

Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy Appendix 2014-2023



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Images

Front cover photos courtesy of Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Resort (horse riding) and Finish Line Events (mountain bike riding). All other photos courtesy of communityvibe unless otherwise stated.

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Contents

1.0 Definitions	1
2.0 Geographic and Cultural Review	3
3.0 Policy Context.....	10
3.1 Victorian Government.....	10
3.2 Hume Region	21
3.3 Other Locations	44
4.0 Benchmarking.....	46
Milford Track (New Zealand).....	46
Overland Track, Cradle Mountain (Tasmania)	47
Lilydale to Warburton ('Warby') Rail Trail (Victoria)	50
Otago Rail Trail (New Zealand).....	51
Mule Trail, Grand Canyon (USA).....	54
Valmont Bike Park, Boulder, Colorado, USA	57
The Whole Enchilada (MTB), Moab, Utah, USA	58
5.0 Survey Analysis	61
6.0 Consultations.....	79
7.0 Written Submissions.....	131
8.0 Funding Opportunities	143
9.0 Track / Trail Development Profiles	154

1.0 Definitions

Regionally Significant Track or Trail	A track or trail that is sustainably designed and constructed to a high standard (mostly off-road where possible); has a high level of appeal to local residents and visitors; highlights and links the unique features of the region; has some length to it, but also options for smaller loops or varying experiences; is supported by appropriate infrastructure; is well promoted and supported by local communities and businesses; and offers a range of benefits to the region.
Municipal Trail	A trail that may provide linkages to key attractions in a municipality such as waterways, parks, etc and which may attract both locals and visitors to use the trail.
Local Trail	A trail that primarily links local facilities such as shops, schools, sports centres, etc to residential areas. These trails are usually off-road and are used by people within the neighbourhoods in which they exist.
Commuter Trail	A trail that provides a fairly direct route for cyclists from residential areas to the business area of a town or city, usually located on road.
Track	The word track can be used interchangeably with trail, and can refer to anything from a dirt road to a pedestrian walkway (generally also unpaved).
Trail	A defined path, route or track which often traverses natural areas and is used by people for non-motorised recreation such as walking, cycling, mountain biking and horse riding. ¹
Cyclist	A person who rides a bicycle (road, hybrid or mountain bike) or a human powered vehicle.
Cycle Tourist	A person who undertakes a recreational visit, either overnight or a day away from home, which involves cycling as a significant part of the visit ² .
Walker / Bushwalker	A person who walks along a trail through urban parks or forest; or undertakes a full day walk in a national park or reserve; or takes part in a multi-day trip where they are self-sufficient carrying everything in a backpack. ³
Recreational Cyclist	A person who rides a bicycle primarily for enjoyment. These cyclists generally tend to use off road paths where possible and travel at lower speeds than commuter or competitive cyclists.

¹ Victorian Government (2004) Victorian Trails Strategy 2005-2010

² Munda Biddi Trail Foundation (2005). *Cycle Tourism: A New Tourism Market Emerges in Western Australia*: www.mundabiddi.org.au/cycle_tourism/images/cthires.pdf

³ Bushwalking Victoria website: <http://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/>

Mountain Bike Rider	A person who rides a mountain bike or hybrid bike on designated mountain bike trails or off-road riding on private or public land. ⁴
Competitive Cyclist	Competitive cyclists are those who generally take part in cycling events or competitions. These cyclists often undertake medium to long distance rides and travel at fairly high speeds. They tend to share carriageway of roads with motorists or use on road cycling paths or shoulders.
Road Riders	Road riders are cyclists who either share the carriageway of a road with motorists, or use on road cycling paths or shoulders to travel to their destination.
Horse Riding Trail	A trail designed for people riding horses. These trails may also allow shared use with other forms of non-vehicular transportation.
Shared Path	A shared path is one which is designed to be used by a variety of different user groups such as cyclists and walkers at the same time.
On Road Path	Sealed path joined to a road and predominantly used by road bikes
Off Road Path	Path constructed a short distance away from a road – may be asphalt, concrete, crushed rock, granitic sand, gravel, or unmade dirt track – predominantly used by walkers, hybrid bikes or mountain bikes.
Rail Trail	Cycling / walking and sometimes horse riding trail built along a disused railway line.
Rails with Trails	Trails located alongside operating railway lines.
Sealed Shoulder	A section of sealed road outside the usual carriageway for motorised vehicles, which is often used by cyclists.
Single Track	A trail that is wide enough for one user only.
Single Use Trail	A trail that is only designed for one type of user group, e.g. horse riders or mountain bike riders.
Trail Head	Specific points at which trails start or end. These locations may incorporate information signage and other facilities such as car parking and toilets.
Training Route	A specified medium to long distance on road route used by cyclists to improve their fitness levels and / or to train for competitive cycling events.

4 Faulks, P. Ritchie, B. Fluker, M. (2006) *Cycle Tourism in Australia: An Investigation of its Size and Scope*, Sustainable Tourism CRC

2.0 Geographic and Cultural Review

The following table provides an overview of key geographic and cultural features of each of the Local Government areas that make up the Hume region:

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
Alpine Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Buffalo National Park • Mount Beauty • Kiewa Valley • Bogong High Plains • Mount Bogong • Mount Feathertop • Falls Creek • Mt Hotham 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High country huts • Goldfield diggings • Chinese Swing Bridge (Wandiligong) • Tobacco sheds • Bright Art Gallery • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls Creek Alpine Resort • Mount Hotham Alpine Resort • Dinner Plain Alpine Village • Murray to Mountains Rail Trail • Great Alpine Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Breweries • Producers of nuts, honey, lavender, olives, berries, hops, butter, flowers, apples, fudge, mustard, specialty breads, lamb, farmed trout, farmed salmon, farmed Murray Cod, herbs, jams, pickles, preserves, pesto, sauces, chutney, cordial
Benalla Rural City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Benalla • Mount Samaria State Park • Reef Hills State Park • Benalla Botanical Gardens • Winton Wetlands (Benalla) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benalla Art Gallery • Benalla Museum • Ned Kelly Touring Route (Benalla) • Benalla Ceramic Mural • Benalla Aviation Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winton Motor Raceway • State Gliding Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Brewery • Bakery products, honey, flowers, fruit, berries, olives, nuts, mustards, relishes, chutneys, preserves, vegetables, herbs

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benalla Performing Arts and Convention Centre • Costume and Pioneer Museum (Benalla) • Various markets and festivals 		
Greater Shepparton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Park Lake • Goulburn River • Lower Goulburn National Park • Shepparton Regional Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Community Art Gallery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shepparton Art Gallery • MoovingArt (Shepparton) • Shepparton Heritage Centre • Historical Society of Mooroopna • Riverlinks (theatre) • Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KidsTown (Mooroopna) • Aquamoves (Shepparton) • Emerald Bank Leisure Land • Tatura Park Events and Exhibition Complex • SPC Ardmona Factory Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Apples, chocolates, fruit, cheese, jam, bakery products, olives, berries
Indigo Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beechworth Historic Park • Chiltern Mt Pilot National Park (Chiltern) • Lake Sambell Reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yeddonba Aboriginal Heritage Site (Chiltern) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Burke Museum (Beechworth) • The Court House (Beechworth) • Telegraph Station (Beechworth) • Beechworth Gaol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray to Mountains Rail Trail • High Country Rail Trail • Indigo Gold Trail (Rutherglen to Upper Sandy Creek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Brewery • Bakery products, honey, stone fruit, berries, apples, pears, saffron, nuts, olives, olive oil,

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Beechworth) • Stanley State forest (Yackandandah) • Woolshed Falls (Beechworth) • Murray River • Lake Moodamere 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burke Museum (Beechworth) • Chinese Burning Towers • Chiltern Athenaeum Museum • Yackandandah Museum • Beechworth Institute of Botanical Art • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rocky Mountain Tunnel (Beechworth) • Rutherglen Gold Battery (Rutherglen) • Beechworth Historic & Cultural Precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> preserves, chocolates, lollies, cheese
Mansfield Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mount Buller • Mount Stirling • Lake Eildon • Bonnie Doon • Alpine National Park • Howqua Valley • Delatite Valley • Goulburn River 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craig's Hut • Bushranger sites • Gold mining areas • Mountain Cattlemen huts • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Victorian Rail Trail • High Country Maze (Gough's Bay) • Mansfield Zoo • Horse trail rides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Brewery • Bakery products
Mitchell Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goulburn River • Trawool Valley • Mt Disappointment State Forest • Tallarook State Forest • Argyle State Forest • Tooborac State 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seymour Railway Heritage Centre • Various markets and festivals • Bylands Tram Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Victorian Rail Trail • Cheviot's Tunnel • Australian Light Horse Memorial Park • Vietnam Veteran's Commemorative Walk (Seymour) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Bakery products • Cheese • Steak • Olives, and olive oil • Honey • Boutique Beer (Tooborac Hotel and

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest • Seymour Bushland Park • Mollison Creek (with railway bridge crossing) • Kilmore Creek 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Army Tank Museum • Horse trail rides • Pyalong Railway bridges (2) 	Brewery)
Moira Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barmah National Park • Murray River (from Barmah to Mulwala) • Murray River Park • Moira Lake • Barmah Lake • Ulupna Island • Ovens River (from Bundalong to Boorhaman) • Goulburn River (Moama to Bunbartha) • Chinaman’s Island (Yarrawonga) • Lake Mulwala • Quinn Island (Cobram) • Kinnaird’s Wetlands (Numurkah) • Barooga Botanical Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous sacred indigenous sites • Dharnya Centre • Garradha Molwa (Aboriginal Cultural Site) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barmah Forest Heritage & Education Centre (Nathalia) • Yarrawonga Mulwala Customs House • Byramine Homestead • Log cabin (Cobram) • Yarrawonga Mulwala Pioneer Museum • Growing Rural Art in Nathalia Store (Nathalia) • Chrystie’s Museum • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulwala amusement park • Cobram Barooga Golf Club (Barooga) • Black Bull Golf Course (Yarrawonga) • Yarrawonga Golf Club (Mulwala) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun Country on the Murray Farm Gate Trail (Yarrawonga-Cobram-Numurkah) • Wineries • Brewery • Fruit, preserves, berries, farmed buffalo meat, cheese, bakery products, chocolates, nuts, honey, olives

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thompson's Beach (Cobram) 				
Murrindindi Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yea Wetlands Goulburn River Lake Eildon National Park Kinglake National Park Toorourrong Reservoir Park (Humedale) Lake Mountain Mt Disappointment State Forest Toolangi State Forest Mt Robertson State Forest Murrindindi Scenic Reserve (with several waterfalls) Cathedral Range State Park Yarra Ranges National Park Black Range State Forest Marysville State Forest Rubicon State Forest 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Victorian Rail Trail Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Kerrisdale Mountain Railway and Museum Alexandra Timber Tramway Buxton Trout and Salmon Farm Hume and Hovell Cricket Ground (Strath Creek) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wineries Bakery products, berries, trout, caviar, organic vegetables, stone fruit, olives, grapes, olive oil, preserves, jams, cheese

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big River State Forest • Mt Torbreck 				
Strathbogie Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strathbogie Ranges • Nagambie Lakes • Goulburn River • Polly McQuinn's Weir • Gooram Falls • Mt Wombat • Balmattum Hill • Tahbilk Wetlands 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Arms Museum • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goulburn Weir 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Bakery products, tomatoes, berries, cheese, organic vegetables, herbs, nuts, fruit, olives, preserves, pickles
Towong Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snowy Mountains • Dartmouth Dam (Mitta Mitta) • Mitta Mitta River (Tallangatta to Dartmouth Dam) • Murray River • Mitta Mountains • Alpine National Park • Lake Hume (Tallangatta) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Tallangatta township • Man From Snowy River Museum (Towong) • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Country Rail Trail (Tallangatta) 	
Wangaratta Rural City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ovens River • King River • King Valley • Warby-Ovens National Park • Mt Glenrowan • Paradise Falls 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wangaratta Art Gallery • Wangaratta Museum • Ned Kelly Museum (Glenrowan) • Kate's Cottage (Glenrowan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray to Mountains Rail Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Brewery • Cheese, mustards, bakery products, olives, berries, honey, jams, pickles, preserves, fruit

LGA	Natural	Indigenous	Cultural	Man-made	Food & Wine
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wabonga Plateau • Lake William Hovell 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenrowan Blacksmith Shop and Armoury • El Dorado Museum • Gold mining relics (El Dorado) • Wangaratta Festival of Jazz • Various markets and festivals 		
Wodonga City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray River • Wonga Wetlands • Sumsion Gardens and Belvoir Park • Albury Botanic Gardens • Lake Hume 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway Village (home to many arts / crafts organisations) • Bonegilla Migrant Camp (Wodonga) • Art Space Wodonga • Army Museum (Bandiana) • Various markets and festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hume Dam • High Country Rail Trail • Wodonga Sports and Leisure Centre • Albury Wodonga Equestrian Centre (Thurgoona) • Murray 1 Power Station and Visitor Centre (Albury) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wineries • Fruit, vegetables, herbs, cheese, honey, olive oil, organic meat, bakery products, preserves

3.0 Policy Context

3.1 Victorian Government

Victorian Government (2012) *Cycling into the Future 2012-2013 and Action Plan 2013-2014*

With a vision to make Victoria the most bike friendly state in Australia, the key directions contained within this document are:

- Build evidence
 - Collect, collate and analyse data on cycling
 - Audit and evaluate regional trails
 - Develop a methodology for modelling current and potential demand
 - Undertake an information needs analysis
- Enhance governance and streamline processes
 - Review processes for delivering cycling infrastructure projects that cross local government boundaries and have multiple land managers
 - Cut red tape when assessing and approving cycling infrastructure projects
 - Review legislation for managing and maintaining off-road paths
- Reduce safety risks
 - Review road rules and road safety legislation
 - Plan and conduct targeted public awareness and enforcement campaigns
- Encourage cycling
 - Review speed limit guidelines to consider the needs of cyclists
 - Provide information on power-assisted bicycles
- Grow the cycling economy
 - Review the impact of cycling on regional tourism
 - Identify areas and routes for competition cycling and training
 - Develop guidelines for mountain biking to balance needs of mountain biking with other public land objectives
- Plan networks and prioritise investments
 - Develop criteria for prioritising potential Government investments in cycling infrastructure
 - Develop targeted investment plans for cycling infrastructure
 - Delivery of cycling projects.

In relation to the Hume region, the report:

- notes its support for the Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy
- notes its intention to provide funding for an off-road bike path beside the Ovens River in Wangaratta
- states that the High Country Rail Trail “features spectacular scenery”
- notes its supports for the 3 Peaks Challenge
- notes the need for urban planning of cycle infrastructure in destinations such as Bright
- recognises the tourism significance of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and the Epic Mountain Bike Track at Mt Buller.

Some points of interest:

- there are more bicycles than cars sold in Australia each year
- 1.08 million Victorians ride a bike each week
- Cycling is the 4th most popular form of exercise in Victorian
- Cycling to work rates have increased by 5% each year between 2001-2011 and recreational cycling has increased at a rate of 2.6% per annum in the same time period.

Tourism Victoria (2011) *Victoria's Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-15*

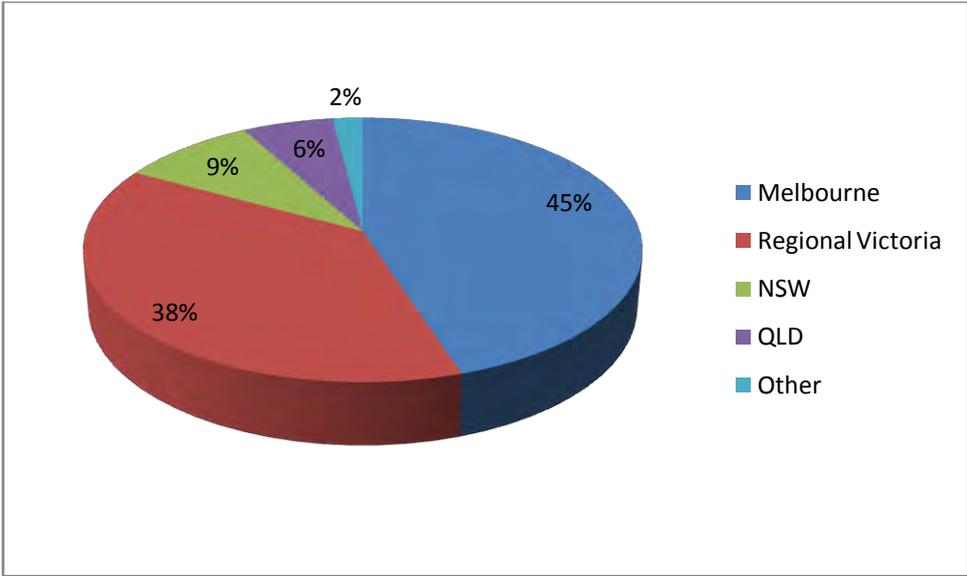
This strategy aims to position Victoria as the leading state for cycle tourism. It also outlines the process to be used by State Government to leverage and enhance opportunities in cycle tourism.

The strategy has identified the High Country as the leading cycle tourism region in Victoria due to its diverse terrain suitable for road cycling, mountain biking and rail trails, as well as its existing and potential events (e.g. the Audax Alpine Classic and Terra Australis). Priority tourism trails for further development in the Hume region (based on their potential to attract interstate and intrastate visitation and increase length of stay) include the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (Wangaratta to Bright) and the Great Victorian Rail Trail. Another priority is developing mountain biking attractions of an international standard, and facilitating investment in suitable tracks in Victoria's Alpine Resorts to support all season visitation to the High Country.

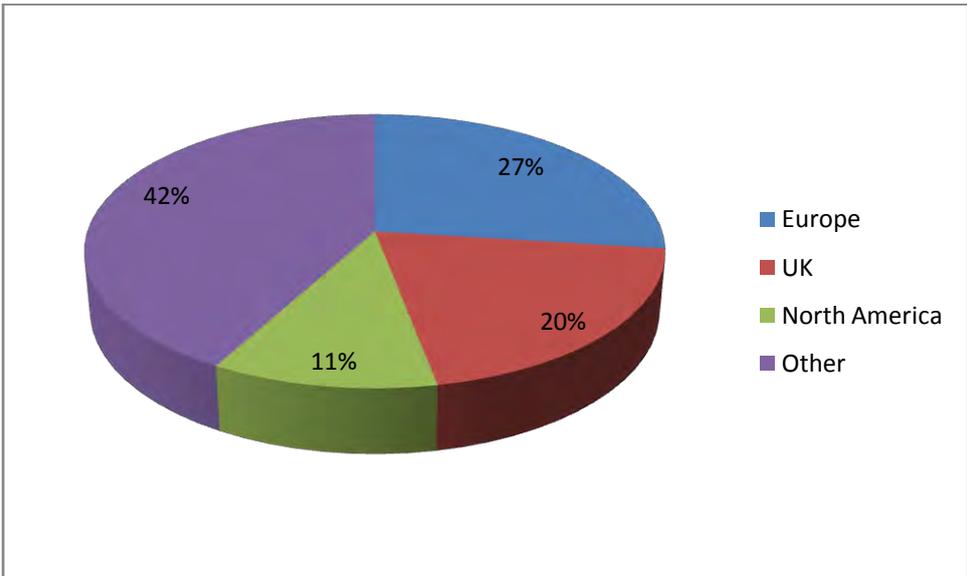
It is estimated that the total expenditure of all visitors who participated in cycling in 2010 in Victoria is \$362 million, and in Australia, \$2.4 billion.

Type of Visitor	Australia		Victoria	
	No. of Visitors	No. of Visitor Nights	No. of Visitors	No. of Visitor Nights
Domestic Day		-	141,000	-
Domestic Overnight	1 million	5.7 million	280,000	1.5 million
International Overnight	258,000		100,000	

Origin of Domestic Overnight Visitors:



Origin of International Overnight Visitors:



Value of Domestic Overnight Cycle Visitors

Visitor Type	Average Length of Stay	Average Number of Activities per Trip
Overnight Visitors to Victoria	3.1 nights	3.3
Overnight Visitors to Victoria who Participated in Cycling	5.3 nights	5.3

Target Markets:

	Age / Sex / Grouping	Rationale	Interests	Origin
Trails	Couples aged fifty plus and families with children	Seek an experience that allows them to spend quality time with friends and family	Complementary experiences, such as food and wine and exploring Victoria's villages.	Predominantly intrastate traveller
Mountain Biking	Males aged 30-39 years, who are well educated professionals with high disposable incomes	Consider mountain bike riding a personal challenge and their motivation for riding is health and fitness, as well as spending time with like-minded people.	Purpose driven travel and will generally participate in a specific activity, such as a mountain bike event.	Opportunities to attract interstate participants and visitors.
Cycling Events	Males aged 40-54 years, who are working professionals, well educated and have a high disposable income.	Health and fitness benefits of cycling.	Professional cycling events bring a high number of spectators and non-professional events interest mainly participants	Some cycling events, both professional and non-professional, currently attract a high percentage of interstate visitors, especially from NSW and the ACT.

Parks Victoria has led the development of the Public Land Tourism Investment Case (Natural Icons), including the identification of specific sites for mountain biking and cycling projects. As part of the investment, Parks Victoria notes the need for contemporary infrastructure and services in the right locations and the need to create private investment opportunities to complement the natural attractions.

The strategy recognised that the capacity to carry bikes on public transport in Victoria is limited and that innovative ways to increase the accessibility of cycle tourism experiences, in partnership with relevant government agencies and public transport operators need to be explored.

A study to explore the feasibility of developing an epic mountain bike ride along Mt Buller Razorback Spur Mountain Bike Ride was funded by Tourism Victoria. If feasible, this would be Australia's first epic ride, as labelled by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA).

The strategy identified an existing trail of regional significance, being the Alpine Loop from Falls Creek, through Omeo, Mt Hotham, then back to Falls Creek via Mt Beauty. A major event has been created to complement the trail: the European-style road cycling event called The 3 Peaks Challenge. “This 230 kilometre route starts and finishes at Falls Creek and traverses the alpine region including Tawonga Gap and Mt Hotham. There are four ride options, meaning riders can choose to complete the ultimate 230 kilometre challenge, or enjoy the scenery and ride one of the 115 kilometre routes”. The strategy also identified the 7 Peaks Challenge, whereby cyclists are encouraged to ride four of seven climbs in the High Country, from the following list:

1. Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort
2. Mount Buffalo National Park
3. Mt Buller Alpine Resort
4. Dinner Plain Alpine Village
5. Falls Creek Alpine Resort
6. Hotham Alpine Resort
7. Lake Mountain Alpine Resort

Specific actions of relevance to the Hume region include:

- Complete priority rail trail and cycle tourism projects, including the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail project (2011-2015).
- Facilitate international standard investment in priority mountain bike tracks, particularly in Victoria’s High Country (2011-2015)
- Establish the Mt Buller Razorback Spur Mountain Bike Ride as Australia’s first epic ride, as classified by the IMBA (2011-2015).
- Partner with public transport operators and the Dept of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure to explore opportunities to increase the capacity of public transport to accommodate bicycles (2011 – 2012).
- Establish the High Country as the leading destination for cycle tourism in Victoria through the development of marketing activities that hero the region’s cycle tourism experiences (2011-2015).
- Identify and encourage the industry to develop tourism packages that combine trails, transport, tours, accommodation and attractions (2011-2015).
- Identify and prioritise mountain biking events that have the potential to attract visitors to the State, including Terra Australis MTB Epic (North East Victorian Alpine and High Country region) and Bike Buller MTB Festival (Mt Buller) (2011-2015).

