



# A Black Saturday Perspective

*Intense isolation and surrounded by raging fires, hearing of hopelessness, death and destruction whilst fire-watching for days and with the expectation for the return of the fire. The personal struggle to reinvent life and overcome the effects of trauma, sustained adrenalin and cortisol, low energy and demoralization continues.*

# January 2009



Temperatures of C40+

Leaves fell from trees

Grass died

Everything suffered

in Taggerty tribal differences disappeared



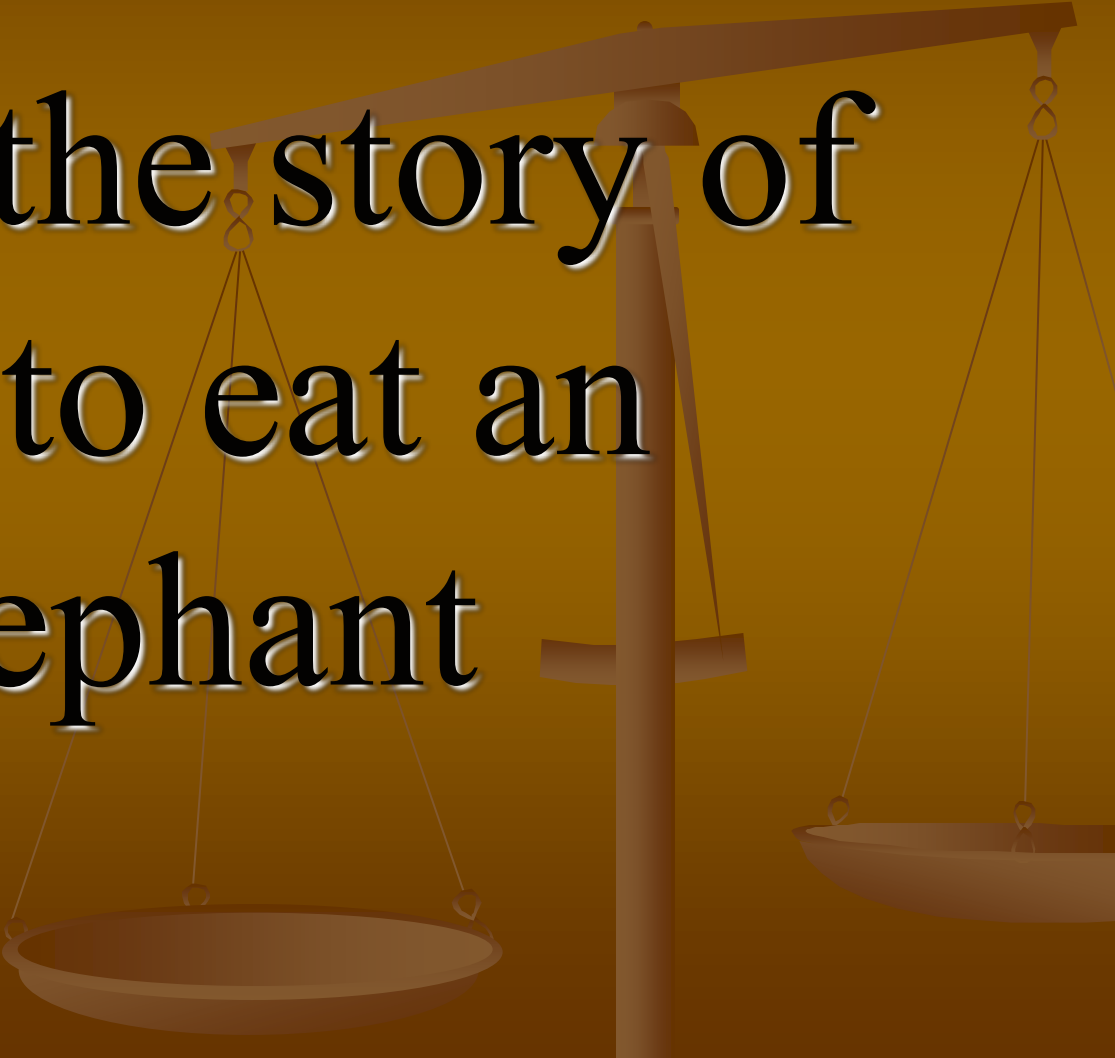


# February 7<sup>th</sup>

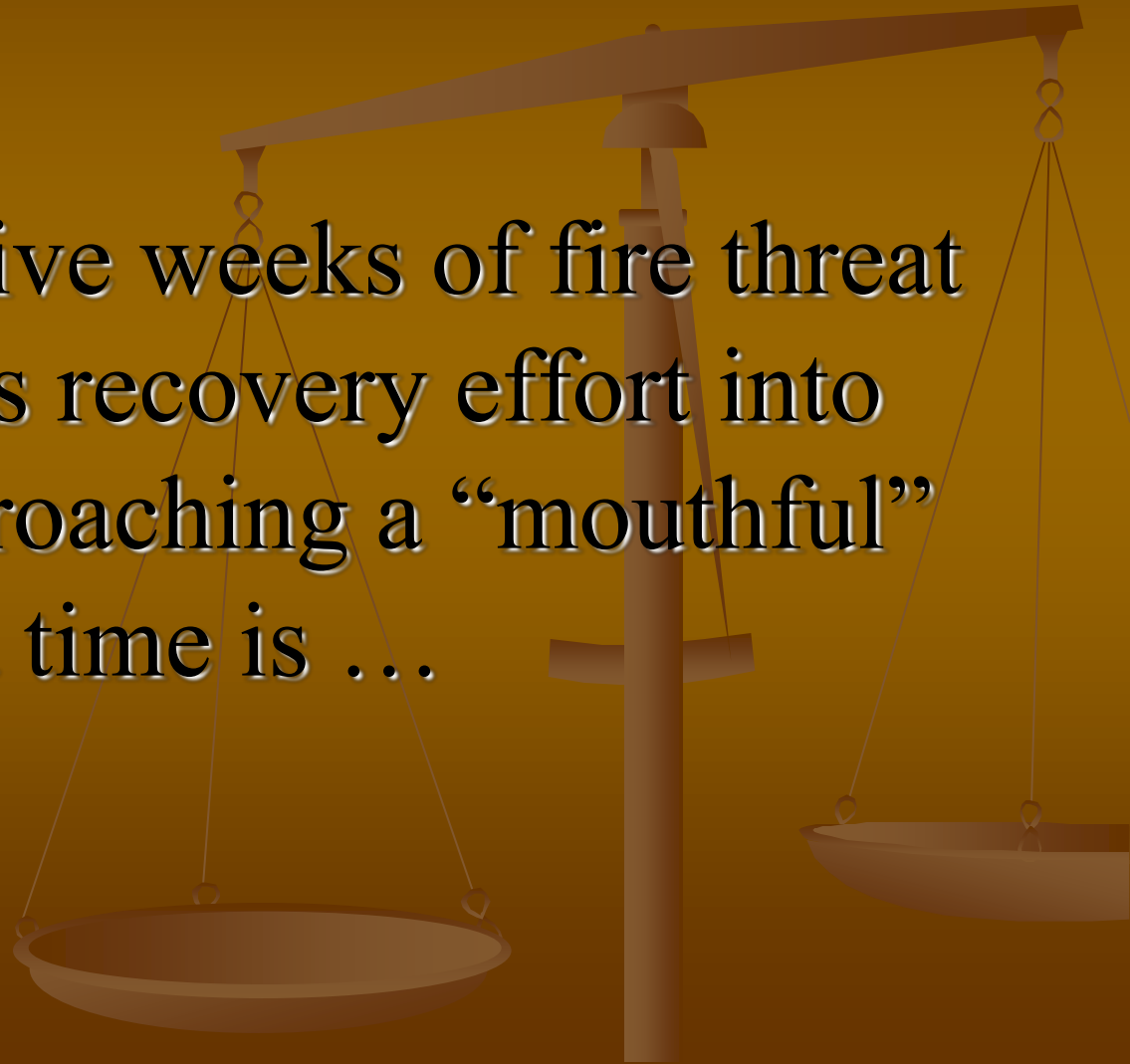
At Barwon Heads  
fruit cooked on trees,  
even Ivy singed



