

Outline of WA MFLR Trials

Researchers from the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) in Queensland are involved in federally funded experiments which provide money also to state forest agencies which are attempting to promote thinning (logging) native forests as an alternative to other measures to reduce risk from bushfire.

A Professor of Forestry Operations Mark Brown is heading a Western Australian field trial into the use of machinery as opposed or in addition to prescribed burning. Professor Brown is also a Director of the USC-based Forest Industries Research Centre and the Australian Forest Operations Research Alliance.

USC won the tender for the WA Mechanical Fuel Load Reduction Trial under the Australian Government's National Bushfire Mitigation Program, administered by the NSW Government Department of Primary Industry to aid a sustainable forestry industry. Professor Brown, who has been travelling between USC at Sippy Downs and the 185ha site at Collie, south of Perth, said the research could produce huge benefits for communities and the environment across Australia.

Amongst other things the MFLR advocate said, "It won't replace prescribed burns to mitigate bushfires, but it could be a complementary tool. **In addition, the material removed to reduce fuel loads could be sold to produce sustainable bioproducts or bioenergy.**"



Professor Brown's comment was observed in the industry publication 'Friday Offcuts':
www.fridayoffcuts.com/index.cfm?id=741&email