



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Inquiry: Inquiry into ecosystem decline

Hearing Date: 27 April 2021

Question[s] taken on notice

Directed to: Matthew Shanks, Taungurung Land and Waters Council Aboriginal Corporation

**1. Mr MEDDICK Page no. 24**

**Question asked.**

Okay, how far away do you think you are from— (forming the Traditional Owner Land Management Board, which then develops the joint management plan)

**Response:**

**2. Ms BATH Page no. 26**

**Question asked.**

Is there elements of that fire strategy and the work around fire sticks that you have got that plan there that you could share with us? So you were talking about connecting with both state land and private land and some sort of the synergies there. Is there some things that we could understand better if you had some documents that you might be able to share? It is not sensitive in that form.

**Response:**

Unfortunately, we do not currently have any recent documents that we are able to share related to our Cultural Fire Program.

Attached to question 3 below, is a high-level overview of the TLaWC Cultural Fire Program associated with the budget ask made as part of the implementation planning.

This describes exploring relationships and partnerships across multiple jurisdictions. We are currently progressing opportunities to this end, but have nothing formal in place that we are able to share publicly, largely due to the lack of resourcing to support these activities that have been allocated in the 2021/22 budget, but have not yet been delivered to Traditional Owner Corporations, including TLaWC.



**3. Ms BATH Page no. 26**

**Question asked.**

And the costings, I think you made mention about those. If there is something there that you would be able to share, just so that we can get our head round that?

**Response:**

As part of the implementation planning for the Cultural Fire Strategy that TLaWC participated in, we worked with the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations to develop a high level 5-year plan and associated budget to support the development of a Cultural Fire Program within TLaWC.

See appendix 1 below

**4. Mr HAYES Page no. 30**

**Question asked.**

A copy of the cultural landscape strategy and cultural fire strategy.

**Response:**

I have attached links to these strategies below, both of which have been launched by Minister D'Ambrosio.

Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy:

<https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/6817/fireplusstrategyplusfinal.pdf>

Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy:

<https://www.fvtoc.com.au/cultural-landscapes>

Appendix 1.

## Taungurung Land and Waters Council

### Background

Our ancestors managed Country according to our seasonal calendar, that was shaped by the lifecycles of the plants and animals around us. Our ancestors read and managed Country according to seven annual seasons, ensuring the health of our people and natural & cultural resources over countless generations.

Taungurung *buk dadbagi* (Taungurung Country Plan) sets out the Taungurung Nations objectives for our Country and our people. Through our Country plan we commit to exploring opportunities to building capacity of our people to play an active role in the decision making for and caring of our Country, as well as protecting and repatriating Taungurung Traditional Knowledge and practices.

*Ganalina biik-nganjin gaaguk wurrii*

Guardians of our Country are active and respected

*Taungurung yulendj bagungga yumaa munda*

Taungurung knowledge is gathered, shared and protected

The Taungurung Land and Waters Council is the corporate entity charged with the responsibility to deliver on the communities needs and objectives, and the primary driver of outcomes that will be sought through the Taungurung Recognition and Settlement Agreement.

### Strengths

The Taungurung Land and Waters Council currently has a Caring for Country team undertaking Natural Resource management work, including contractual arrangements with State agencies to heal and manage Country.

Taungurung Knowledge Holders played a significant role in the development of the Cultural Fire Strategy. We will continue to build on our experiences using Cultural Fire at key sites, and further establish partnerships within our territories with land and fire management agencies, as well as private land holders.

### Pathway to cultural fire

The Taungurung Land and Waters Council will build its team and resources for cultural fire application, as well as partnering with the State on planned burn activities and emergency response.

A primary objective of TLaWCs Caring for Country team is to expand the application of our Cultural Fire practices into an ongoing program that has the co-benefit of providing employment to Taungurung people as we apply our knowledge and practices associated with Cultural Fire.

The Taungurung have a strong desire to connect with other Cultural Fire practitioners and knowledge holders, and build relationships with other Victorian Traditional Owner Nations to share our knowledge and experiences. This will ensure Cultural Fire is re-invigorated on a wide scale to heal and manage Country, like our old people. We also wish to connect to Cultural Fire knowledge holders

and practitioners in other jurisdictions, to share knowledge and strengthen the network of Cultural Fire Practitioners and spread the coverage of Cultural Fire across all Countries once again.