Victorian Government (2009) *Victorian Cycling Strategy*

This strategy focuses on guiding policies, programs and projects that promote cycling as a major form of personal transport. It identifies the benefits of cycling as:

- Reduced congestion (less road congestion and crowding on public transport)
- Low energy and environmental footprint (no greenhouse gasses, pollutants or noise and reduced need for parking spaces)

- Health and fitness
- Affordability (cheaper than driving or public transport)
- Social inclusion (mobility and independence)
- Extended access (when used in conjunction with public transport)
- Community safety (passive surveillance)

The five strategic directions contained within this strategy are:

- Build networks to connect communities
- Promote and encourage a culture of cycling
- Reduce conflicts and risks for cyclists
- Better integrate cycling with public transport
- Integrate cycling into land use planning

The strategy identifies the completion of cycling links in regional centres, including Benalla, as a key priority.

Victorian Government (2008) *Victoria's Nature Based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012*

This strategy focuses on ensuring that Victoria's Nature Based Tourism industry increases the supply of high yield visitor yields while remaining its sustainability, i.e. ensuring that it remains healthy. It recognises some of the key challenges for the industry as:

- addressing barriers to growth to attract public and private investment
- increasing the sustainability and viability of the nature-based tourism industry
- encouraging the industry to limit its carbon footprint
- raising visitor expenditure and tourism yield for provincial Victoria
- heightening nature-based tourism consumer awareness of Victoria
- maintaining the principle of equity of access to public land
- contributing to a healthy environment.

The five types of identified nature-based tourism are:

- ecotourism
- adventure tourism (e.g. cycling, horse riding)
- extractive tourism (e.g. fishing)
- wildlife tourism
- nature retreats.

A nature-based tourism visitor is one who takes part in at least one activity that is defined as a nature tourism activity such as bushwalking.

The strategy states that Victoria's tourism industry employs around 160,000 people and is worth \$10.9 billion.

Although Victoria's national parks attract the highest park visitor numbers in Australia (28.6 million to protected area parks in 2004–2005) they fail to capture yield, particularly from international visitors.

Twenty percent of nature based tourism visitors are estimated to come from interstate, primarily from NSW, QLD and SA, whereas the remaining 80% are from Victoria (58% from Melbourne and 22% from regional Victoria). International nature based tourism visitors primarily come from UK, North America, China, New Zealand and Germany. China is expected to be the largest market by 2016.

Nature Based Tourism Figures for Year Ending 30 June 2007:

Visitor Type	% of visitors who undertake at least one nature tourism activity	% of nature based tourism visitors who take part in bushwalking / rainforest walks	% of nature based tourism visitors who visit national or state parks	No. of nature based tourism visitors
Domestic Day	Not stated	16%	18%	8.1 m
Domestic Overnight	37%	27%	22%	6.3 m
International Overnight	77%	41%	69%	1.13 m

Whilst opportunities exist for self-reliant nature tourism visitors, there are limited experiences available for high yield visitors. Issues hindering growth are the five A's: attractions; access; activities; amenities; and accommodation. Or more specifically:

- “lack of an integrated policy and planning framework to enable private investment (‘enabling environment’)
- low consumer awareness and perception of Victoria as a nature-based tourism destination
- limited coordination and focus on sustainable destination planning, development and management of key nature-based tourism destinations
- climatic events affecting travel behaviour and industry viability
- lack of a unique brand to position Victoria in a competitive marketplace failure of Victoria’s national parks to capture yield, despite high visitor numbers
- high yield ‘hero’ product and infrastructure gaps surrounding key natural attractions
- undersupply of experiences to cater to international markets
- low visitor expenditure in regional Victoria
- financial viability of existing businesses
- industry fragmentation and lack of an industry voice
- financial sustainability of public land infrastructure assets
- low significance placed on nature-based tourism by some communities”.

Victoria’s nature based tourism vision is: “Victoria will be recognised as the leading sustainable nature-based tourism destination in Australia renowned for its diverse and accessible natural attractions.” To achieve this vision, five key directions have been developed:

Direction	Description	Hume Region Relevance
Creating supportive frameworks	Create an ‘enabling environment’ to attract nature-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing for longer-term leases of up to 65 years that match tenure to return on investment, excluding national parks

Direction	Description	Hume Region Relevance
and partnerships	tourism investment and maintain the integrity of the natural environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigating planning mechanisms to facilitate nature-based tourism infrastructure development on private land • increasing maximum licence terms to 10 years for tour operators on public land • creating a sustainable model for private investment into public land infrastructure
Planning and managing sustainable destinations	Foster sustainable practices including carbon reduction initiatives and strategies to maintain a healthy environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking a long term approach to destination planning, development and management with Phase 3 being Victoria's High Country (after Great Ocean Road / Grampians and Philip Island / Gippsland). • developing and implementing a consistent approach for reducing visitor impacts on public land • increasing involvement with Aboriginal communities.
Developing authentic, memorable experiences	Fill identified access, activity, amenity and accommodation gaps through public and private investment.	<p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing the Wild Walks of Victoria with a high yield commercially-run walking component with demountable standing camps/accommodation • positioning Victoria as Australia's premier mountain biking destination • developing world-class visitor experiences at key national parks.
Facilitating viable and innovative businesses	Seek to increase the triple bottom line sustainability of the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the professionalism and excellence of existing and potential operators through training • increasing opportunities for business skills mentoring programs • continuing to improve the tourism knowledge and skills of land managers and tourism partners through training.
Effective marketing	Enhance the competitive positioning of Victoria as a destination with world-class natural attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing the brand positioning of nature-based tourism for Victoria • supporting regional campaigns that focus on nature-based tourism • expanding marketing efforts, including cooperative marketing by Tourism Victoria and Parks Victoria • developing thematic collateral including 'Top 10' experiences • increasing access to nature-based tourism information online, including the development of a Parks Victoria online booking system • ensuring high quality nature-based tourism images and new media are obtained for promotional use and used consistently across government.

Roy Morgan Value Segments (TM) for nature based tourism indicate that those groups most likely to take part in ecotourism (e.g. bushwalking) and adventure tourism (e.g. cycling, horse riding or mountain bike riding) are people grouped into the following categories:

- Socially aware – social issues oriented; 35-49 years of age; politically / community active; upmarket professionals; wealth managers
- Visible achievement – success and career driven; 35-49 years of age; recognition and status seekers; good family living; wealth creators.

Nature based tourism assets identified for Hume region include:

- Victoria's High Country:
 - Key Public Lands – Alpine National Park; Alpine Resorts; and Mt Buffalo National Park
 - Attractions and activities - Alpine and adventure, alpine wilderness, ski touring, skiing, abseiling/climbing, horse riding, mountain biking, bushwalking, Mt. Buffalo, Australian Alps Walking Track, white water rafting Goulburn and King rivers
- The Murray:
 - Key Public Lands – Barmah State Park, Barmah State Forest (including Dharnya Centre), Murray River Reserve
 - Attractions and Activities - Water-based adventure, 4WD, Ecotourism (including Bird watching and Aboriginal cultural heritage), Extractive tourism (fishing) and nature retreats.

Major projects identified for the Hume Region (as part of Phase 3) include:

- Feasibility study for public-private partnership infrastructure upgrade at Mt Buffalo Chalet
- Wild Alpine Walk with demountable accommodation potentially linked to the Alpine Resorts (these should feature central facilities with day walks, loops, and one way walks extending out from a central complex or walks linking various Alpine Resorts).
- Identify new and existing Alpine Resorts accommodation suitable for attracting summer nature-based tourism visitors.
- Alpine National Parks interpretive centre with a tourism/customer service approach
- High Country/Alpine Resorts adrenalin mountain biking
- Feasibility study to develop a world-class adrenalin activity centre in the Alpine Resorts including mountain biking, bungee jumping, zorbing and other activities
- Identify, improve and develop Aboriginal tourism products in the natural environment.

Victorian Government (2004) *Victorian Trails Strategy 2005-10*

This strategy has been developed by the Victorian Trails Coordinating Committee to guide trail development in an integrated and sustainable manner throughout the state. The three key directions of this strategy are: trail network management; trail marketing; and trail research. This strategy describes a trail as “a defined path, route or track which often traverses natural areas and is used by people for non-motorised recreation such as walking, cycling, mountain biking and horse riding.”

At the time the strategy was printed, Victoria had more than 2,000 trails, 8,000km in length (this does not include footpaths or on-road bicycle lanes). Trail management agencies are as follows:

Agency	% of Victoria's trails managed	Number of kilometres of trails managed
Parks Victoria	50%	4,000km
Department of Sustainability and Environment	35%	2,800km
Local Government	15%	1,200km

Comments of relevance to the Hume region:

- The Murray to Mountains Rail Trail is expected to contribute \$0.5 million per annum to the local community, with a multiplying effect of up to \$1.9 million per annum (Geddes 1999).
- The 650km long Australian Alps Walking Track attracts up to 15,000 day visitors per year, but only 200 overnight trail users complete the whole distance.

The vision outlined in this strategy is: “To have a sustainable trail network that provides diversity of experience and equity of access for the health and wellbeing of Victorians and visitors alike.” The guiding principles developed to help achieve this vision are:

- Individual and community health and wellbeing
- Protection of natural and cultural heritage
- Economic benefits to state or region

Key issues identified in this strategy include:

- Achieving sustainable trails
- Managing environmental impact
- Maintaining community involvement
- Marketing of trail opportunities
- Equity of access
- Lack of agreed standards
- Shared use of trails
- Lack of flagship trails
- Lack of coordinated and shared research.

Actions of relevance to the Hume region:

- Develop short walks from key visitor nodes in icon parks and alpine resorts to further the objectives of year-round use of alpine resorts.
- Investigate opportunities for the creation of interpretive overnight hiking trails on appropriate non-park public land or private land, where there is either existing accommodation or interest in the development of hut or cabin style accommodation within short walking distances of established trails, e.g. linking trails to the Australian Alps Walking

Track between Mt Hotham and Falls Creek with accommodation outside the Alpine National Park.

- Investigate the Murray Valley Trail opportunity that may have one or two-day walking or cycling loops using existing trails around rural centres such as Albury/Wodonga.
- Develop identified and industry-approved mountain biking trail opportunities both in and around Melbourne and regional areas.
- Promote current overnight walks that do not require navigation skills (standard 3-4) and are within 2-3 hours of Melbourne to maximise customer awareness and product confidence (e.g. the Baw Baw Plateau).
- Rail Trail developments in Hume region of a high priority include the High Country Trail (Bandiana to Cudgewa) and Murray to Mountains (Wangaratta to Bright and Beechworth). Both the Goulburn Valley (Tallarook – Alexandra – Mansfield) Rail Trail and the Rushworth to Murchison East Trails were listed as low priorities.

Institute of Sensible Transport and Victorian Department of Transport (2010) A Technical Evaluation of Bicycle Carriage on Victorian Trains and Coaches

The aim of this report is to investigate practical ways in which bicycles can be carried on regional public transport in Victoria so as to create a more integrated transport system. At the same time it is mindful of meeting the requirements of public transport operators and other passengers.

Research undertaken as part of this project indicates that cyclists want more space on trains for bicycles (sometimes for an entire group travelling together); a guarantee that they can take their bicycles on buses should they wish; and a booking system.

Key recommendations within the report are:

- Establish a public transport bicycle advisory committee.
- Introduce an optional booking system to allow bicycles to be carried on V/Line services.
- Improve data collection of vital statistics to help integrate the integration of cycling with public transport.
- Install racks on trains to allow bicycles to be stored vertically (this not only creates a defined number of storage spaces for bicycles, but also reduces the likelihood of bicycles inadvertently moving).
- Provide bicycle trailers which are able to carry large numbers of bicycles on bus services or attached to other vehicles in areas with rail trails or areas which are popular recreational cycling locations.
- Encourage cyclists to store a 2nd bicycle at their destination station (in a Parkiteer high security bicycle cage) to allow to combine public transport usage with cycling, but not to necessarily carry their bicycle on a train.
- Ensure that train stations are well connected to surrounding areas with high quality bicycle paths and on road bicycle lanes.

3.2 Hume Region

Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council (2012) Draft Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan, which is available for public comment at this stage, aims to articulate a vision for four season, vibrant, sustainable resorts for the following six alpine resorts: Falls Creek, Lake Mountain, Mt Baw Baw, Mt Buller, Mt Hotham and Mt Stirling. The report states that these resorts are significant recreational and tourism destinations that are visited by more than 1.2 million annually and generate over \$610 million in Gross Domestic Product. In relation to cycling, walking and horse riding activities, which are undertaken as part of what is known as the 'green season', visitor numbers are small but growing, and have been helped by a focus on events, new product development and marketing by resorts.

The proposed vision of the 2012 Strategy is: "Victoria's alpine resorts will be vibrant, growing and sustainable places, delivering alpine recreational and tourism experiences that are available to all."

One of the key strategic objectives of the Draft Strategy is to enhance the visitor experience and to develop the alpine resorts. The Strategy notes that the alpine region, whilst not impacted upon quite so much as the regional tourism market (due to higher numbers of Australians choosing to travel overseas for their holidays and lower numbers of international visitors), is facing challenges to grow visitation. The Strategy recommends that the alpine resorts should focus on maximising yields from their current assets and exploiting the competitive strengths of the region and of each resort. Specifically it states that winter should be supported to continue to be the driver of economic and financial outcomes and that the role of the green season should be strengthened. In relation to the green season, the Strategy recommends that the alpine resorts "selectively develop green season visitation, recognising the need for product differentiation between resorts and realistic expectations about what is possible in economic terms. Government should show leadership by supporting a small number of key initiatives to help build market confidence. Some of these initiatives will also be of benefit beyond the green season."

The Strategy identifies the green season strengths of each resort and estimated visitor numbers from November 2010 to April 2011 as follows:

Resort	Estimated Visitor Numbers	Strengths	Weaknesses
Mt Baw Baw	45,000	Growing nature-based/outdoor education role. Access to the Gippsland region and the growing outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Market uncertainty associated with as yet unproven demand. • Poor product and service diversity on offer (generally seen as an urgent need to be tackled. Improving availability of some summer services, such as medical and pharmacy, is likely to require funding support from ARMBs and/or government).
Lake Mountain	37,000	Biking options. Links to Marysville.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of offers across resorts (e.g. focussed on relatively low cost/ low yield offerings that minimise risk, such as hiking, mountain biking, road
Mt Hotham	112,000	Commencement of iconic walk. Dinner	

Resort	Estimated Visitor Numbers	Strengths	Weaknesses
		Plain product offering in close proximity.	cycling, touring and special events).
Falls Creek	68,000	Finish of iconic walk. Rocky Valley/water availability for green season activities. Wellness and lifestyle opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear messages that a compelling differentiated offer has been established (too much reliance on an undifferentiated ‘alpine environment’. • Village design that is less attractive in the green season (e.g. bare surfaces; lack of trees) • Physical isolation. • Safety perceptions (e.g. related to fire occurrence in the last decade). • Weather conditions (e.g. necessitating a greater focus on indoor opportunities). • Government conflicts (e.g. lack of a whole-of government approach, particularly between Parks Victoria and ARMBs in some cases where potential activities require agreement of both). • Existing lease durations (which limit scope to use leases as a means of incentivising businesses to open during the green season).”
Mt Buller / Mt Stirling	83,000 and 30,000	Established mountain biking role. Good all-rounder for green season’s activities. Close to Melbourne. Good services (almost a town). Mt Stirling has a raw natural appeal.	

The Strategy suggests that “a small suite of prioritised, high profile, iconic products that can commence positioning the alpine resorts for year-round visitation is essential to growing visitation outside of the winter season. Whilst there is a push for year-round operations at the resorts, there is a need to plan carefully.” It notes that alpine resorts in North America still only bring in less than 10% of the total revenue for the resorts.

Australian Alps National Landscape Inc. (2010) *Australian Alps National Landscape Tourism Strategy – for the International Experience Seeker Market*

The Australian Alps is one of approximately 15 natural and cultural landscapes selected by Tourism Australia and Parks Australia to promote as a world class visitor experience.

According to the strategy, the Experience Seeker market wants:

- Authentic personal experiences
- Social interaction
- Experiences that are different to their normal day to day life

- Understanding and learning about different lifestyles and cultures, preferring to participate rather than simply observe
- Challenge themselves – physically, emotionally and / or mentally
- Genuine destinations that are not necessarily part of the tourist route
- Exposure to unique and personally compelling experiences

The positioning statement that has been developed for the Australian Alps is:

“Mountain range upon mountain range and un-interrupted horizons; a mystical place of ever-changing weather, of winter snow and summer wildflowers, of gnarled snow gums and local characters; spend time and learn from the people and their stories on the rooftop of Australia. Journey through the high country where nature and culture will inspire and challenge your spirit.”

The five integrated layers of a visitor experience, as identified in the strategy are:

1. **“place** including the physical characteristics and sense of the mountains;
2. **infrastructure**;
3. **services** that include visitor information as well as food and beverage,
4. **tours, activities** and **attractions**; and
5. **interpretation**, which facilitates and shapes connection, meaning and understanding.”

The future vision is that the Australian Alps will offer an integrated experience across the destination:

- connected by service hubs and clusters;
- linked to major gateway cities via a hierarchy of touring routes;
- from one to the other through seamless visitor information
- and a culture of cross-referrals matched to visitor interests; and
- via transport that meets visitor needs.

The strategy notes the need to offer walking and cycling trails; strong Aboriginal product; well presented, self-guided journeys linked to products; and a premier mountain-biking destination. One of the suggestions in the strategy includes the piloting of an Adventure Bus between Melbourne and Bright, with stops in the Yarra Valley, King Valley, Mansfield and Beechworth so that people can access adventure activities, natural attractions and food and wine. Other suggestions include the promotion of local and regional events and festivals via an annual calendar; day walks that are upgraded and better promoted; and the development of eco-lodge mountain immersion on the Great Walhalla Alpine Walk. Crosscut Saw Range (Mt Buller-Mt Stirling) has been identified as one of the most impressive locations for the Experience Seeker.

The strategy states that international market ready products need to be:

- Commissionable
- Geared to the needs of the target market
- Offer a distinctive, authentic experience
- Reflect the high levels of service expected by international visitors, including a booking system that is easy and quick to access
- Have marketing collateral geared to the international market.

Short to Medium Term Priorities in the Hume region:

- Mt Hotham-Falls Creek Wild Walk – has potential to be the brand’s lead product: multi-day walk with standing camps and eco-lodge. Currently subject to feasibility assessment.
- Mt Buller-Razorback Spur Epic Mountain Bike Ride – should be Australia’s first ‘Epic’ Ride; currently subject to feasibility assessment
- Adventure Bus between Melbourne and north-east Victoria, linking adventure activities in the Yarra and King valleys, Buller and Bogong Clusters
- Additional Indigenous tourism product and the establishment of independent Indigenous tourism businesses
- Mt Buffalo Chalet – re-negotiating the lease for the 1910 chalet and seeking a sustainable and viable commercial operation that will offer all season activities within the National Park
- Signature heritage/nature/food & wine experience incorporating Craig’s Hut, in the Mansfield area– product development required
- Small-group, personalised cattleman/horsemanship heritage experiences – there is scope across the Alps for smaller, highly participative experiences in alpine settings. This style of product is best aligned to strengths of Omeo, Mansfield, and Corryong areas.

Long Term Priorities in the Hume region:

- Cross Cut Saw Range Walk – feasibility assessment required for the proposed development of a multi-day walk with quality accommodation outside wilderness and high impact areas.

The Strategy identifies:

- Destination Clusters:
 - Baw Baw Cluster - area around Baw Baw National Park, Rawson, Erica and Walhalla;
 - Buller Cluster - area around Mansfield and Mt Buller-Mt Stirling;
 - Bogong Cluster - area around Wangaratta, Beechworth, Myrtleford, Mt Beauty, Mt Bogong, Falls Creek, Dinner Plain, Omeo, Mt Hotham, Mt Feathertop, Bright, Mt Buffalo, King Valley and Milawa
 - Kosciuszko Cluster - area around Corryong, and the following destinations in NSW: Mt Kosciuszko, Thredbo, Jindabyne, Charlottes Pass, Perisher Valley, Khancoban
- Primary Service Hubs: Bright, Mansfield, Walhalla
- Service centres: Baw Baw Alpine Resort, Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Alpine Resort, King Valley, Milawa, Wangaratta, Beechworth, Myrtleford, Mt Beauty, Falls Creek Alpine Resort, Mt Hotham Alpine Resort, Dinner Plain, Omeo, Wodonga, Corryong.

Board for Alpine Resorts Tourism (2010) Development of Buller Epic Cross-Country Mountain Bike Trail

The purpose of this report is to identify the processes required to establish a cross country mountain bike trail between Mt Buller and the Razorback. Specifically the report identifies:

- demand for the trail
- any specific issues associated with development and operation
- the best route
- potential commercial opportunities

- community benefits
- a strategy to deliver the trail
- a structure for engaging with stakeholders

Several points of interest to note:

- 500,000 adult Australians participate in mountain bike riding
- Proposed trail will be 40km long
- Trail is expected to cost \$400,000 to construct, with an annual allowance of \$50,000 for maintenance (\$25,000 for wages for 6 months and \$25,000 for vehicle and equipment costs).
- Commercial opportunities include: guided cross-country mountain biking tours; rider and bike shuttle service; sponsorship; events; riding clinic and bike shop
- 1,850 independent trail riders are expected to use trail in first year of operation; this figure is expected to increase at 7% p.a.
- 77% of riders are likely to be Victorians
- Assume that riders will spend \$154 per day
- Trail sits on land managed by DSE, Parks Victoria and Mt Buller – Mt Stirling Alpine Resorts Management Board.

Board of Alpine Resorts Tourism (2008) *Non-Winter Nature-Based Tourism Destination Development Study for the Victorian Alpine Resorts*

This strategy aims to assess the potential of the Victorian alpine resorts to support high yield nature-based tourism experiences in the non-winter period. The vision identified in the strategy is: “The Victorian alpine resorts will be the place to experience diverse, challenging and engaging nature-based experiences that will sustain a vibrant tourism industry during the non-winter period and inspire a lasting connection between visitors, the alpine landscape and its people.”

Key recommendations of relevance include:

- Recognise and support the Great Walhalla Alpine Trail as the current leading high yield walk product for the Victorian alpine region. (High)
- Undertake a business case to investigate the potential to develop the proposed Mount Hotham-Falls Creek Wild Walk, and the capacity of this walk to become the ‘hero’ or ‘iconic’ product for strengthening the profile of the Victorian Alps as a nature-based tourism destination. (High)
- Undertake feasibility investigations for the development of the proposed Mount Buller – Razorback Spur Epic Mountain Bike Ride. (High)
- Position the Victorian Alps (specifically Mt Buller-Mt Stirling and Falls Creek) within the core hub (along with Canberra and Thredbo) for the international mountain bike riding market.
- Support the growth of road bike and mountain bike riding activities at each of the Alpine Resorts. (Moderate)
- Undertake further feasibility investigations into the proposed Cross Cut Saw Range Wild Walk becoming positioned as the next leading walk product in the longer term (following the successful implementation of the Mount Hotham– Falls Creek Wild Walk). (Moderate).

Bonegilla Advisory Group (2012) High Country Rail Trail Strategic Plan 2012-2015

Key directions outlined in this plan are:

- Upgrade trail surface with granulite between Huon Reserve and Ludlow's Reserve.
- Repair of rail trail section which has been flood -damaged between Kiewa River and Whyte's Rd.
- Engage with NECMA to establish a budget for a long-term solution for the construction of a robust rail trail in the flood-prone section between the Kiewa River and Maher's Rd.
- Clearing of vegetation infringement along various sections of the rail trail
- Completion of the Ebden Station rest stop.
- Construction and installation of 8 benches to be placed in strategic locations.
- To identify an agreed best central location in Wodonga for the beginning of the High Country Rail Trail where prominent interpretative signage can be displayed.
- Establish a Strategic Plan with City of Wodonga, Albury City and PAW for the future development of safe and accessible linkups with the High Country Rail Trail.
- Seize opportunities to recruit membership, e.g. through regular events and at official gatherings (i.e. opening ceremony of Sandy Creek Bridge)
- Explore a variety of advertising options to involve local community groups in Rail Trail events
- To encourage continued use from local groups/educational institutions to use rail trail variety for a variety of community-based activities/events.
- Establish a cooperative funding arrangement with 3 Shires involved (Indigo Shire Council; City of Wodonga; and Towong Shire Council) for the development and maintenance of the High Country Rail Trail.
- Establish representation on the NEVT Board
- Establish a regular information dialogue with Parkland Albury Wodonga Board members and other relevant partner agencies.
- Update and print off revised brochures
- Update High Country Rail Trail website.
- Regular distribution of brochures to the visitor information centre
- Regular updates of events with relevant cycling and walking groups.
- Conduct a survey of users/user groups of the HCRT between Wodonga and Huon Reserve (September 22nd – beginning of School Holidays).

