RECOVERY PLAN

AGRN 1108
Bayindeen Rocky Road Bushfire

V1.2 April 2024

Pyrenees Shire Council acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes whose lands form the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respects to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the Elders and people of these tribes.

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First signs of recovery – taken from the Cave Hill Creek website 24.4.2024 Bushfire Recovery - Cave Hill Creek

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INTRODUCTION

The February-March 2024 Bayindeen Rocky Road fire has had significant impacts across the Pyrenees Shire Council and its communities. As the full picture starts to emerge of the devastation Council is actively engaging with Commonwealth, State and other Local Government agencies to garner the full range of support needed.

Thousands of community members were evacuated during the height of the event with most businesses closed including the Council offices in Beaufort.

The communities of the municipality were well into active recovery fifteen months on from the significant October-November 2022 flood events, to be further devastated by the Bayindeen Rocky Road fire event. The compounding nature of emergencies experienced has quite significantly set most people in the community and workforce backwards. Pyrenees Shire has a small population of 7,613 across a vast geographic area of 3,435 kilometres with 34.9% of the population being over 60 years of age. This presents Council with a further challenge to adequately fund services and maintain and renew community assets.

At an EFT of 87 staff, Council has had an estimated 80-90% of staff directly impacted by the fire.

This plan has been developed to coordinate the bushfire recovery operation and provide an implementation framework and reporting mechanism for the bushfire Recovery Committee.

This plan is a dynamic, working document and care should be made to ensure the latest version is utilised.

1   FIRE INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Pyrenees Shire was impacted by the Bayindeen – Rocky Road bushfire in February-March 2024. The fire was first reported to the CFA/FFMVic around 10.30hrs on Thursday 22 February 2024 as being between Buangor and Warrak, on the western border of the shire (border with Ararat Rural City Council.

The fire originally burned fast in a South Easterly direction, driven by extremely strong northerly winds and the fire entered the Mt Cole State Forest in areas that were inaccessible. By 19.00hrs that night, the fire was over 6300 hectares in size. A forecasted wind charge turned the fire burning in a north easterly direction. The fire doubled in size quickly to 15,000 hectares by early morning Saturday 24 February 2024.

A further peak weather day was declared on Wednesday 28 February with three spot overs around 17.00hrs near the Beaufort township and a spot to the northeast corner of the fire area. At this point, the fire remained within containment lines due to a successful aggressive attack strategy on any outbreaks.

The fire was declared contained at 12.07hrs on Thursday 29 February 2024 and declared safe when Transition to Recovery was formally agreed on 5 April 2024.

Access remains restricted to all areas of Mt Cole/Beeripmo and Mt Lonarch/Berumgower State Forest until safe to do so. Mr Buangor State Park is closed until further notice, including Middle Creek, Ferntree and Bailes Camping areas and all walking tracks.

A significant number of roadside trees were impacted, and assessments undertaken by DEECA. Thousands of large mature trees along public roads need to be removed to ensure public safety, and Pyrenees Shire Council need to further assess trees accordingly. This is impacting on the opening of key roads particularly to nature-based tourism operators.

Seven residential homes were lost in the Raglan area, with shedding and other infrastructure on many other properties around the area significantly impacted. Drainage and unsealed road infrastructure was also impacted.

Agriculture was significantly impacted with fencing, infrastructure, stock, crop, and fodder losses.

Townships and areas impacted by the fire include: Amphitheatre, Avoca, Bayindeen, Beaufort, Ben Nevis, Buangor East, Chute, Elmhurst, Eurambeen, Eversley, Glenlogie, Glenpatrick, Green Hill Creek, Langi Kal Kal, Lexton, Main Lead, Mount Cole, Mount Lonarch, Nowhere Creek, Raglan, Rosyth, Trawalla, Waterloo, Brewster, Buangor, Ercildoune, Glenbrae, Glenlofty, Lamplough, Middle Creek, Mount Cole Creek, Percydale, Warrak, and Warrenmang.

Transition from Response to Recovery was agreed and accepted on 5 April 2024.

A full summary of the fire impact assessment is outlined in Section 5 of this plan.

2 CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK (POST-FIRE)

Pyrenees Shire has a very small population of 7,613 across a vast geographic area of 3,435 kilometres with 35.9% of the population over 60 years of age. This presents Council with a significant challenge to adequately fund services and maintain and renew community assets.

Early indications are that the financial impact of this event is in excess of $6 million for council managed infrastructure, plus the cost of private and agricultural infrastructure repair and renewal. An advance payment request has already been input into the Commonwealth NDRA funding portal with verbal approval received for $1 million. Taking into consideration that the annual operating budget of Council is $25 million, the recovery requirements will be a significant organisational challenge to manage and support and cannot be achieved within existing capacity.

The most immediate challenge faced by Council is the need to quickly assess and address hazardous trees where the related public safety issues may prevent full opening of roads to public access.

Council has been advised that no Commonwealth funding will be available for additional community officers. It is likely that long-term case management might be required to ensure that impacted residents and ratepayers receive the physical and psychological support needed and careful planning for this will be required by Council. This support may need to be limited to a referral concierge service as long as appropriate specialist services are available either through government or other agencies. This will be a huge limiting factor regarding the need for long-term support for agricultural businesses, likely to have a big impact on the Economic Development & Tourism, and Planning and Development Teams' return to business as usual.

Council will utilise the existing flood recovery team positions to support the roles involved with infrastructure rehabilitation administration, claims administration, outreach services, and community events where possible unless additional funding is provided.

Impact on the local economy has been significant and effort and funding will be needed to restore the nature-based tourism product and support businesses reliant on visitation to the region.

Council commenced secondary impact assessments on Thursday, 20 March. Assessments are largely complete.

2.1 Key Considerations Moving Forward

Key considerations include:

- Developing, complex psychological and mental health issues arising from ongoing risk of fire plus the cumulative impact of a series of emergency events in the local area – i.e., 2019 Lexton-Ben Major Fire, 2020-2022 COVID-19, 2022 Flood, and the 2024 Bayindeen-Rocky Road Fire.
- Essential emergency works causing disturbance to natural environment adding to local residents' trauma.
- Need to balance critical safety works with rehabilitation and conservation of natural environment and wildlife habitat.

- Community resilience to future bushfires.
- Monitoring resource requirements over time and advocating for additional resources if needed, particularly if the recovery process is likely to extend past Commonwealth allocated timeframes, or support is needed by Council that is not covered through available funding.
- Ensure alignment between Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV), DEECA, and other agency recovery activities and Council activities.
- Long term support needs of property owners wanting to rebuild homes or associated infrastructure – timeframes likely to extend beyond government recovery support timeframes.
- Loss of population if people move away from the area and loss of growth opportunity if people decide not to move to the area.
- Loss of tourism in the area – particularly nature-based tourism.
- Council crisis management team and officer resilience and capacity to respond to multiple emergencies alongside maintaining / quick return to business as usual. Need for advocacy for increased emergency recovery funding on an ongoing basis.

3   ADVOCACY

3.1   Funding

The most vital Council advocacy role in emergency management and recovery is to advocate for funding.

a. **Event Recovery Funding:**
   As a small rural council with a limited ability to source income, it is vital that funding be made available to Council and the community for effective recovery from a specific event.

