

Forest Fire Victoria* News

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BURNT FENCING

FARMERS ASSEMBLE TO SUE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT OVER BUSHFIRE DAMAGE

The Victorian Farmer's Federation (VFF) is compiling a list of names to join a class action for compensation over Victoria's 2003 bushfires, which destroyed 1 million hectares of land.

Up to 400 farmers are intending to take action against Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). The DSE says the farmers have been threatening the action for

several months but it has received no formal correspondence.

Meanwhile, Paul Weller from the VFF is encouraging those affected

to add their name to the list.

"I think there's a lot of our farmers that suffered during the fire and they don't feel as though they've been adequately compensated," he said. "This class action's one of the few remaining few options for them."

(ABC RADIO WEBSITE Monday, 18 October 2004)



HOMESTEAD LOST BETWEEN OMEO AND SWIFTS CREEK

GOVERNMENT FACES FIRE ACTION

PAUL SELLARS, WEEKLY TIMES, 08 Sep 04

THE Victorian Government is facing an unprecedented class action over the devastation caused by last year's bushfires.

An organisation known as the Stretton Group will seek a court ruling to identify government agencies it believes are liable for the size and severity of the fires, which burnt out more than 1.3 million hectares in East Gippsland and north-east Victoria.

Implicit in the action is the claim it was government negligence, rather than an act of nature, that lay behind the fires' magnitude.

The group, made up of landowners,

community groups and fire experts, is seeking "declaratory relief," potentially through the Federal Court, which would include a damages payout to people affected by last year's fires.

Spokesman Tony Cutcliffe said the number of plaintiffs involved would be "mind-boggling" and the trial comparable to a royal commission in what it uncovered.

He said the agencies to be named in the action included the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Parks Victoria and the CFA.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE 2003 ALPINE BUSHFIRE MUST NEVER BE REPEATED. THIS WAS A "FERAL FIRE"