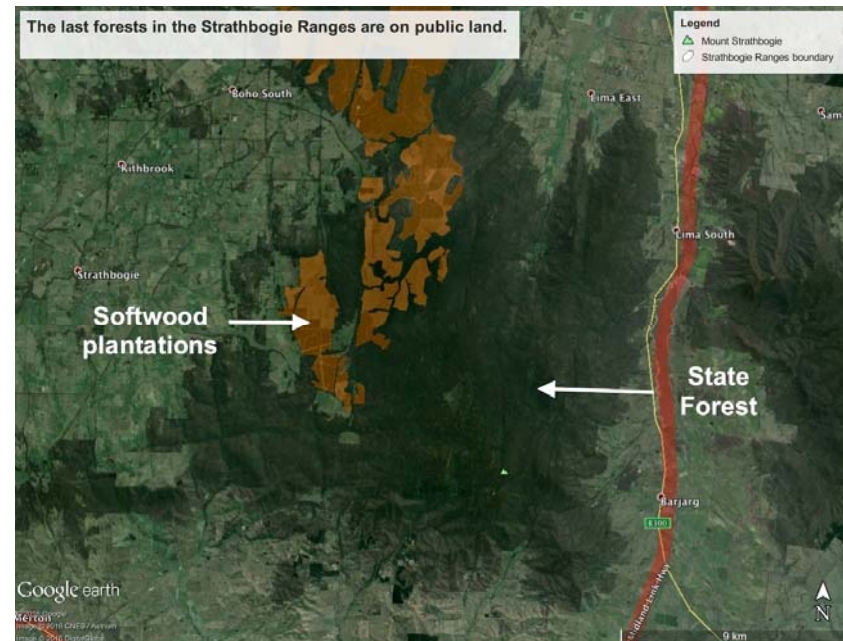
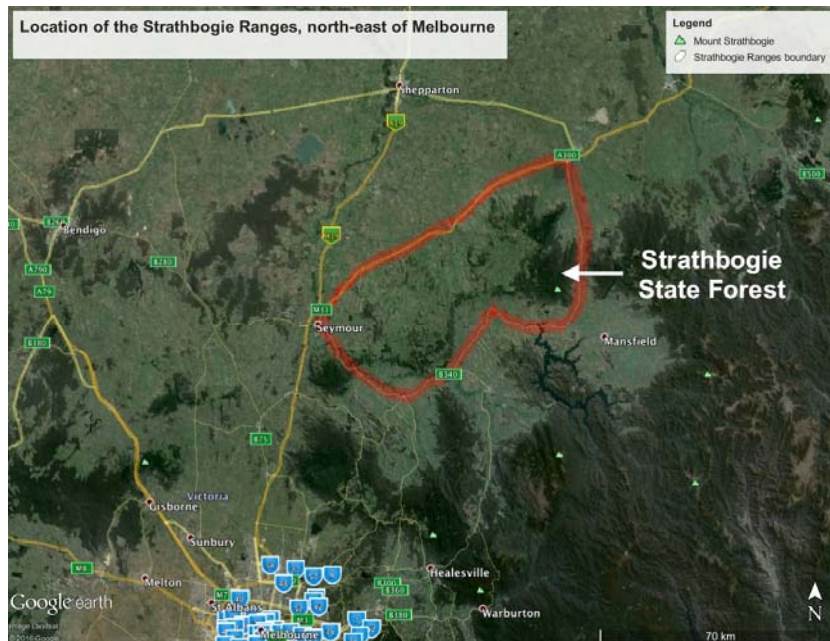


Strathbogie Ranges

- Total area of forest on public land ~30,000 ha, or 300 sq km.
- Farmland and rural communities surround the forest: Strathbogie, Swanpool, Mansfield, Bonnie Doon, Warrenbayne.
- Highly fragmented and isolated from the montane forests to the south and east.
- Significant environmental (water, biodiversity, carbon) and recreation values.
- About 20 CFA Brigades cover the Strathbogie Ranges landscape and are regularly called upon to assist bushfire control.
- Long history of planned burning, with scale and frequency of burns increasing.