   Indications are that funding for community support officers for the Bayindeen – Rocky Road Fire event will not be forthcoming, which is likely to result in a lesser quality service available to the community in the short to medium term.

   This may be a decision made because of the ERV (Emergency Recovery Victoria) team implementation and time will tell if this is a successful alternative when the on-the-ground recovery coordination is led by councils.

b. **Ongoing Council Relief and Recovery Funding:**
   Fixed term funding is provided to councils for emergency management of $73,000 per year – non-indexed and has only had one increase over the period of the program. This funding is largely used for emergency planning and the administration of emergency management plans and the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. To create certainty, it would be beneficial for this funding to be made permanent and ongoing, and be indexed to CPI.

   In the recent Emergency Management Act changes, two emergency-related positions were mandated for local government authorities (MEMO-Municipal Emergency Management

Officer and MRM-Municipal Recovery Manager). No associated funding to support these positions was provided for the duties that are associated with the roles.

Climate change is increasing the frequency of emergency events that need relief and recovery effort by council officers. This currently distracts and impacts heavily on business as usual and it is likely that future consideration of more permanent emergency roles will be needed, for which funding is currently unavailable.

c. **Ongoing funding to build Community Disaster Resilience:**
   Ad hoc funding becomes available periodically to build community resilience, but the inconsistent nature of these programs does not lead to permanent community change in attitude or practices.

   As the level of government closest to the community, councils are ideally placed to lead and guide these programs which would benefit from an ongoing and permanent program which would require funding from government.

3.2   Tourism advocacy – Tourism Midwest Victoria

Economic modelling by Urban Enterprise estimated the economic downturn loss to be $300 million in tourism revenue and a decline in visitation by 850,000 tourists, affecting over 2,144 jobs.

Tourism Midwest Victoria is advocating for funding for recovery projects and activities across four key areas:

- Marketing - $800,000 to develop recovery campaigns and brand building.
- Leisure events - $300,000 to provide marketing and operational support aimed at sustaining leisure events affected by cancellations.
- Business events - $200,000 over 2 years to support a business development sales resource dedicated to driving TMV's business event industry.
- Tourism infrastructure - $12 million to facilitate the recovery and reconstruction of key tourism and recreation assets within the TMV region.

4   FIRE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The following provides an overview of the social, economic, environmental impacts of the fire, highlighting the extent to which the Pyrenees community has been affected.

Although many Pyrenees communities were affected by the fire, the areas significantly impacted included: Bayindeen, Beaufort, Buangor and Buangor East, Elmhurst, Raglan, Mount Cole, and Mount Lonarch.

4.1   Relief Centres and Community meetings

Relief centres were established:

- Beaufort Community Bank Complex was briefly opened on 22.2.2024 but almost immediately closed following direction to evacuate Beaufort.
- Maryborough was opened on 22.2.2024 and closed on 1.3.2024 (9 days).

- Ararat was opened on 22.2.2024 and closed on 1.3.2024 (9 days).
- Ballarat was opened on 22.2.2024 and closed on 24.2.2024 and re-opened on 28.2.2024 and closed on 1.3.2024 (6 days).

The Beaufort and Avoca Resource and Information Centres were also used as places for residents to seek relief, support, and information during the weeks of the event.

Community meetings were held:

- 23 February – Maryborough and Wendouree
- 25 February – Beaufort and Raglan
- 27 February – Beaufort and Avoca
- 1 March – Beaufort and Elmhurst
- 7 March – Raglan
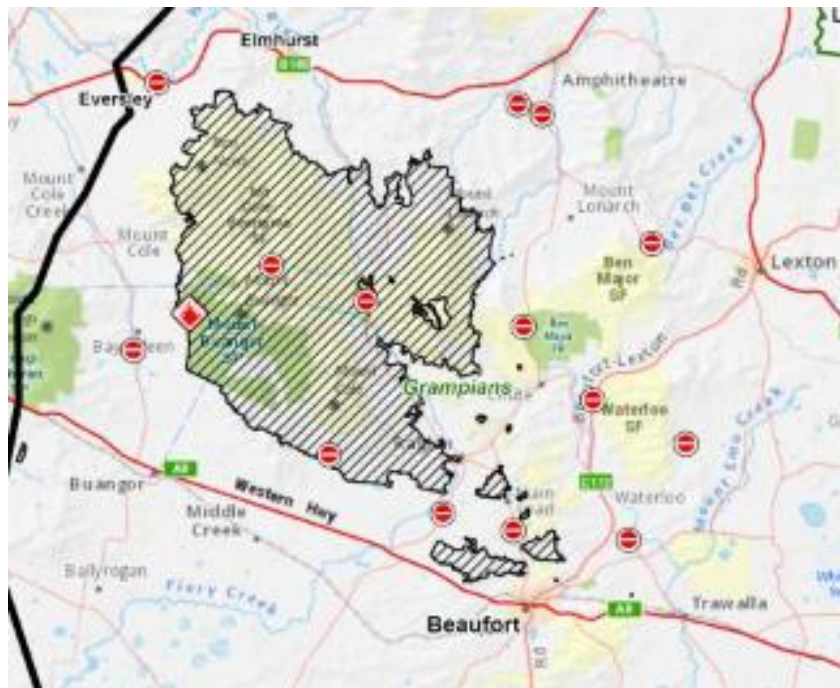
4.2   Private property impacts

The impact on private property was felt across the majority of the northern part of the shire, including Raglan, Beaufort, and the areas north of the Western Highway.

6,788 hectares of private property was impacted from the bushfire event. Rapid Impact Assessment data indicated that approximately 228 properties were affected, with indications that significant damage was caused to 36 of those properties.

A total of eight primary residences have been either destroyed or damaged to an extent that people cannot remain living in them as a result of the fire.

Many individual and families displaced by the bushfires have had to find alternate accommodation arrangements, both within and outside of the shire, until such time as longer-term plans can be finalised and arranged. These include:

- Utilising emergency accommodation facilities
- Living with relatives
- Living in donated houses
- Private rental of properties
- State Government arranged rental of properties
- Installing temporary accommodation facilities onsite, such as caravans or mobile homes

As at the beginning of April, DFFH had processed 449 relief payments. Applications for emergency relief payments through the State have now closed.

17 properties initially applied for essential water replacement support, where water had been used during bush firefighting operations. 61 properties were initially supported by Blaze Aid to replace fencing.

4.3   Public Property / Community Assets Damage / Impacts

14,895 hectares of public land was impacted by the bushfire event, including a significant portion of Mount Cole State Forest and Mt Buangor State Park.

DEECA managed immediate hazardous trees and the Mt Cole and Mt Lonarch forests remained closed, impacting on nature-based tourism.
Three of the six huts were destroyed. Belmont, a State-significant heritage asset was also damaged.

1/2]   B3219 Belmont House   ⊕

The fire led to major disruptions, including road closures, including the Western Highway a state-significant arterial road, and suspension of V/Line services.

4.4   Council-managed Critical Assets and Infrastructure

The fire caused major disruption to the road network across the northern end of the shire, north of the Western Highway – and including the Western Highway at some points during the height of

the emergency. At the height of the emergency, the entire road network north of the Western Highway within the Pyrenees Shire and Ararat Rural City was closed, between Burrumbeet to the East and Ararat to the West.