### Outcomes being sought

The TLaWC seek to ensure that the Taungurung people are the decision makers when it comes to healing and managing Country in our territories. We seek the following outcomes through the Taungurung Cultural Fire Program:

- The Taungurung knowledge system and Taungurung Traditional Knowledge is restored and actively being shared with community
- TLaWC to have a year round fire (and NRM) crew with a (summer) emergency management function and other seasonal culturally informed burns and monitoring.
- Taungurung leading the management of Country with Cultural Fire within our territories, through the establishment of our own fire teams
- Taungurung informing the management of contemporary fire by government and other non-Taungurung land and fire management agencies/organisations
- Taungurung people have access to Country for healing and management
- Taungurung people are actively managing Country according to culturally significant plant and animal species and other cultural values (e.g. food and fibre, obligations to care for Country)
- Research, monitoring and evaluation of Taungurung territories and our knowledge and practices is led by Taungurung people. Strong partnerships are established.
- The respectful integration of Taungurung Traditional Knowledge and Science is realised.

### Priority areas for action

- Restoration of the knowledge system. Recovering and adapting practice to the contemporary environment (Program component 2).
- Resourcing of staff, equipment and training to build a cultural fire team (Program component 1).
- Developing TLaWCs country-wide cultural fire plan and strategy (Program component 4).
- Developing TLaWC burn plans (separate to DELWP led process) (Program component 4).
- Revision of the TLaWC Country Plan (Program component 2).
- Initiating Reading Country program (Program component 2).
- Developing long term collaborative trial sites in different Countries so procedural pathways and practice can be developed (Program component 3)
- Enabling community access to cultural fire ground Bring elders and knowledge holders together with members to recover knowledge. Community burn days to pass on knowledge. Perform at a range of sites (low to high risk) (Program component 3).
- Developing partnerships with other Cultural Fire knowledge holders and practitioners across jurisdictions (Program component 2).
- Developing partnerships developed with key land and fire management agencies, to enable co-capacity building in Cultural Fire. (Program component 4).
- Developing research partnerships to provide evidence of the beneficial impacts of cultural fire (Program component 2).

- TLaWC regional version of State-wide co-governance group being resourced by DELWP Resourcing of staff, equipment and training to build a cultural fire team (Program component 4).
- TLaWC to partner with DELWP to incorporate planned cultural burns and culturally influenced burns into JFMP over scenario sites (Program component 4).
- TLaWC involved in DELWP pre-fire season (Program component 4).
- Participating in the review of the Code of Fire Practice to ensure Cultural Fire is recognised appropriately (Program component 4).

### Budget action lines

- Staff (2 teams of 5 set up over 5 years), plus equipment and training for fire fighting, planned burning (contracted services) and cultural fire practice development (e.g. Firesticks)
- Set up a regional (Taungurung Country) partnership group to progress TLaWC resourcing, policy and operational needs with state land and fire management agencies
- Participation in state-wide meetings and other processes (with other Traditional Owners and groups) e.g. Knowledge Group, Co-Governance Group etc.
- Participation in a Victorian Cultural Fire Workshop
- Participation in the Firesticks National Cultural Fire Workshop
- Cultural heritage assessments as part of Reading Country and to inform Emergency management activities (identify new CH assets and verify existing e.g. ACHRIS system)
- Revise the Taungurung Country plan
- Develop the Taungurung Cultural Fire plan strategy

Total budget over 5 years: \$13, 340,930

A summary of the budget is below:

#### TLaWC cultural fire implementation Plan - summary of costs

**Table 1. Summary by category of expenditure**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Partnerships and collaboration	\$302,000	\$312,570	\$323,510	\$334,833	\$346,552	\$1,619,465
Training and resources	\$593,172	\$515,938	\$533,995	\$552,685	\$582,029	\$2,777,819
Planning	\$155,850	\$6,055	\$156,267	\$6,486	\$6,713	\$331,370
Fire delivery	\$1,024,150	\$1,858,881	\$1,884,187	\$1,909,683	\$1,935,375	\$8,612,276
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,075,172</b>	<b>\$2,693,443</b>	<b>\$2,897,959</b>	<b>\$2,803,687</b>	<b>\$2,870,670</b>	<b>\$13,340,930</b>

**Table 2. Summary by Program Component**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Program Component 1: Managing the transition to cultural burning and healthy Country.	\$537,850	\$470,375	\$486,838	\$503,877	\$514,800	\$2,513,740
Program Component 2: Restore and protect the knowledge system	\$314,990	\$170,765	\$326,741	\$182,927	\$196,043	\$1,191,466
Program Component 3: Holistic land management for healthy Country and healthy people.	\$155,000	\$160,425	\$166,040	\$171,851	\$177,866	\$831,182
Program Component 4: Embedding cultural fire practice.	\$1,067,332	\$1,891,879	\$1,918,340	\$1,945,031	\$1,981,961	\$8,804,542
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,075,172</b>	<b>\$2,693,443</b>	<b>\$2,897,959</b>	<b>\$2,803,687</b>	<b>\$2,870,670</b>	<b>\$13,340,930</b>