

Scenic Rim Local Recovery Group

Bushfire Recovery *Plan on a Page*

Southern Queensland Bushfires, 6 – 12 September 2019 and

Eastern Queensland Bushfires, which impacted the western part of the Scenic Rim, from 8

November to 19 December 2019.

Endorsed by: Scenic Rim Local Recovery Group on 6 March 2020



Mayor
Cr Greg Christensen



CEO
Mr Jon Gibbons



LR Coordinator
Mrs Debra Moore

Recovery narrative

Surrounded by World-Heritage listed national parks, breathtaking scenery and highest quality, locally grown fresh food, the Scenic Rim remains a popular must-see tourist destination. Only one hour from both Brisbane and the Gold Coast, the Scenic Rim's unique location makes for an ideal getaway location.

The Scenic Rim is a robust and resilient community, assisting each other through previous events and associated recovery. The Scenic Rim is committed to ensuring that our communities have a successful and resilient future and will approach recovery from an empathic and inclusive approach in partnership with other agencies.

Council Values

- Communication – we actively promote clear, concise and open discussion between staff, Council and communities.
- Respect - we act respectfully towards each other, accepting each person's individuality and their role
- Quality - we have pride in whatever we do and strive to do it well
- Staff worth - our actions demonstrate that our people matter
- Trust - we build strong relationships that we believe in and rely on.
- Teamwork - we work cooperatively to achieve common goals, drawing on the strengths of each other, in a supportive and safe environment.
- Honesty - we act with integrity and when we ask an honest question, we get an honest answer.
- Accountability - we accept ownership of our role and responsibility for our actions.

About the disaster event

In September 2019, the Southern Queensland Bushfires impacted a number of communities across the Scenic Rim, specifically areas of Binna Burra and Sarabah. The bushfires burned over some weeks, causing significant disruption to essential services, businesses, schools and tourism. In November 2019 bushfires, known as the Eastern Queensland Bushfires struck the Scenic Rim region, crucially impacting rural communities of farming and agriculture in areas of Tarome, Clumber and Carney's Creek.

Local Recovery Group

Established: 16 September 2019

Chaired by: Local Recovery Coordinator – Mrs. Debra Moore, Manager Community & Culture
Disaster Management Coordinator – Alisa Totenhofer

Lines of Recovery

The Scenic Rim Regional Council Recovery Plan on a Page involves four key functions:

- **Human and Social, Economic, Environment and Infrastructure** (Building, Roads and Transport).
- Based on the magnitude of the bushfires and ability for the Council to lead the recovery, the functions of Roads and Transport and Building have been amalgamated into one function called Infrastructure.

Key stakeholders

Lead state government agencies, community groups, non-government organisations/non-government associations, local businesses and trader associations, service providers and other invested parties.

Recovery objectives

1. Essential services – power and telecommunications - repaired and restored.
2. Emergency funding provided to eligible applicants.
3. Damage and impact assessments – completed.
4. Offers of assistance are effectively managed
5. Fencing, sheds, water tanks and farming infrastructure repaired and/or replaced.
6. Water tanks are able to be utilised
7. Restore confidence in the tourism market.
8. Road transport network – complete damage assessments, develop reconstruction program and coordinate works for state and local controlled roads.
9. Increase community awareness and preparedness for all hazards through community engagement.
10. Employment opportunities are sourced for those from Binna Burra Lodge
11. Recovery of wildlife habitats to accelerate return of wildlife.
12. Enhance the resilience of local businesses
13. Repair and rebuild of homes and businesses.
14. Seek further funding assistance opportunities to support community recovery efforts where needed.
15. Enhance recovery governance through the re-development of a Local Recovery Sub-Plan.
16. Support the restoration and re-establishment of Binna Burra Lodge and additional businesses and services affected.
17. Recovery of national parks and surrounding environment.
18. Replacement of park infrastructure and camp grounds and ensure public areas are safe from fire damage trees and other items.

Damage and impacts

Damage and impacts

Human and Social

- Community wellbeing – short term instructed and self-evacuations of Binna Burra, Sarabah, Palen Creek, and Carney's Creek areas.
- Community wellbeing – financial stress from lack of insurance
- Community wellbeing – psychosocial wellbeing of community members affected, compounded trauma from drought.
- Community Wellbeing – loss of community connections
- Public Health – concerns about water contamination, in particular with regards to retardant and ash, after rain events.
- Public Health – concerns on exposure to asbestos
- Isolation for children due to school closure – Beechmont State School.
- Essential services – loss of power and water to affected communities.
- Essential services – loss to little telephone and mobile service.

Economic

- Impacts to land utilised by rural producers, such as fencing, stock welfare and loss of paddock feed.
- Loss of income to local services and small businesses: power outages, damage, staff isolation.
- Insurance – lack of or underinsurance for residential and business properties
- Tourism: potential impact on tourism due to road closures and closure of national parks
- Tourism: drop in custom, cancellation of bookings and reduction of enquiries to hospitality businesses.
- Tourism: perception that area is unsafe - impacting local businesses.
- Loss of income for employees at Binna Burra Lodge – annual wage bill - \$1.8M/year.
- Loss of income for local suppliers of Binna Burra Lodge – annual supplies - \$3.6-4M/year.
- Loss of income for businesses and suppliers were experienced around closure of major highway.
- Loss of employment for Binna Burra Lodge employees
- Evacuations resulted in a loss of customers for O'Reillys, Spicer's Peak Lodge and surrounding local businesses.