Services such as kerbside waste collection, school bus routes, transfer stations, and mobile library had to be suspended. Any services that needed officers to travel around the northern part of the shire were suspended.

The majority of roads were re-opened when the fire danger had passed, but at the time of drafting this plan thousands of hazardous trees remained an issue with the ability to open some roads, including the Raglan – Elmhurst Road.

4.4.1   Hazardous Trees

Trees along the road reserve of the following roads were heavily impacted. The following provides data as at 5.4.2024:

Road	Section	Distance burned km	Inspected	Works	Comments
Raglan-Elmhurst Rd	South (to the Glut)	5	Complete		Includes 3 km HPV area
	North	9	In progress	In progress	
Main Lead Rd	North	0.5	Complete	Complete	
	South	1.2	Complete	Complete	
The Glut		1.2	Complete	In progress	
Richardsons Rd		1.9			
Ditchfields Rd		1.8			
Back Raglan Rd	South	3.0	In progress		
Raglan-Mt Cole		3.5	In progress	In progress	
Ferntree Gully Rd		4	In progress	In progress	
Drew Lane		1.5			
Lucardies		1			Patches burnt
Aherns		0.2			
Stars		2.2			
Panthers Lane		2			
Tip		2.9			
V Waldrons Rd		1.2			
Red Hill Tk					
Bights Rd					
TOTAL DISTANCE		42.1			

Arborists commenced assessment on 15 March 2024. Trees assessed as requiring removal based on the most recent data included:

Main Lead/Raglan-Elmhurst Rd	2070
The Glut	800
Raglan Mt Cole Rd	170
Back Raglan Rd	336
Total	3376

The updated tree assessment methodology is attached as Appendix A.

4.4.2   Roads and road infrastructure

Inspections were conducted on critical assets with the following impacts identified:

Location	Road type	Damage / impact	Comments
Back Raglan Rd, Beaufort	Gravel	Major vegetation impact Major guidepost damage Minor signage damage	
Main Lead Rd, Main Lead	Sealed	*Between King St – Nuggety Ln* Minor road surface damage	
Main Lead Rd, Main Lead	Sealed	*Between Musical Gully Rd – Amphitheatre Rd* Major vegetation impact Major guardrail damage Major guidepost damage	125 metres of guard rail

Raglan Elmhurst Rd, Glenlogie	Sealed	*Between Richardsons Rd – Raglan Mt Cole Rd* Major vegetation impact Minor guidepost damage	
Windham St, Raglan	Gravel	*Between Raglan-Elmurst Rd – end of rd* Minor road surface damage	Water damage from hydrant
Raglan Elmhurst Rd, Glenlogie	Sealed	*Between the Glut Road – Richardsons Rd* Major vegetation loss Major guardrail damage Major guidepost damage Minor signage damage Minor structure damage	31m of guardrail, damaged wooden posts and charred rail 5.5 from Windham St. 46m of bridge guardrail, major damage, both sides 7.1km from Windham St.
Raglan Elmhurst Rd, Glenlogie	Sealed	*Between Lower Wimmera Road – Mt Lonarch Road* Major vegetation impact Major guardrail damage Major guidepost damage Minor signage damage	63m of guardrail with melted reflectors and charred rails 14.2km from Windham St. 61m of guardrail damaged wither sides with culvert inlets clogged 14.2km from Windham St., End units of guardrail fully melted 15km from Windham St. End units of guardrail.
Pitchers Lane, Raglan	Gravel	*Between Raglan Elmhurst Rd – Wilkinsons Rd* Minor vegetation impact Minor guidepost damage Minor signage damage	
Drews Lane, Raglan	Gravel	*Between Raglan Mt Cole Rd – Lucardies Rd* Major vegetation impact	
Raglan Elmhurst Rd, Glenlogie	Sealed	*Between Mt Lonarch Rd – The Glut Rd* Minor road surface damage Major vegetation impact Major guardrail damage Major guidepost damage Minor signage damage	15m and 33m damaged guardrails 9.8km from Windham St. 100m major damage guardrail each side 10km from Windham St.
Drews Lane, Raglan	Gravel	*Between Raglan Mt Cole Rd – Amphitheatre Rd* Major vegetation impact Major guidepost damage Minor signage damage	
Guys Rd, Raglan	Gravel	*Etween Beggs Lane – Eurambeen Raglan Rd* Major vegetation impact	

4.5   Agricultural / Primary Producers

Primary producers experienced stock and crop losses and fencing losses of many kilometres. Primary producers continuing their recovery from the 2022 flood event were impacted again with further stock loss and fences damaged.

A snapshot of the losses for the Grampians Region is shown below:

	Ararat	Pyrenees	Total
Total farm area affected (ha)	1,137	3,366	4,503
Livestock			
Total animal deaths	54	228	282
Total bee hives lost	1	537	538
Infrastructure			
Total fencing impacted (km)*	346	464	810
Machinery, woolsheds, and haysheds lost	0	49	49
Irrigation pumps lost	0	2	2
Vehicles and machinery lost	0	17	17
Crops/Pastures/Grain/Fodder			
Total field crop (standing) lost (ha)	0	20	20
Total stored grain lost (t)	0	0	0
Total hay/silage lost (t)	18	170	188
Total grazing pasture lost (ha)	767	2,272	3,039
Horticulture			
Summer fruit lost (ha)	0	0.1	0.1
Wine grapes lost (ha)	10	0	10
Other fruit lost (ha)	0	14.9	14.9
Pine plantations lost (ha)			1,000

*estimated that, including internal fencing, up to 1,495 km of fencing was destroyed.

Blaze Aid established a base camp at Buangor from which to facilitate volunteers and farm fencing replacement. Another contractor from Langi Kal Kal is also supporting recovery works.

Council officers worked with Agriculture Victoria in relation to animal welfare. A total of 133 stock (sheep/cattle) were taken to the Ballarat landfill by council contractors for disposal between 24 February and 7 March 2024. In these cases stock could not be buried on site given the size of the properties, proximity to dwellings and townships, and potential for ground contamination (Raglan area is within a designated water catchment). The cost associated with this activity was in excess of $5,000 for council contractors. Fees at the Smythesdale Landfill (managed by the City of Ballarat) were waived as per the request of the Minister of Environment. It is estimated that the fees would have been in excess of $3,000.

The HVP plantations along the Raglan Elmhurst Road / Mt Lonarch area were heavily impacted and, with a limited time period in which to recover impacted timber, recovery works need to occur very quickly.

4.6   Tourism and Economic

A number of events were cancelled due to the fire event. There were financial losses to organisers, suppliers and local businesses which would have normally benefited. Further impact on business and tourism due to loss of trade during the fire event and the Easter Holiday season due to forest closures, cancellation from visitors and inability to take school and other tourism groups into natural areas.

Impacts on tourism are likely to be longer-term. Mt Cole State Forest comprising the Beeripmo Trail and many campgrounds has been significantly impacted – a major attraction for hikers, campers, and day visitors and is the primary centre for activities at the Cave Hill Creek facility.

Tourism Midwest Victoria and Grampians tourism led a joint approach to access funding for consultants to undertake a financial assessment of the impact. Tourism Midwest Victoria provided a draft Fire Recovery Tourism Program in April 2024 which included economic modelling estimating the loss to be around $300 million in revenue and a decline in visitation by 850,000 tourists, potentially affecting over 2,144 jobs.

