

Trigger for Australia Bushfires: Environmentalism, Not the Environment

by Jeremy Beck

This analysis of Australia's devastating bush fires was released by the Australian Citizens Party on Nov. 20, 2019 and Jan. 8, 2020. Mr. Beck is the Victoria State Chairman and National Management Committee member of the Australian Citizens Party. The combined report has been edited and links have been added.

Similar firestorm disasters have been equally preventable. EIR published, on Nov. 15, 2019, the [article](#), "As Half of the State Goes Dark—Green Insanity and Electricity Dereg Set California on Fire," by Patrick Ruckert, and an earlier [article](#), an Interview with the Nevada rancher Kris Stewart, on June 21, 2019, "What Is Causing Massive Wildfires in the U.S. West: The Environment—Or Environmentalism?"

Jan. 12—Numerous fire experts have warned for decades that increasing fuel loads would lead to catastrophic bushfires. They're emphatic that "climate change" is *not* the issue at all. The real problem [they say] is green ideology, which opposes the necessary hazard reduction of fuel loads in national parks and which greatly inhibits landholders from clearing vegetation on their properties. Whilst Aboriginal tribes performed regular controlled burns for millennia, so-called environmentalists now demand vast areas of forest be locked up to preserve some "natural ecosystem" that never existed in the first place. In April 1770, Captain James Cook described Australia as a "continent of smoke," but now environmental laws prevent necessary controlled burns and land clearing, setting the stage for mega-infernos on hot windy days.

The Volunteer Fire Fighters Association (VFFA) of New South Wales prominently displays on its website an [article](#), "Green Ideology, Not Climate Change, Makes Bushfires Worse," by Miranda Devine. Numerous articles on the VFFA website point to fire experts



AP/Glen Morey

Wildfires raging in Bairnsdale as of Dec. 30, 2019.

warning that [the level of] fuel loads pose the real danger and "it's ridiculous to blame climate change." Devine's article reported on a 2003 federal [parliamentary inquiry](#) into bushfires, titled "A Nation Charred: Report on the Inquiry Into Bushfires," which showed that a 4-fold increase in ground fuel leads to a 13-fold increase in the heat generated by a fire. The mainstream media mostly ignores these firefighters and has instead focused on the [Emergency Leaders for Climate Action](#), which, as seen below, is a front for the Anglo-American financial oligarchy.

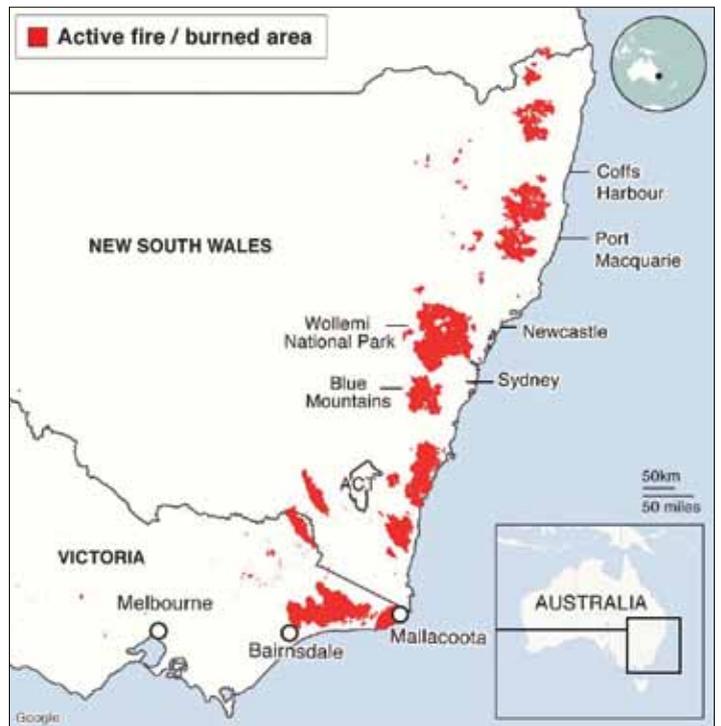
Roger Underwood, Chairman of [Bushfire Front of Western Australia Inc.](#), on March 10, 2019 wrote to then Environment Minister Melissa Price, following her comments that the recent Victorian bushfires were



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Fire and Rescue personnel move in to protect properties from the Green Wattle Creek bushfire as it approaches South West Sydney on Dec. 6, 2019.

Bushfires in New South Wales and Victoria



NSW Rural Fire Service, Vic. County Fire Authority

the “result of climate change.” Such misinformed comments from the minister could not go unchallenged. Underwood has 40 years’ experience in bushfire management in Australia and overseas. He was General Manager of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) in Western Australia (WA). He wrote,

I implore you to withdraw your comments blaming the recent bushfires on climate change. They are unhelpful to Australian firefighters and disrespectful to Australian bushfire scientists and managers ... the very people who are putting their lives on the line to protect the Australian environment and communities.

