrick Miller and the VIC–DSE team on clearing dozer line.
- Flora – the flora group worked on specs, and some fire monitoring protocols. The group will try to incorporate previous research on bog recovery.

NSW State–NPWS employees Geoff Kalwy and Ian Jackett have completed their last day of field assessments and will not be returning to Alexandra. Gasser BAER team members appreciate all their hard work, field surveys, and willingness to be part of the team.

The Gasser BAER team is scheduled to present their Kilmore East–Murrinidindi Complex North BAER report on Tuesday, March 10, and deliver their final BAER plan to DSE on March 11.

Carolyn Napper's Forest Service BAER Team

**Photo of Members of the Napper BAER team include: Carolyn Napper, USFS (Team Leader); Todd Ellsworth, USFS (Assistant**

**Team Leader); Bob Davidson, USFS; Michael Kellett, USFS; Tom Koler, USFS; Greg Napper, USFS; Jason Pyron, USFS; Pete Robichaud, USFS; Jim Schmitt, USFS; Liz Schnackenber, USFS; Ed Snook, USFS; and Dave Young, USFS. Also pictured above are Rich Schwab, NPS (BAER Team Field Liaison) and Cathleen Thompson, USFS (BAER Team Information Officer).**

The Napper BAER team continued to coordinate and work with the following VIC–DSE employees: Laurie Jeremiah, Neville Penrose, Daniel Mainville, Paul Pearson, Greg Hollis, Rolf Willig, Wally Notman, and; VIC–PV employee Greg Young, and Andy Gilliam; Tarago Catchment Sustainable Farms employee Nicole Driessen; Gippsland Water employee Jillian Busch; and VIC Department of Primary Industries (DPI) employee Lindsay Hyde.

On Friday, February 27, Napper BAER team members departed the Lakes Entrance area and stopped in the VIC–DPI office in Bairnsdale to meet with Joanna Freslov and Lisa Adams regarding heritage and cultural resources found within the Bunyip fire perimeter. Joanna and Lisa also provided additional names of contacts in Noojee area.

The Napper BAER team received a briefing at Noojee from the Incident Management Team for the Bunyip fire. Paul Pearson (DSE), Rolf Willis (DSE), Greg Hollis (DSE), Lindsay Hyde (DPI) Jillian Busch (Gippsland Water), and Nicole Driessen (Taragon Catchment), provided an excellent overview of the potential values–at–risk within the fire area:

The Napper BAER team received a briefing at Noojee from the Incident Management Team for the Bunyip fire. Paul Pearson (DSE), Rolf Willis (DSE), Greg Hollis (DSE), Lindsay Hyde (DPI) Jillian Busch (Gippsland Water), and Nicole Driessen (Taragon Catchment), provided an excellent overview of the potential values–at–risk within the fire area:

- 1) Water Catchments such as the Tarago water supply and Drouin water supply catchment;
- 2) Cultural resources in the western portion of fire had greater areas of habitation;
- 3) Forest recreation sites such as walking trails, 7 acres of rock, and other recreational uses;
- 4) Biodiversity issues including flora and fauna as there are scatterings of threatened flora, and some owls;
- 5) High voltage power lines in the lower part of the fire;
- 6) Private land located at the bottom of the fire;
- 7) Crown land issues;
- 8) Indigenous values, including European sites of sawmills and tram sites that are scattered throughout the burned area;
- 9) Three Apiary sites within the burned area; and
- 10) Built assets such as roads and bridges.

The Napper BAER team provided an overview to their Australian counterparts regarding the BAER process including utilization of the BARC map, field characterization of catchment condition, identification of values-at-risk and recommended post-fire emergency stabilization and rehabilitation treatments to minimize these threats. Each discipline broke into smaller groups to discuss and share ideas on how to assess the burned area.

On Saturday, February 28, Napper BAER team members continued to meet with their VIC agency counterparts. Several of their counterparts joined the BAER team for a day in the field with the focus being on calibration and orientation. Together, the group stopped at three sites to discuss values-at-risk, how the team collects data, and discussed the vegetative recovery of different Ecological Vegetation Classifications (EVC):

- Stop 1) the Pedersen Weir which was constructed in 1963. The structure is the point where water is diverted for domestic water supply to the Warragul Water treatment plant. It provides water to Warragul, Drouin, Nilma, and Darmum townships and is a part of the Gippsland Water (GW) responsibility. The GW has an agreement called the Bulk Water Agreement with the Melbourne Water supply. The team concurred that the weir needs to be accessed daily and may require frequent cleaning;
- Stop 2) The team discussed the ecological vegetation classes and the post-fire response of Mountain Ash trees. Wally Notman (DSE) explained that when the leaves are scorched, the trees will die. Most of the trees at that location were dead and it appeared to be a moderate burn severity. The area had not burned since 1939 and often the Mountain Ash trees are an early-successional species and will regenerate. Above the road there was a plantation from 1994 that was less than 20 years-old and would probably be re-seeded since that area had also burned. The group agreed that weeds should not be a big concern in this burned area; and
- Stop 3) the team's discussion focused on road and stream crossings, and overall road design. Napper BAER team member Greg Napper (USFS Civil Engineer) explained that he had noticed a change in the road condition from one catchment to another – with the first area being gentler (Tarago) and this area (Bunyip) being steeper. Some of the items the group looked at included

calculations of burn severity above a crossing, erosion and sediment delivery in the catchment.