There are four tourism properties directly impacted and with the significant amount of damage to nature-based tourism, it is expected that Mt Buangor State Park, Mount Cole, and Mount Lonarch will remain closed for quite some time. This will have a significant impact on others nearby who rely on nature-based experiences as well as those directly impacted.

The following statement by Tim Chandler, Managing Director of Cave Hill Creek (a major tourism business within the Pyrenees Shire) expresses their situation:

"Five weeks on from the Bayindeen fire and recovery is well underway. We have lost approximately $1 million in infrastructure, $400,000 in contents and $500,000 in bookings. Twenty casual staff were without work for more than six weeks. While we are aiming to reopen with modified offering by 12th of April 2024, we are confronted with various challenges, which include securing resources to navigate insurance claims, grappling with layers of government responsibility regarding impact assessments and support, as well as addressing issues with road access and infrastructure."

4.7   Social

Fires traumatise people and communities for long periods of time. Displacement from one's home, loss of property, loss of income, and disruption to business, recreation and social affairs can cause continuing stress. Fires leave visual scars and burn odours for a long time which can also be a distressing reminder for people.

Additionally, many of the firefighters, among the thousands deployed, involved in fighting the fire were local. Anecdotal reports say that stresses for firefighters were increased due to communication issues.

The evacuation of a town as large as Beaufort is unusual in Victoria and the impact to the areas around Raglan, Lexton, Amphitheatre, and Waterloo from having two fires within five years cannot be discounted.

Social impact is less visible and longer lasting. It can emerge at varying times and is not felt equally by all. There have been reports from more vulnerable community members who don't feel connected to their community or don't have access to services such as public transport that felt completely isolated during the fires and didn't know where to turn.

Eight homes were destroyed and numerous more properties experienced infrastructure destruction around their homes and businesses. All of these require rebuilding and/or repair work. This will take time and resources which can add to stress levels for residents and volunteers.

Additional stresses upon already traumatised residents can add to the levels of trauma, including the necessary and essential public safety works in removal or pruning of hazardous trees along impacted roads.

4.8   Public Health

There can be longer term health impacts such as poor air quality caused by smoke. Smoke can exacerbate existing conditions such as asthma, high blood pressure, heart conditions and other chronic diseases, particularly in people at high risk. Smoke can travel over long distances resulting in much greater population exposure.

Contaminated drinking water from debris or ash is another health risk that needs to be monitored and the risk minimised. There are many properties with water tanks used for drinking that were fire affected.

Health and wellbeing are major priorities of this Recovery Plan and Council will work with other agencies and regional organisations to deliver or facilitate programs that support this recovery.

4.9   Wildlife

About 22,000 hectares of forest at Mt Cole and Mt Buangor burned in the weeks-long bushfires. The ABC reported[1] that wildlife carers say, "*the impact on already stressed native wildlife is heartbreaking.*"

While it is home to many native Australian animals, Mt Buangor State Park is best known for supporting echidnas, kangaroos, wallabies, and koalas. With the whole state park pretty much decimated, there are many wounded animals requiring euthanasia or significant care.

Six weeks post fire is reportedly the peak time for animals to be coming out if they are wounded, but wildlife is likely to be exiting the burnt region for weeks if not months from now. The main species caught in the bushfire were kangaroos, but many other species were injured including lizards, echidnas, and deer. There is increased likelihood of wildlife movement by roads.

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[1] Native animals that survived Bayindeen bushfire face increased threat from predators six weeks on - ABC News

Counts of wildlife killed without DEECA intervention have not occurred, so the following impact numbers are based on observations of wildlife moving freely through the landscape or where DEECA intervention was required for animal welfare.

Animals dispatched at the Bayindeen Rocky Road fire incident, after an assessment DEECA teams, which included veterinarians with sedation darting capabilities were:

- 316 Eastern Grey Kangaroo adults
- 40 Eastern Grey Kangaroo pouch dependent joeys (including furred and unfurred)
- 24 wallabies
- 1 koala
- 8 deer

In addition to this, reports were received of (rough numbers due to mob sizes) in excess of 400 healthy kangaroos moving through the landscape.

The full impact on fauna in the forests in not yet known, with no counts conducted of already deceased animals and other animals not found by DEECA teams, due to operational constraints including tree strike risk, managed by focussing efforts on likely animal refuge areas such as water bodies and green wedges with either no or low fire impact.

Species in the landscape who survived the fire now have indirect impacts like habitat loss and increased predation. In burnt landscapes, introduced predators like cats and foxes can move through more easily. A local landowner said that the first wildlife seen to be returning were eagles.

4.10 Council impacts – employees and business continuity

Services directly impacted by the bushfire included kerbside waste bin collections, road and infrastructure inspections and maintenance, maternal & child health, outreach library services.

Services impacted through necessary redirection of staff attention included planning and building services, local law and enforcement activity, community development and engagement, economic development and tourism.

Council employees living in the shire were directly impacted through living in the impacted area, losing personal infrastructure, and being subject to evacuation. Employees who didn't live in the shire were unable to attend their normal place of work for a short period of time.

Some employees were deployed, at the request of the Incident Controller, to assist on the fire front with creating fire breaks etc.

Six weeks on from the incident, return to business as usual remains incomplete for employees working on the recovery team.

5   FIRE RECOVERY PLANNING AND COORDINATION

Recovery planning needs to be community focused and incorporate the needs and desires of the broad and diverse communities that make up the municipality of Pyrenees.

The objectives for relief and recovery are to support communities in successfully dealing with the impacts of an emergency in the social, built, economic, and natural environments. By doing so, they help to build cohesion and resilience for future emergencies. Agriculture is a major industry in the Pyrenees and has been included as a specific recovery environment.

Recovery Environment	Description	Types of relief and recovery activities likely to be undertaken	
Social	Family and personal support, community development, financial assistance, and material aid	Relief centres Recovery centres Accommodation Personal support Case management Financial assistance Material aid	Community development Information coordination Health services Disability / Aged care Volunteer coordination Donations coordination Animal welfare
Built	Infrastructure and buildings, essential services, public assets, and utilities	Post impact assessment Clean-up Transport Roads, bridges and culverts	Dangerous tree removal Community infrastructure Fencing Waste management Planning and Building
Natural	Air and water, public land, flora and fauna and ecosystems	Environmental health Public health Water catchments	Air quality Natural environment Cultural heritage
Economic	Retain and industry, employment, small business, and tourism	Economic development Tourism promotion Financial assistance	Small business sector Building & planning
Agricultural	Primary producer support, animal welfare, stock feed, agistment and fencing	Primary producers Animal welfare Stock feed	Agistment Fencing

The Recovery Plan is designed as a high level, overarching view of the bushfire recovery. Detailed impact and recovery information is contained within the CrisisWorks emergency management

system (used by many councils and emergency agencies) and specific tasks and associated workflows will be managed through that system. It is not proposed to duplicate those tasks within this Plan.

The overarching principles for recovery:

- Empower and engage individuals and communities including business, tourism, and the agriculture sectors.
- Be community driven and focused on outcomes – consult, engage, and support.
- Be adaptive and scalable.
- Community connectedness.
- Community wellbeing.