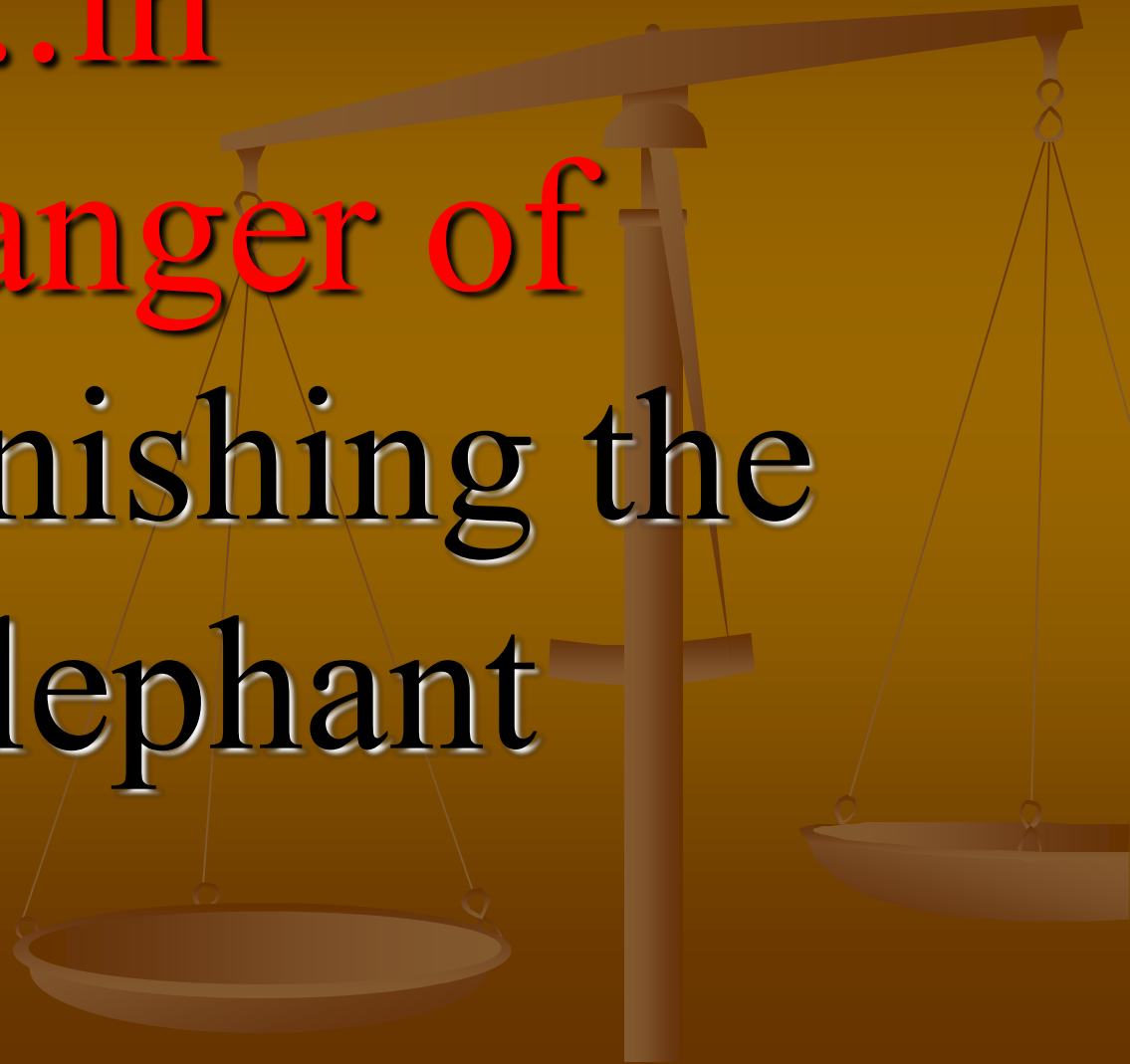
This is the story of  
how to eat an  
Elephant

A wooden balance scale is positioned on the right side of the image. It has a vertical post with a horizontal beam. Two pans are suspended from the beam by strings. The left pan is lower than the right pan, indicating it is heavier. The scale is made of a light brown wood.

To reduce our five weeks of fire threat  
and 20 months recovery effort into  
something approaching a “mouthful”  
at a time is ...



