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Media Release

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Fire preparedness needed for Shepparton

Independent Member for Shepparton District Suzanna Sheed has raised concerns in the Victorian Parliament last week about the high fire risk area between Shepparton and Mooroopna.

“There are many areas - roadsides, public lands, even private properties that have incredibly tall grass that is currently drying off. It will not be long until we have over 40-degree days in our region, and it will be too late then to do anything about slashing or doing safe burning,” Ms Sheed said.

“I have observed myself and last year went on trip with some of our CFA officers to see what is happening in our forest. In parts it is so overgrown and in need of some form of forest management to reduce the fuel loads.”

“The tracks need to be looked after to ensure that our fire trucks can get access; there are huge areas of young saplings that should not be there and impede the natural side of the forest, and along the Goulburn River there are houses and suburbs effectively just on the other side of the river where there is very overgrown forest,” Ms Sheed said.

Ms Sheed has asked the government to urgently undertake works that are needed in many areas. She noted that there is a small window of opportunity to do something about clearing away tall grass and saplings especially between Shepparton and Mooroopna to ensure the safety of our communities and avoid the devastation we saw during the bushfires during the last fire season.

Ms Sheed said the National Bushfire Royal Commission Report has recommended that public land managers convey clearly and make available to the public their fuel load management strategies, including the rationale behind them.

“This is a recommendation our state government should adopt. Our communities should know what is being done to keep them safe in preparation for the fire season and have an annual reporting process that details the outcomes of management strategies.”

ENDS

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