Community





Some parts of this forest have had no fires for 100+ years



We care about the forest



600 years collective service and growing

Community interest in excessive planned burning is strong

Planned central Victorian fire 'too big' for season

April 6, 2016 12:00am

KATH SULLIVAN The Weekly Times



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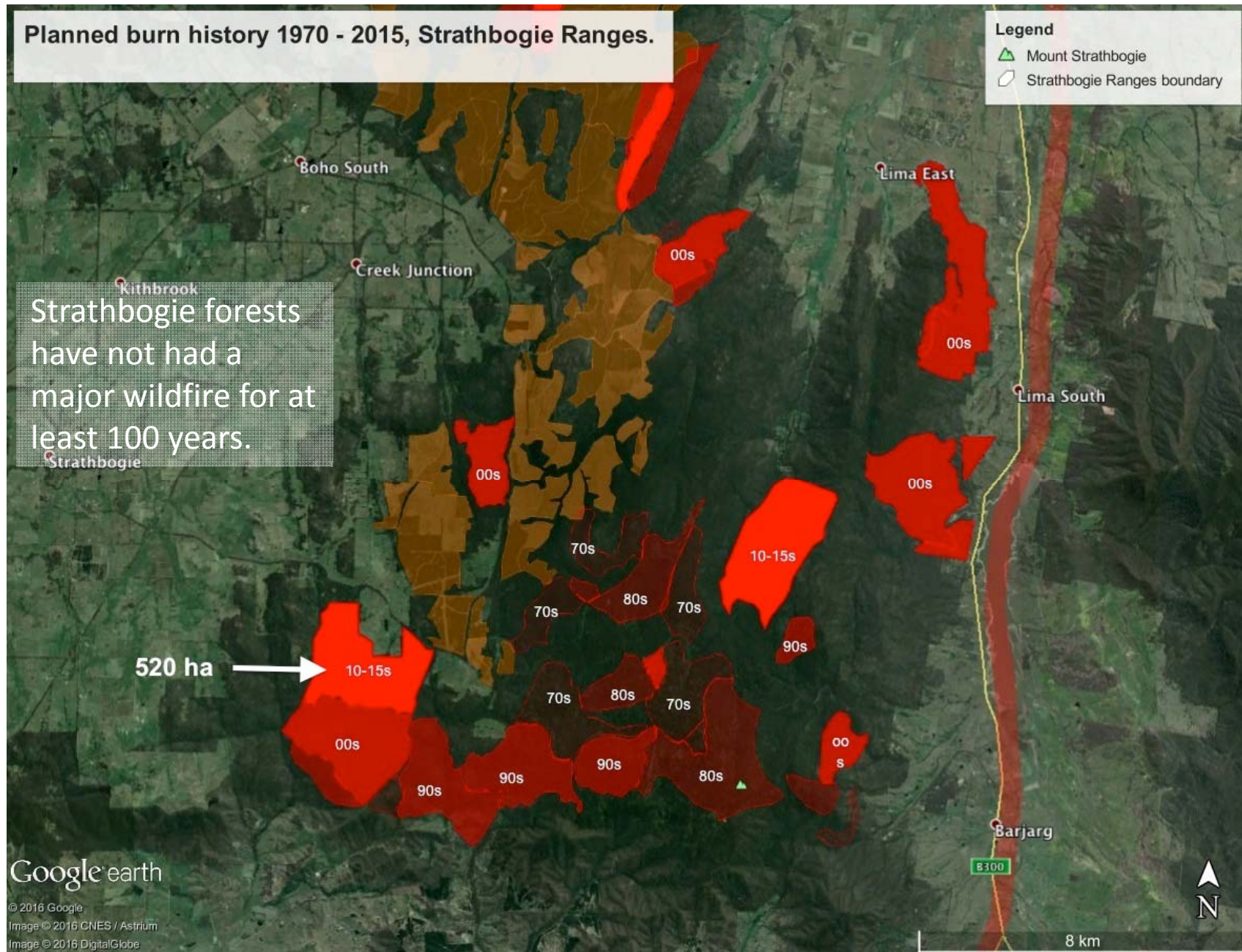
MOST VIEWED

1. Planned fire 'too big' for season
2. Jurassic park just outside Winton
3. Illegal tobacco crop 'worth \$16m' found
4. A little house on the prairie
5. Gun laws likely to change