...in  
Danger of  
Diminishing the  
Elephant









# Sarsens Tun 16:00 hrs



Unannounced

Spot fires began  
North and South  
of us

rising in seconds











as the main fire travelled toward Narbethong the valley  
filled with smoke







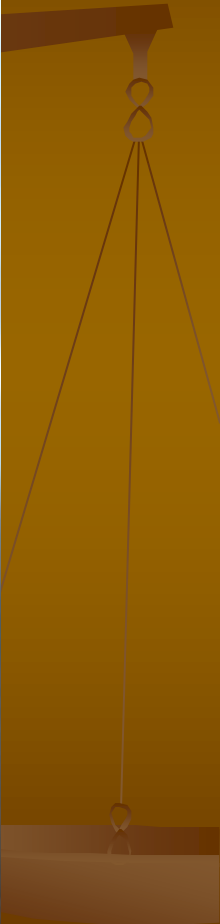




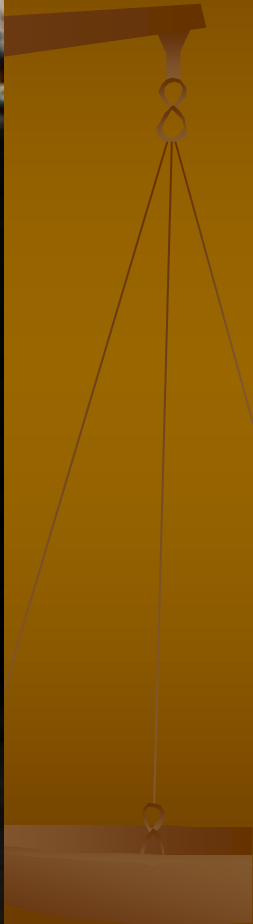
# Taggerty towards Midnight



# Morning



# Sunday morning February 8th



# Taggerty





# Taggerty





# Taggerty homes lost



Sheep leave the stable after 5 days





Sun for a while, listening to memorial service,  
while fires rage nearby, are we forgotten?





We cancel dental app.

Cathy, our dentist,  
comes to help electrify  
fence for rescued cattle  
& food for CFA