Greater Shepparton City Council (2012) *Greater Shepparton Cycling Strategy 2012-16 Discussion Paper*

This discussion paper highlights background research that has been prepared as part of the 2012-2016 Greater Shepparton Cycling Strategy. It does not identify future priorities.

Greater Shepparton City Council, *Cycle in Greater Shepparton – A Cycling Guide to Greater Shepparton*

This guide provides details on the various on-road, off- road and mountain bike trails in the Greater Shepparton area. There is a mountain bike hub at Mt Major, Dookie, which features two downhill trails and a cross-country trail.

Hume Regional Management Forum (2010) The Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities (2010-2020)

This strategy was developed to provide advice and make recommendations to inform decision making and investment in the Hume Region over the next ten years. The Hume region is comprised of four distinct and inter-connected sub regions:

- Central Hume – Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield and Wangaratta
- Goulburn Valley – Greater Shepparton, Moira, Strathbogie and Campaspe (part of Loddon Mallee region)
- Lower Hume – Mitchell and Murrindindi
- Upper Hume – Indigo, Towong and Wodonga.

The vision identified in the strategy is: “The Hume Region will be resilient, diverse and thriving. It will capitalise on the strengths and competitive advantages of the four sub regions, to harness growth for the benefit of the region and to develop liveable and sustainable communities.”

The key themes and directions emanating from this strategy are as follows:

Environment Theme: Natural resources protected and enhanced for current future generations

1. Anticipating and adapting to the effects of climate change.
2. Managing our water resources sustainably.
3. Protecting native habitat and biodiversity.
4. Harnessing renewable energy sources, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pursuing innovative waste management approaches.

Communities Theme: Healthy, vibrant and resilient communities

5. Embracing learning for life.
6. Providing appropriate and accessible social services and infrastructure.
7. Developing innovative and flexible service delivery models.
8. Strengthening communities, increasing resilience and enhancing liveability.

Economic Theme: A thriving and dynamic economy

9. Strengthening a capable workforce.
10. Adapting and diversifying agriculture in an environment of change.
11. Facilitating research and innovation in tourism, manufacturing and industry to encourage new and evolving business.
12. Developing information and communications technology (ICT) and energy infrastructure that builds on existing competitive advantages.

Transport Theme: An integrated network of efficient and high functioning transportation systems

13. Enhancing integrated planning for mobility.
14. Developing a proficient land transportation system.
15. Linking communities through improved public transport and transport linkages.
16. Strengthening the sustainability of the transport system.

Land Use Theme: An efficient and sustainable pattern of urban and rural land use and development

- 17. Directing future population growth to settlements with the greatest capacity to accommodate it.
- 18. Maximising use of existing infrastructure and services and facilitating strategic investment in future infrastructure and services.
- 19. Retaining productive rural land for agriculture and other compatible rural uses.
- 20. Ensuring efficient use of land use planning resources in the region.

The strategy notes that one of the unique opportunities for the Hume region is “to strengthen and expand its cycling economy. This will involve building on existing strategic concepts as well as an expansion of cycling trails to create a network of links throughout the region that will add to the variety of the tourism experience. Trails will also attract many users by providing access for visitors to unique landscape opportunities. Incorporating planning for cycling as part of a reference for the regional tourism body will deliver leverage and efficiency gains for the region.”

The development of tracks and trails falls under communities, economic and transport. Several ‘ready to advance projects’ were identified in June 2010 in the region, including rail trail infrastructure for cycling and walking trail links: Bright to Harrietville / Wangaratta to Whitfield / Winton Wetlands.

Indigo Shire (2008) Recreation Plan - Vol 3

This plan identified participation rates by local residents in a range of physical activities, based on a survey of 758 local residents (most of whom were between 40-70 years of age). Key results are as follows:

Activity	No. of Females	No. of Males	Total	% of Females	% of Males	Total
Walking	161	86	247	39	25	33
Cycling (road)	57	76	133	14	22	18
Bushwalking	28	23	51	7	7	7
Horse Riding	28	4	32	7	1	4
Running	7	11	18	2	3	2

The survey also identified usage of tracks and trails by local residents, as follows:

Facility	Females			Males		
	Never Use	Occasionally Use	Regularly Use	Never Use	Occasionally Use	Regularly Use
Bicycle Paths / Walking Trails	17%	30%	41%	23%	31%	34%

To encourage more people to cycle, the survey identified the following factors:

- Need better quality facilities
- Facilities need to be conveniently located
- Information about what is available and where is required
- Specific cycle tracks / paths / trails are needed
- Availability of suitable programs / classes.

Walking and cycling tracks were viewed as the second highest priority for recreational spending by Indigo Shire by both males and females, should funds become available.

Indigo Shire Council (2008) Strategic Bicycle Plan Update

This plan provides an update to the previous Bicycle Plan. It identifies the Murray to Mountains Trail and the upgrade between Wahgunyah to Rutherglen as major generators of recreational cyclist trips in Beechworth and Rutherglen and has potential to increase cycling demand to/from the nearby townships (e.g. Yackandandah and Everton). It states that recreational trails should be a minimum width of 2.0m with a desirable width of 2.5m and should be constructed in more informal material (e.g. gravel) to reflect the scenic nature of these facilities.

Existing recreational trails in Indigo Shire include:

The Muscat Trail

This route currently links Rutherglen to Wahgunyah via a circuit visiting eight wineries. The majority of the route is on sealed or unsealed roads, with some sections on off road tracks, in a flat topography that is ideal for social cycling. The route is poorly marked with 'Muscat Trail' signs, and a pamphlet at visitor/tourist information centres needs development/updating and reprinting.

Rutherglen Cycle Routes

The five bike ride loops are: "Winery West Loop", "Gourmet Loop", "Watchbox Loop", "The Humpy Doos" and the "Chiltern Valley Loop". The routes are not marked and not shown pamphlets.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail

The 'Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail' currently links the towns of Wangaratta and Bright, and provides a branch link to Beechworth. It runs along disused railway reservations and provides a high quality off-road shared path experience for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. It is proposed to construct two further stages to the 'Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail', namely:

- a link connecting Bowser to Wahgunyah via Springhurst and Rutherglen, and;
- a link connecting Bowser to Whitfield in the King Valley. (Rural City of Wangaratta).

Stage 2 of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail – Wahgunyah to Rutherglen is set to commence construction shortly. Rutherglen to Bowser needs to be implemented immediately on completion of Stage 2 works.

The High Country Rail Trail

The "High Country Rail Trail" is being built from Wodonga to Corryong along the disused railway reservation. To develop the inter linking of trails, similar to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, a connection from Tangambalanga to Huon has been recommended.

Priorities:

#	Priority
1	Completion of Murray to Mountains Rail Trail – Stage 2, Wahgunyah to Rutherglen and

#	Priority
	associated wine trail loop links currently under construction
2	Barnawartha to Chiltern
3	The construction/upgrading of shared bicycle/pedestrian paths (mostly linking primary schools to residential areas)
4	The signing of the Muscat Trail Rutherglen Bicycle Network and updating tourist information pamphlets.
5	The extension of the 'Murray to Mountains Rail Trail' network, to include the construction of a rail trail from the Hume Highway to Rutherglen (part of the proposed Stage Three of the 'Murray to Mountains Rail Trail').
6	The construction of a shared pathway linking Beechworth and Stanley via upgrading existing pathways to Lake Kerford and constructing a combination of on road and off road linkages through to Stanley.
7	The construction/ completion of shared bicycle/pedestrian off-road paths around Lakes Sambell, Anderson, and King.
8	The construction of a link from Tangambalanga to the High Country Rail Trail along the Tangambalanga – Huon Road reserve
9	The development of an Indigo Shire bicycling pamphlet to be available at all Tourist Information centre outlets and be available on the World Wide Web.
10	The upgrading in the medium term of the signed on-road routes in the townships to marked bicycle lanes and the upgrading in the medium term of the major 'Township Linking Routes' to include sealed shoulders for the improved safety of cyclists.

Mansfield Shire Council (2012) *Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail Integrated Strategy for Interpretation, Identity and Wayfinding (Brief)*

This brief seeks consultants to assist with the development of a comprehensive integrated strategy that will facilitate the delivery of world class interpretation, identity and wayfinding along the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail (now Great Victorian Rail Trail). It is expected that the strategy will include:

- Signing covering interpretation, identity and wayfinding
- Paper-based directional, interpretation and motivational collateral
- A dedicated App
- Web site and content management
- E-news and content management
- VIC/Stakeholder communication/display package.

Moira Shire Council (2005) *Cycling and Walking Strategy*

This strategy primarily focussed on municipal and local level trails. It did however mention the proposed Murray Valley Trail, which is managed by the Murray Darling Association. This vision for

this particular trail is to link the 109 existing trails along the Murray River to form one seamless link (1,800km) which can be accessed by foot, bicycle or car. The trail was supposed to be developed between 2002-2012. In relation to medium to long term plans for off-road trails, the report identifies:

- Nathalia to Picola Rail Trail
- Yarrawonga to Benalla Rail Trail
- Nathalia to Tungamah Trail
- Cobram to Strathmerton Rail Trail or shared off road path along pipeline on south side of Murray Valley Highway
- Wunghnu to Katamatite Wilderness Walk (Parks Vic working on this).

Murray to Mountains Committee of Management (2008) Murray to Mountains Cycle Tourism Strategy 2008-2010

The aim of this strategy is to position the North East as a must-ride destination for cyclists. The vision for the Murray to Mountains region is that by 2010 it “will be recognised as the most diverse and comprehensive destination for all cycling disciplines providing economic benefit for the region.”

The strategy uses the same definition as the South Australian Cycle Tourism Commission, *Cycle Tourism Strategy 2005*, to describe a cycle tourist: “Cycle tourism visits are considered to be for the purpose of holidays, recreation, pleasure or sport; and to include either overnight stays, or day trips to other tourism regions during which the visitor either engages in active cycling, or is a spectator at a cycling event.”

Demographics and behavioural characteristics of Australian cycle tourists are described in the strategy as primarily:

- From NSW (36%) or Victoria (27%)
- Rated by Ray Morgan Value Segment as Socially Aware (24%) or Look at Me (22%); and also as a Big Spender (53%)
- Male (57%)
- Young parents (28%) and mid-life householders (23%) who travel as a family with children (27%) or who travel with partners / as a couple (21%)
- Aged between 14-24 (34%), 35-49 (27%) or 25-34 (25%)
- Using friends or relatives homes for accommodation (44%)
- Have been to the area before (29%) or hear about it from friends of family (25%)
- Make bookings for accommodation directly (24%) or through a travel agent (24%) in person (21%) or through a website (20%).
- The strategy identifies Experience Seekers as the key market for cycle tourism trails. The following table provides an overview of the needs and motivations of such visitors.

Experience Seekers		
Types of Cycle Tourism	Cycling Holidays <i>These are defined as holidays, by both domestic and overseas visitors, where cycling is the main purpose of the holiday. Cycling holidays can either be self guided or organised by a cycling holiday operator.</i>	Holiday Cyclists <i>This means cycling while on holiday and consists of day rides taken while on holidays and will be one of a number of activities undertaken during the holiday.</i>

Experience Seekers					
Types of Cyclists	Frequent Cyclists	Leisure Cyclists	Cycling Enthusiasts	Infrequent Leisure Cyclists	Occasional Leisure Cyclists
Description	Will go leisure cycling once or twice a fortnight during summer and occasionally during winter. They will own a bike.		Will go cycling at least once a week. Will own a bike. More likely to commute on bicycle.	Rarely ride a bike May or may not own a bike. More likely to rent a bike. More likely to be families and retirees. Cycling would be a secondary reason for visiting the region.	Own their own bike. Regularly ride a bike during summer. More likely to be older and not constrained by children.
Motivation	Use Cycling as a form of regular exercise.		Primary source of exercise. Part of a network of cyclists.	Not their primary reason for visiting but may ride while they are here. Rail Trail would be a challenging ride. Ride in groups with family and friends.	Not their primary reason for visiting but may ride while they are here. Rail Trail would be a challenging ride. Ride in groups with family and friends.
Cycle Activities	Tourism Day rides on quiet country roads and Rail Trail. Town based short trips. Access to countryside from their base.		Long day cycle rides. Independent cycle touring. Cycling Events.	Rail Trail Cycling. Packaged Cycling Holidays.	Rail Trail Cycling. Packaged Cycling Holidays.
Product Requirements	Circular day cycle routes with maps and information. Rail Trail. Safe place for vehicle. Cycle Friendly accommodation. Cycle Parking and storage. Cycle repair.		Ideas for day rides. They will plan their own rides. Cycle Friendly accommodation. Cycle Parking and storage. Cycle repair.	Rail Trail Cycle Hire. Package Cycling Holidays.	Rail Trail Cycle Hire. Package Cycling Holidays.

The four objectives listed in the strategy to increase the profile of cycle tourism in the region and some relevant actions are:

1. Increase visitation, yield, length of stay and dispersal of cycle tourists to the associated communities of the Rural City of Wangaratta and Indigo and Alpine Shires.
 - Brand development initiatives
 - Tactical marketing initiatives, such as development of a ride profile booklet, events based marketing, visiting journalist program, quarterly email to consumer database, etc
 - Collaborative marketing initiatives such as working in partnership with Virgin Blue, researching demographics, campaigns to promote picnics and purchase of local food and wine (Pedal to Produce).

2. Improve communication between industry stakeholders at a local, state and national level that translate into benefits for the local communities and result in the creation of a productive and supportive industry structure.
 - Develop close alliance with Mt Stromlo (Canberra Off Road Club) & Mt Buller
 - Speak to VLine and its operators on an as needs basis to ensure smooth movement of Cycle Tourists to the region
 - Package development with Virgin Blue
 - Develop a Cycle Friendly Business program.

3. Identify opportunities for the development of new, and the improvement of existing cycling infrastructure that builds on the overall product offer within the region and facilitate its development.
 - Develop Rail Trail loop ride to Milawa Gourmet Region and extend the trail all of the way to the Murray
 - Development of key Road Ride Profiles linked in with key tourism themes
 - Participate in the redevelopment of the Beechworth Mountain Bike Park
 - Develop a master plan for MTB trails in the Murray to Mountains Region incorporating Beechworth MTB Park, Warby Range State Park and Big Hill MTB Park (Mt Beauty)
 - Development of cycle friendly and interpretive signage as well as bicycle racks.

4. Identify new cycle tourism business opportunities that build on the overall product offer within the region and facilitate their take up.
 - Incorporate Online Reservation Systems (i.e.: Bookeasy) into Cycle Tourism Website
 - Development of a Cycle Tourism Website (www.murraytomountains.com.au)
 - Facilitate new cycling events in consultation with all relevant stakeholders
 - Facilitate the development of appropriate tours with commercial Tour Operators
 - Facilitate a community awareness campaign to capitalise on the Visiting Friends and Relatives market
 - Development of Infrastructure Fund to assist small businesses in becoming cycle friendly.

Murray to Mountains Committee of Management (2010) *Murray to Mountains Cycle Tourism Strategy 2010-2013 (Draft)*

This draft strategy aims to continue to develop the North East of Victoria as a key cycle tourism destination. The strategy cites a report by La Trobe University which claims that the daily expenditure along the Murray to Mountains Trail by each user as:

- Accommodation - \$ 52.00
- Food and Beverage - \$123.00
- Fuel / Transport - \$ 18.00
- Cycling - \$ 6.50
- Souvenirs / Gifts - \$ 6.50
- Other - \$ 38.00
- Total: \$244.00

Key strategic objectives and some of the actions to further advance cycle tourism in the north east include:

1. Strategic Objective 1: Development of iconic cycling infrastructure:
 - Connect the King Valley, Harrierville and Yackandandah to the existing MTMRT.
 - Progress new and improved cycling infrastructure for road riding.

- Develop an iconic gravity fed mountain bike experience.
 - Progress the use of quiet country roads to connect the cycling, food and wine experience.
2. Strategic Objective 2: Facilitate the investment in improved bicycle services:
 - Develop a cycle friendly public transport service and trial during peak usage periods.
 - Develop a full suite of cycling maps detailing numerous rides that are available in North East Victoria.
 - Develop a tour operator resource which will encourage private business investment into improved bicycle services.
 - Develop a 'Cycle Ready' resource kit as part of the Wheelie Good Business program for businesses across North East Victoria and work with businesses to help them achieve accreditation.
 3. Strategic Objective 3: Increase visitor experience satisfaction through continual improvement in business hospitality:
 - Implement a consumer survey process which will provide important usage, visitation and experience information and which will monitor and evaluate trends in cycle tourism visitation.
 - Deliver an Economic Impact Study on cycle tourism in North East Victoria in cooperation with Regional Development Victoria.
 4. Strategic Objective 4: Delivery of an innovative, targeted, experienced based marketing campaign:
 - Develop high quality marketing campaigns for Queen Victoria Ride and Dirty Dozen mountain biking.
 - Investigate the use of new technologies to promote the Murray to Mountains cycling experience.
 - Explore cross promotional opportunities with the broader North East Victorian region.
 - Delivery of an upgraded Murray to Mountains Map/Ride Guide.
 - Continue to promote use of Murray to Mountains website for various purposes.
 5. Strategic Objective 5: Deliver industry best practice communication plan:
 - Dissemination of a monthly industry and consumer e-newsletters.

Murray to Mountains Committee of Management (2011) Murray to Mountains Strategy Review and Update 2011

This document has been produced to evaluate the success of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and to identify initiatives to continue to improve the facility.

Priority activities between 2011 to 2016 include:

- Increased trail network, with completion of new links and connections (including completion of Rutherglen to Bowser along the rail line and the investigation of rail over span at Sandy Creek).
- Market research to understand user needs and wants.
- Improved trail experiences, including signage, facilities, accessibility, associated services (based on market research).
- Consistent, quality infrastructure and maintenance.
- Promotion and development of further cycling-based business opportunities (including a commercial presence within rail trail reserve; transport support services; development of packages /tours / transport options; and increased capacity to carry bikes on VLine services).
- Increased community connections and involvement with the Rail Trail.

Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee of Management (2012) *Strategic Plan 2012-2017*

The vision of the M2M Trail is: “Australia’s premier rail trail and world class tourism experience.”

Priorities contained within this plan include:

Increased trail network with completion of new links and connections – all trails linked up

- Investigate and implement further buy-in with funding to develop/upgrade trail and its amenity

Market research to understand user need and wants

- Develop a user statistical data base

Improved trail experiences including signage, facilities, accessibility and associated services

- Implement a logical and consistent signage policy
- Develop a program to increase the number of landscaped and shaded area along the Trail
- Investigate the possibility of camp establishments at key points along the trail
- Enhance the accessibility and availability of public transport options along the trail
- Utilise “Smart Phone” applications that will support the Rail Trail

Consistent, quality infrastructure and maintenance

- Ensure Trail meets maintains its Iconic Status.
- Develop a program of continual improvements to trail pavement
- Enhance the amenities along the Trail
- Develop a program to address the issues raised in the **Safety Audit**
- Implement required actions as Crown Land Manager

Increased community connections and involvement with the Rail Trail

- Encourage adoption and ownership by community of the Rail Trail

Review Strategic Plan and Direction

- Carry out review of MMRT strategic plan and future direction

Committee Governance

- Conduct an Audit of key operating Documents relating to the Rail Trail.

The following key strategic activities have been removed from the Strategic Plan following a shift of responsibilities to Tourism North East and the beginning of the Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy:

- Increase overall Trail Network
- Develop Linkages/ Alliances with other Rail/cycle trails
- Carry out user market research
- Develop further Technology supporting the Trail
- Increase Business connectivity and buy in
- Develop a commercial presence within the rail trail reserve
- Develop promote cycling based opportunities
- Investigate & promote transport support services
- Agitate for increased Bike carrying capacity on VLine trains.

Murrindindi, Mansfield and Mitchell Shire Councils (2011) Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail Management Plan

This Management Plan is designed to guide decisions and actions pertaining to the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail (Now Great Victorian Rail Trail) over the next ten years. The trail is managed by a Special Committee known as the Goulburn River High Country Trail General Committee, which was set up under Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989. The trail is located on land which passes through three shires: Mansfield, Mitchell and Murrindindi. This rail trail in Mansfield and part of Yea township is managed by the Crown, and the remainder is leased from VicTrack in Mitchell and Murrindindi Shires for the purpose of use as a Rail Trail. Commencing in Tallarook, the 134km long trail extends to Mansfield with a branch from Cathkin to Alexandra.

The Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail (GRHCRT) Advisory Committee will guide and inform decision making by Mansfield, Mitchell and Murrindindi Shires in relation to development, promotion, management and maintenance issues associated with the trail. Responsibility for the negotiation and agreement of maintenance standards will remain with the respective Councils. Each Council has also signed a document which commits them to maintaining their respective section of the rail reserve for a minimum of ten years. Indicative maintenance costs have been identified at \$1,000 per km p.a. with a CPI adjustment of 3% annually. A \$10,000 financial commitment has been suggested from each Council to develop a marketing strategy.

The committee, when established, will consist of:

- An independent chairperson
- One councillor from each Council
- One community representative from each Council
- One business representative from each Council
- The CEO or their delegate as a non-voting member.

In addition, there will be a technical sub-committee which will advise on asset related issues and a marketing sub-committee which will advise on marketing and product development. A Memorandum of Understanding will be established.

Each Local Government Authority will:

- Create and support the Technical Committee
- Create and support the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail (now known as the Great Victorian Rail Trail) Advisory Committee by developing and signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- Contribute towards the resourcing of the Advisory Committee and the Marketing Sub Committee
- Jointly agree on the selection criteria for the appointment of Committee members and jointly agree upon the independent chairperson
- Ensure consistency between local laws and the intent of the Code of Conduct
- Be responsible for the Rail Trail within their respective municipality, subject to standards (relating to control of weeds and pathway maintenance as an example) as agreed through the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- Provide maintenance of the Rail Trail to the agreed service standards
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements relating to flora, fauna and heritage
- Apply and enforce the Local Laws and Regulations pertaining to the Rail Trail
- Issue and manage permits to graze
- Issue and manage permits to manage designated areas of the reserve for other purposes (including the environment and the community)
- Auspice funding applications on a case by case basis and be responsible for controlling their own budget for the Rail Trail within their municipality
- Commit funds to maintain and market the trail
- Develop a voluntary Cultural Heritage Management Plan in partnership with the Advisory Committee
- Protect and enhance flora and fauna along the trail
- Reduce the occurrence and impact of pest plants and animals within the Reserve
- Implement actions to manage waterways and drainage together with threatened aquatic and terrestrial species
- Incorporate risk environments, strategies, programs and actions pertaining to the Rail Trail into relevant sections of their Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP).
- Determine the most appropriate mechanisms for implementation of the Maintenance Plan within council operations. E.g. Road Management Plans and Strategies
- Ensure all emergency vehicles below 5 tonnes GVM (CFA, Ambulance, SES and Police) are able to access the Rail Trail.
- Implement the new brand and logo consistently across the whole Rail Trail

There are a number of indigenous and European sites of heritage significance within the rail reserve and documented in the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register and the Victorian Heritage Register. In relation to flora, much of the trail falls within endangered or vulnerable Ecological Vegetation

Classes (EVC), as per Department of Sustainability and Environment classifications and there are a number of rare or threatened species within 1km of the rail trail.