5.1   Bushfire Recovery Governance and Coordination Structure

Pyrenees Shire Council has developed a municipal recovery coordination structure to effectively manage business-as-usual services with recovery functions.

The governance structure will comprise of a CEO-led Council Disaster Recovery Coordination Committee. This structure is one that governs the recovery of all disasters impacting Council, its operations and community.
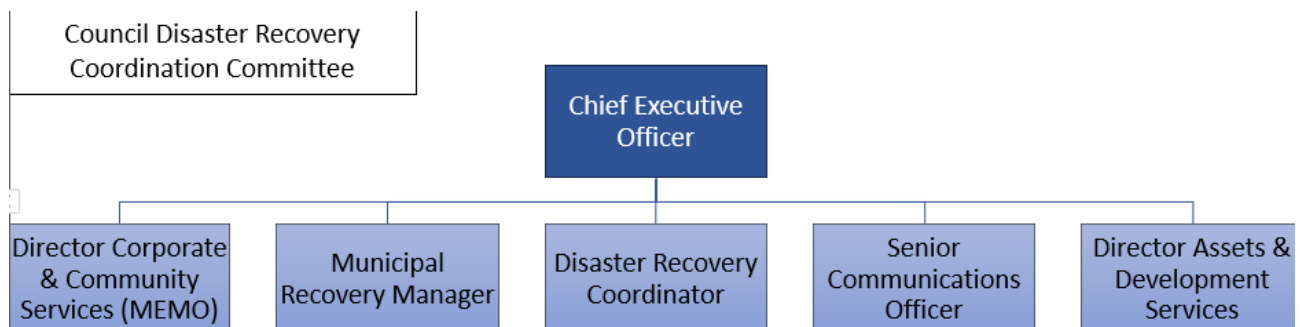
The primary responsibilities of the Council Disaster Recovery Coordination Committee involve, but are not limited to:

- Establish and maintain relief and recovery service arrangements in preparation for an emergency, including business continuity strategies.
- Identify and recruit agencies to assist in the relief and recovery process.
- Identify local and external resources available for relief and recovery.
- Involve the community in planning and implementation of the relief and recovery process.
- Develop a Recovery Plan including an Action Plan to identify all actions necessary to ensure recovery is undertaken in a systematic, effective, and timely manner appropriate to the Council's and community's capacity.
- Liaise and oversee the governance of the Recovery Coordination Structure and Disaster Recovery Team.
- Liaise and communicate with other sub-committees that might be established.
- Maintain an effective working relationship between municipal and regional service providers.

- Inform the community of the progress on municipal recovery, major initiatives, and achievements.

Taskforces (or recovery workgroups) aligned with the five recovery environments may be formed, should the need arise.

This Committee meets as required to oversee planning and implementation of agreed tasks.

## 5.2   Council Bushfire (Disaster) Recovery Team

During the bushfire event, Council's Crisis Management Team gathered to coordinate immediate relief and early recovery services. The Committee, led by the CEO and supported by the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) to meet as frequently as required and at least fortnightly.

This Plan will implement the Recovery Structure for governance and coordination, and implementation, transitioning to a Council Disaster Recovery Team.

Funding limitations preclude the implementation of a dedicated bushfire recovery team, similar to that existing to coordinate recovery from the 2022 flood events. Therefore, utilisation of the flood recovery team, plus other officers or contractors as needed, will be needed.

Funding constraints will limit the level of direct recovery support that can be provided by Council, necessitating the use of a referral concierge process whereby Council officers can act as a conduit between individuals needing specific support services and referral to relevant public or government services available.

The implementation of the Bushfire Recovery Plan and rehabilitation works will be structured as follows:
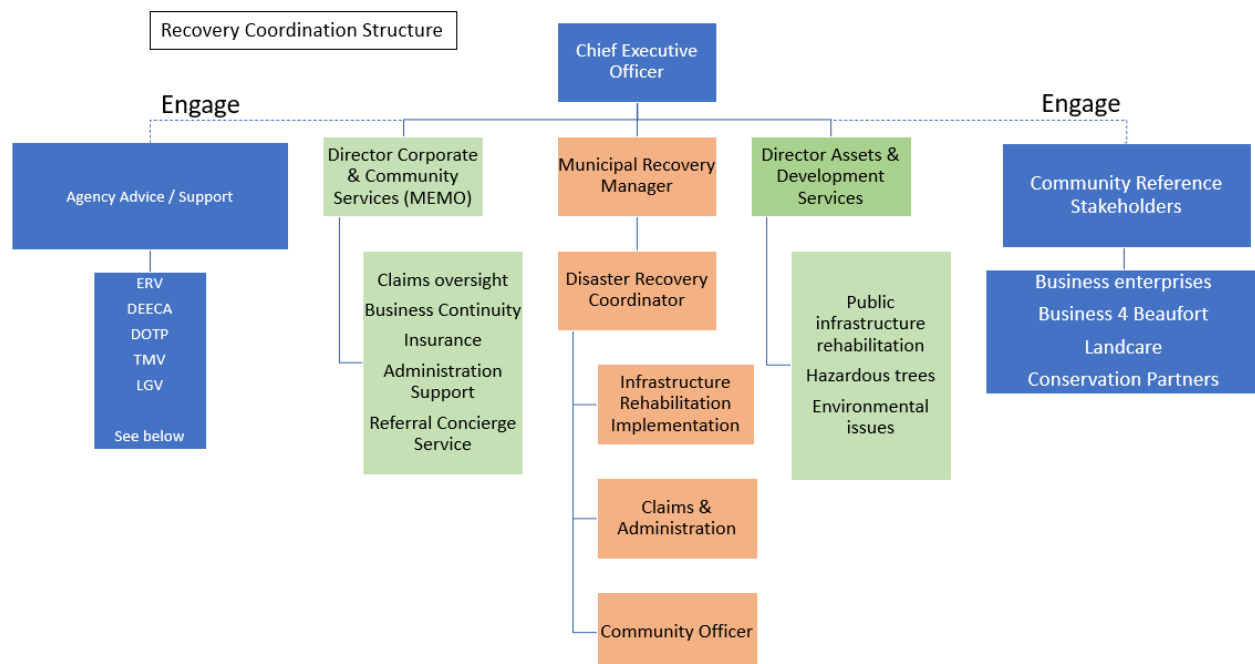
The functions of the roles marked in orange will lead most of the communications, implementation coordination, and community communications and liaison. The functions of the roles marked in green will deliver the actual implementation of tasks scheduled by the coordination team.

Unfunded roles that will potentially require incorporation into existing services include business / agriculture / tourism / planning recovery liaison and support.

5.3   Agencies assisting in recovery

Pyrenees Shire Council has the legislative responsibility to lead recovery activities at a municipal level. Long term requirements may need regional and/or specialist support.