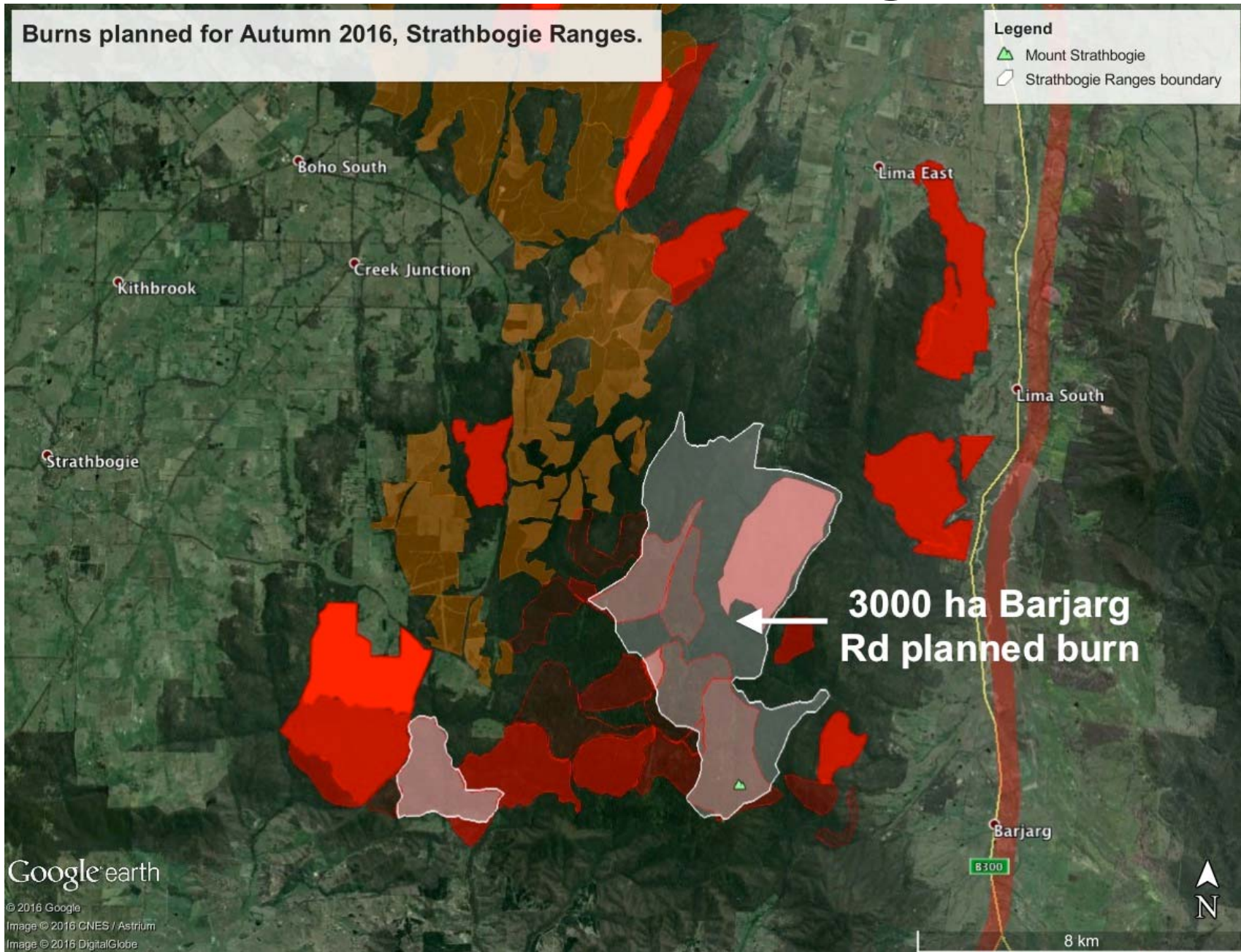
Fire in the Strathbogies – our concerns

- Large-scale burns (000's ha) erase existing mosaic burn patterns of previous decades' smaller-scale burns.
- DELWP in the Goulburn Region (probably State-wide) has no systematic on-ground program to quantitatively assess the impact of planned burns on fuel-loads or any other characteristic of the post-fire vegetation.
- DELWP has no capacity to learn from its decades of planned burn operations in the Strathbogie Ranges.
- Planned burning may actually provide a false sense of safety for communities in fire-prone landscapes - DELWP extension info. perpetuates this belief within rural communities.
- Large burns may be cost effective, but might also be having negative outcomes for forest health and resilience.