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd (2010) *The Murray River Area Strategic Plan 2010-2022*

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd is a cross-border, not-for-profit, community managed, non-government organisation that specialises in involving the broader community in environmental management of public bush parks. It has developed a bush parks framework and philosophy based on the protection and restoration of the unused and degraded public lands in the Albury Wodonga region for conservation, recreation and heritage outcomes for the benefit of our community. Its focus from 2010 to 2022 includes the development of 99km of tracks and trails to provide reasonable bicycle, pedestrian, vehicle and boat access in accordance with the recreational and conservation characteristics of the locale.

Specific actions of relevance include:

- Victorian Murray River Frontage - Establish basic walking track from Lake Hume to Barnawartha. Three footbridges over creeks required. Option in longer term of another seven low level crossings or footbridges.
- Wodonga Hills - Maintain existing walking track network. Community to lead development of future tracks. Support Albury Wodonga Mountain Bike Club in development of mountain bike park.
- Regional Bio-Links - Maintain existing 55km rail trail corridor. Upgrade three trestle bridges and install one low level footbridge in short term. Low level crossings at 12 other timber trestle bridges in medium term. Restore one or two timber trestle bridges in longer term.
- NSW Murray River Frontages - Establish basic walking track and amenities. Work with Albury City Council to implement Murray River Experience. Work with Murray Darling Association to implement Murray River Trail (utilising existing tracks, trails and local road network)

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd has worked in partnership with the regional community to develop and manage nine key bushland parks including the 57km long High Country Rail Trail. This trail is projected to become one of the six top rail trails in Australia. It is managed in partnership with the Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group, Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group and Koetong Shelley Development Association.

The strategy notes the need to develop recreation infrastructure such as tracks, footbridges and other structures which are not adversely affected by flooding which occurs regularly in the area. It also notes that infrastructure constructed in the hill country needs to “take into account future land management strategies, such as opportunities for fuel reduction burns, and the prevalence of termites. Steel and earthen structures are preferred to timber.”

Level of Service Categories used by Parks Victoria have also been identified within this Strategy.

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd (2012) *The Murray Parkways. Corryong to Wodonga and Wahgunyah. Implementation Plan. High Country Rail Trail 2012 to 2015.*

This strategy aims to identify the works, partners and indicative costings required to further develop the High Country Rail Trail. A summary of the Action Plan follows:

Area	Actions
Community Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group, Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group and Koetong Shelley Development Association. • In short term, build relationship with Cudgewa community. • In medium term, establish Wodonga Rail Trail Advisory Group when VicTrack lease of disused railway corridor issued.
Recreational facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing 55km rail trail (slash, spray and roll) • Upgrade trail surface between Wodonga and Tallangatta. • In short term, restore five trestle bridges and install one low level footbridge • In medium term, low level crossings at 12 other timber trestle bridges. • In longer term, restore one or two of biggest timber trestle bridges.
Biodiversity measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance corridor with focus on pest plant and animal control. • In short term, 7km of fencing and revegetation (Darbyshire). • In medium term, 8km of fences and revegetation (Cudgewa).
Fire Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biannual spray and slash of track. Slash five metre strips at occupational crossings to establish breaks along linear corridor. • Environmental burn every five years (important for native grasses).

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd (2012) *The Murray Parkways. Corryong to Wodonga and Wahgunyah. Implementation Plan for Kiewa River 2012 to 2015.*

This strategy identifies the actions of Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd to develop Kiewa River frontage. The key trail related recommendation is to develop a footbridge to link the crown land area near Yackandandah Creek junction.

Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd (2012) *The Murray Parkways. Corryong to Wodonga and Wahgunyah. Implementation Plan for Murray River 2012 to 2015.*

This strategy identifies the long term vision of Parklands Albury Wodonga Ltd to create a 422km Murray to Mountains Experience (walking / 'single' track) which connects Bright along the Ovens River to Yarrawonga and Wahgunyah and along the Murray River to Corryong, with linkages to Tangambalanga and Beechworth.

The strategy notes that the Albury Wodonga Tourism Industry is estimated to generate \$21 million for the regional economy annually. It also states that in 2009 the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail generated \$3 million in expenditure from 40,000 visits.

Specific trails related actions include:

- Victorian Murray River frontages - In short term: establish basic walking track from Lake Hume to Barnawartha. Five footbridges over creeks required. In medium term: establish

basic walking track from Barnawartha to Wahgunyah. Option in longer term of another low level crossings or footbridge to link with Wonga Wetlands and the Wagirra Trail in Albury local government area.

- Kiewa River frontage - Footbridge to link crown land area near Yackandandah Creek junction.
- Wodonga Hills - Maintain existing walking track network. Community to lead development of future tracks (e.g. Yackandandah Creek and Middle Creek). Support Albury Wodonga Mountain Bike Club in development of mountain bike park.
- High Country Rail Trail - Maintain existing 55km rail trail corridor. Upgrade trail surface between Wodonga and Tallangatta. Upgrade three trestle footbridges in Darbyshire and Koetong in short term. Upgrade three trestle bridges in Cudgewa in medium term. Low level crossings at 12 other timber trestle bridges in medium term. Restore one or two iconic timber trestle bridges in longer term.

Strathbogrie Shire Council (2009) *Bicycle and Walking Path Strategy*

The vision of Strathbogrie Shire Council is to establish the Shire as a cycling and walking friendly community. Its goal is to support more people to cycle and walk for transport and recreational purposes. The majority of recommendations are for improvements or extensions to existing local tracks and trails.

Towong Shire (2010) *Tourism Strategy 2010-2013*

The vision contained within this Strategy is “to develop a high quality touring experience that capitalises on the natural assets, vibrant cultural and festival activities that support a sustainable and liveable community.”

Towong’s strengths are considered to be “its authentic, uncomplicated lifestyle, the villages, the events and the characters.” Four priority projects are:

- “Make a modern interpretation of the Man From Snowy River synonymous with the Towong Shire and a core element of targeted promotion of Victoria’s High Country;
- Bring all Towong tourism businesses into the era of digital and cooperative marketing;
- Leverage off the current events and encourage new events to develop that will support viable new tourism businesses;
- Invest in infrastructure that attracts the primary target markets to bring additional value to the Shire; and
- Take every opportunity to encourage visitors to explore more of the region.”

In relation to walking, cycling and horse riding opportunities, the Strategy recommends the development of rail trail visitor facilities and a marketing plan for the Towong Shire section of the High Country Rail Trail in partnership with the Regional Tourism Board.

The guiding principles developed as part of the Strategy include:

- “Retain our environment and lifestyle
- Build local employment and grow population – especially young people
- Longer stays and a higher spend
- Make local businesses viable
- Provide infrastructure for locals
- Promote the essence of the region to locals, visitors, potential locals and investors
- Generate year round and repeat visitation
- Provide the impetus to improve key tourism infrastructure
- Improve operator and industry skills to enhance the visitor experience
- Attract tourism and business investment
- Educate locals on the benefits of tourism.”

Strategic priorities contained within the Strategy are:

- “To improve the visitor experience
- Improve key tourism infrastructure
- To promote a product that can be delivered, don’t over or under promise
- To improve operator and industry skills to enhance the visitor experience
- Attract tourism and business investment
- Increase visitation, spend and length of stay.”

Specifically in relation to the High Country Rail Trail, the Strategy recommends:

- Construction of additional facilities in Towong Shire
- Development of a significant event to raise awareness of the trail potentially by linking the Beechworth spur of the Murray to the Mountain Rail Trail with the High Country Rail Trail to further cement the High Country partnership.
- Extension of the trail from 40km to 140km
- Creation of wayside stops and interpretation opportunities between the new bridge and the trail end
- Marketing of the rail trail within regional Victoria in partnership with the Regional Tourism Board.

Wodonga City Council (2008) *Wodonga Bicycle Strategy*

This strategy focuses on promoting more cycling across the community. It recognises the potential value of cycle tourism and specifically notes three such trails in the municipality: Murray to Mountains Rail Trail; High Country Rail Trail and the yet to be developed Murray Trail. Some of the more relevant recommendations include:

- Complete construction and surfacing of cycle path from Beechworth Rd round-about to Kiewa Valley Highway linking to the High Country Rail Trail.
- Complete construction of cycle path from Baranduda to link with High Country Rail Trail and Murray Valley Highway.
- Investigate options for mountain bike track developments within parklands surrounding Wodonga.

- Investigate feasibility of cycle path links on existing rail corridors following completion of rail by-pass project.
- Stage construct with subdivisional development, a cycle path link along Wodonga Creek to Kiewa River to link with High Country Rail Trail.
- Supporting, where appropriate, initiatives which encourage use of the High Country Rail Trail.

Wodonga City Council (2012) *High Country Rail Trail and Public Pathways Development*

This report identifies the fact that although Council has a network of cycling and walking pathways, these are primarily located in new developments, with few convenient connections for commuting and barely any off-road access near the city centre. It recognises a major opportunity to rectify this situation by acquiring linear corridors along the unused railway easements to East Bandiana from central Wodonga.

The key sections covered in this report are:

- Whytes Road to Kiewa Valley Highway, East Bandiana,
- Kiewa Valley Highway to Stump Hotel, South Bandiana,
- Stump Hotel to Wodonga High Street/Osburn Street, and
- Osburn Street to Albury via the disused main railway.

Wodonga City Council (2007) *Wodonga City Municipal Recreation Plan*

This Recreation Plan aims to provide a strategic framework to guide the future planning, development and management of sporting and recreational opportunities for Wodonga residents.

A telephone survey of 350 residents (the majority of which were females aged between 35-74 years of age) conducted as part of the Recreation Plan noted the following participation rates in trail based activities:

- Walking / bushwalking (no differentiation between the two activities) 38.8%
- Cycling 9.6%
- Running 2.4%
- Horse riding / equestrian 0.9%

In relation to the Wodonga Cycleway, 49% of telephone respondents said that they had used this facility in the past 12 months, primarily for walking or jogging to improve fitness.

The plan notes that whilst the cycling / walking network is generally considered as excellent, there are some sections that are poor (cracked) surfaces, whilst others follow back fence-lines leading to users having a perception of these sections being unsafe.

Trail related recommendations included within the plan are:

- “Conduct organised road racing events on local roads within the City of Wodonga.
- In the long-term, investigate the development of an off-road criterium circuit (1 – 1.5 km in length).

- Investigate opportunities to develop local-standard mountain bike trails on surrounding hills, which link to the existing Wodonga cycling network and trails system.”

Wodonga City Council (2011) *Super Tuesday Bicycle Commuter Survey*

This Survey provided details on the number of people who were recorded riding a bike at 19 different sites in Wodonga on Tuesday 1 March between 7am and 9am. Lincoln Causeway at the train overpass towards Gateway Island and Lincoln Causeway recorded a total of 56 riders during this time. It is the key commuter route for riders from Wodonga. Anzac Parade, towards Kiewa Valley Hwy, Anderson Rd and Anzac Parade has also been identified as a key route with 41 riders.

Wodonga City Council (2010) *Wodonga Sustainable Transport Strategy*

This strategy focuses on commuter cycling and walking as opposed to recreational cycling. Some points of relevance to recreational trails include improved connectivity, end of trip facilities, cycle friendly businesses, events, lighting and wayfinding.

The vision for the strategy is that it will “contribute to the sustainable development of a well connected community, with facilities to encourage safe walking and cycling, innovative traffic management measures, the provision of good public transport and easy access to local services.”

Recommendation of relevance includes:

- “Earmarking land for a bicycle link that connects the new railway station, Rail Trail, Melrose Drive / Maloney Road industrial estate and CBD.
- Develop an integrated transport and tourism hub in the central area of Wodonga that includes a bus interchange, bicycle end of trip facilities, scooter and bicycle hire, transport information and maps and other facilities (toilets, cafes, etc).”

Winton Wetlands Committee of Management (2012) *Winton Wetlands Master Plan Summary Sheet*

The Winton Wetlands Master Plan describes works to be undertaken over the next 10 years which will restore and regenerate the environment and allow the site to evolve into a “major attraction for bird watchers, star gazers, bush walkers, cyclists, campers, wildlife lovers and photographers, as well as people wishing to experience the vastness and beauty of the location.” The total cost of implementing the master plan is estimated to be \$57 million.

Stage one of the master plan involves the development of recreational facilities such as camping grounds, BBQs, lookout areas, shade structures, playground, cafe and improved access to the water. It will also include the development of walking / cycling trails and interpretive information. The

cycling / walking trails will link into Benalla via the Inlet Channel bicycle trail and then onto the Murray to Mountains Trail.

The second stage of the master plan involves the development of nature based tourism opportunities such as “guided tours of the Reserve, concerts and events, tethered balloon rides, night canoeing, guided fauna tours, a centre for culture and history, sound and light shows, local food and wine as well as a range of accommodation options.” The Yorta Yorta Nation has indicated that it is keen to ensure that indigenous cultural values are given prominence at the site.

Alpine Shire Council (2011) *Economic Impact of Cycle Tourism*

The purpose of this document was to develop a model to estimate the economic contribution of cycle tourism. The study estimates that overnight recreational cyclists spend approximately \$250 per day in the region and day recreational cyclists spend in the vicinity of \$50. Cycle event competitors are estimated to spend between \$80 and \$800 per day. AUDAX race competitors spend an average of \$167 per day.

The study estimates that the annual number of days spent by visitors whose primary trip purpose is recreational cycling is 59,900 and for visitors whose primary trip purpose is attending a cycling event, this figure is 8,000 days. When multiplied by \$250 and \$167 respectively, the total visitor spend is estimated to be \$16,311,000. In terms of professional services investment spend, the study found that local government spent \$143,000 on cycle tourism marketing and promotion during this time and state government spent \$250,000, totalling an investment spend of \$393,000. Construction expenditure by local government during this time was \$646,000. The study states that the initial stimulus into the NE Victorian regional economy is \$17.4 million per annum. By incorporating flow on effects, the regional output / income is \$24.4 million per annum and the regional value added is \$12.1 million per annum. This translates to 157 full time jobs.

The study has prepared an input output model that can be replicated in other areas to determine the economic impact of tracks and trails.

3.3 Other Locations

Loddon Mallee Trails Network (2010) *Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategy*

The aim of this strategy was to identify potential regionally significant trails in the Loddon Mallee region of Victoria that have the potential to attract domestic and international visitors to the area, showcase the unique landscape and cultural features of the area and to invigorate and increase recreational opportunities for local communities. The Strategy identified seven regionally significant trails and six municipal level trails, which when combined have the potential to attract \$7 - \$8.7 million annually to the area and to create 70 to 87 full time jobs. The challenges identified by the project included:

- Lack of coordination and communication between trail developers
- Lack of tools to assist with trail planning and design

- Lack of research and data collection
- Limited resources for trail developments
- Limited marketing and distance from the market
- Long distances and some areas of poor landscape amenity
- Limited supporting infrastructure and services
- Uncertainty of carrying bicycles on public transport

This strategy identified potential linkages from Rushworth to Murchison and Nagambie, as well as a linkage from Heathcote to Kilmore and on to Tallarook.

4.0 Benchmarking

Milford Track (New Zealand)	
Length	54km. 4 day easy / medium hike.
Location	Fiordland National Park. Walk commences in Glade Wharf, Lake Te Anau and finishes in Sandfly Point, Milford Sound, New Zealand
User Groups Permitted	Walkers only. Track opens on 23 October 2012 and closes on 30 April 2013.
Management	The trail was in government control until 1992. At that point a license to operate was sold to Tourism Milford Ltd.
Maintenance	Department of Conservation
Governance	Department of Conservation
Membership	No membership opportunities.
Marketing	Trail is marketed through various outlets including Department of Conservation (DOC) and all DOC commercial tourism providers.
Maps	Maps available on various websites, e.g. http://www.ultimatehikes.co.nz/media/61853/milford-map-web.gif
Access to Water	Water is not available for purchase along the trail.
Accommodation	Mintaro Hut (capacity 40); Dumpling Hut (capacity 40); Clinton Hut (capacity 40); and Mackinnon Pass Shelter. Accommodation in huts (bunk beds) must be pre-booked through Department of Conservation (costs NZ \$90 per person for 3 nights accommodation). Huts are supplied with gas cookers, tables, seating, cold running water, solar-powered lighting and heating in the main kitchen/dining area. Bunkrooms have communal sleeping arrangements, with mattresses provided. Ablution blocks have flush toilets and wash basins. There are no showers in the huts. Hikers must carry their own sleeping bag, all food, cooking utensils, eating utensils, warm clothing, waterproof clothing and sturdy footwear regardless of the season. Operators of guided walks have built their own lodges along the Milford Track.
Packages	A package providing hut fees and all the transport requirements to and from the track is available when booking. This costs around NZ\$200 and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus transport from Te Anau along SH 94 to Te Anau Downs. • Launch across Lake Te Anau to the beginning of the track at the Glade Wharf. • Three nights hut accommodation on the Milford Track. • Transport from Sandfly Point Shelter across Milford Sound to the Milford Sound Launch Terminal.. Accommodation is available at the nearby Milford Sound Lodge. • Bus transport back to Te Anau along SH 94, the Milford Road, probably the most spectacular road in the country. Hikers can arrange to be dropped at the Divide, the beginning of the Routeburn Track. <p>Alternatively, a guided walking option is available, e.g. NZ\$1,830 multi-share in the low season with Ultimate Hikes New Zealand</p>

Milford Track (New Zealand)

	<p>(http://www.ultimatehikes.co.nz/en/guided-walks/the-milford-track) for a 5 day / 4 night walk (including transport, accommodation, meals, snacks, backpacks, rain jackets and a cruise on Milford Sound).</p> <p>Half day guided walks are available through Trips & Tramps for \$95: http://www.tripsandtramps.com/trips/milford-track-guided-walk</p> <p>Full day guided walks are available through Real Journeys for \$195-\$295: https://www.realjourneys.co.nz/en/experiences/walks/milford-track-guided-day-walks/</p>
Permits / Season	The quota system allows approximately half the "capacity" of the track to be used by guided tours while the other half is undertaken by people walking on their own or in informal groups. Both groups use separate systems of huts. Only 40 independent walkers permitted to start the track each day and 50 through guided opportunities. Season - late October to late April.
Parking	Parking is available at Glade Wharf, Lake Te Anau
Number of Trail Users	6,500 visitors each year.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crowding on trails - noise – in huts from snorers and early risers - incompatible uses (e.g. those seeking an experience of self-reliance versus those who prefer to be guided); - track damage - effects on sensitive natural ecosystems.
Other Comments	There is a shuttle service that connects Milford Track with Queenstown – Te Anau Downs and this service also connects to other trails: www.tracknet.net
Source of Information:	New Zealand Trampler: http://www.tramper.co.nz/?250 Department of Conservation: http://www.doc.govt.nz/ Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milford_Track

Overland Track, Cradle Mountain (Tasmania)

Length	65km, 6 day walk, with optional side trips which can extend the length and duration of the hike.
Location	Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park, Tasmania
User Groups Permitted	<p>Walkers only – either as part of a guided experience or as part of a self-reliant wilderness experience. Three types of walkers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - independent walkers using public huts and/or campsites; - guided walking groups using public campsites; - guided walking groups using private commercial huts. <p>Licensed tour operators for the Overland Track include: Cradle Mountain Huts, Wilderness Expeditions, Tasmanian Wilderness Experiences, Tasmanian Expeditions, Tarkine Trails. Prices for guided six day walk are in the vicinity of \$2,000 per person, and are likely to include transport to and from Launceston, all food on the walk, National Park passes, tent accommodation, cooking equipment, emergency equipment, Lake St Clair ferry, and one or two guides.</p>
Management	Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania, in accordance with the statutory 1999 Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan. All revenue from

Overland Track, Cradle Mountain (Tasmania)

	the Overland Track fee contribute to the long-term sustainable management of the track, including track work, hut maintenance, toilets, signage, interpretation and staffing.
Maintenance	Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania. Revenues raised via the booking system and commercial licences fully recover the operational and maintenance costs of the Overland Track at T1 standard.
Governance	Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania
Membership	Not a membership based organisation.
Marketing	The Overland Trail is extensively marketed through Parks and Wildlife Service website, Discover Tasmania website and the websites of licensed tour operators.
Maps	Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair map and notes (1:100 000 TASMAP) is recommended for walkers, as is the Visitor Guide: 'The Overland Track: One walk, many journeys' published by Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service. This booklet contains daily walk notes, 3D maps, and detailed interpretive notes on the geology, flora, fauna and history of the track.
Access to Water	Rainwater tanks are provided at each of the main huts. Water can also be collected from watercourses along the track, i.e. deep lakes or fast flowing streams.
Accommodation	<p>Tents must be carried by walkers along the trail, as there is no guarantee that space will be available in the huts along the way. Campsites are located at regular intervals along the track. There are six main accommodation huts along the trail, each with a sleeping capacity of between 16 and 36 people. In addition there are several smaller huts and some historic huts that can only be slept in during an emergency. Each hut has a long sleeping platform, but mattresses and bedding are not supplied. Each hut also has a composting toilet and a rainwater tank. Cooking benches, tables and bench seating are supplied, but no cooking utensils or stoves are available. Fuel stoves must be carried for cooking purposes. Accommodation at the huts cannot be booked.</p> <p>Most of the licensed tour operators use the camping platforms for accommodation, whilst Cradle Mountain Huts Walk use five private huts (with twin share accommodation, showers, cooking facilities, composting toilets and a drying room) located slightly off the main track out of view of other track users. These huts are primarily serviced by helicopters. Fees for an all inclusive guided tour staying in these huts is just over \$3,000 during peak season.</p>
Permits / Season	<p>Trail is open all year; however bookings are required between 1 October and 31 May and both a Parks Pass (\$30 for up to 8 weeks per person) and an Overland Track Fee (\$200) need to be paid in advance. Bookings can be made online. During this peak time, the trail must be walked from north to south (Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair).</p> <p>Only 60 departures are permitted each day during the peak walking season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 34 independent walkers (maximum group size of 8, using the public huts and tent platforms/campsites) - 13 group members booked to use the group tent platform sites (e.g. schools and community groups) - 13 walkers departing with the commercial tour company (Cradle

Overland Track, Cradle Mountain (Tasmania)

Mountain Huts) using private hut accommodation.

Although departure dates must be booked, walkers are not locked into a fixed itinerary or a fixed number of days on the Track.

Parking

Private cars can be parked at both Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair. Many walkers find it most convenient to leave their car at Lake St Clair and catch a bus to Cradle Mountain. Bus transport to both Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair visitor centres is available all year round from Hobart, Launceston and Devonport, with more frequent services in the December-April time period.

Number of Trail Users

Approximately 8,000 walkers per year. Of the independent walkers on the track in 2005, 57% were from interstate, 35% were from overseas and 8% were from Tasmania. The mean age of these walkers was 34 years of age; many had a low level of bushwalking experience; and most were professional people or university students.

Challenges

- Protecting the area from devastating pests and diseases (partially alleviated through the presence of boot wash-down stations and request that walkers not only stay on the track at all times, but clean and dry all boots and camping gear, including tent pegs, poles, gaiters and trowels prior to bushwalking so that this equipment is free of all debris (soil, seeds, plant material, algae, leaf litter). A bio-security fact sheet on the Parks and Wildlife Service website also supports the message.
- Muddy or eroded track conditions, or surface infrastructure in poor condition, are not consistent with the aspirational standard of the Overland Track, and may present a walker safety hazard. Degraded tracks exhibit vegetation loss, soil erosion, which can lead to deteriorating water quality.
- Too many people in huts at night; and noisy people in huts.
- Negative interactions between groups of walkers
- Evacuating walkers if there is a bushfire (walkers are required to record their whereabouts in log books located at the beginning and end of the walk, as well as at each of the huts)
- Toilet seepage or improper camp hygiene practices may lead to a decline in surface water quality, potentially causing sickness for walkers who do not treat water before drinking.