Recovery activities at a local level are in partnership with agencies, non-government organisations, local service providers and community groups and individuals including, but not limited to:

Organisation	Role/Function
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)	Housing and accommodation, psychosocial support, individual and household financial assistance DFFH processed 449 emergency relief payments prior to closing applications in early April 2024. Victorians impacted by the bushfires can continue to access recovery supports, including emergency re-establishment assistance payments (where eligible) through the Emergency Recovery hotline – 1800 560 760.
Department of Health (DOH)	Health and medical assistance, public health
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)	Victoria's lead agency for economic recovery and business and industry engagement: Local economies, business, agriculture, public telecommunications, tourism, employment
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)	Energy services, reticulated water and wastewater services, natural environment, public land and waterways, threatened ecosystems and species
Department of Transport (DOT) / Regional Roads Victoria (RRV)	Transport - rehabilitation of DOT managed public buildings, roads, bridges and rail, enhance critical infrastructure resilience Planning – Bushfire Emergency Recovery Coordination
Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV)	Community information, community recovery coordination, state and commonwealth funding, coordination of spontaneous volunteers, management of donated goods, coordinate state-led clean-up of residential properties, support to local government
Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)	Administer Natural Disaster Financial Assistance (NDFA), funding for primary producers, voluntary non-profit groups, small business, local government
Australian Red Cross (ARC)	Support local government and other agencies to provide support to affected persons, advocate for community needs, organise public appeals, provide advice on wellbeing in recovery, coordinate spontaneous volunteers and staff recovery, staff recovery centres.

Organisation	Role/Function
Salvation Army	Support ERV and EMV in the management of donated goods, assist affected persons in personal support, emergency accommodation and transport
Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs)	Provide advice services to local government and other agencies, develop flood recovery programs for CMA assets/waterways, rehabilitate waterways managed by CMAs, support agencies in rehabilitation of other public land, waterway and assets, protection activities to support ecosystem recovery, implement flood damage restoration programs for flood affected waterways
Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)	Free financial counselling to farmers, fishing enterprises, forestry growers and harvesters, and small related businesses experiencing, or at risk of, financial hardship.
Agriculture Victoria (AgVic)	Deliver information and support events to manage the recovery process on topics such as: • Grazing, cropping and pasture management • Irrigation and horticulture system rehabilitation • Soil erosion management • Land management • Animal health and nutrition • Whole farm planning • Water quality • Weed management
Water Corporations	Recovery and rehabilitation of essential reticulated water supply, wastewater management systems and sanitation systems for domestic use, restore, clear and rehabilitate public buildings and assets managed within Water Corporations' portfolio.
Insurance Council of Victoria (ICA)	Link insurance advice to relevant recovery authorities, coordinate insurance damage assessments and expedite claims processing for insured residents and businesses to access financial and accommodation benefits.
Victorian Council of Churches (VCC)	Provide psychosocial support including psychological first aid, emotional and spiritual care and personal support.
Environment Protection Authority (EPA)	Provide advice and information services to recovery agencies, provide waste pollution management strategies, undertake assessment/rehabilitation of public buildings and assets, coordinate approved state-led clean-up of residential property.
Victorian Building Authority (VBA)	Participate in recovery building and plumbing activities with other responsible agencies
Regional Development Victoria (RDV)	Supporting rural and regional communities and businesses through natural disasters, emergencies and unplanned events - providing advice, facilitating solutions, convening recovery committees and driving longer term, sustainable recovery.
Disaster Legal Help	Free information and advice on legal issues because of the floods, including help with tenancy, insurance or property damage.
Victorian Farmers Federation	Support the agriculture sector following natural disasters.

Organisation	Role/Function
Australian Energy Market Operator	Electricity services assets reinstatement and return to reliable supply by managing electricity system security emergencies.
Tourism Midwest Victoria	Marketing, brand, tourism business development, events.
Heritage Victoria	Assesses heritage places affected by disaster events, provide advice to heritage asset owners and managers on proceeding with repairs.

5.4   Bushfire Recovery Plan

This plan has been developed to coordinate the bushfire recovery operation and provide an implementation framework and reporting mechanism for the Council Bushfire Recovery Coordination Committee. It has been designed to evolve over time and has the community at its core.

Implementation of the plan will be the responsibility of the Committee, supporting Disaster Recovery Team, operational business units, and Council, working in close partnership with other recovery agencies.

The action plan does not identify specific programs, activities, or events at individual agency / community levels. It does identify strategies to assist in addressing ongoing recovery issues in a coordinated and planned way to avoid duplication of effort and resources. Identifying gaps in local services, advocating on behalf of affected communities, and promoting longer-term sustainable community support strategies are important outcomes.

5.5   Evaluation

5.5.1   Incident Response and Relief Debrief

An internal Council response and relief debrief session was held on Thursday 28 March 2024. The debrief recaptured an overview of the incident and discussed:

- General observations and comments
- Successes and blockages
- Lessons learned

Worked well:	Challenges:	Improvement Opportunities:
• Community messaging via SMS • Outstanding effort by the Council communications team • Effort of the Mayor – came across as genuine and effective • Willingness of staff to volunteer support • Offers of support from other councils • Acknowledged Chantelle's coordination for the community meetings • Lots of opportunities at relief centre meetings to get information circulated	• Direct impact on staff and road closures could have had a greater limitation on staff response • Road closures limited attendance to community meetings • Community assumptions regarding use of Council equipment • Disappointing that Council equipment and operators were not better utilised • Assumptions that staff would monitor Facebook and other	• Determine ideal location for communication tools • Be prepared for Council to take control of community meetings – do not assume that ICC will control – especially with regard to live streaming and communication tools • Very little time to set up for community meetings and communications – better preparation needed • Align consistent messaging to both community and staff – ensure inclusion of both

• Good communications between Council and MERC for local knowledge • EMLO role of extracting need-to-know information, asking the right questions, and providing a summary of information to Council to facilitate public comms and answers to questions • Use of two EMLOs in ICC worked well – One would be insufficient • Council staff response was agile regardless of individual location • Use of Teams for communication worked well for emergency response agencies • Initial Impact Assessment (IIA) data received quickly • Relief Centre registrations no longer in entrances avoiding queues upon entry	community-facing communication tools • ICC Communications team failed to provide responses to community questions • ICC did not take responsibility for the community meetings • Workload was high and the influx of information made it difficult to disseminate • Vic Emergency App was slow to update • Action and support requests were received direct from CFA and not always through ICC • ICC shift times / Council EMLO shift times were not aligned • Road closure accuracy impacted waste kerbside collections • Ensuring Relief Centre registrations were completed by all attendees	• Use of email is not effective for staff communications in emergencies – consider using MS Teams channels via phone apps • Summaries of CMT meetings should be communicated to staff – key points could go to staff advising to access Facebook for more information • Use of MS Teams as an immediate and constant communications tool for the CMT • Maintain use of two EMLOs in ICCs • Facilitate earlier and more direct communications with impacted people / communities • Ensure EMLOs are assigned same shift rotas as ICC • Strengthen waste kerbside collections in emergency situations in future contracts • Council-managed vulnerable persons register

5.5.2   Evaluation of the Bushfire Recovery Plan

Reporting to the Council Disaster Recovery Coordination Committee by coordinating officers and teams will be required at each meeting and at regular intervals outside of formal meetings.

An evaluation of recovery operations will be conducted following activation of the action plan. The evaluation may be an informal or formal debrief and will identify the strengths and weakness of the local operational response to the needs of the community.

Understanding and documenting the role recovery team members play in the overall recovery process for the 2024 bushfire event is a key factor in learning from and improving the municipality's capacity to respond and recover from an event.