Lyne brings CFA food  
from Bendigo, &  
Glenda from Melbourne



Cattle arrive after ABC  
Radio called for help

“Perfect teats” escapes

5 days to recapture

2 months to go home



# Fires continue in the Blue Range



We are not sure where  
the fire is, as new  
plumes keep appearing

At night mighty pyres  
surrounded us for days

# Fires break through containment lines





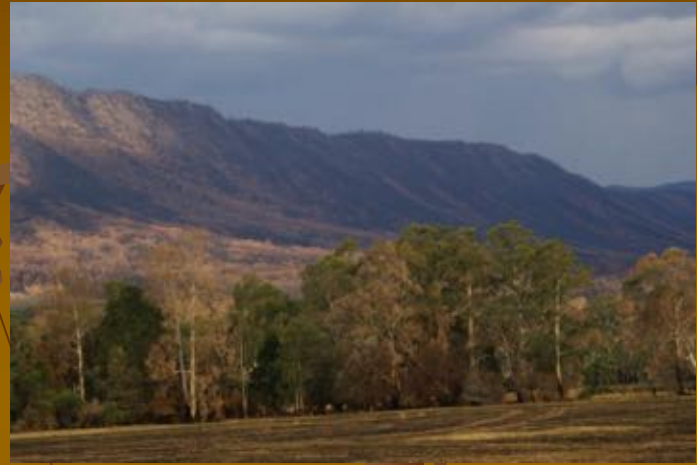
Winds change

We find more friends alive

Yea & normality



# Taggerty lost 43 rural houses



# March 5<sup>th</sup> Patrick & Geoff are dead too, and it rains



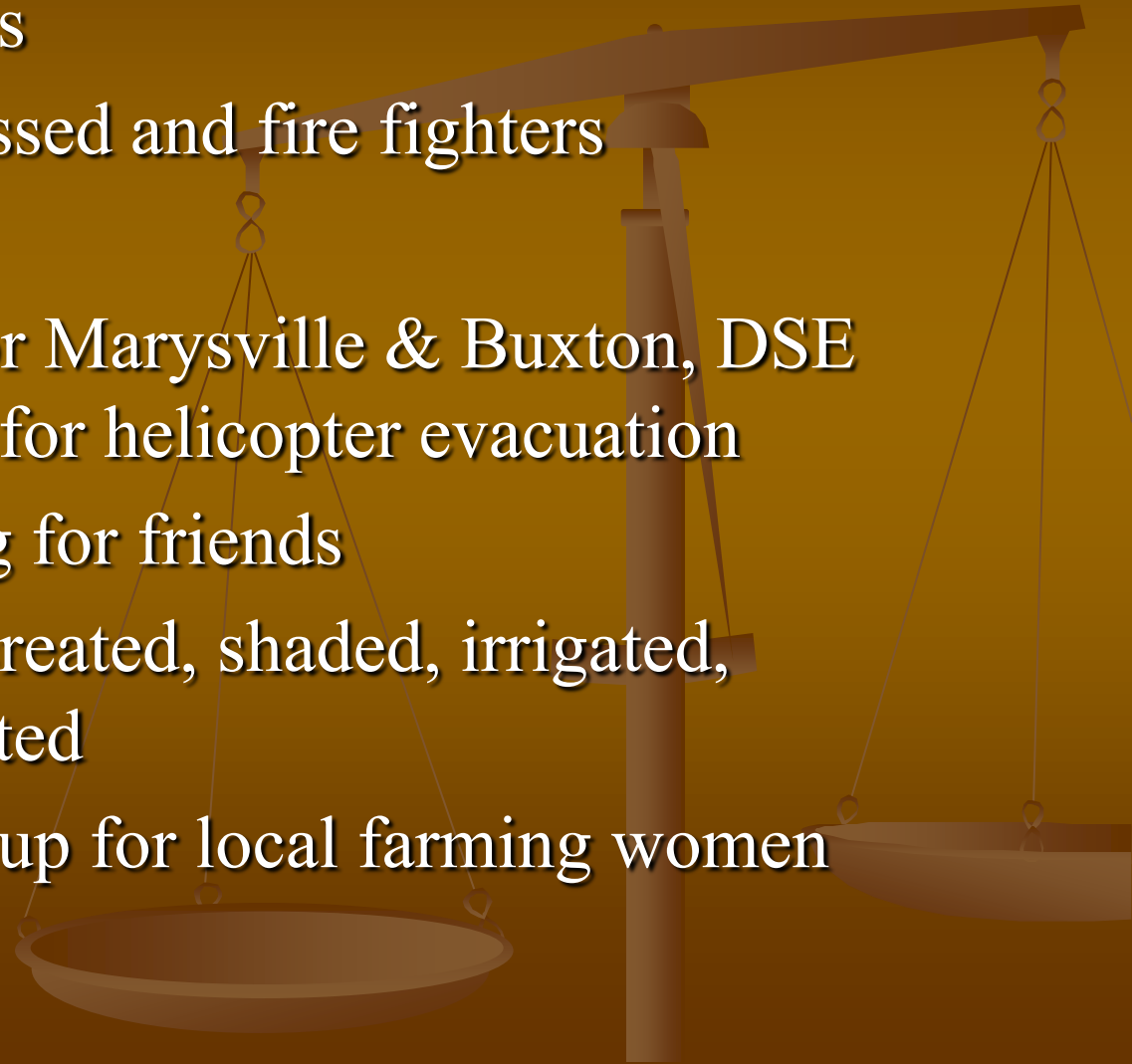


# Recovery starts as fires reduce



# Community activities

- CFA shed breakfasts
- Talking to dispossessed and fire fighters
- Cattle housing
- Ambulance posts for Marysville & Buxton, DSE rescued in Rubicon for helicopter evacuation
- Burned tree clearing for friends
- Planted – nursery created, shaded, irrigated, catalogued, distributed
- Created support group for local farming women