Bushfire Front Committee Members include Chris Back, Chief Executive Officer, Bush Fires Board of Western Australia (1995-97); Don Spriggins, who has over 40 years’ experience in bushfire management in WA and Victoria, and was a regional and district

manager of the Lands and Forests Commission of WA; Dr Frank McKinnell, with over 40 years’ experience in bushfire research and management in WA; and Noel Ashcroft, with over 25 years’ experience in forest fire prevention and control in South West forests, WA. These veterans show conclusive evidence that prescribed burning and fuel reduction is a tried and proven method in forest and land management, and that blaming fires on climate change is pure nonsense.

Another prominent fire expert, David Packham, also has long warned of excessive fuel loads and that talk of climate change is “an absolute nonsense.” As a retired Senior Research Fellow at Monash University, Packham is one of Australia’s leading fire experts. He was co-developer of the aerial prescribed burning techniques that have been adopted throughout Australia and North America. In a June 2016 [submission](#) to the Victorian Parliament, Packham wrote:

Fire politics has replaced facts, science has been hijacked until it is really “politics by a different means” and leadership has been lost in a



CC/Ninian Reid

A man attempts to defend his home at Lake Conjola, as fire consumes the house next door:

maze of legal actions and inquiries, contrived seminars and workshops, public relations craftsmanship and research discourse by press release.

Emergency Leaders for Climate Action

Why did twenty-two retired fire and emergency service chiefs blame “our ‘new normal’ of catastrophic weather risks” for intensifying the bushfire danger? Put simply, the Emergency Leaders for Climate Action is a project of the [Climate Council](#). Headed by Tim Flannery, the Climate Council is a front for the financial oligarchy’s [World Wildlife Fund](#) (WWF) and its secretive 1001 Club of mega-rich donors. The following profiles of four Climate Councillors are noteworthy:

- **Greg Bourne** was CEO of WWF Australia (2004-10). Before that he was a senior oil executive at BP, serving as Regional President Australasia (1999-2003) and Regional President Latin America (1997-98). For two years Bourne was Special Advisor on Energy and Transport to UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. He was Chair of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (2012-16).

- **Lesley Hughes** is a director for WWF Australia and a member of the Wentworth

Group of Concerned Scientists, the WWF front group behind the disastrous [Murray-Darling Basin Plan](#).

- **Gerry Hueston** recently retired as President of BP Australasia. He was Chairman and Board Member of the Australian Institute of Petroleum, and Board Member of the Business Council of Australia.

- **Greg Mullins** former Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW, and former President of Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities’ Council.

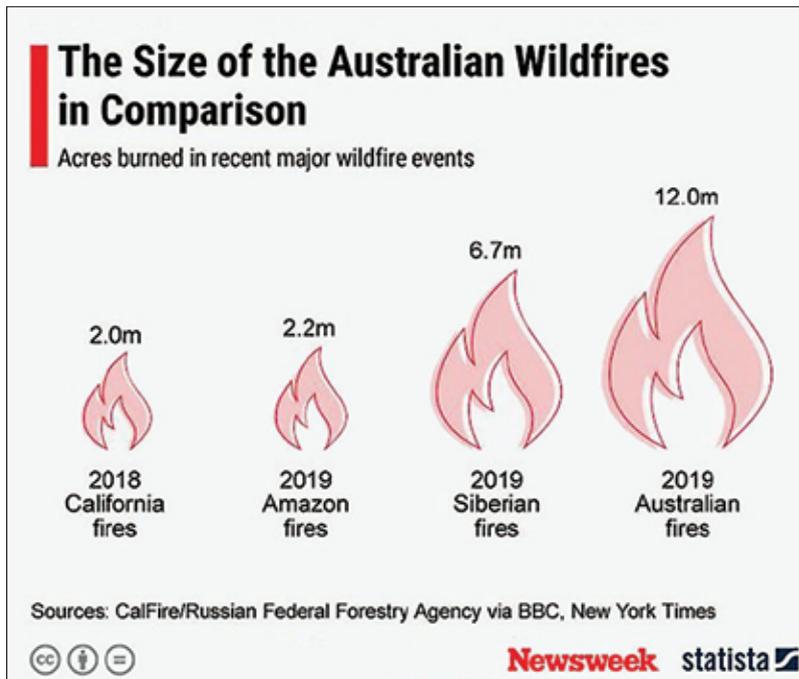
It’s not surprising that two senior former BP executives are Climate Councillors. Sir Eric Drake, former Chairman of BP, was a long-time 1001 Club member until his death in 1996. The British oil cartel has long intervened in environmental policy. Notably, John Loudon, who

headed the Royal Dutch Shell Group, was a 1001 Club member and was WWF President (1976-81). The official 1001 Club membership list is confidential, but whistle blowers confirm that members are from the highest levels of the City of London banking establishment. We must not let this bankers’ “climate change” plot distract from the message of actual fire experts.



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Bushfire-charred Prospect Hill, in Sydney, Jan. 6, 2020.