Other

Comments

- The surface of the trail is mostly natural (i.e. rock / gravel), but also contains duckboard over the buttongrass plains as well as planking and cordwood in certain areas. There is some boulder scrambling on near the summits of mountains and some very steep sections.
- Waterless composting systems have been installed at each of the five overnight huts. This system costs considerably more to maintain, as it requires helicopter removal of solid wastes and remnant liquid, to an authorised 'Controlled Waste' site. This work is undertaken annually by a licensed waste removal contractor, typically during autumn. This ensures no discharge of faecal matter to the environment.
- The following guiding principles have been adopted by Government to achieve the vision for the Overland Track:
 1. The Overland Track will be known worldwide for showcasing the values and engendering an appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

Overland Track, Cradle Mountain (Tasmania)

2. The Overland Track will provide a distinct product that can be differentiated from other walking opportunities in Tasmania.
3. A range of experience options will be provided to meet the needs of a range of visitor groups.
4. Each experience option will be sustainable and involve best practice environmental and management standards.
5. The Overland Track experience is a total experience and excellence at all stages will be delivered.
6. The use of the Overland Track for marketing Tasmania will engender an appreciation of the values of the area and of the scarcity of the opportunity offered.

Source of Information: Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania:
<http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=7771>

Lilydale to Warburton ('Warby') Rail Trail (Victoria)

Length	39km (4 hours one way). Surface is crushed rock or tar seal.
Location	Lilydale to Warburton, (40km east of Melbourne CBD), Victoria
User Groups Permitted	Walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
Management	Yarra Ranges Council is the Committee of Management for the rail trail. A Management and Development Plan has been produced and endorsed by Council and DSE. This plan provides the strategic direction for the trail and aims to lift the popularity, quality and profile of the Rail Trail. Strong partnerships have been established with interest groups including DSE and the Friends of the Rail Trail group has been reinvigorated.
Maintenance	Friends of the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail is a not-for-profit group who have worked closely with the Warby Trail Committee of Management since its development. The group also holds activities along the trail including revegetation and community education.
Governance	Yarra Ranges Shire Council governs the rail trail.
Membership	The trail is not a membership based facility, however, the Friends of Group involves local residents and interested trail users.
Marketing	Trail is promoted on Yarra Ranges City Council, Rail Trails Australia, Bicycle Network Victoria and various tourism related websites.
Maps	A map is available on the Yarra Ranges website. It indicates the state road network number and highlights dangerous road crossings as well as infrastructure along the trail.
Access to Water	None of the maps indicate water refilling stations; hence it is assumed that trail riders need to bring their own water or purchase from businesses along the trail.
Accommodation	Accommodation is available on the trail in towns such as Seville, Milgrove, Woori Yallock and Warburton, and also nearby in places such as Olinda, Healesville, Yarra Ranges and Kalorama
Permits	/ No permits are required, except for special events.

Lilydale to Warburton ('Warby') Rail Trail (Victoria)

Season	
Parking	Parking is available at Lilydale Railway Station Mt Evelyn station site, Wandin Station site, Seville Station site, Woori Yallock Station, Launching Place (near the hotel), Millgrove Station site and Warburton Station site. There is no regular trail specific shuttle service
Number of Trail Users	This is the most utilised rail trail in Victoria with 150,000-200,000 trail users each year.
Challenges	Seeking funding within Council and externally for improvement projects, both in terms of improvement and ongoing/maintenance costs is a major challenge. A 40km trail and broader reserve with significant environments and cultural heritage sites costs money to maintain and Council is reluctant to contribute significant funds as it is a State Government asset, despite Council being Committee of Management. Key projects in the future are access to water and public toilets.
Other Comments	The trail can be accessed by bus or train from Melbourne to Lilydale. Only fold up bikes are permitted on buses, however, other bikes can be carried free of charge on metropolitan trains. Alternatively, trail users can take the Puffing Billy steam train from Belgrave to Gembrook, then cycle north along the Gembrook–Launching Place Road. Bike hire is available in Lilydale, Mt Evelyn and Warburton.
Source of Information	Yarra Ranges Shire Council: http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Things_To_Do/Lilydale_to_Warburton_Rail_Trail Railtrails: http://www.railtrails.net.au/vic/lilydale_warburton/index.htm Bicycle Network Victoria: http://www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/general/bikes-and-riding/42413/ Sent email to Yarra Ranges and Friends Group in December and February, but there was not reply.

Otago Rail Trail (New Zealand)

Length	150kms – usually completed in three to four days, averaging 40-60km per day.
Location	Trail runs between Clyde and Dunedin on the South Island of New Zealand
User Groups Permitted	Mountain bikers, walkers and horse riders. Trail users can undertake a self-guided tour, or join one of the tour operators along the trail. Tour operators typically provide transfers, hire of bikes and accessories, secure off road or undercover parking if required, accommodation, meals, guide and vehicle support. Most operators do not post prices on their website; however, Rail Trail Active operates a 3 day 2 night tour on the Otago Rail Trail for \$1,200. They also run specialty one day tours such as a Beer and Bikes Tour for \$299.
Management	The land on which the Otago Rail Trail is situated was purchased by the Department of Conservation in 1993 as a recreational reserve once the rail corridor was decommissioned. Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust has been responsible for the management of the Rail Trail since its establishment in 1994 and the opening of the Rail Trail in 2000. As the Trust is a charitable organisation, it can receive donations from community members. It has raised over \$1.5m towards trail upgrades.

Otago Rail Trail (New Zealand)

Maintenance	Department of Conservation (DOC) maintains the Rail Trail for use by visitors, encourage community involvement and work with the OCRT Trust to support its enhancement objectives for the Otago Central Rail Trail. Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust has contributed many hours of voluntary labour to the trail.
Governance	The Otago Rail Trail is governed by the Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust, which is made up of four volunteers. Each member contributes approximately 15 voluntary hours per week to the Trail.
Membership	Otago Rail Trail is not a membership based organisation, however, it does have a large e-newsletter following.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Otago Rail Trail is marketed on the Otago Rail Trail and Otago Central Rail Trail websites and on trail operator websites. - Otago Central Rail Trail has an e-newsletter (with 3,500 subscribers) - The Otago Central Rail Trail is listed with Trip Advisor, features on Stumble Upon, Social Mention, TweetGrader which gives the Otago Central Rail Trail Twitter account 90/100. It is also associated with About Me, an online business card which links to the website, as well as Facebook, LinkedIn and You Tube. - The 6th edition of the Rail Trail leaflet has been printed and is displayed at i-sites, bike hire and other related businesses throughout New Zealand. - Trail users are advised through marketing material about the fact that there may be some loose material and bumps along the trail and that there are some areas where mobile phone reception is weak or not available. - Marketing material also advises people to not disturb stock in paddocks or on the trail and to ensure that horses are ridden at walking pace and in single file on the side or centre of the trail and lead over bridges and through tunnels. Riders are reminded to remove dung from the trail.
Maps	Maps are available on the Otago Rail Trail website: http://www.otagorailtrail.co.nz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=90&Itemid=72
Access to Water	Water is available for purchase in towns along the Rail Trail. The Otago Central Rail Trail website encourages people to take their own drinking water with them and to replenish water supplies at local businesses. It states that treated drinking water is not always readily available. It also states: "The Central Otago climate is unique and rainfall is scarce. Suitable drinking water can be costly for businesses to provide, so you shouldn't expect to be able to fill your water bottle as and when you need to".
Accommodation	Each of the towns along the Otago Rail Trail offers some form of accommodation ranging from backpacker-style hostel and self-contained accommodation to B&Bs and luxury hotels. There is a free Otago Rail Trail Booking Service available to book accommodation, as well as bike hire, luggage transfers, transport and train bookings. Currently there are 90 on trail accommodation options.
Permits Season	/ Trail is open year round. Bookings for accommodation may be required in summer due to high demand.
Parking	Parking is available at Middlemarch near the railway station, at the Clyde railhead and also along the Otago Central Rail Trail. Vehicles left in these car parks are at the owner's risk. Some tour operators provide secure off road or undercover parking.
Number of Visitors	In 2011/12, 14,503 people travelled the whole trail (an increase of 21% on the previous year and up from 6,260 in 2003/04). The Poolburn section received 20,588 visitors in 2011/12, a decrease of 4% on the previous year, but well up from

Otago Rail Trail (New Zealand)

7,678 in 2003/04. The two busiest months of the year are March and April, followed by January. Winter use is low. The seven counters on the trail (metal pads that sit below the ground) cannot differentiate between cyclists and walkers, however technology is currently being developed by NZ Department of Conservation to achieve this.

Challenges

Concern that trail users would leave boundary gates across the trail open (has been counteracted by development of a narrow cattle grate installed at one end of each locked boundary gate. Known as 'Gibson Gates', these are wide enough for bikes with panniers bags to be ridden through but function as an effective stock deterrent). Other concerns are raising sufficient revenue through selling of advertisements on the trail pamphlet, on the website and in the trail passport to help cover the cost of maintenance.

Other Comments

- The Rail Trail is a public reserve, and motorised vehicles are not permitted on the Trail. The surface is gravel.
- Catch-A-Bus is a passenger service that follows the Rail Trail in its entirety. It offers a 24 hour booking line and will pick up passengers, luggage and bikes door to door. It will also forward baggage to the next overnight stop for \$10 per bag (weight limit of 10kg per bag). Full payment is required 24 hours prior to departure. Office operates from 7am to 7pm. Service operates on a timetable, although times are approximate due to the door to door nature of the service. There are several other companies that provide shuttles and passenger transfers.
- The Taieri Gorge Railway also carries passengers and will carry bikes free of charge.
- A guide book is available for purchase (\$25) and also a DVD (\$20)
- An Otago Central Rail Trail Passport is available for \$10. It contains a rail trail map, interpretive information and also locations of red replica Railways Department phone boxes where a self-inking stamp is located.
- Otago Central Rail Trail businesses displaying the New Zealand Cycle Trail Official Partner logo meet minimum cycle-friendly standards. They provide a quality experience, high level of customer service for cyclists and prompt friendly service to all cyclists. Their staff can provide first-hand knowledge of the Otago Central Rail Trail and explain how to get more information and maps of other local bike trails. Cycle friendly accommodation will have made provision for securing bikes, a bike stand, basic tools, and/or know the contact details and opening hours of the nearest bike repair shop.
- There are environmental toilets at various places on the trail and public toilet blocks in towns along the trail. Trail users must bring their own toilet paper.

Source of Information

Otago Rail Trail:
http://www.otagorailtrail.co.nz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=48
 Otago Central Rail Trail: <http://www.otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz/>
 Email from Department of Conservation (Central Otago Area Office) – Anita Middlemiss
 Email from Otago Central Rail Trail Trust – Kate Wilson

Mule Trail, Grand Canyon (USA)

Length	21 miles (33.8km) for the overnight rides (10.5 miles each way / 17km)
Location	Grand Canyon, USA
User Groups Permitted	Riders on guided mule tours operated by concessioners such as Xanterra Parks and Resorts and Canyon Trail Rides. Private equine owners can also bring their stock into the park and ride, subject to receiving backcountry permits for overnight rides (but not required for day rides). Hikers share the trails with mules / horses / burros (small donkeys).
Management	Trails are managed by the National Park Service. Tours are operated by concessioners.
Maintenance	Trails are maintained by the National Park Service and maintenance is funded through park entrance fees, concessions franchise fees and other Federal Government funding. Concessioners are required to eradicate urine pools and to remove mule manure from trails.
Governance	Trails are governed by the National Park Service.
Membership	None. Trail users pay to take part in guided tours.
Marketing	Internet marketing via National Park Service (NPS) website: http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/mule_trips.htm
Maps	Map available on NPS website: http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/upload/backcountry_map.pdf
Access to Water	Trail operators supply overnight riders with a new water canteen and day riders with water.
Accommodation	Trail riders of less than one day's duration stay at various lodgings around the Grand Canyon. Overnight riders stay at Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the Canyon near the Colorado River (reserved and purchased in advance) or at one of the campsites in the inner canyon.
Permits / Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bookings for overnight rides are in strong demand and need to be booked up to 13 months in advance. - North Rim Mule Rides only available from 15 May to 15 October each year due to snow. - Only riders over 7 years of age for some trails and 10 years or over on other trails. Riders must not weigh more than 91kg on some trails or no more than 102kg on others.
Parking	Shuttle buses transfer riders from the Grand Canyon Lodge to the trail head half an hour before departure time. Parking for self sufficient horse riders is designated to particular trail heads.
Number of Users	<p>It is proposed that trail rider numbers will be capped at 10,000 rides per year.</p> <p><u>Details from Xanterra Parks and Resorts and Canyon Trail Rides</u></p> <p>South Rim Tours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abyss Overlook - 3 hour ride (\$123) – 7,848 riders in 2011; - Phantom Ranch – 1 day overnight ride(\$507) – 2,549 riders in 2011 - Phantom Ranch – 2 day overnight ride (\$714) – 258 riders in 2011 <p>North Rim Tours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One hour Rim Ride (\$40) – 2,639 riders in 2011 - Half day Inner Canyon Ride (\$80) – 4,670 riders in 2011 - Half day Rim Ride (\$80) – 271 riders in 2011

Mule Trail, Grand Canyon (USA)

Challenges

- Preventing damage such as erosion and rutting to trails by mule use (partially achieved through limiting the number of riders on inner canyon trails).
- Conflict between mule riders and hikers (partially reduced through realignment of some trails and development of trail etiquette)
- Prevention of the spread of weeds from overnight horse riders (where horses are privately owned and brought to the Park)
- Emergency evacuation of riders at the bottom of the Canyon
- Evacuation of riders for incidents such as wildfires
- Provision of sufficient toilets in the Inner Canyon (some additional composting toilets have now been built)
- Waste, particularly from plastic water bottles (construction of new filling stations for water bottles at trail heads and heavily visited sections of the trail, plus discontinued sale of plastic-bottled water has assisted in waste reduction).
- Traffic congestion in the Park (reduced by operating a shuttle service and commencement of a bicycle hire service).
- Lack of funds for maintenance works at the Park (assisted by 63,051 volunteer hours in 2009 and by the establishment of the Grand Canyon Association – an official fundraising entity for the Park; however there is still a significant shortfall each year).
- Sourcing power for Phantom Ranch (overnight accommodation for mule rides) and other areas of the inner Canyon (a feasibility study was conducted into developing a micro-hydropower plant to provide “green energy” and save \$18m in 2009).
- Water availability due to climatic changes.

Other Comments

Commercial Use Authorisations are permits that authorise suitable commercial services for park visitors within Grand Canyon National Park. The term of a CUA may not exceed 2 years and no preferential right of renewal or similar provisions for renewal may be provided. Grand Canyon National Park authorises a variety of commercial services such as overnight horseback riding. Fees are \$350 per annum. Backcountry permits are required for overnight horseback riding trips involving camping, but not required for day horseback riding or for overnight stays at Phantom Ranch and other selected developed campsites. Permits are valid only for the trip leader, itinerary, number of people, and dates specified on the permit. There is a non-refundable fee of \$10 per permit plus \$5 per person per night camped below the rim and \$5 per group per night camped above the rim (with an additional \$5 per horse). South Bass Trail and Pasture Wash Trail visitors may be charged an additional fee by the tribe for crossing the Havasupai Indian Reservation.

Equines (horses, mules, and burros) are only allowed on a few designated Grand Canyon National Park trails. Llamas, goats, and other private stock are prohibited. Both in-state and out-of-state residents are required to bring a current health certificate with negative Coggins test for each equine.

Riders accept responsibility for their personal safety and must notify park rangers immediately of any animal injury or fatality. Owners are responsible for the

Mule Trail, Grand Canyon (USA)

removal of dead or injured animals. Tree savers must be used when stock is tied to trees.

To prevent congestion and conflicts on trails, rules have been established regarding specific times of the day when each trail can be travelled downhill and when it can be travelled uphill.

Mule strings have the right-of-way and horse riders must find a safe place to get as far off the trail as possible. If there is no safe place to yield right-of-way, horse riders must backtrack to a suitable location and allow the mule string to pass.

In winter caulked shoes are required when snow or ice is present or anticipated on trails.

Overnight rides are limited to a maximum of six riders and six horses / mules / burros. A rider may lead no more than five head. Pack stock must be led, tied together in single file. Loose herding is not allowed. Four campsites are available: North Rim Horse Camp (only available from 15 May to 15 October each year – has a pit toilet, potable water and small holding pen); Bright Angel Campground (only one equine group per night); Cottonwood Campground (only one equine group per night); and Phantom Ranch. Each of these campsites requires that at least one person must camp with the stock.

To prevent the introduction of non-native plants into the park, only certified weed free forage (hay, straw, mulch) can be used in the park. Stock groups must be prepared to display proof of certification tags. No forage can be taken beyond a trailhead into the backcountry. Pelletized feed, hay cubes and grain products can be used in the backcountry. Grazing of stock is not permitted.

Horse riders are encouraged to prevent the spread of noxious weeds by cleaning stock trailers and the hooves, coat, mane and tail of stock before entering the park and to feed weed free forage or processed feed to stock for a few days before.

Feed should be carefully stored in rodent-proof, lightweight storage containers, as paper and cloth are considered to be ineffective against determined squirrels and mice. If feed is not kept in containers, it must be hung from pack poles by a long rope.

Water is available for stock at one day-use area and at designated campgrounds. Animals can also be watered directly from natural water sources where streams cross maintained trails and seasonally where one of the trails crosses a creek. Equines are not allowed in streams above or below trail crossings. Collapsible canvas buckets to carry water from other sources is encouraged.

Source of Information

National Park Service website:
http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/mule_trips.htm

Valmont Bike Park, Boulder, Colorado, USA

Length	42 acres of bike park facilities.
Location	Boulder, Colorado, USA
User Groups Permitted	<p>Valmont Bike Park is designed for cyclists. It is a natural-surface facility, recognized as the largest urban bike park open free to the public and offers multiple disciplines for all ages and abilities. VBP features an underlying “skill progression” design to serve all ages, abilities and riding styles. This design will allow riders to improve their riding skills as they work their way up to advanced-level slopestyle, dirt jump and cyclo-cross elements throughout the park. It is designed for public day-to-day recreational use, programming, special events and world-class races. Facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terrain Park – dirt jumps, slope style, dual slalom, two pump parks - Cyclocross Features – sandpit, two staircase run-ups - Other Features – network of single track trails, learning loop, permanent podium, tot track for tricycles and strider bikes, tot lot playground and event plaza.
Management	<p>Valmont Bike Park was built by the City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department on land acquired with a ballot initiative in 1996. In 2006, the Parks Department sought community wide input on the best use of Valmont Park site and they recognised the demand for in town cycling. Park construction was planned, and construction began in March 2010.</p> <p>Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA) helped the city develop the land into a bike park, and began fundraising to supplement rates. Combined fundraising and grant writing by the City and BMA, have raised over \$500,000 for bike park construction, with considerable donations from lottery funds, foundations and businesses.</p>
Maintenance	<p>The City of Boulder Parks & Recreation Department started its first Trail Crew Volunteer Program at the Valmont Bike Park. They aimed to recruit ten people eager to learn about bike trail maintenance and who were willing to work side by side with staff to maintain, rebuild, and in the future enhance the bike park. Regular workdays were held on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 600 volunteers were recruited in 2011, providing over 2,000 hours of assistance.</p> <p>Boulder Mountainbike Alliance contributes funding and volunteer effort to build and maintain trails.</p>
Governance	City of Boulder
Membership	Boulder Mountainbike Alliance individual memberships range in price from \$50 to \$1,000.
Marketing	Marketing occurs through various websites, facebook and twitter.
Maps	Map available on Boulder Mountainbike Alliance site: http://bouldermountainbike.org/sites/default/files/ValmontBikePark-TrailMapNo.pdf
Access to Water	Drinking fountain available. No shops on site. Trail users encouraged to bring their own water.

Valmont Bike Park, Boulder, Colorado, USA

Accommodation	Accommodation available in Boulder. Most trail users are likely to be day users.
Permits / Season	The park is open from dawn to dusk, but closed during bad weather. Boulder Mountainbike Alliance website provides an update on condition of all trails. Participation is free.
Parking	Parking is available on site. Shared paths lead to the site and a bus stop is located at the entrance to the park.
Number of Trail Users	500 users per day in summer. 50,000 users per year.
Challenges	None identified.
Other Comments	<p>City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department has trained up more than 100 people as Park Hosts to convey information to the general public about the park features including which jump lines are right for them or the best way around the Glade trails.</p> <p>Valmont Bike Park has hosted various cycling events serving more than 2,000 participants and more than 3,000 daily spectators in 2011.</p> <p>The Bike Park was named the host venue for the 2014 Cyclo-Cross Nationals.</p> <p>The Bike Park has provided programs, clinics and lessons to more than 350 cyclists from the beginner to expert skill level in 2011.</p> <p>Valmont Bike Park partnered with more than two dozen businesses, agencies and organisations in 2011 to offer additional onsite and offsite services such as programs, demonstrations, food, lodging and support.</p> <p>The City of Boulder Parks and Recreation Department selected Avid4 Adventure to provide a variety of cycling classes and programs at Valmont Bike Park. A one-year contract with renewal options for up to two additional years was awarded. Selection was based on criteria established by the department for management of programs and classes to be offered at the park. Avid4 Adventure is the primary provider of all organized recreational programming at Valmont Bike Park, including program development, staffing and registration. The City of Boulder shares revenue generated from these programs.</p>
Source of Information	<p>City of Colorado: http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2410&Itemid=4890</p> <p>Boulder Mountainbike Alliance: http://bouldermountainbike.org/valmont-bike-park-blog</p> <p>Email from Mike Eubank, City of Boulder, Colorado, USA dated 5/2/13</p>

The Whole Enchilada (MTB), Moab, Utah, USA

Length 30 miles (48.3km), descending 7,000 feet. Takes about 3-8 hours to complete.

The Whole Enchilada (MTB), Moab, Utah, USA

Location	La Sal Mountains in the Mant-L Sal National Forest 20 miles from Moab, Utah, USA. It incorporates Burro Pass, Hazard, Kokopelli, Porcupine Single track, and Porcupine Rim - an Epic La Sal Mountains to Colorado River Ride
User Groups Permitted	Mountain Bike Riders. Starting in high alpine forest at Burro Pass, the ride transitions to aspens, high desert and finishes off plummeting down to the Colorado River on exposed single track. The type of riding varies from slow, steep and technical rocky single track to wide open high speed sections and everything in between. Considered to be a difficult trail. A shuttle service takes riders to the beginning of the trail.
Management	US Forest Service manages La Sal Mountains
Maintenance	US Forest Service
Governance	US Forest Service
Membership	This is not a membership based trail.
Marketing	The trail is featured on many websites, as well as YouTube
Maps	The trail is well marked and there is an on-trail a map at the end of every section providing directions. Maps are available on various websites.
Access to Water	Riders are required to bring their own water.
Accommodation	Accommodation is available in Moab at the base of the trail.
Permits / Season	Permits are not required. Peak season is over the summer months (June to August).
Parking	Riders park at a bicycle shop in Moab and are transported by shuttle bus to the top at a cost of \$25. Shuttles depart daily, starting at 8am. Private group shuttles are also available.
Number of Trail Users	During peak season there can be over 500 riders on a Saturday.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US Forest Service is constantly pressured by competing user groups to open new trails and sensitive areas and to relax regulations. However, the Forest Service is mandated to conserve resources for future generations and to limit impacts to the level at which the forest health can be sustained on all levels, including water quality, ecology and scenic value. - Dealing with changing visitor use and expectations - Conflicts between down-hill mountain bike riders and uphill travel by horse riders and hikers. - Preventing people from creating their own connector trails - Preventing erosion that may be caused by cyclists travelling through wet areas and compacting the soil. - Preventing soil disturbance and dust caused by high speed mountain bike riders - Preventing the spread of weeds – mountain bike riders are encouraged to wash bikes before leaving or entering a new area. <p>Proposed actions of US Forest Service are to keep approximately 60 miles of existing authorised non-motorised trails on the system as well as a mix of</p>

The Whole Enchilada (MTB), Moab, Utah, USA

designating new trails, changing the use designation of some existing non-motorised trails, placing seasonal closures on some trails, and closing and reclaiming some existing trails that are no longer needed on the trail system.

