



UNIVERSITY of
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Bushfire planning: what Tasmania can learn from global trends

An international perspective on Tasmania's bushfire crisis will be offered by a visiting pyrogeographer in Hobart next week.

Dr Crystal Kolden is Associate Professor of Fire Science at the University of Idaho, an American state which has seen more than its fair share of major wildfires, as recently as 2012 and 2017. A former wildland firefighter for the US Forest Service, she has seen the devastation fire can cause first-hand.

On **Wednesday, 13 February**, Dr Kolden, who is currently a Visiting Scholar at the University of Tasmania, will give a seminar as part of the University's Fire Centre Seminar Series entitled 'Wildfire disasters locally and globally: learning from global trends to plan for future bushfires in Tasmania'.

"2018-2019 is already a banner year for wildfire in Tasmania, with impacts second only to 1967, and the potential for disaster is ongoing," Dr Kolden said.

"For Tasmanians, the reality of extreme bushfire activity raises concerns about what to do next and how.

"Many countries globally are grappling with the same questions, and fire science can help identify where there are analogues to what is happening in Tasmania and what mitigation strategies are worth pursuing.

"Climate change will inevitably produce more bushfires under more extreme conditions, and new approaches will be required to avert disaster."

The Fire Research Hub was established by the University of Tasmania in October last year with the express goal of connecting all the scientists, managers and communities working in bushfires across the State.

The Director of the Fire Centre Research Hub, Professor David Bowman, said Tasmania's many fire experts were spread out across Tasmania and ways of encouraging collaboration needed to be pursued.

The hub aims to link bushfire researchers to staff in the Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and the Environment, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management and the State Emergency Service to respond to their needs with highly relevant research. It also aims to assist communities in preparing for fire and to understand traditional fire management by engaging with local Indigenous communities.

"We are aiming for something that is globally unique in how we engage with others through this hub," Professor Bowman said.

Dr Kolden's seminar will be held on Wednesday, 13 February, at 12 pm in Life Sciences Lecture Theatre 1 at the Sandy Bay Campus.

Information released by:

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