

# NASA image: Fires in Southeastern Australia

March 31 2015

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The fires superimposed on the satellite image of southeastern Australia designated by red spots may be indicative of "planned burns" by the Victoria region. Credit: Jeff Schmaltz, MODIS Rapid Response Team.

The fires superimposed on the satellite image of southeastern Australia designated by red spots may be indicative of "planned burns" by the

Victoria region. This map: <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fire-and-emergencies/planned-burns/planned-burns-now-and-next-10-days> found on the Department of the Environment and Primary Industries for the State of Victoria shows the burns that are planned for the next ten days and many of them coincide with the red spots on this MODIS image taken by the Aqua satellite on March 30, 2015. What is the reason for fire management teams purposely setting a fire? The reasons can actually be many. A fire set at the right time can:

Reduce hazardous fuels, protecting human communities from extreme fires; Minimize the spread of pest insects and disease; Remove unwanted species that threaten species native to an ecosystem; Provide forage for game; Improve habitat for threatened and endangered species; Recycle nutrients back to the soil; Promote the growth of trees, wildflowers, and other plants; Destress overcrowded conditions; and Prevent fire-dependent species from disappearing.

Some of these red spots could still be bushfires that are burning without controls in place since this is still fire season in Australia. There is no definitive way to tell other than to match the fires against the prescribed fires map.

This natural-color [satellite image](#) was collected by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) aboard the Aqua satellite on March 30, 2015. Actively burning areas, detected by MODIS's thermal bands, are outlined in red.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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