Other Comments

- Half (\$135) and full (\$175) day tours are offered by a bicycle shop in Moab and generally include bike rental, helmet, transportation to trail head and lunch.
- An enduro event was held in September. The Big Mountain Enduro Series is multi-day annual Enduro series of rides throughout Colorado, Utah and New Mexico. Races follow a mix of the European formats; tying in epic backcountry Enduros on big terrain, as well as lift-accessed stages blended in along the way. Courses feature predominantly downhill timed “special” stages linked together by non-timed liaison climbing stages. This rapidly growing discipline combines the physical endurance of cross-country riding with the technical difficulty and excitement of downhill racing. Entrance fees are \$175.

Source of Information

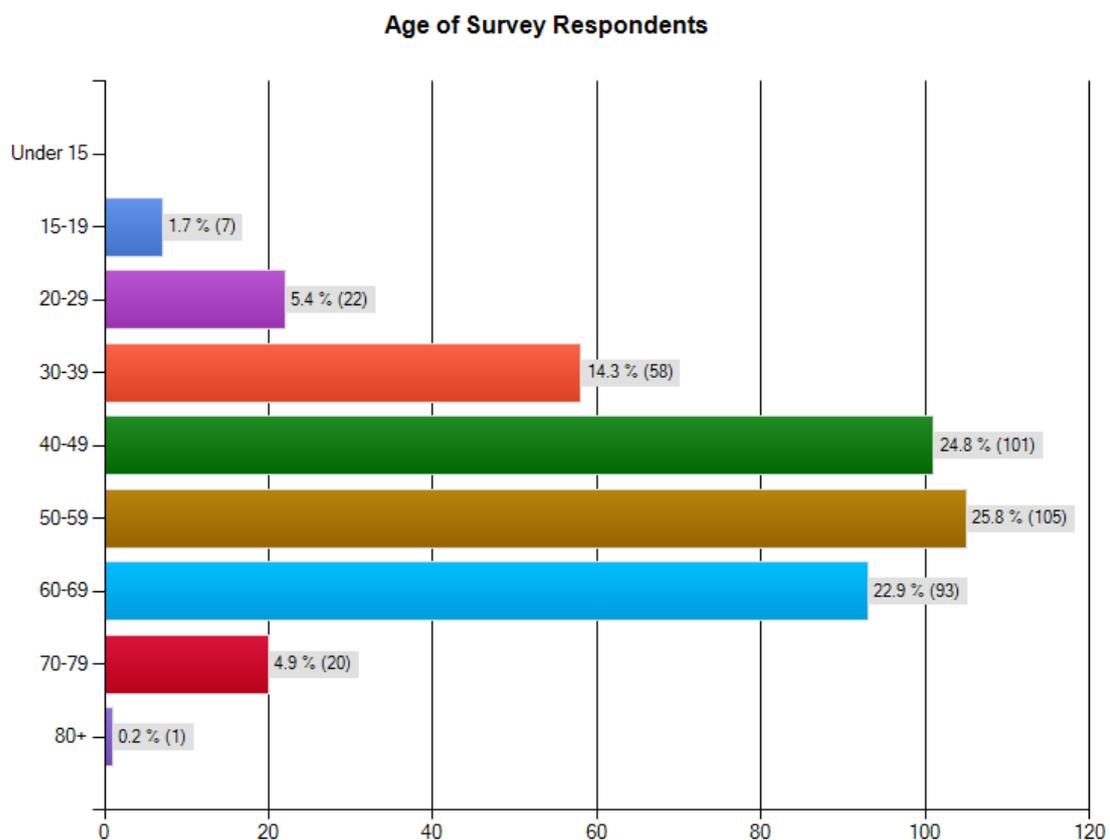
US Forest Service:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/mantilasal/recreation/bicycling>
Frontiernet: <http://www.frontiernet.net/~lasalforest/LaSals.htm>
Big Mountain Enduro: <http://www.bigmountainenduro.com/>

5.0 Survey Analysis

An electronic survey was developed and forwarded to all Local Government Authorities and many community based groups throughout the Hume region in November and December 2012 in order to obtain data to help improve the existing network of regionally significant trails in the region. Survey results are as follows:

Age and Gender

A total of 536 people completed the Hume Region Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy. 56.8% of survey respondents were male and 43.2% were female. In relation to age distribution, the majority of survey respondents were aged between 40-69 years of age.



Place of Residence

Survey participants resided across a wide range of postcodes. The highest number was from the 3747 postcode area (6.3%), representing the Beechworth area. The next highest number of responses came from postcode 3678 (4.4%), representing the rural area around Wangaratta (but not the rural city itself). The next region with the highest response was 3749 (4.2%), representing the Yackandandah area; followed by 3730 (3.9%), representing the Yarrawonga area and 3677 (3.9%), representing the rural city of Wangaratta.

Use of Regionally Significant Trails

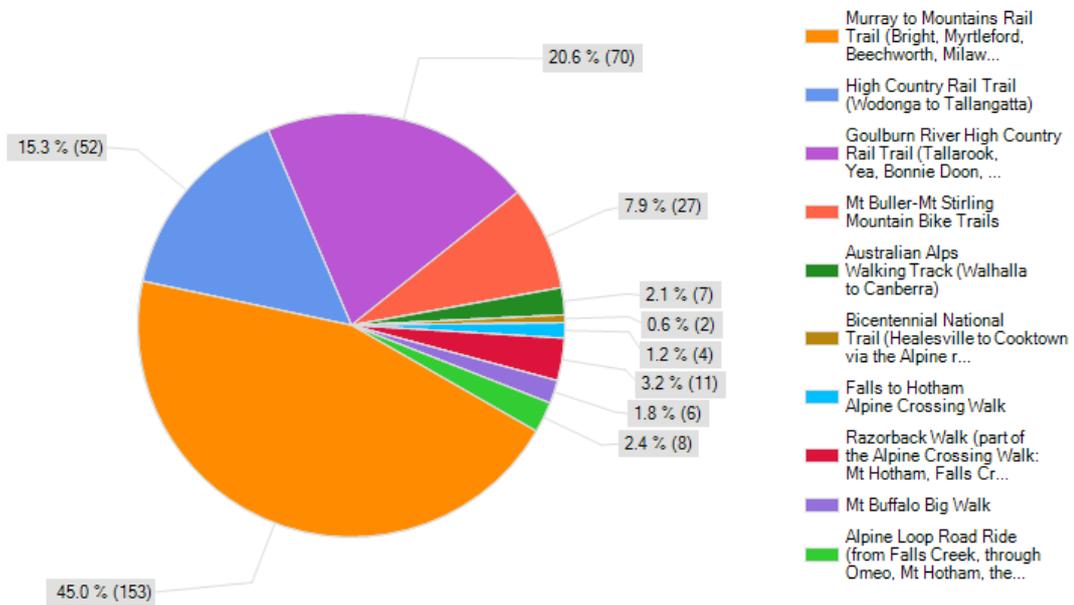
Respondents were asked to indicate which regionally significant tracks or trails in the Hume region they have used in the past. Respondents were able to identify more than one track or trail. The following table indicates responses:

Trail	Number	Percentage
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (Bright, Myrtleford, Beechworth, Milawa, Wangaratta, Wahgunyah and Rutherglen)	352	65.7%
High Country Rail Trail (Wodonga to Tallangatta)	159	29.7%
Great Victorian Rail Trail (Tallarook, Yea, Bonnie Doon, Mansfield)	134	25.0%
Razorback Walk (part of the Alpine Crossing Walk: Mt Hotham, Falls Creek and Mt Feathertop)	130	24.3%
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	95	17.7%
Australian Alps Walking Track (Walhalla to Canberra)	80	14.9%
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Trails	76	14.2%
Alpine Loop Road Ride (from Falls Creek, through Omeo, Mt Hotham, then back to Falls Creek via Mt Beauty)	71	13.2%
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	61	11.4%
Bicentennial National Trail (Healesville to Cooktown via the Alpine region)	26	4.9%

69 people stated that they used 'other' tracks and trails. In many cases, the 'other' trail identified was in fact part of one of the trails listed on the survey. The most significant number of 'other' trails identified included the O'Keefe Rail Trail (10), located in the City of Greater Bendigo and the Beechworth Mountain Bike trails (8), which forms part of the Dirty Dozen cluster of MTB tracks.

Respondents were then asked to nominate the one regionally significant track or trail that they have used most recently, and were advised that the following six questions would relate specifically to this trail. The Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (45.0%) was identified by almost half of the survey respondents as their most recently used trail (45.0%), followed by the Great Victorian Rail Trail (20.6%) and the High Country Rail Trail (15.3%). The chart below indicates the one track or trail survey respondents have most recently used:

The One Regionally Significant Track or Trail Most Recently Used



Motivation for Trail Use

Survey respondents were asked to identify their primary motivation for using the specific track or trail they identified in the previous question. The majority of survey respondents were motivated purely by enjoyment (36.5%). This was closely followed by ‘an activity to do with family and friends’ (28.5%). Fitness was the third most popular response (10.0%) and ‘to enjoy the attractions along the way, e.g. scenery, culture, wildlife, food and wine’ was the fourth most popular response (9.4%).

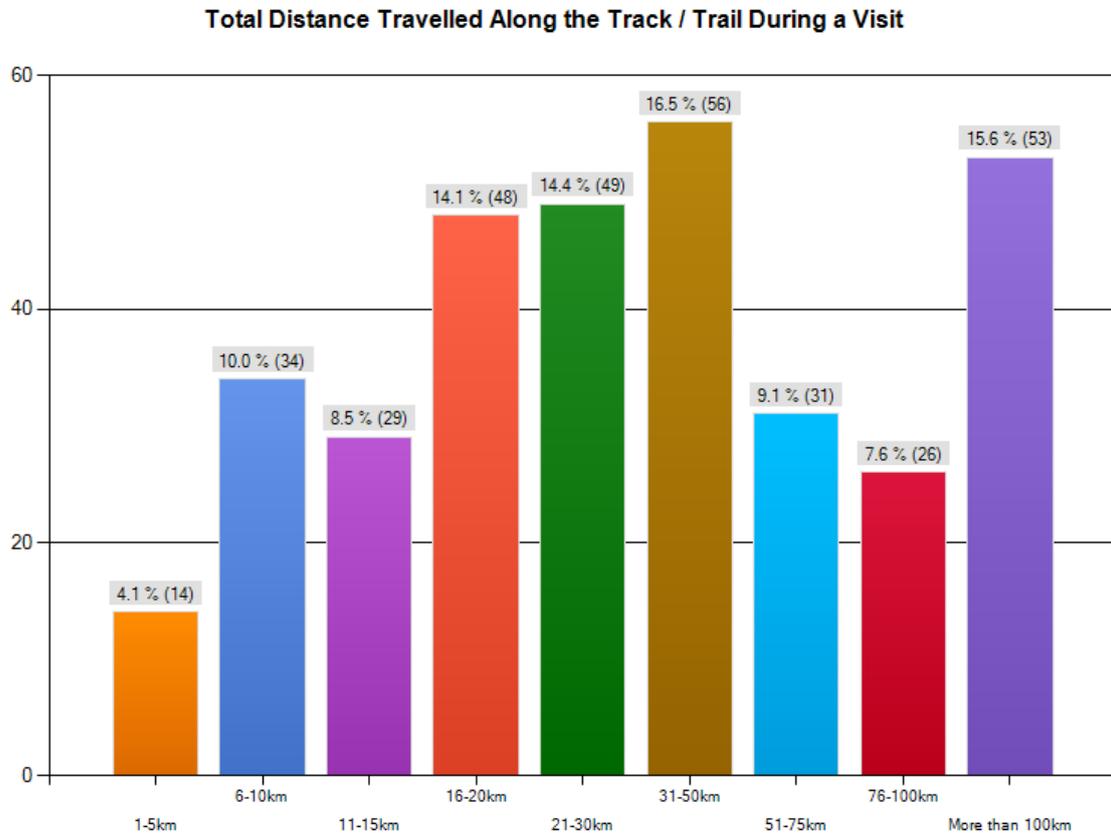
Mode of Transport

The majority of people who completed the survey primarily used a mountain or hybrid bike to travel along their chosen track / trail (60.0%). Road riders (17.6%) and walkers (15.9%) were the next two most popular answers. Only 6.5% of survey respondents rode a horse along the chosen track / trail. Several people indicated that they had used touring bikes or roller skis, and one person said that s/he had used a recumbent trike. The mode of transport indicated by survey respondents will have an impact upon the type of improvements they may identify throughout the survey.

Distance Travelled

Distance travelled along regionally significant tracks and trails by survey respondents varied greatly (note that the three quarters of survey respondents travelled by some form of bicycle). Forty-five percent (45%) of trail users travel anywhere between 16-50km per day. Another 15.6% indicated a

total travel distance of more than 100km. The following chart provides an overview of the total distance travelled during a visit to a specific track / trail:



Length of Stay in the Hume Region

The vast majority of people who used the trail were local residents (40.9%). However, of those who visited the area, most stayed between two days (30.3%) and three (24.9%), with a reasonable number staying for four or more days (23.9%).

Track / Trail Experience

Survey respondents were asked to rate their experiences along the most recently used track / trail. Results are as follows:

Track/trail surface is in good condition	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	90.9	7.8	1.3	0
HCRT	52	61.5	13.5	25.0	0
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	72.9	12.9	14.3	0
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling	27	88.9	7.4	3.7	0

Mountain Bike trails					
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	28.6	42.9	28.6	0
Bicentennial National Trail	2	50	50	0	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	75	0	25	0
Razorback Walk	11	100	0	0	0
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	100	0	0	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	87.5	0	12.5	
Track/Trail was well signed	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	88.2	7.2	4.6	0
HCRT	52	65.4	15.4	19.2	0
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	72.8	10.0	17.1	0
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	66.6	11.1	22.2	0
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	14.3	42.9	42.9	0
Bicentennial National Trail	2	0	0	100	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	50	25	25	0
Razorback Walk	11	81.8	9.1	9.1	0
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	99.9	0	0	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	75.0	12.5	12.5	0
Information about track/trail was readily available	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	75.2	16.3	4.0	4.6
HCRT	52	65.4	17.3	17.3	0
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	75.7	17.1	7.1	0
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	92.6	3.7	3.7	0
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	28.6	28.6	28.6	14.3
Bicentennial National Trail	2	50	50	0	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	25	25	25	25
Razorback Walk	11	72.8	18.2	0	9.1
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	83.3	16.7	0	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	75.0	12.5	12.5	0
Track/Trail provided good opportunities to link to attractions of Hume region	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	77.7	13.1	5.3	3.9
HCRT	52	57.7	21.2	19.2	1.9
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	68.6	21.4	5.7	4.3
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	51.8	25.9	12.1	11.1
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	28.6	0	28.6	28.6
Bicentennial National Trail	2	50	50	0	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	0	25	50	25

Razorback Walk	11	54.6	18.2	0	27.3
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	66.6	33.3	0	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	75.0	12.5	12.5	0
The track / trail was designed in such a way to allow me to choose the length of my walk / ride or the degree of difficulty of my walk / ride.	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	79.8	11.8	7.2	1.3
HCRT	52	65.4	23.1	11.5	0
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	81.5	12.9	2.9	2.9
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	77.7	14.8	3.7	3.7
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	28.6	0	14.3	57.1
Bicentennial National Trail	2	0	100	0	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	25	25	50	0
Razorback Walk	11	81.8	9.1	0	9.1
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	83.3	0	16.7	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	87.5	12.5	0	0
Sufficient food and beverage opportunities were available along or near the track / trail	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	64.1	20.3	11.8	3.9
HCRT	52	34.6	21.2	24.6	9.6
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	71.4	18.6	7.1	2.9
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	29.6	37	7.4	25.9
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	0	0	42.9	57.1
Bicentennial National Trail	2	50	0	50	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	0	0	25	75
Razorback Walk	11	27.3	9.1	18.2	45.5
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	33.4	50	0	16.7
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	87.5	12.5	0	0
Suitable accommodation opportunities were available along or near the track / trail	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	66.7	14.4	5.9	13.1
HCRT	52	38.5	28.8	19.2	13.5
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	57.1	20.0	7.1	15.7
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	74.0	14.8	3.7	7.4
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	42.9	14.3	28.6	14.3
Bicentennial National Trail	2	50	0	50	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	50	0	25	25
Razorback Walk	11	54.6	9.1	0	36.4
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	66.7	0	16.7	16.7

Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	87.5	0	0	12.5
The event I participated in was well run	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	17.6	18.3	1.4	62.7
HCRT	52	27.0	25	0	48.1
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	30.0	15.7	1.4	52.9
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	22.2	22.2	0	55.6
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	42.9	0	14.3	42.9
Bicentennial National Trail	2	0	0	0	100
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	25	0	25	50
Razorback Walk	11	36.4	9.1	0	54.5
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	33.3	0	0	66.7
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	62.5	0	0	37.5
In general my experience using this track / trail was positive.	n=	Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	N/A or Don't Know
Murray to Mountains	153	94.1	2.6	1.4	2.0
HCRT	52	88.5	3.8	3.8	3.8
Great Victorian Rail Trail	70	98.6	0.0	1.4	0
Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike trails	27	88.9	7.4	0	3.7
Australian Alps Walking Track	7	71.4	0	14.3	14.3
Bicentennial National Trail	2	100	0	0	0
Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk	4	75	0	25	0
Razorback Walk	11	99.9	0	0	0
Mt Buffalo Big Walk	6	100	0	0	0
Alpine Loop Road Ride	8	100	0	0	0

The answers to this question provide some useful information about specific trails, however, given the small sample size of the Bicentennial National Trail, the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk, the Mt Buffalo Big Walk and the Alpine Loop Road, caution needs to be used in regards to making any judgements based on the answers. Some specific issues to note are:

- The surface of the High Country Rail Trail may need to be improved.
- Signage may need to be improved on a number of trails, including the High Country Rail Trail, the Great Victorian Rail Trail, Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Trails and the Australian Alps Walking Track.
- More information may need to be made available for the High Country Rail Trail and the Australian Alps Walking Track.
- Better linkages to other facilities and attractions in the Hume region may need to be made for the High Country Rail Trail and the Australian Alps Walking Track.
- There may be a case to provide alternative loops to the High Country Rail Trail, Mt Buffalo Big Walk and the Australian Alps Walking Track to allow trail users to choose the length or degree of difficulty of their trail experience

- There may be a need to encourage the development of businesses that supply food and beverages to establish themselves along the High Country Rail Trail. Perhaps the opening of more ski resorts over the summer period will allow people using the Australian Alps Walking Track to have greater access to food and beverages along the way if desired
- There may be a need to encourage the establishment of businesses that provide accommodation alongside the High Country Rail Trail (or to better promote the establishments that already exist) and to explore opportunities for the establishment of suitable accommodation options in the high country (such as huts or eco-lodges).
- In general there are very high levels of satisfaction with the experiences offered along the tracks and trails in the Hume region.

Suggestions to Improve Specific Tracks or Trails

Survey respondents were asked to identify any specific improvements that they would like to see made to improve the overall experience of the trail. The following responses were received:

Legend:

- M2M = Murray to Mountains Rail Trail
- HCRT = High Country Rail Trail
- Great Victorian Rail Trail = Great Victorian Rail Trail
- MBMS = Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Trails
- AA = Australian Alps Walking Track
- BNT = Bicentennial National Trail
- FH = Falls Hotham Alpine Crossing Walk
- RW= Razorback Walk
- MBBW = Mt Buffalo Big Walk
- ALR= Alpine Loop Road

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS	AA	BNT	FH	RW	MBBW	ALR
Improve directional signage and distance markers to towns, amenities, food / drink locations (16)	Improve trail surface – consider sealing or using compacted gravel (16)	Improve trail surface, particularly at Tallarook end (19)	Improve signage (7)	Retain as a remote experience	Retain undeveloped and challenging aspect of trail	Better signage required	Better maintenance to minimize erosion	Link to accommodation	Construct verge between Bright and Harrietville
Improve maintenance of the trail – tree debris around Beechworth; surface between Myrtleford and Eurobin; Quarry Rd, Everton; Milewa; blackberries; tree roots (16)	Improve signage and distance markers (5)	Improve signage (8)	Develop more MTB trails like this nearby (2)	Eliminate road sections	Provide access for horse riders, walkers and MTB riders		Retain undeveloped and challenging aspect of trail	Link to other tracks in the region	Develop hard shoulders on roads
Provide opportunities for horse riders to link to trail (7)	Link trail into the centre of Wodonga (5)	Install distance markers (4)	Add single trail sections to Delatite River Trail	Repair bridges			Public transport required to trail heads		
Install more interpretive signage (4)	Develop food drinking water and accommodation options along the way (3)	Improve trail maintenance, including weed control (4)	Provide off road cycle links to Mansfield along Delatite River	Join trail sections together					
Widen trail, particularly between Bright and Porepunkah (4)	Improve parking at beginning and end of track (2)	More accommodation along the trail especially for larger groups	Arrange for more shuttles up Mt Buller	Improve signage					

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS	AA	BNT	FH	RW	MBBW	ALR
		for one night and at Yarck (4)							
Link to other trails in the region – on or off road trails and quiet country roads (3)	Provide better options for horse riders (2)	Provide access to water taps for drinking (3)	Legalise Smiths Gully trails	Improve maintenance of overgrown plants / trees					
Need for more shuttle services for riders and baggage (3)	Construct additional toilets (2)	Improve customer service standards of businesses and provide them with regular trail condition information (3)	Remove heavy layer of leaf litter from some fire trails						
Improve access to public transport for bikes (2)	Incorporate more tourist attractions, e.g. Hume Weir (2)	Seal the trail (2)							
Improve section just west of Myrtleford (2)	Extend trail to Cudgewa and further if possible (2)	Clean up and restore train station platforms to use as picnic spots							
Plant more shade trees, particularly around Porepunkah (2)	Install bike racks	More food options along the trail							
Extend to Yarrawonga	Install more seats	Public camping sites too far away							
Improve information about trail	Improve road crossing points along Thomas	Easier access from Strath Creek Rd,							

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS	AA	BNT	FH	RW	MBBW	ALR
access points	Mitchell Drive/Anzac Pde	Kerrisdale (currently have to cross bridge on GV highway)							
Improve information and physical connections to trail head in Wangaratta	3 bridges section across Kiewa River flats need to be raised with additional culverts to prevent flooding	Carparking area should be well signed							
Reduce the number of fences along the trail		Review dog issues (off-lead, droppings)							
Improve bridge near Porepunkah		Wider entries to road crossing to accommodate large kid trailers							
Need for more food / drink options near Wangaratta		Establish a bike repair shop in Alexandra							
Need more accommodation at Everton		Develop drinking facilities for animals							
Fix water fountain in Myrtleford		Need more rest stops with benches and tables, especially Caithkin to Tallarook							
Complete linkages:		Construct eco-toilets along the							

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS	AA	BNT	FH	RW	MBBW	ALR
Rutherglen to Wangaratta (2); Wahgunyah to Lake Moodemere; Rutherglen to Springhurst; Rutherglen to Chiltern and El Dorado		trail							
More toilets, shade and drinking water, especially at Wahgunyah (2)		Develop some sample itineraries							
Provide internet access at stations		Better access to Molesworth from track							
Modify poorly designed crossings eg Rostrevor Hops Garden		Better train connections with Tallarook							
Options to link to remote camping									
Keep promoting trail extensively									
Restrict car access on Rutherglen to Wahgunyah trail									
Upgrade Oxley to Milawa section									

