



Cape York Peninsula Development Association Inc.

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Media Release

20.2.07

Satellite Fire Tracking Blazes Path to Southern Queensland

Managing fire through the use of cutting edge satellite technology will be the basis of discussions at a Rangelands Fire Project meeting to be held at the National Parks and Wildlife office in Roma on February 21, 2007.

The meeting will discuss the formation of a steering group for the project and provide information on how fire tracking technology can be utilised by land managers in Southern/Central Queensland rangelands to manage fire related risks to their properties.

The project, funded through Queensland State Government Strategic Reserve Funding, is an extension of the Cape York Peninsula Development Association's (CYPDA), Cape York Fire Management Program.

Northern land managers have been using this program to receive real time fire tracking services since 1999 and the data has been recorded to build fire history maps of Cape York to assist them to build fire into their property management plans.

Manager for the project, Bryan Cifuentes, has 17 years of experience as District Inspector for the Cairns Peninsula Rural Fire District and is looking forward to sharing knowledge with rangelands land managers.

Brian said, "An understanding of fire in the landscape and its impacts on production, conservation and traditional owner outcomes and values is fundamental to effective land management. Fire activity has a direct economic impact on production, through lost grazing areas and crops, time diverted to fire fighting and potentially lost grazing productivity through woody thickening and weed encroachment."

Fire information will be available through The North Australian Fire Information (NAFI) website www.firenorth.org.au, which identifies fire hotspots, enabling land managers to respond rapidly to outbreaks and also provides fire history maps to assist with better managing fuel loads throughout the year to prevent highly destructive wild fires.

Brian added, "This project encourages land holders to look beyond their own back yards to manage fires as they have no respect for property boundaries. Inland areas of southern and central Queensland lack a broad scale, regionally driven community process to identify fire management issues and determine priority actions. The Rangelands Fire Project seeks to redress a lack of baseline information to drive informed decision making - both in relation to wildfire response priorities and regional proactive fire management planning."

The project is a collaborative exercise between Regional Natural Resource Management bodies, Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water, Environmental Protection Agency and local Councils.

Interviews:

Brian Cifuentes, Project Manager – Rangelands Fire Project



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