Planned burns are getting bigger - too big



The burn is too big




Assessment of 2015 'successful' planned burn

Tames Rd burn assessment

- 25% of all trees (>0.7 m DBH) affected by the burn, were killed.
- 50% of all old-growth trees (>1 m DBH) affected by the burn, were killed.
- These figures are likely underestimates

TAMES ROAD PLANNED BURN - IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Strathgogie Sustainable Forests Group - January 2016

Summary
Recent planned burns in Strathgogie forests have been disastrous for the health of the forest and its resident fauna. A significant proportion of the old-growth elements in the forest that have survived 150+ years of logging and fires, have been destroyed by a recent planned burn. Planned burning of the sort and at the scale undertaken by DELWP in Strathgogie forests must stop immediately and a more informed approach to baseline mitigation needs to be developed, particularly in light of the shift to a risk-based approach to fire risk in the State.




Old-growth trees killed by the planned burn - how old was this ancient Victorian Blue Gum?

Background
On 28 March 2015, Dept. Environment, Water & Planning (DELWP) initiated a planned burn of a 521 ha section of forest in the Strathgogie Ranges, known as the Tames Rd planned burn. Following the burn, at the request of a neighbouring landholder that knew the area intimately, members of the Strathgogie Sustainable Forests Group (SSFG) inspected parts of the burn adjacent to its northern perimeter. From that inspection it was clear that at least some parts of the burn area had experienced a high intensity fire that severely scorched large areas of the tree canopy, incinerated areas of understorey vegetation to mineral earth and killed a number of the last large, mature trees in parts of the forest.

Subsequent inspection of another part of the planned burn suggested that the environmental impact of this burn may have been more widespread than initially thought.

Strathgogie Sustainable Forests Group 1
<https://strathgogiesustainableforests.com/forests>
<https://www.facebook.com/Our-Strathgogie-Forests-62175337554293/>

Reducing the effect of planned burns on hollow-bearing trees
Fire and adaptive management report no. 95
Lucas BMJF
2016



VICTORIA Environment, Land, Water and Planning

The forest was too dry and the burn was too hot



The forest was too dry and the burn was too hot



The environmental damage was significant



The environmental damage was excessive



Long un-burnt forest – fuel loads?



Long un-burnt forest – fuel loads?



What about carbon?

- Euroa Environment Group commissioned a report to assess emissions from planned burning in the 2016 season.
- Barjarg Rd burn would have liberate 43,000 t eCO₂ (conservatively)
- Emissions of 22,000 cars annually

Why the burning of large areas of remote bush is counter-productive (1)

- Erase much of the existing burn mosaic.
- Long un-burnt forest in these Ranges is often relatively open in the understorey. Fire stimulates shrubby growth which can elevate fuel loads.
- It will create fuel-load issues across a large area for the subsequent 5 to 20 years.
- This forest is fragmented, isolated, relatively small and has a history of local fauna extinctions.

Why the burning of large areas of remote bush is counter-productive (2)

- Decimate populations of several threatened species (e.g. Greater Glider, Powerful Owl).
- Recent Summers, including 2015 & 16, have been hot and dry – the forest is stressed and should not be deliberately burnt.
- Low-intensity burns kill a high proportion of century-old trees and significantly degrade the forest.
- Emissions from these burns are real and measurable and should be taken into account.
- Creates a false sense of safety in the surrounding community.

The future

- We are involved in the community fire advisory committee for the Strathbogie Ranges.
- Smaller area of the forest burnt annually.
- FOPs based on evidence and assessed risk, not worst-case-scenarios and fear.
- Burns to be strategic: assets, forest perimeter, roadsides, vegetation that copes with more frequent fire (ridgelines, drier forest types).
- Encourage landholders reduce fire-risk around their homes and farms.