Missing Links or Connections

Survey respondents were asked to identify any specific links or connections to tracks and trails in the region. The following responses were received:

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS
Beechworth to Yackandandah (14)	Extend trail beyond Tallangatta to Koetong, Cudgewa, Burrowye Pine Mountain, Corryong, Tintaldra to Khancoban (15)	Link Tallarook to Seymour (12)	Develop off road cycling links to connect to the MTB trails
Wangaratta to Rutherglen via Springhurst (14)	Improve linkages into Wodonga section of trail via disused rail corridor (13)	Wandong to Heathcote with a connection to the Great Victorian Rail Trail (5)	More cross country tracks towards Mansfield
Oxley to Whitfield via King Valley (8)	Link MTM to HCRT via Beechworth, Yackandandah, Osbornes flat, Allans Flat, across to Kiewa then link at Huon (10)	Alexandra to Eildon (4)	Develop a single track downhill from Corn Hill to Howqua Gap
Beechworth to Myrtelford via Stanley (7)	Develop off road link from Wodonga to Albury (2)	Tallarook to Kilmore and Wallan (2)	
Wahgunyah to Lake Moodemere (4)	Beechworth to Yackandandah via Wooragee	Alexandra to Thornton and Cathedral Ranges via Hallsflat and Acheron (2)	
Bright to Harrietville (4)	Complete link to Murray Valley Hwy at Killara to join to riverside track heading to Albury	Connect Great Victorian Rail Trail with M2M and HCRT	
Yackandandah to Huon (HCRT) (4)	Link to Kiewa Valley Walking Track	Link to Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail	
Beechworth to Yackandandah via Wooragee (4)			
Wangaratta to Yarrawonga (3)	Extend trail that follows Yackandandah-Wodonga Rd from Wodonga towards Baranduda		
Yackandandah to Myrtleford (3)	Safe track from rail trail to Kangaroo Store at Bonegilla		
El Dorado Loop (3)			
Chiltern to Beechworth (3)			
Wangaratta to Chiltern (3)			
Whitfield to Mansfield (3)			
El Dorado to Beechworth (2)			
Mountain bike trails in the Warby Ranges			

M2M	HCRT	Great Victorian Rail Trail	MBMS
linked to Wangaratta (2)			
Horse riding link from Wangaratta to the Warby's (2)			
Everton to Milawa via Markwood (2)			
Bright to Wandilgong			
Bright to German Town, Freeburgh			
Track to Baranduda			
Tracks to Rutherglen wineries			
Yackandandah to Wodonga			
Moyhu to Tarrawingee or Everton			
Link to Benalla			
Trail from Wangaratta railway station to trail head			
Yarrowonga to Bundalong via Mulwala			
Link Glenrowan, Benalla and Winton Wetlands			
Mountain bike track from Bright to Hotham that connects with Dinner Plain and Falls Creek			
Yackandandah to Barnawatha			
Beechworth to Albury via Wodonga			

Most Desired Characteristics or Features of Tracks and Trails

Respondents were asked to identify the characteristics or features that they would like to see included on any new regionally significant tracks or trails in the region. Key responses included

1. Smooth all weather surface – bitumen or well compacted gravel surface (53)
2. Signage that is clear; provides interpretive information; shows distances; and is not able to be vandalised (32)
3. Accommodation, food and attractions accessible to the track / trail (32)
4. Trails that are multi-purpose and suitable for all users including families and people riding road bikes and hybrids (27)
5. Natural bush scenery along the track / trail (18)
6. Access to drinking water along the track / trail (18)
7. Historical landmarks and information to be featured along the track / trail (16)
8. Off road trails with minimal road crossings (16)
9. Opportunities to access tracks / trails by using public transport (15)
10. Link with other existing tracks / trails (15)
11. More toilets accessible to tracks / trails (13)
12. Purpose built and longer MTB trails with a range of technical features included (12)
13. Horse friendly trails and infrastructure for horses, e.g. yards (12)
14. More rest stops, seats and picnic places along trails (12)
15. More camping spots along trails (10)
16. Connect with towns along the track / trail or near it (10)
17. Regular track / trail maintenance (6)
18. Easy access and parking for cars, horse floats and bike trailers (6)
19. Promotion via the internet (5)
20. Maps with distance and elevations (5).

Important Initiatives or Features for Tracks and Trails

Survey respondents were asked to identify the key features of importance when choosing to use a track or trail in the Hume region in the future. Features have been prioritised according to the highest response:

1. Information to allow self-guided tours (301)
2. E-newsletters to keep users up to date on tracks/trails in the region (244)
3. Bicycle transfers between destinations (215)
4. Development of other types of tracks or trails e.g. kayaking/canoeing (204)
5. Development of apps and QR codes for smart phones incorporating track/trail information (196)
6. Ability to transport bicycle on public transport or plane to region (182)
7. Luggage transfers between destinations (173)
8. Ability to book all aspects of visit online (167)
9. Budget packages including guide, luggage transfer, accommodation (163)
10. Mid-range packages including guide, luggage transfer, accommodation (141)
11. Indigenous interpretive opportunities and businesses (140)
12. Adventure Bus between Melbourne and Albury/Wodonga via major centres (115)
13. World-class adrenalin activity centre in the Alpine Resorts (101)
14. High-end/luxury packages including guide, luggage transfer, accommodation (81)

Events Attended

Respondents were asked to identify which cycling, mountain bike riding, walking or horse riding events that they have attended based on any of the regionally significant tracks / trails in the Hume region in the past. The majority of respondents (67.7%) had not attended any organised events in the Hume Region. Of those who had attended an event, the highest percentage attended the Audax Alpine Classic in Bright (26.4%); followed by State or National series mountain bike events (15.7%); Bike Buller Festival (14.6%); and the 3 Peaks Challenge (14.0%).

Event Enhancement

In terms of the way events could be enhanced, survey respondents suggested the following:

1. Develop an online calendar of events, advertised through facebook, emails and relevant websites (7)
2. Hold more horse riding events (3)
3. Advertise events in local newspapers (3)
4. Run more events aimed at families (3)
5. Reduce entry fees for events (3)
6. Hold short / modified events as part of larger events for beginners or younger riders / runners / walkers (3)
7. Run events in cooler months (2)
8. Improve surface of off road tracks (2)
9. Hold more events (2)

New Events in the Hume Region

Survey respondents were asked to suggest new events in the Hume region which utilise regionally significant tracks and trails. The top ten suggestions included:

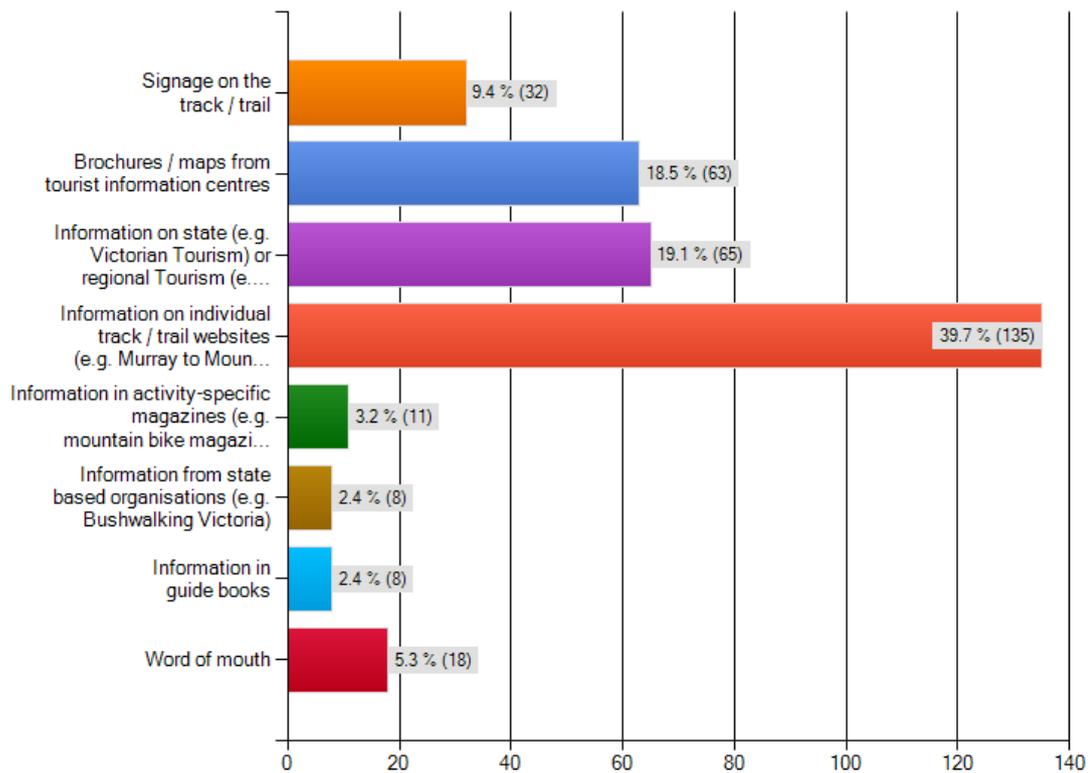
1. Events for the whole family to participate in – short course; scavenger hunts along trails (8)
2. Horse trail riding events, including events with a focus on fundraising, similar to the event held in Wombat State Forest (6)
3. Running or cycling events using rail trails, including Great Victorian Rail Trail (5)
4. Adventure / ecotourism events (3)
5. Less serious / competitive events (2)
6. Triathlon on HCRT (2)
7. Mountain bike event in El Dorado, Beechworth, Mt Pilot National Park (2)
8. MoRide Gran Fondo in Beechworth (2)
9. More organised running events – from 10km races through to marathons (2)
10. Local pilgrimages celebrating history, events and people (2)

Information

Survey respondents were asked to identify their preferred way to find out information. The four most popular sources of information are information on individual track / trail websites (39.7%); followed by information on state or regional tourism websites such as Tourism North East or Tourism Victoria (19.1%); brochures / maps from tourist information centres (18.5%); and signage on the track / trail (9.4%). Whilst some people like to hear from others about tracks and trails (5.3%),

there was little support by survey respondents for sourcing information from activity specific magazines (3.2%); from state based organisations (2.4%) or from guide books (2.4%). Others suggested Rail TrailsAustralia website, apps, e-newsletters and online mountain bike forums. A number of respondents believe that the marketing approach needs to be multi-faceted, rather than relying on one source only.

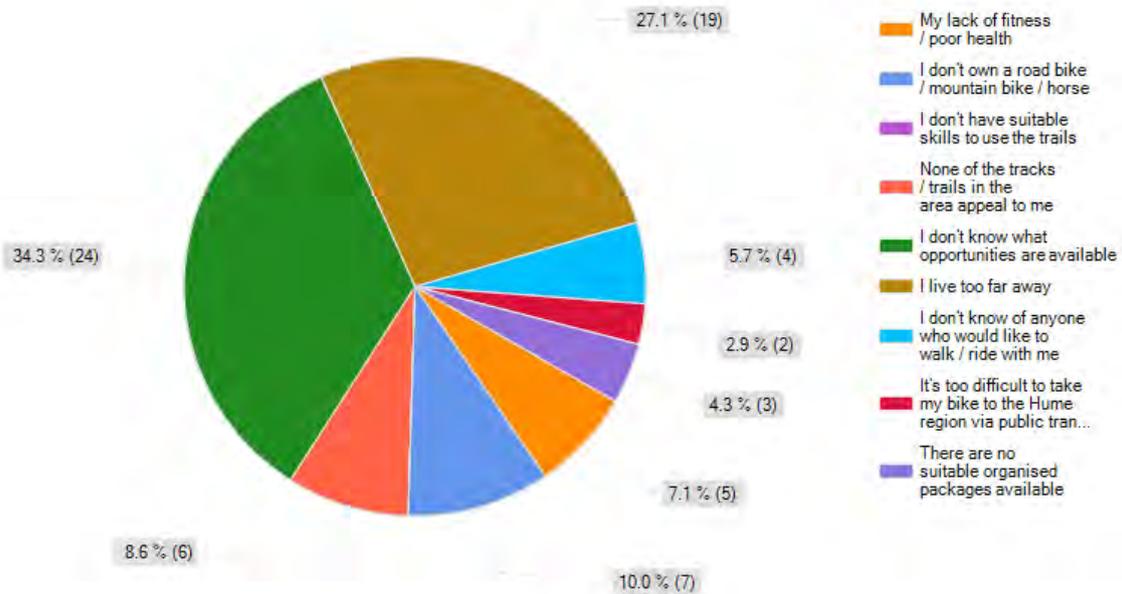
Preferred Way to Find out Information About Tracks or Trails



Barriers to Trail Use

The 70 survey respondents who indicated that they don't use regionally significant tracks or trails were asked to identify the main barrier to participation. Just over one third of these people said that they are not aware of the opportunities available (34.3%). A further 27.1% said that they live too far away from any of the regionally significant tracks or trails; and another 10.0% stated that they don't own a road bike, mountain bike or horse to enable them to use the tracks or trails.

Main Barrier to Track / Trail Utilisation



Other Suggestions

Survey respondents were asked to identify any other suggestions in relation to the development and improvement of regionally significant tracks and trails in the Hume region. The top ten suggestions included:

1. More horse trails (14)
2. Connect trails to one another (14)
3. Keep providing great trails in the region (10)
4. Provide more online promotion and information, e.g. where people can park safely, track descriptions, trail condition reports, etc (8)
5. Bicycle transport / transfers to the start of a trail and improved access for bicycles on trains (8)
6. Trail developed along the Murray River from Yarrawonga to Tocumwal via Cobram, with no access for motorbike riders (7)
7. Better signage on, or near, trails (7)
8. Trails that are designed for families – easy riding, minimal road crossings and good signage (including distances between locations) (7)
9. Greater focus on multi-use trails that can be used for recreational and commuter purposes (6)
10. Develop Wandong to Heathcote Trail (6)

6.0 Consultations

The following table provides an overview of each of the consultations undertaken with key stakeholders:

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Moira Shire Council – Council Officers	29/10/12 7 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray Link is part of the regional Murray Trail – predominantly uses forestry tracks. The Yarrowonga to Bundalong section is narrow. The Cobram to Tocumwal section through the bush needs better signage. Parks Victoria was involved in the planning of this trail. • Numurkah trail is well used, but maintenance is minimal. • There are well formed tracks around Barooga along the river but there are pinch points on the bridge • Possible new trail options include Yarrowonga to Bundalong and Cobram to Tocumwal. • Trails Strategy currently being prepared by @leisure (Kylee). • At a local level there needs to be a group set up with Council, Parks Victoria and community representation on it to advance tracks and trails in the area. • A canoe trail is currently being planned by Park Victoria through Barmah State Forest and Moira Lakes area as part of the River Red Gum project. Contacts are Chris Mercier (Wangaratta) and Aaron Gaudier and Chris McCormack. • Most tracks in the bush are also shared by vehicles and subject to flooding periodically. Tracks through the bush need better signposting in general as people are reluctant to navigate such tracks without knowing where they are going. • Levy banks are an option for trail development. • Good accommodation options exist between Yarrowonga and Cobram at Tocama Retreat. • Potential to develop a long distance trail between Yarrowonga and Wangaratta via Bundalong, however some of the land around Bundalong is privately owned. • Need to strike a balance so that trails help to provide a good experience for people, as opposed to just extracting money from them. • Trails should be shared by locals and visitors to the area. • <u>Key planning principles:</u>

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protection and enhancement of the environment ○ Economic development of local businesses ○ Economic benefits for the community ○ New product development to enhance tourism potential of the region ○ Safety ○ Ease of maintenance ○ Designed to minimise potential damage from floods and fire ○ Cultural heritage management ○ Consider whole of life cost ○ Community support ○ Community benefit ○ It has to be where people want to go <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lower Glenelg is a good model of a regionally significant canoe trail. Bookings are required and Parks Victoria operates a cost recovery method. ● Need to lobby for additional resources for Parks Victoria. ● Communication needs to be improved between Council and Parks Victoria. ● Friends of Groups (e.g. Kiwanis) are important partners. ● Barriers include: maintenance, budgeting, planning for fire and flood. ● Ongoing communication model – consider economic development officer group.
Indigo Shire Council – Council Officers	29/10/12 7 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Priority trail is Beechworth to Huon via Yackandandah. This 60km section of road is estimated to cost \$7m and will form part of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. DSE owns part of the land and the remaining land is on road reserve controlled by VicRoads and Council. There is no private land along the proposed trail. Part of the trail will be provide an on-road cycle trail and other parts either as off road or on low use roads. Council will be appointed to manage the trail, but may delegate this responsibility to the M2M Rail Trail Committee of Management. ● A master plan has been developed for the Wahgunyah River Trails network. An extension will ultimately be made to Lake Moodemere. ● Chiltern to Beechworth and Rutherglen to Chiltern have been identified as potential trail opportunities, but are not priorities at present

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>and have not been scoped.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding has been announced for extensions to the Murray to Mountains Trail. • Uncle Toby's, which is situated on the Wahgunyah to Rutherglen Rail Trail, provides a \$25K community grant each year. • Communication model – consider Bicycle Network Victoria or Regional Tourism Board. Would need participation by VicRoads, Rail Trails Australia (Vic), Bicycle Network Victoria, etc. • M2M currently has technical and communications portfolios, with Council officers and community representatives forming part of the Committee of Management. • Barriers: limited resources of both Council and Parks Victoria. • Communities are keen to be involved in trail management. • Would like to see government organisations redirect some of the health promotion budget away from promotion to development of infrastructure. • Horse riding in the region is popular at Mt Pilot. • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trails need to feature natural attractions ○ Trails need a concentration of tourism product ○ Trails should benefit communities as a passive recreational option and options for active transport to key destinations ○ Protect the environment ○ Economic development ○ Consistent branding and similar signage ○ Sealed ○ Wide enough for all user groups including horse riders ○ Should feature regular access points, loops and connectors.
Indigo – Invited Representatives	29/10/11 15 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Potential future developments include:</u> • Beechworth to Huon via Yackandandah • Off road mountain bike trails next to rail trail between Beechworth and Everton • Springhurst Railway Station to Wahgunyah • Old Tallangatta to Corryong (marketed as bush biking) • Wahgunyah to Wodonga via a single track along the Murray River

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rutherglen to El Dorado • <u>Improvements required:</u> • HCRT – Wodonga section • Rail trails commencing from railway stations in the centre of town as opposed to starting on the outskirts • Linking trails through the urban space, potentially using nature strips where required. • Signs directing people to tracks and trails. • Mapping of trails • Signage on trails • Visitor Information Centres should have a bigger role in promoting tracks and trails • Tourism North East is currently delivering a region wide mapping project for tracks and trails. It is also wishing to establish a set of common terms / definitions to describe trails, e.g. green run. • Tourism North East can auspice trail groups. • Most trails groups appear to be unincorporated. • Many people want to experience a wilderness feeling away from traffic, but want to know that they are close to towns and services. • Many people want a 2-3 day trail experience. • Falls Creek to Mt Hotham appears to have limited 'buy in' from operators at this stage. • Mountain bike riding on Mt Buller is limited to approximately 5 months of the year • More private enterprise is needed along trails to establish cafes and camping sites. • Consider establishing a tool sharing arrangement between different areas / trails • Demand for sealed trails • Unsealed trails require more ongoing maintenance. • No core facilities between Wangaratta and Wahgunya • No facilities after Shelley's Pub on the High Country Rail Trail • M2M Rail Trail has been unable to establish a friends of group. • The community needs to be involved in trail development from the very beginning.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning Principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trail is appealing to funding bodies ○ Trail goes where people want to go ○ Community support and community champions • <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of funds for small volunteer groups ○ Poor communication ○ Political boundaries ○ Lack of coordination and integrated planning ○ Lack of funding ○ Trail management groups don't necessarily understand the needs of existing or potential trail user groups. (i.e. in terms of providing facilities at suitable intervals, etc). ○ Land ownership issues
Parks Victoria – Head Office	26/11/12 4 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Alpine National Parks Management Plan will be released in Dec / Jan. • Mountain Bike Guide to be released in 2013. • Individual management plans exist for some of Parks Victoria's sites (refer to website). • Parks Victoria has developed a Visitor Experience Framework (VEF). Its previous service level framework was considered too asset focussed, whereas the VEF focuses on what is required for quality destinations and journeys. • A state-wide trails strategy is currently being developed. • The River Red Gum Management Plan will be developed soon. • Parks Victoria is classifying trails as state, regional or local. The level of infrastructure will be assessed according to the classification of the trail and the type of experience it is designed to deliver. • Parks Victoria has an extensive road and track network throughout the Hume region. • <u>Australian Alps</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim is to provide for all season visitation to complement activities at the Alpine Resorts • Parks Victoria intends to upgrade support facilities for trails between Mt Hotham and Falls Creek. • Parks Victoria is developing a multi-purpose trail between Sun Valley and Wallace's Hut, suitable for walking and cycling.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Victoria supports a feasibility study to develop a cross country mountain bike circuit in the Howqua Valley. • Parks Victoria is investigating opening some seasonal trails for cycling, but keeping them closed for cars (a change to regulations will need to occur to allow this to happen) • Parks Victoria would like to retain the Razorback Walk just for walkers. • Upgrading short walks is important as these trails usually experience the highest levels of use. • Some visitor upgrades have been occurring around the Bogong High Plains. • Parks Victoria continues to support horse riding in the Australian Alps and will develop appropriate infrastructure to encourage horse riding, e.g. horse camps, troughs, yards, etc. • Parks Victoria supports a feasibility study to identify and record historic bridle trails, with the aim of re-opening these trails if possible. • <u>Falls Creek to Mt Hotham Walk</u> • This walk, which is currently being developed, is one of four iconic walks in Victoria (the others are Great Ocean Walk, Grampians and Croajingalong National Park) of state-wide significance. • Accommodation is currently being updated at Cope Hut and Dibben’s Hut and will be launched next year. • The proposal for demountable accommodation was not pursued when first proposed, but due to a State Government policy change following the VCAG enquiry, the climate is now more suitable for private investments on public land • A master plan is currently being developed with Tourism North East, with buy in from LGAs and RDV and with in-kind support from Parks Victoria. • The Razorback is considered a bit too steep for the market that the walk is being aimed at, i.e. ‘Comfort in Nature’ walkers, hence some work may need to be done to create an easier option for those who want it, or to add an additional day to the trip. Some ground truthing of the route will be required. • Feathertop is considered an essential component of this walk.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is considerable environmental sensitivity to developing or upgrading trails in the alpine region. • <u>Mountain Bike Guide</u> • Guide will assist Parks Vic and DSE staff to assess authorised and unauthorised trails and to determine which trails should be further developed and which ones should be closed. • No mountain bike strategy exists at present to prioritise developments across the state or regions. • Some demand for a mountain bike ride like the Great Victorian Bike Ride.
DSE - Head Office	26/11/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several regionally significant tracks and trails in the Hume region cross DSE land, e.g. Mt Buller-Mt Stirling Mountain Bike Park, Bicentennial National Trail, Australian Alps Walking Trail. • Mountain Bike Guide will incorporate processes so that DSE and Parks Victoria staff will be able to assess and review new MTB proposals and upgrade proposals. Guide to be released in 2012/2013 financial year. • Integrated Public Land Strategy to be developed. From this, five year regional plans will be developed, as well as work plans. • DSE, Parks Victoria and VicRoads have been working together to produce spatial data with agreed upon data fields. • DSE role is to provide spatial information on land alignments, ownership, etc, and to upgrade this information as required. It is the role of other organisations to market these trails. • Environment Statement: value, act, enjoy • DSE Walking Trail guidelines and IMBA gradings used on trails. No need to identify new grading standards. • Marketing and signage both need to be improved. There are no clear directions regarding who should be responsible for marketing. • Apps are supported as they reduce the cost of producing and maintaining signs and can provide a wider range of information about a particular site. • A focus of DSE needs to be on forming better, more enduring partnerships to sustain its investment long term, in areas such as