Environment

- Damage to park infrastructure
- Potential contamination threat due to asbestos exposure.
- Catchments and waterways impacted by the fire, debris run off and retardants.
- Threats to water quality.
- Burnt and fallen trees – public health and safety risk.
- Concerns surrounding vegetation regrowth for rural producers.
- National, state and local parks and walking trails damaged, impacting on public access.
- Threat to flora and fauna in the region.

Infrastructure (Built and Roads)

- 11 dwellings were destroyed/uninhabitable.
- 18 properties sustained damage.
- A number of roads were closed due to fire threat during event.
- Major highways were closed, including Cunningham Highway and Mt Lindesay highway.
- Large landslip impacted Binna Burra Road. Estimated to remain closed until mid-2020.
- Heritage listed Binna Burra Lodge was destroyed.
- Vegetation impacting road furniture.
- Power disconnected to a number of homes.
- Road signs damaged.
- Water tanks sustained fire damage/residue
- Damage to dwellings, exposing hazardous materials such as asbestos.

Recovery timeframes

	Short term (ST)	Medium to long term (ML)	Ongoing (OG)
Human and Social	1 2 3 10	15 16 4 9	14
Economic		6 5 13 15 16 4 7 12 14	
Environment	1 3	15 16 4 11 17 14	
Infrastructure	1 3	8 13 15 16 4 18	14

Recovery timeframes

Recovery narrative

Recovery objectives

Scenic Rim Regional Council

Map of Scenic Rim



Activations for Disaster Recovery Funding Assistance

For details of activations and assistance measures visit www.qra.qld.gov.au/activations

Disaster relief measure

- Counter Disaster Operations
- Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets
- Disaster Assistance (Small Business) Loans
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Small Business
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for Primary Producers
- Disaster Assistance (not-for-profit organisations) Loans
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loans Scheme for not for-profit organisations
- Freight Subsidies for Primary Producers
- Essential Services Safety and Reconnection Scheme 07/09/2019
- Personal Hardship Assistance Scheme (PHAS)*

Activation date

- 07/09/2019
- 11/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 13/09/2019
- 07/09/2019
- 07/09/2019

*The PHAS and ESSRS for Scenic Rim is limited, refer to www.qld.gov.au/community/disasters-emergencies/queensland-disasters for specific areas.

Recovery tasks

Human and social

- Assess human and social impacts
- Provide emergency hardship payments to eligible impacted individuals
- Provide Australian Disaster Recovery Payments to eligible impacted individuals
- Identify and manage personal hardship cases within the community.
- In partnership with relevant agencies, provide access to psychological support services to those in need of assistance.
- Reopen schools and businesses.
- Community messaging relating to fire retardant
- Community events – fundraising/donation events and community engagement events
- Community Messaging – Enhancing community messaging through social media.
- Manage donated goods.

Economic

- Develop strategy to re-engage tourism market “open for business”.
- Develop resilience strategies for local businesses
- Provide support for Insurance challenges .
- Support workers unemployed as a result of the Binna Burra closure.
- Identify impact on agriculture and potential funding opportunities to assist recovery.

Measures of success

Human and Social

- Community members have returned home or have transitioned into appropriate accommodation.
- Community members have returned to work.
- Schools have reopened and children returned to school.
- Community members were able to access a recovery hub.
- Community members supported through outreach visits.
- Eligible community members have accessed financial assistance.
- Community messaging – community recovery newsletters have been distributed and received across impact zones.
- Community and visitors participate in and support community events.
- Funding secured to support community recovery and resilience strategies.
- Stronger partnerships and relationships built with communities and local non-government organisations.
- Community resilience has increased through education and engagement.
- Donated goods have been managed effectively
- Enhanced community connectedness through the use of media means.

Environment

- Identify impacts and activities to support the recovery of the natural environment.
- Remove hazardous debris/vegetation.
- Identify impact to wildlife and their habitats.
- Regeneration of wildlife numbers and habitats
- Clean up of national parks.
- Safely remove hazardous waste (asbestos).
- Arborist to inspect and remove hazardous trees in public areas
- Water tanks, quality of residential water tanks.
- Repair damage to park infrastructure and camp grounds.

Infrastructure (built and roads)

- Establish damage to dwellings / damage assessments to be undertaken
- Repair fencing to rural producer properties
- Reopen roads and highways
- Identify damaged public assets (buildings and roads)
- Identify damage to Binna Burra Lodge and support recovery through the Binna Burra Lodge taskforce.
- Removal of vegetation impacting road and road furniture.
- Power reconnections.
- Water tanks, clean and drinkable water supply to individual/private owners.
- Waste levy fee waived for bushfire waste/debris.

Economic

- Binna Burra Lodge workers transitioned to other employment.
- Tourism – targeted tourism strategies released, resulting in increased tourism.
- Tourism – live reads/adverts/open for business messaging across SE QLD has been implemented.
- Binna Burra Lodge has reopened and is accepting guests.
- Individuals are able to resolve insurance challenges
- Funding to support agricultural recovery has been sought.

Environment

- Wildlife strategies have been developed to support re-establishment.
- National parks and camping grounds have been reopened.
- Waste has been appropriately disposed of.
- Wildlife monitoring has indicated a revival in animal numbers
- Water quality issues of individual/private owners have been resolved.

Infrastructure (built and roads)

- Asset damage has been identified.
- Fencing is repaired.
- Hazardous trees and damaged infrastructure posing safety issues have been removed.
- Roads are open and usable.
- Damage assessments have been undertaken and damage to properties has been repaired.
- Power has been reconnected to all properties.
- Water tanks are clean and usable.

Recovery tasks

Measure of success

Map of Scenic Rim

Activations summary