



Carmel Tebbutt MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Climate Change and the Environment | Minister for Commerce

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Parks Service preparing for the fire season

Deputy Premier and Minister for Climate Change and the Environment Carmel Tebbutt said the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) was focusing on fire preparedness and gearing up for what could be a challenging summer.

“We have already seen a number of wildfires around the State and it is a timely reminder that we need to prepare for the warmer months,” Ms Tebbutt said.

“NPWS has been taking advantage of every opportunity where there have been suitable weather conditions to do hazard reduction burning.

“Since 1 July, the NPWS has conducted more than 70 burns treating almost 20,000 hectares of national park estate.

“This is on top of a near record hazard reduction year last year where NPWS completed 168 hazard reduction burns covering almost 60,000 hectares - the largest in five years and the second largest since records were kept.”

Ms Tebbutt said today more than 60 NPWS Sydney Region firefighters were undergoing a series of exercises at Middle Head to hone their skills and close to 50 officers were attending a similar day in the Blue Mountains.

“At Middle Head, tasks are divided into five sectors, with each focusing on a different firefighter competency.

“NPWS firefighters will test their map reading and GPS skills, talk through aircraft safety and ensure all their personal protective gear is up to date and their equipment is in good working order.

“NPWS hold at least one fire preparation day for each region every year and more than 40 exercises similar to those being held today are being run across New South Wales.”

Ms Tebbutt also today congratulated five NSW firefighters for their efforts in battling huge blazes in British Columbia over the last five weeks.

Returning home yesterday, NPWS firefighters were part of a contingent of 30 specialists from across Australia and New Zealand.

“Our firefighters are amongst the best in the world,” Ms Tebbutt said.

“They have spent five weeks giving their weary Canadian counterparts some respite from battling the massive fires in that country.

“The experience has enabled them to share and swap skills and techniques which will be a great benefit to both countries. I thank them for their professionalism and commitment and welcome them home.”

NPWS crew deployed were: David Crust, Area Manager, Mudgee; Alan Henderson, Area Manager, Gosford; Peter Clark, Area Manager, Hastings; Sean Leathers, Senior Field Supervisor, Dorrigo; Ian Smith, Regional Operations Coordinator, Nowra.

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