It provides Council with not only a strategic tool to review and assess performance in planning, responding to, and recovering from these incidents, but provides a critical resource bank of information, such as key learnings, and challenges.

6   VERSION CONTROL

Version 1.0	March 2024	Initial version
Version 1.1	April 2024	Inclusion of impacts
Version 1.2	17 April 2024	More comprehensive inclusion of impacts. Extended considerations moving forward following observations during early recovery activities. Inclusion of key actions arising from bushfire response and relief debrief held

7 FIRE RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The following provides high level actions that will be needed to achieve recovery from the Bayindeen Rocky Road Fires.

Detailed task assignment and completions monitoring will be done via the workflows within the CrisisWorks emergency management system.

7.1 General and administration
Goal: To maximise ability of Council to lead recovery activities.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Recovery Committee	Council Disaster Recovery Committee.	Recovery Team	Ongoing	In place
	Finalise Recovery Action Plan.	Kathy	Apr	Complete
	Implement recovery reporting regime	Kathy / Admin	May	In progress
	Consult on whether a community-led recovery committee is required / desired.	Recovery Team		
Financial management	DRFA Claims management: • Advance request • Maximise Claims	Kathy Recovery Team	Mar Apr - ongoing	Complete In progress
	Identify other funding available	Recovery Team	Ongong	No top-up funding identified as yet
Evaluation	Incident Debrief - Conduct an incident debrief as soon as possible to identify strengths and weaknesses with the incident response, relief, and preparation for recovery processes.	Recovery Team	Mar	Complete
	Recovery Evaluation -	Recovery Team	June	

7.2 Communication and Information
Goal: To ensure that impacted individuals continue to feel supported and heard.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Community information	Provide empathetic, relevant, and timely information to impacted community members and staff.	Comms		
Staff communication	Establish ongoing meetings with CMT/ Recovery staff and ELT. Disseminate activities to broader organisation to widen involvement.	ELT / Comms		
Community awareness & education	Provide regular information bulletins (social media, email, hard copy) to the community and staff on assistance available and activities being undertaken to enable people to recover well.	Comms / Recovery Team		

7.3 Social Environment

Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Personal support to individuals (residents and property owners)	Develop a full list of impacted individuals from post impact assessment reports, CrisisWorks data, and emergency payment data.	SIA Team	Apr	Complete but ad hoc additions may be received
	Develop a comprehensive list of recovery support services available for individuals.	Recovery Team	Apr	Complete – included within CrisisWorks
	Ensure affected residents have access to resources to assist with the recovery process. Arrange for referrals to connect into available services where not already provided.			
	Develop a referral concierge service for impacted individuals who have not yet made contact but need support later on.	Recovery Team	Apr	Recovery Desk in place in BRC
Personal support to individuals (staff)	Develop a full list of impacted staff from post impact assessment reports, CrisisWorks data, and emergency payment data.	Admin	Apr	Complete and ongoing
	Provide similar support and access to services as detailed for residents above.			
	Facilitate follow-up psychological support for impacted staff / Councillors.	P&C	May	Not yet due
Social connections	Facilitate community led recovery through supporting activities, events, information, and access to resources to build connections.	Recovery Team		
	Facilitate separate functions and connections with impacted staff. Maintain contact and follow-up.	Recovery Team		
Mental health	Organise long term case management with partner organisations to aid in mental health of residents, particularly those most vulnerable and who have been impacted by other recent natural disasters.	PSC / ERV		
	Organise long term case management with partner organisations to aid in mental health of primary producers that have experienced multiple natural disaster impacts over a relatively short time frame.	EcoDev / ERV		
	Ensure appropriate programs are in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of council staff, agencies and partners – those	P&C	Ongoing	In progress

7.3 Social Environment

Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
	impacted as well as those having worked through the event.			
Promote information sharing	Support engagement and community participation in recovery activities.			
	Facilitate story telling opportunities for impacted individuals (Community).			
	Facilitate story telling opportunities for impacted staff and families.			
	Schedule and promote regular community recovery update mechanisms.	Comms	Ongoing	
	Improve communication by ensuring timely, accurate, and localised information sharing.			
Emerging issues	Identify emerging social issues for incorporating into medium- and long-term recovery planning. Identify through engagement with affected communities.			
	Establish for reporting on insights from community activities, meetings, or events.			
	Continually review and assess planned recovery activities and adjust as required.			

7.4 Built Environment – Infrastructure

Goal: To repair and restore local infrastructure and other assets across the municipality that have been impacted by the bushfires – to reduce risks to safety and to build the resilience of our infrastructure.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Insurable assets	Using the post impact assessment data, determine: • Insurance entitlements on assets. • Gain quotations for reinstatement of each asset. • Identify contractors who would be able to undertake the work.	Tim / Dean	Apr	Unlikely to be insurable assets impacted – to be confirmed
Recovery Plan – Council assets	Prepare and implement an action plan which sets out the works required to reinstate Council or critical infrastructure lost or damaged. The action plan should list all agreed recovery tasks, who will be responsible for implementation, a proposed timeline and the resources required.	Tim	Apr / ongoing	In progress Impacted assets include roads, guard rails and signage.
Residential / Private Infrastructure	Planning and Building – relating to rebuilding activities. • Building inspections	P&B	Ongoing	

7.4   Built Environment – Infrastructure

Goal: To repair and restore local infrastructure and other assets across the municipality that have been impacted by the bushfires – to reduce risks to safety and to build the resilience of our infrastructure.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
	• Planning and Building permit and associated activities			

7.5   Natural Environment / Roadside Vegetation Management

Goal: To reduce risks to safety whilst balancing with conservation needs.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Hazardous Trees	• Complete assessment of all trees along road reserves impacted by fire. • Develop a project plan to manage dangerous trees. • Engagement of contractors to remove hazardous trees. • Development of methodology and program for hazardous tree removal in conjunction with agencies and stakeholders.	Noel / Doug	Ongoing	Arborist assessments in progress Works started Methodology development complete Contractors engaged
Future impacts' management	Engage DEECA to develop a plan to manage regrowth.			
	Identify, plan for, and manage future susceptibility to landslip and erosion; and ash in waterways.			
	Identify whether claims for future associated impacts, not directly attributable to the fire, are DRFA claimable.	Kathy	Apr	In progress
Fragility of impacted habitats and biodiversity being further damaged by clean-up efforts	Collaboratively develop and establish a rehabilitation program of roadsides (within funding constraints) with stakeholders, including Landcare. Monitor the immediate impacts and consequential impacts of clean up.	Noel / Doug		
Additional impact from further storm, wind or significant rainfall activity	Continued assessment of trees and landscape particularly where impacts to the public, infrastructure and other assets may occur.	Noel / Tim	Ongoing	As needed
State Parks Recovery Plan	Monitor and participate where appropriate in the development and implementation of the plan to restore the natural and built assets within the State Forests lead by Parks Victoria and DEECA.	Parks Vic / DEECA		

7.6 Economic / Agricultural Environment – Primary Producers, Business and Tourism

Goal: To support business continuity and rebuilding, and grow longer-term economic and community resilience.

Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Status
Assessment	Assess the impact on businesses with AgVic and work with them to identify the exact extent of impact and their needs to restore full operations.	Ray	Mar/Apr	Complete
Fencing	Communicate BlazeAid presence and availability for fencing support.	Ray	Ongoing	Well advanced
Fodder loss and replacement	Livestock primary producers will need to source alternative supplies at their cost.	External		
Economic Recovery Plan	Prepare an action plan to list all agreed recovery activities, who will be responsible for coordination, a proposed timetable, and what resources are required.	Ray		Tourism recovery plan drafted
Implementing the Plan	Secure the required resources to fund the various recovery tasks and implement in order of priority. Report regularly to the Bushfire Recovery Committee.			Blaze Aid in place and well progressed in fencing rehabilitation support
Business support	Coordinate with relevant agencies to support business recovery.			

8 ATTACHMENT A – TREE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Issued 16 April 2024

This work applies only to roadsides that have been impacted by the Bayindeen Rocky Road Fire.

<u>First Stage work</u>

Before any tree removal occurs:

1. Trees are to be assessed by a qualified and experienced arborist to determine whether there is a risk to road users, as a result of the fire impact to the tree. Each assessment is to be documented in a report for Council.

2. Trees that have been assessed are to be tagged and numbered and identified for either:
    a. Removal (hazardous)
    b. Pruning (to remove the hazard)
    c. Retention (not a significant risk)

3. A secondary assessment to be undertaken by crew team leader (who is also an arborist with significant experience) prior to any "first stage works" to:
    a. confirm the initial assessment (that the tag on the tree and the arborist report match)
    b. Identify if the tree is considered a "high hazard tree" and in close proximity to the road carriageway (at risk of falling on the carriageway).
    c. Trees of a lesser hazard to be considered in the second stage works.

4. Where trees have been identified as high hazard and in close proximity to the road carriageway then:
    a. Remove the tree if the arborist assessment is to remove.
    b. Prune the tree to remove the hazard if the arborist assessment is to prune.
    c. Avoid any unnecessary disturbance of the roadside in the removal works. Work may involve access to roadsides with heavy plant and equipment to the extent that is reasonably necessary to remove the hazard.

5. Where trees have been "flagged" by another party:
    a. these are to be considered as part of the secondary assessment process (step 3 above).

     b. If the tree is <u>not</u> a "large old tree with significant hollows" present, then it may be removed following the secondary assessment process (step 3).

     c. If the tree is a large old tree with significant hollows, it shall be considered for conservation value before any works occur with the tree in the Second Stage Work.

     d. If the tree is a large old tree and is considered a high hazard and clear and present danger to road users, it may be removed as part of the First Stage Work.

6. The secondary assessment (step 3 above) of "high hazard trees" (in addition to other considerations) shall also have regard to the road classification, traffic volume and usual traffic speed.

7. It is expected that the first stage works will involve the removal of up to approximately 50% of the trees identified for removal (in step 1 and 2).

8. To the extent that it is possible, effort will be made to provide notice of works ahead of first stage removal taking place.

9. A large tree is defined as a native canopy tree with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) greater than or equal to the large tree benchmark for the relevant bioregional EVC. The DBH can be determined by measuring the circumference (in centimetres) of a tree at 1.3 metres above ground level. (Refer DEECA website for EVC classifications)

<u>Second Stage work</u>
Methodology for these works shall be developed in consultation with DEECA.
This work will involve the removal or pruning of trees that have not been removed or pruned in the First Stage Works, but which also present an unacceptable risk to road users.

Note that this methodology may be modified by Council following any updated advice.

9   ATTACHMENT B – TRANSITION TO RECOVERY REPORT EXCERPT – Risks, Issues and Consequences

The risk, issues and consequences are outlined below, and the total impact from these are informed by evidence and data that will be validated and expanded over the next 6 weeks. This includes more detailed impact assessments that continue to be undertaken as access to all areas occurs.

Pyrenees Shire Council will monitor risks, issues and consequences identified and work with partner organisations and the State Government to mitigate these. The Shire is likely to have limited resources and ability to mitigate these risks without additional State Government support, acknowledging that the Pyrenees Shire is also still recovering from 2022 floods.

Roads and Road Reserves			
Risk	**Mitigation**	**Responsible Organisation**	**Partner Organisation**
Council roads impacted	• Work with land managers to coordinate and communicate road repairs and rehabilitation works. • Integrate repair and rehabilitation requirements within Regional Recovery Plans.	PSC	ERV
Dangerous trees have been identified on PSC managed public road reserves posting significant risk to road users	• Complete assessment of all trees along road reserves impacted by fire. • Develop a project plan to manage dangerous trees. • Implement road closures as identified. • Engage contractors to undertake removal work.	PSC	ERV DEECA VicPol

Natural Environment			
Risk	**Mitigation**	**Responsible Organisation**	**Partner Organisation**
Fragility of impacted habitats and biodiversity being further damaged by clean up efforts	• Establish a rehabilitation program including the completion of SIAs. • Monitor the immediate impacts and consequential impacts of clean up.	PSC	DEECA ERV
Any storm, wind or significant rainfall activity will cause additional consequences, particularly on the number of dangerous trees identified resulting in further closure of roads, parks and tourist areas	• Continue assessment of trees particularly where impacts to the public, infrastructure and other assets may occur.		

Primary Producers

Risk	Mitigation	Responsible Organisation	Partner Organisation
Primary producers continue recovery from the 2022 flood event have been impacted again due to further stock loss and fences damaged	• Work with AgVic to obtain impact assessments and understand support required. • Communicate BlazeAid presence and available for fencing.	PSC	AgVic BlazeAid
Due to the loss of fodder for livestock primary producers need to source alternative supplies at their cost	• Continue to monitor the situation and identify possible sources of fodder	PRS	AgVic

Business and Tourism

Risk	Mitigation	Responsible Organisation	Partner Organisation
Impact on business and tourism due to loss of trade during the fire event and the Easter Holiday season sue to major State and National Forests being closed for an extended period of time with cancellations from visitors and inability to take school and other tourism groups	• Coordinate with relevant agencies to support businesses. • Economic recovery will seek to capture full impact to inform recovery activities.	PSC	SBV ERV Parks Vic

Mental Health

Risk	Mitigation	Responsible Organisation	Partner Organisation
Mental health of residents particularly those most vulnerable and who have been impacted by other recent natural disasters	• Organise long term case management with partner organisations	PSC	ERV
Mental health of primary producers that have experienced multiple natural disaster impacts over a relatively short time frame	• Organise long term case management with partner organisations.	PSC	ERV
Menal health of Council staff and local agency staff – those impacted as well as those having worked through the event	Appropriate programs in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of Council staff, agencies and partners.	PSC	ERV DFFH

Pyrenees Shire Recovery			
Risk	**Mitigation**	**Responsible Organisation**	**Partner Organisation**
Inability of Pyrenees Shire to finance and resource the appropriate recovery structure	• Identify alternative funding sources. • Advertise positions or source contractors to fulfil roles.	PSC	ERV LGV MAV
Shire revenue and cash flow • Delay in rate payments may alter Council's financial projections • Limited ability of Council to expend on recovery resources and activities and time between reimbursement or lack thereof	• Adjustment to revenue projections and potential delay to BAU expenditure. • Negotiate with State Government for additional funding for recovery activities and long term management of items such as dangerous trees.		