

One of the most recognised and accepted methods of bushfire mitigation and management is the use of firebreaks.

Sometimes a natural feature, a fire trail or a road provide an edge to which a firebreak can be burnt. Often however, the fire will jump a break if it is too narrow or the main fire is in the tree canopy.

It seems apparent to me that the best form of firebreak is **a divided highway/road with an appreciably wide, sacrificial median strip.** At times of an impending conflagration the median strip could be burnt to provide a worthwhile width of firebreak.

Vegetated median strips are also valuable in minimising headlight glare and can provide other benefits. Many people see them as wildlife corridors but a former scout from my troop lost his life when swerving his car to avoid a koala which had descended from trees in the median strip along the Hume Highway in Victoria. Perhaps apiculturalists could come up with a more win-win suggestion or two.

As to the costs associated with extra land resumption or national parks encroachment by divided highways, these must be measured as an investment against the costs associated with firefighting bushfires and loss of property. Obviously the extra cost of constructing these sorts of roads/highways should not only come from road-making budgets.

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