A lot of our areas that are now national parks, used to be forested country, and the sawmillers had a sustainable industry, and they used to manage the bush. They used to do a lot of the hazard-reduction burning to keep all the tracks open, because they valued timber. Timber was important. Now we've closed the forestry industry down—virtually—we've locked up the parks—we don't let people into them, we've closed all the trails off. And our timber just gets burnt and wasted, and meanwhile overseas, they're cutting down rainforests to supply Australia with timber. How crazy is that?

Green Insanity Opposes Controlled Burns

Last month Williams reported—also on 2GB radio—that most of the controlled

Failed Fire Management Policy Must End

Raging bushfires sweeping through Australia were entirely predictable, and the experts who forecast this crisis are in utter dismay that their warnings were ignored. Fuel loads are now about *ten times greater* than existed under Aboriginal management at the time of British colonisation, so what else did we expect? In recent decades “green” ideology has seen forests locked up, fire trails grown over, and fuel loads explode as controlled burns are prevented under spurious green rationales.

Fire expert David Packham has explained that a ten-fold increase in fuel load means the fire will be 100 times more intense. It's just basic physics and has nothing to do with whatever change the climate may be undergoing.

In an interview with Jane Marwick on 2GB radio last week, Volunteer Fire Fighters (VFFA) Vice President Brian Williams said:

It's all preventable; this is the tragedy of it all. This fire has been building for the last 20 years. We've been burning, in New South Wales, less than one per cent of our bushfire-prone land for the last 20 years. So that means every year, the fuel loads just continue to build. And they continue to build until we get a disaster like this.

burns are now arranged on a timeframe of between 12 and 25 years, which he said “is just crazy.” He said it was nonsense that climate change is reducing the window for controlled burns. “We can burn right through the winters now.” The problem is that they are forced to wait so long between burns that lately their fires have tended to burn too hot even on days when the maximum temperature is just 12° Celsius (53.6° Fahrenheit).

Recently retired group fire officer Fred Forrest, from the Mansfield Fire Brigade Group in the foothills of the Victorian Alps, confirmed that when he was young, they did controlled burns in the autumn of every year. The lack of controlled burns now is absolutely the issue, he insisted. Despite this, he's confident that controlled burns can be done safely in the cooler months even with the additional fuel load that has built up in recent decades. “They are doing this, but they need to do much more and on a broader scale,” he said. In addition, Forrest remarked that decades ago, the timber industry, cattlemen and the forestry commission all collaborated to ensure good fire-reduction policy.

Typical of the “green” insanity is the Victorian Government's decree last November to cease native timber logging by 2030 and immediately end logging of old-growth forests. Native timber provides a

valuable product, but now the state government has killed an industry, and locked up forests which are almost guaranteed to go up in smoke in the next inferno.

Many of the large trees in Victoria are regrowth after the 1939 Black Friday bushfires, which burned approximately 575,000 hectares of reserved forest, and 780,000 hectares of forested Crown land. Following those fires, planned burning became an official fire management practice in Victoria. The proven method of hazard-reduction burning has ensured that we've not seen another Black Friday event. But the unwinding of this proven policy in recent decades has led to the current crisis.

Opponents of controlled burning have cited events where such burns have gotten out of control. This is as silly as proposing to ban aeroplanes because they crash sometimes. The evidence of the overall success of controlled burning is overwhelming. Fires with excessive fuel loads are impossible to extinguish, no matter how many water bombers and fire trucks are available.

Blaming the Fires on 'Climate Change' Isn't Science

David Packham, in a November 12, 2019 interview with *Sky News's* Andrew Bolt, explained this scientifically with reference to the Byram fire intensity index, which measures in megawatts (MW) the amount of heat energy emitted per metre of fire front. Today's heavy fuel loads, he said, like those that fed the February 2009 Black Saturday fires in Victoria, can yield 70 MW per meter; but no technology known to man can extinguish a fire of more than 3 MW per meter.

Discussion of "climate change" as a contributing factor by some fire chiefs has frustrated many frontline firefighters, who consistently say climate change is ir-



State Government of Victoria

A firefighting helicopter water-bombs a wildfire in East Gippsland, Victoria on Dec. 31, 2019.

relevant. In joining Tim Flannery's Climate Council, former New South Wales fire chief Greg Mullins has upset many of his colleagues. VFFA president Mick Holton told *The Australian* last month that Mullins had "lost his way" in highlighting climate change above all other factors. "I found he was a great person to work for, and he's a great fellow, but I think he's lost his way. It is disappointing to me when he would have learned about fire science and isn't discussing the fuel load issue." Holton said Mullins's main experience was in city and suburban fires.

Packham has consistently said, and scientifically proven, that blaming bushfires on climate change is "absolute nonsense." Governments pushing this propaganda should take note of Packham's stern warning in his 2015 submission to the Victorian Parliament:

The current land management policy and practice puts citizens in peril. Such acts with full knowledge of the consequences could fall within the definition of a crime against humanity, and when the next fire disaster occurs and perhaps thousands die in Victoria, those responsible should be referred to an International Court.