On Sunday March 1, several BAER team members flew over the fire area to better characterize the burned area. Team members included: Liz Schnackenberg (USFS Hydrologist), Ed Snook (USFS Hydrologist), Dave Young (USFS Soil Scientist), Todd Ellsworth (USFS Soil Scientist), and Tom Koler (USFS Geologist–Economist). Other BAER team groups divided–up to review the burned area for roads, soils, biodiversity, and catchment response.

Greg Napper, and Napper BAER team member Jason Pyron (USFS Biologist), assessed the Spion Kopke road area and surveyed many bridges and access roads.

Napper BAER team members Liz Schackenberg and Ed Snook met with Melbourne Water employee Rob Considine to discuss some of the water issues. The hydro group will have a river health person discuss these issues regarding values–at–risk. The hydro group will discuss the limnology – with Napper BAER team member Pete Robichaud (USFS Research Scientist), and an operational specialist to determine how the dam works. The BAER team has been asked to do a wrap–up session for Melbourne Water. It was decided that Melbourne water will attend the Napper BAER team's close–out in Melbourne on Thursday, March 12.

The Napper BAER team found that the Bunyip weir and aqueduct is open and exposed to upslope debris flows. Multiple underground sections are at risk from plugging from debris flows and could flood downstream if it becomes plugged and creates more erosion. One good thing is that most of the slopes above it are somewhat gentle. Tarago Catchment officer Nicole Driessen and the BAER team went up Quartz creek, almost to the pass at North Hells Gate, to review the riparian condition.

On Monday, March 2, the Napper BAER team's focus was the Bunyip aqueduct and some of the other higher soil burn severity areas. Napper BAER team member Jim Schmidt (USFS GIS Specialist) worked the cross–walk mapping between watersheds and soil burn severity.

Napper BAER Team member Bob Davidson (USFS Soil Scientist) and DPI employee Lindsay Hyde (Sustainable Landscapes) looked at the high severity soil burn along the Tea Tree Track road (which is in poor condition). The road is waterbarred but very steep and the team expects increased erosion. The road was previously in poor condition and the team should avoid driving the road, if possible. Bob found a culvert on the Tea Tree road where there is an expected increase in sediment.

The Napper BAER team collected data from five sites – some with moderate severity soil burn with high catchment response. The team saw that some grass trees and ferns had re-sprouted and found destruction of the soil structure where roots were heated. The team determined that there was more high severity soil burn in the Bunyip catchment area. The northeast and northwest areas have more understory burn that is not fully captured on the BARC map. Some of the main Bunyip tributaries contain a higher soil burn severity than is displayed on the initial BARC map.

On Tuesday, March 3, 2009, Napper BAER team member Michael Kellett (USFS Wildlife Biologist) and DSE employees Rolf Willig and Jean-Marc Porigneaux were accompanied by journalist Joseph Feil to the southern part of the Bunyip Fire. Mr. Feil was gathering information and photography from the Bunyip Fire for an upcoming article in Outback Magazine (<http://www.outbackmag.com.au/>). The team's field reconnaissance included a portion of Bunyip State Park near Tonimbuk, which contains habitat for one of only two small populations of the critically endangered and Victoria State Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (FFGA)-listed Helmeted Honeyeater. At the park, they met with another DSE employee and volunteer who led them to feeding stations in a thick stand of tea tree along Diamond Creek where we observed nearly a dozen of these rare birds. The team discovered that the advance of the fire had stopped just 300 meters from this occupied habitat, and that none of the honeyeaters from this population were lost to the fire.

BAER Team Field Liaison Rich Schwab and Pete Robichaud returned from their visit with the Gasser BAER team and their BAER process presentation at Melbourne University. They reported that their

presentation and meeting with the university went very well. Pete mentioned that the biggest concern for burned areas is the potential for suspended solids, debris flows, and nutrients adversely affecting water quality. The Melbourne University researchers also felt that a rainfall intensity of 60–mm with an 10–minute duration appears to be a trigger point for damage, and mentioned that slip failures also occur several months after fires.

On Wednesday, March 4, the Napper BAER team returned to Noojee to work on further analysis and assessments. Napper BAER team members Liz Schackenberg and Ed Snook received information on the watersheds to model and received data from the Bureau of Meteorology on rainfall intensity and flood information. The hydro group needed GIS Specialist Jim Schmidt to lump some of the catchments together to assist in their analysis. Napper BAER team members Bob Davidson, Dave Young and Todd Ellsworth were able to sample several areas within the fire area and revised the BARC map to generate a final soil burn severity map. The biodiversity group is looking at the EVC data and trying to lump some of the information to create EVDs that help to show the impact of the fire on different species. This is a new approach and everyone is hopeful this may provide valuable information.

The Napper BAER team tackled the values–at–risk spreadsheet with their VIC agency counterparts. The team moved from potential values–at–risk to more site–specific known values–at–risk. The team identified threatening processes, areas affected and consequences, and treatment objectives.

The Napper BAER team selected Quartz Creek catchment for more intensive analysis and a field trip for the group. The team will review the BAER process in the field with our VIC cooperators, identifying treatment objectives, discussing possible treatments, and sharing our criteria for actual treatment selection.

The Napper BAER team is scheduled to present their Bunyip fire BAER report on Tuesday, March 10, and deliver their final BAER plan to DSE by March 11.

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