



MEDIA *release*

Community Engagement Unit

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MR130/1206

BAN ON WOOD AND SOLID FUEL FIRES IN PARKS AND RESERVES

“Due to the extended dry conditions and predicted continuing hot weather, a total ban on all wood and solid fuel fires in ACT rural parks and reserves has been declared,” Mr Brett McNamara, Regional Manager Rural Region, Parks Conservation and Lands, announced today.

“The ban is in force immediately in Namadgi National Park, Murrumbidgee River Corridor, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, Googong Foreshores, Canberra Nature Park and Molonglo Gorge near Kowen Pine Forest. The ban will remain in place until the ACT receives significant rainfall,” Mr McNamara said.

“Urban parks and the Cotter Campground will not come under this ban.

“Under the current dry conditions fires can easily start from the sparks and embers of a campfire, while solid fuel fires such as wood charcoal heat beads can remain hot after being extinguished and can relight,” he said.

“While camping permits are still being issued for Namadgi National Park, campers are advised to bring cold foods that don't require cooking.

“Smokers are also asked to be particularly careful — a stray match or cigarette butt could cause a fire with dire consequences.

“The ban is consistent with the National Parks and Wildlife Service ban of all wood and solid fuel fires within Kosciuszko National Park and national parks and reserves across the south-western slopes of NSW. Namadgi National Park is part of this chain of national parks across the Australian Alps.

“Day visitors and bushwalkers within Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve are also reminded to be aware of falling limbs from drought-stressed trees, particularly during high winds,” Mr McNamara said.

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Statement ends: 14 December 2006

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