# Farming continues



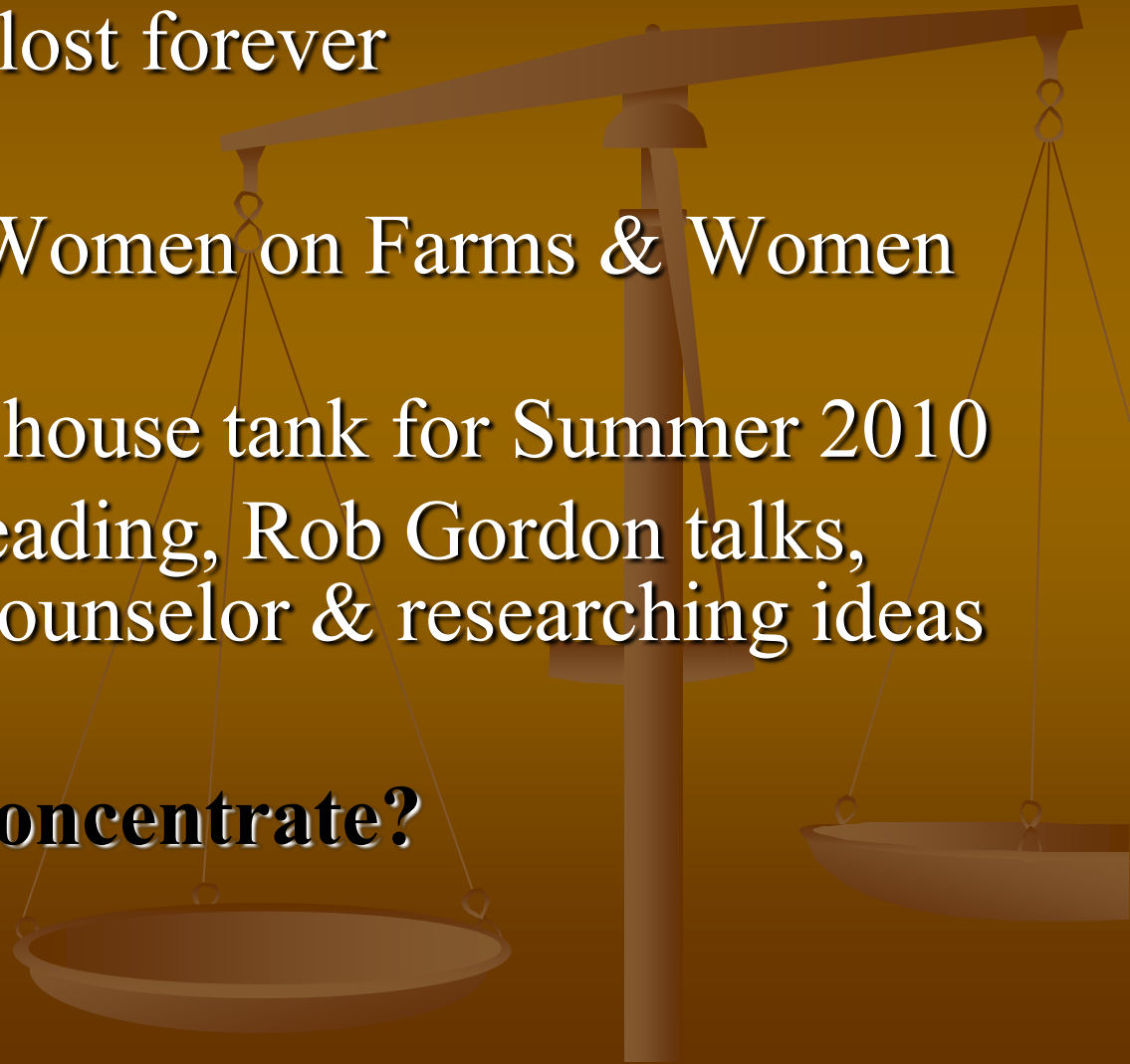


# Taking the rough with the smooth



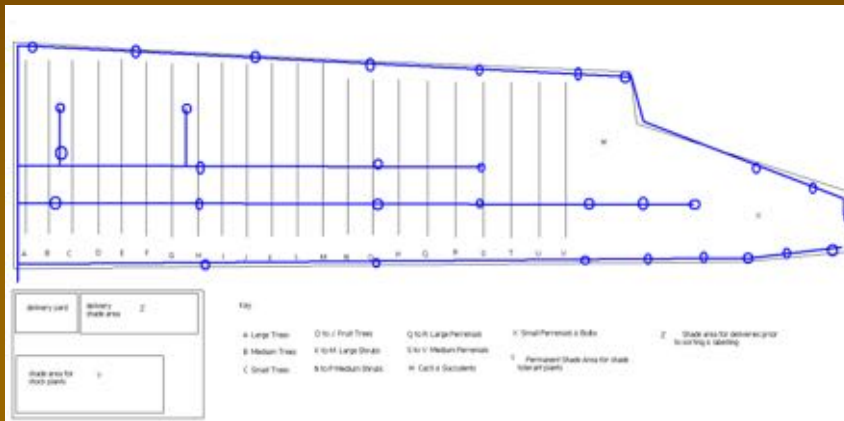
# Personal Recovery

- Bushfire Case Managers, grants & donations
- Planted & work lost forever
- volunteers
- Vinnies, Salvos, Women on Farms & Women in Agriculture
- Generator & new house tank for Summer 2010
- Counseling and reading, Rob Gordon talks, Rural Financial Counselor & researching ideas
- **Is it possible to concentrate?**





# New work found elsewhere



# New income creation ideas in progress



# Personal & Business Recovery

- Bushfire Case Managers, grants & donations
- Cert IV Training & Assessment - return to teaching or on-farm training courses?
- Business Mentor – our livelihood lost
- Counseling and reading, Rob Gordon talks, Rural Financial Counselor & researching ideas
- CAD software for return to Garden Design
- Design studio created in Chalet
- Diploma in Permaculture due February 2011
- **Is it possible to achieve a clear desk?**