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are of the belief that because DSE owns the land on which a trail is located, it should maintain this land and the supporting infrastructure.
<p>Albury City Council and Wodonga City Council staff)</p>	<p>30/10/2012 2 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albury Murray River Trail- Wheiga Trail branded. • Lake Hume to Wonga Wetlands (nationally significant environmental area). Mostly off road. Private land issues. Will go to Apex Park. There are trail linkages across bridge. Need to undertake some improvements on causeway around Wodonga Creek. Old stock bridge there - currently investigating a swing bridge. Need more shoulder width on bridge. • Getting out to HCRT is problematic. Starting point not clear. Want to go from railway station. Used to start at Anzac Parade. Trying to acquire old rail line. Vic Track is currently selling portions of the old rail line. May not be ideal for the rail trail as it is not particularly scenic. Preference would be to develop trail so that it goes past the river and parks rather than through an industrial area. • Could potentially link - good potential. • Wodonga end of trail needs to focus on the east section. • Albury Wodonga Parklands (PAW) wants to develop a bush track / mountain bike trail to Wahgunya. • Howlong is the only crossing point of the Murray to the west of Albury Wodonga. • Wahgunya and Howlong bridges need some work. • Hume and Hovell Track finishes in Albury - mostly single track through bushland, part will be converted to a 2.5-3m wide trail. Managed by NSW Crown Lands. Will be sealed. Currently narrow and undefined. • Greater Hume Shire Council wants a trail from Albury to Jindera to bring people to Jindera. • Eventually a trail could be developed between Wonga Wetlands to Howlong. • Private leases are still an issue in the region in terms of river access. • Connections though city with small streets and high traffic volumes need to be carefully considered. • Investigate Murray River Experience concept

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>plans on website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albury Thurgoona Trail and Lavington Trail - both connect to Murray River Trail.
<p>Wodonga Council Staff</p>	<p>30/10/2012 6 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative planning is important. Need to focus funds and directions on best outcomes. Currently reviewing Cycle strategy and devising a new strategy in-house. Priorities not yet identified. Council contributed \$100K to the High Country Rail Trail (HCRT). HCRT links to products including Bonegilla. Narrow lake section to Bonegilla. Council intends to upgrade rail trail and to improve linkages. Linkages to Albury need to be considered and also from Wodonga to Yackandandah; Wahgunya to Corryong; and Kiewa River to Yackandandah (this latter link is supported by PAW) Some major issues for trails in the region are flooding and private leases Kiewa River fluctuates - flooded more often than not in the last 3 years. May need to provide boardwalks through this area. Rail reserve could be used from Reid St to the HCRT. Ideally the HCRT will start in Reid St. Can't use the rail reserve around Melbourne Road. Could use some sections of northern section towards Albury. Need to keep railway line reserve open in case of war. Rail reserve is only 3m wide. A challenge in developing a link between Wodonga and Beechworth is the gradient – it's all uphill. Similarly, Yackandandah to Beechworth though the bush is uphill too. Wodonga to Yackandandah Road has high conservation value. Trails developed in new subdivisions are all off road. HCRT - needs surface improvements from Whites Road to boundary. Kiewa River to Pollards River is flood prone - need a boardwalk. There may not be a sufficient budget to develop linkage improvements from Wodonga in the short term. Should consider a link between Killara and

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>Bonegilla and then an Albury link.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albury link could be made along off-road next to Riverine Highway, then Lake Hume to Bellbridge and on to Apex Park. From there, Haywoods Bridge across Hume Bridge Wall. • Commuters want to go across the causeway and recreational cyclists want to go across other bridge. • Some cyclists will undertake an off-road ride with family one day and then a road ride the next by themselves or with other on road riders. • Cycle tourists include road cyclists. • Need to identify the needs of commuters too. • Airlines and V/Line both have potential to bring trail riders / walkers to the region. • Planning principles: community benefit - connects towns/areas; • Design principles: consistency of surface; develop a hierarchy of trails; identify minimum standards. • Planning issues: cultural heritage management plans; flooding. • Marketing principles: utilise QR codes and modern way finding techniques; describe the surface in marketing materials so trail users know in advance the type of surface they will encounter. • Maintenance: Council contributes \$5K p.a. for maintenance of the HCRT. Council also does some work to reduce likelihood of flood damage and some general upgrades. • Communications: suggest that it occurs though tourism boards. • Could potentially link up the valleys to Falls Creek. • Need to identify how Albury links in. • Murray River Tourism - Wodonga maybe leaving this organisation. • Wodonga is a key hub in the Hume region. • There is a mountain bike park at Mt Beauty. • Wodonga at capacity with accommodation. • Council wants to develop a different tourism product for the City. • Bonegilla linkages – narrow roadway – VicRoads and Goulburn Murray Water own the waterway – pedestrians walk on the side of the road.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Wodonga Invited Reps Meet	30/10/2012 14 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McMillians Track – Omeo to Woods Point may be a regionally significant trail. It is 220km long and has links to the goldfields [outside the Hume region]. • People using the Hume & Hovell Trail, which links all the way to western port in Victoria, often get lost in Albury due to poor signage. • Australian Alps Walking Track is a regionally significant trail • Major Mitchell Trail is another regionally significant trail. It travels from Adelaide to Sydney via Howlong. It seems to disappear in Bendigo. • Parks Albury Wodonga (PAW) has plans to develop trails from Wodonga – Waghuna, around Tangambalanga and also around the Lower Kiewa. • HCRT – section army base, huge rocks. • Talangatta > Sandy Creek > Huon has been well covered. • Kiewa flood plain – needs a boardwalk of 800m. Middle Creek prone to flooding. • Want HCRT to go to the railway station, but not past Bunnings and McDonalds. • Need better signage along the HCRT. • In relation to the HCRT, it is very difficult to navigate to Whites Road from the Visitor Information Centre (VIC). • Would like to acquire an old rail corridor for the HCRT Wodonga section. PAW is currently in discussions with VicTrack and believes that a lease may be granted soon. • Believe that a paved surface in town is appropriate. In town people will walk dogs. 2.5m width is the desired standard. • Car parking needed at Sandy Creek Bridge & Whites Road (the official start of the HCRT). • 10 year agreement exists with the three councils: Wodonga, Indigo and Towong. • A 10 tonne roller is used on the trail each year. • Wodonga City undertakes the \$5K of works itself, whilst the other two councils provide funds for maintenance. • May need more amenities along the trail in the future. • HCRT needs to be promoted differently – people need to know that it is steep east of Old Tallangatta. It is really suitable for more self-

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>sufficient riders, not for road riders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albury Mountain Bike – Nail Can Hill – Albury. Have partnered with PAW re: development of Wodonga venues. Beechworth MTB park is the closest significant park. PAW doesn't want segregated trails unless there is a risk to trail users. IMBA audited a 40km single track. PAW believes that only 3km should be single purpose for MTB riding. Want to develop both MTB trails and recreational trails. IMBA's construction standards will help to reduce ongoing maintenance costs. Trail will mostly use hand tools and will be built by volunteers. • Federation Hill in Wodonga is a linear MTB and recreational trail from east to west. It is well used. • Wodonga City Council hasn't identified the best spot yet for new MTB trails, but quite a few suggestions have been received from PAW, e.g. Mars Hill could be turned into a MTB mecca. Their preference is for Nail Can – can string loops together. • Could connect MTB areas in a loop using existing linear trails. • Vision is to start small, prepare a master plan and identify potential venues. Develop a linear trail to begin with and then add loops. • GHD report indicates that there is pressure on the ecology of Nail Can Hill. • Wodonga MTB trails primarily cater to locals at present. Usage has doubled in the last five years. • Lack of funds inhibits mountain bike trail developments. • WRENS – retained lands, linear reserves and linear corridors. • Significant natural features of the municipality include hills, the Murray River, Lake Hume and Wodonga Creek. • Could widen and seal shoulder on road to Yackandandah. • In Flanders, Belgium, there is an electronic tool called Fitzplanner whereby every road has a number and you can plan your route. Could consider the development of a similar tool for the Hume region. • Gaps in the network include Wodonga to Allans Flat Waterhole, Barranduda to Yackandadah, Mt Beauty, Bright, Khancoban, Mitta Loop, Talgarno

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>and Federation Hill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some great road rides in Indigo, Wodonga and Alpine municipalities. • <u>Principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost effectiveness ○ Community benefit ○ Maximize network for all users ○ Link into existing assets – access parking ○ Wow factor – natural features ○ Understand user profile ○ Trails designed in accordance with accepted standards ○ Safety ○ 2.5-3m wide trails ○ Visibility ○ Vegetation management ○ Environment – enhancement restoration ○ Multi – use ○ Challenging / variety. • Wodonga City Council will review all recreation plans by June 2013. GIS – don't have a map yet. • HCRT – east of Tallangatta – still working towards. Colac Colac. Bridges over river needed to get to Tangambalanga.
<p>Towong Shire Council – Staff Meeting</p>	<p>30/10/12 4 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus for Towong Shire Council is the further development of an accessible world class trail between Wodonga and Old Tallangatta (High Country Rail Trail). Priority one is the Wodonga to Huon section and the second priority is from Bellbridge to Granya. The long term plan may include continuation of the trail to Corryong. • Tourism has increased significantly in the Shire between 2001-2009: expenditure by visitors to the area has gone from \$2m - \$29m. Visitors are staying around 4 nights and are spending approximately \$67 per day. • Strengths of the area: adventure tourism, environment, self-drive opportunities for baby boomers, cycling, motorcycle touring. Visitors are always looking for new products. • Local gymnasium owner is starting to run some events linked to the High Country Rail Trail (HCRT). • A farmer has been noted driving along the HCRT frequently in the evening near Huon to avoid using the road. Some form of barrier may be required in this area. • Acknowledgement that Parks Victoria is under-

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>resourced in relation to tracks and trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burrowa Pine Mountain is a significant local attraction. It takes 4-6 hours to hike into the area. It is the largest monolith in the Southern hemisphere and contains indigenous paintings and lots of wildlife. Information needs to be provided at other Visitor Information Centres and on the internet. • Mitta Mitta offers good white water opportunities which could link into trail activities. • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community benefits ○ Benefits for local businesses ○ Benefits for both visitors and locals ○ Accessibility ○ Supported by Council planning ○ Assets planning (for replacement, maintenance, etc) ○ Promotion of indigenous sites and opportunities ○ Interpretation opportunities. • <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural Heritage Management Plan process and costs ○ Active rail lines ○ Maintenance costs ○ Declining volunteer numbers ○ Limited cycling culture ○ Logging trucks between Tallangatta and Corryong ○ Lack of signage on roads indicating presence of cyclists ○ Lack of businesses in towns that are considered to be tourism-friendly ○ Lack of trail related packages ○ Lack of leadership role by Council (could consider free bike hire, rickshaw, tandem bikes, fun and funky bike racks, etc ○ Insurance for bicycle hire businesses has been problematic in the past, but new scheme by Tourism Victoria is more viable ○ Need to show businesses how they can benefit from trails and packages • Granya is maintained by Parks Victoria and features a waterfall, public toilet, free camping and a hall. • Council is strategically developing recreation

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>centres around the Shire at Mitta, Cudgewa, Tallangatta and Walwa. Mitta Valley has developed a new recreation facility for major events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Victorian Bike Ride has previously been hosted by Tallangatta.
<p>Alpine Shire Council – staff meeting</p>	<p>31/10/12 5 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhance / promote natural features ○ Community benefit ○ Economic development ○ Used by locals ○ Connected to established infrastructure ○ Developed where people want to go ○ Sustainability ○ Linkages (low weighting – separate trail link from transport link) ○ Potential to attract reasonable user numbers ○ Political will of key stakeholders (e.g. Councils willing to put aside money for maintenance and development) ○ Council and stakeholder support. • Rutherglen to Wangaratta section of Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M) is estimated to cost around \$5m. • Priority projects for Alpine Shire are the development of recreational and mountain bike trails at the Hancock Victoria Plantations (HVP) site at Mystic Park near Wandiligong and an extension of the M2M trail to Harrietville (part of Cycling Central project). • The HPV site will feature 150km of MTB trails – 70km of these already exist on plantation land. This is a community-driven project with a willing land manager. • Funding has recently been received from Regional Development Victoria for a study to examine transport options in the Hume region. It has been auspiced by Indigo Shire Council. Transportation to the area is seen as the missing link. • Desire to disperse visitors across the region. • Need some clarification around the term ‘regional significance’ – does this relate to visitors, locals or both? • The funding agreement developed when the M2M was established stated that Councils must maintain the trail for 10 years. The trail is now

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>older than 10 years, but each LGA is still committed to maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some research in SA identifies the health benefits of trails. • Barriers - cultural heritage management planning and lack of resources by Parks Victoria. • On road trails should incorporate bike lanes when constructed. Instead, lanes are often added as a retrofit. Often on road trails receive less maintenance than an off road trail. • We need to take people off the roads and encourage them to ride bikes – this will help roads to last longer. • How do we maximise alternative transport options? • In relation to potential communication models, North East Tourism may be too specific. May need to consider Regional Managers Forum or Regional Leaders Forum (made up of industry and agencies). • Consider accessing Federal Government grants for trail developments, not just Victorian grants. • The Mt Hotham – Dinner Plain shared path is designed for cross country skiing, cycling and walking. Need to enhance the experience and raise awareness of this trail opportunity. • The Dinner Plain Master Plan identifies off road cycling as an opportunity. • The Bonocord Track, which was established 80-90 years ago, is not well used and could be improved. It has magnificent views of Mt Feathertop, Mt Bogong and Mt Buffalo. There is infrastructure at the beginning and end of the trail. • Big Hill Mountain Bike Park at Mt Beauty offers state and off road mountain bike competitions. • The Dirty Dozen Mountain Bike Paths are located at Mt Buller, Falls Creek, Beechworth, Bright and Mt Beauty. This is a nationally significant group of trails, with Mt Buller identified as the ‘hero’ destination. This group of trails needs to be connected by transport. • There is potential to provide equine linkages across municipalities.
<p>Falls Creek and Mt Hotham Alpine Resorts</p>	<p>31/10/12 2 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls Creek to Bogong offers heritage walks and huts either as day walks or walks of several days duration. • The Australian Alps Walking Track is State Government driven

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotham to Falls walk may not have the number of users or yield yet • Need to have some accommodation options on mountain open over summer • There is an active marketing campaign to promote walking at Mt Hotham over summer. Product is in place. Focus is on walking in preference to cycling. Walks promote engagement through the historic landscape. • Mt Hotham staff offer free tours on walking tracks. • Horse riding is not permitted on the trails at Mt Hotham. It is however allowed at Dinner Plain. • Mt Hotham launches its bushwalking season on Melbourne Cup weekend each year. • Gold mining and European history are attractors for bushwalkers visiting Mt Hotham. Walkers seem to understand this history and the added bonus is that there are still relics there. These walkers then tend to develop an ownership and greater appreciation of the area. • The 3 Peaks Challenge and triathlons bring in approximately \$1m to the Falls Creek over a one week period. • Two demountable camps have been proposed for accommodating walkers on the Wild Walk (to be developed by Parks Victoria). • Transport needs to be provided at the beginning and end of the Wild Walk. • Need to change Australian culture through marketing so that it is considered the norm to visit the mountains for walking, cycling, etc over summer, as is the case in Europe. This could result in a two season peak. • Mt Bogong walks should be included as regionally significant. • Need to extend the stone paving on the Razorback as it is starting to degrade. The plan should be to replace a little bit each year as other international trails do. • The 7 Peaks Ride could also be converted to a 7 Peaks Walk. Tourism North East is considering this option. • Some of the better known alpine walks include: Mt Hotham to Dinner Plain (12km); the Huts Walk – linked to the Australian Alps Walk (21km); Cobungra Ditch at Mt Hotham (12km linear or 18km circuit); Falls Creek to Wallace’s Hut Loop (7-8km).

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falls Creek has 45im shared single direction MTB trail (also suitable for walking) • Cooma and Bombala are currently developing MTB trails.
DSE – Forest and Fire Division	31/10/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSE has an annual risk assessment process, a signage strategy and walking trail guidelines. It is currently preparing a MTB manual. • Fire has been more of a focus of DSE in recent years, rather than recreation. • Budgets are limited and the Go For Your Life funding program was cut recently. It was used to undertake improvements on some trails. • DSE has its own cultural heritage officers • DSE is keen to be involved in trail development from its inception. • Whilst there are no specific horse riding trails in the area, people are permitted to use forest roads for equine activities. • Process for trail construction on DSE land: look at tenures and the zone; assess leases (Crown Land division); assess biodiversity and environmental impact and advise on appropriate construction method (Biodiversity unit); undertake a cultural heritage management plan; and then permit the community to comment on the District Action Plan. • There is no ‘trigger’ that identifies whether or not a toilet should be placed on a trail by DSE. It is really related to usage and health risks. Ongoing costs are very high for toilet maintenance and often cause a strain on budgets. • Consider developing a communication model in the Hume region divided into two areas – north and south. Representation should be from LGAs, DSE, DPI, PV, RDV. Trails groups should report to this group.
Mansfield Shire Council	1/11/12 2 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level consultations at the policy level are required with V/Line regarding the transportation of bicycles on buses and trains. It is not possible to travel from Beechworth back to Melbourne by public transport with a bicycle (unless it is a fold-up bike). It is unlikely that the private sector will fill this transport gap in the short term. • In order to engage businesses, we need to

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>present in a format that they can digest, i.e. this is what a trail means to a business in terms of \$, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we encourage existing or new businesses to support trails? Do we look at providing start up capital? • Need to develop a business model for trails. • Need to develop high yielding walking products. • Current planning and policy inhibits high yield wilderness accommodation development. • Investors are willing to invest, but as yet a suitable investment environment does not exist. • The key message contained within the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (2011) <i>An Inquiry into Victoria's Tourism Industry Report</i> is that the way public and private land is managed and regulated, especially in national parks, impedes investment in tourism. The report recommends that the Government should allow the development of tourist facilities in national parks by private operators (such as accommodation), providing that such a development complements environmental, heritage and other values, as well as provides public benefits. The Victorian Government responded positively to this recommendation. We now need to provide some direction about how this can happen and to identify definitive roles for the State Government, LGAs and businesses. • There are five horse riding businesses operating in the Mansfield area. There is a capacity issue in relation to the number of commercial licenses on public land. Some top end product is offered by Michael Watson and Charlie Lovick. Michael is trying to develop a cluster model (i.e. a cluster of trails rather than one linear trail) and uses trails along the Howqua River. The school market and day rides are still the most common products at present. • A MTB development has occurred at Gough's Bay on private land. • Craig's Hut is regionally significant and attracts large numbers of visitors. However, there are competing interest groups visiting this site. • A lot of the visitors to the Mansfield area are low yielding 4WD motorists and motorcyclists. Often these types of visitors reduce the experience for more high yielding visitors.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often the yield from visitors does not come back to the region. • Logging impacts on the experience of trail users, e.g. landscape degradation and road closures. • Some of the older logging areas may have good infrastructure for trail users, but there is limited planning in relation to usage of this infrastructure. • Parks Victoria is under-resourced. If the organisation was more empowered at the local level, it would be able to be more responsive. • Civil works have been completed on the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail (Great Victorian Rail Trail). The next priority is to focus on branding, interpretive opportunities and wayfinding. • Development of a link from the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Seymour (possibly along School House Road) is considered to be critical and is estimated to cost approximately \$3m. • The Great Victorian Rail Trail was able to retain a tree corridor for the trail. Although this was a more expensive option, it has provided a better quality experience for trail users. • The new seal of the M2M track is only 1.5m wide. • There is land available (water corridor) to extend the Great Victorian Rail Trail from Alexandra to Eildon. • Great Victorian Rail Trail has a 1:14 minimum gradients and is currently 134km long. There are good opportunities for people with disabilities to use the trail around the Seymour section of the trail. • The Epic at Mt Buller-Mt Stirling has been developed on land managed by both DSE and Parks Victoria. The branding of this trail as 'Epic' is likely to have a profound impact on the domestic market due to the recognition of this international branding. • The Razorback Walk has been identified as a trail with great potential, however, it still needs some more development. It does not appear to be driven by consumers as yet. • Trails need to have a personality, connections and infrastructure development • The Bluff / Craig's Hut is recognised as a signature horse ride. • Gradients of trails need to be standard and to

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>speaking the same language, e.g. ski trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Destination Sustainability Project involves all key stakeholders including land owners and businesses. • There are both short and long walks at Sheep Yard Flats that go through to the gold mining area around Fryers. There is an iconic looking cattle man's hut at Fryers.
<p>All Terrain Cycles (private business)</p>	<p>1/11/13 1 person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Terrain Cycles (ATC) has a shop in Mansfield and also on Mt Buller (in the village square) over summer. It offers MTB tours, skills clinics, camps and rail trail transfers (a 12 seater transit van and 3 trailers). • Shuttle service users need to book 48 hours in advance via email or phone. There is no online booking service. Marketing has been limited to date. • ATC has been granted a License to Operate in the alpine area. Mt Buller's commercial operators fees are approximately \$110 per year. • Need better paved safe off road trail around Mansfield that connect to the Great Victorian Rail Trail. A link from Alzburg Resort would also be useful. • Have developed a MTB track at Rifle Butts Rd, Mansfield. A large number of users visit the track on Monday nights. • There is a gap in the recreational and family level trail experience. • A huge number of people are using the Great Victorian Rail Trail and businesses are starting to see the economic benefits. • There is a lack of public transport in the Mansfield area. • ATC is launching its Bike and Brewery Tour in February. This tour is supported by Alpine, Indigo and Mansfield Shire Councils as well as Tourism North East. A helibiking tour is still to be launched. • Mt Buller needs more trails. Over summer it needs its hospitality enterprises and atmosphere to grow, i.e. a bar, nightlife and food operators. Arlberg and Cattleman's Apres Bar will open over 2012/13 summer, but they are both out of the way of the central village area. Would be good if Uncle Pat's opened.
<p>Mitchell Shire</p>	<p>2/11/12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council expects that the first draft of its trails

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Council – staff meeting	8 people	<p>strategy will be available in December 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st priority of Council is to develop a link from Tallarook to Seymour on the Great Victorian Rail Trail. The 2nd priority is to develop a link from Wandong to Heathcote via Kilmore – using some tramway land owned by VicTrack. Want to develop the trail next to the tramway. A ‘wish list’ priority is the extension of the trail from Seymour to Pyalong via Puckapunyal. • In relation to the Great Victorian Rail Trail (Mitchell Shire section), the whole surface needs to be improved, pinch points need to be alleviated and a better solution needs to be found for the star pickets. Crossings over arterial roads are often too narrow and too steep. There are some erosion and drainage issues along the trail and weed management is an issue. Some of the trail furniture has been stolen and vehicles have been seen using some sections of the trail. Flooding is a problem when trying to develop drop toilets. There is concern that some of the minor bridges could cause an injury to horse or rider if the horse slips. • There are not enough car parking spaces at the Tallarook trail head, particularly for horse floats. Perhaps land around the corner could also be used for parking. • In Seymour, parking could be developed at Goulburn Park. • Trawool Resort has a large car parking area and offers plenty of space for demounting. Could be worth providing yarding of stabling at Trawool for horse riders. • Some B&B’s along the trail are keen to develop yarding or stabling if it seen to be viable. • Tallarook Streetscape project, which will take several years to prepare, will provide for a more bicycle friendly community by incorporating more bicycle lanes and roll-over curbs. • Transfers to Melbourne area available from a Yea based tour operator for trail users. • It is very difficult to take bicycles on V/Line services. • There may be some angst in the Tallarook community if the Great Victorian Rail Trail is extended to Seymour resulting in Seymour becoming a trail head. • When the Great Victorian Rail Trail is extended to Seymour, there needs to be very clear line

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>marking from the train station to the beginning of the trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Victorian Rail Trail operates under an MoU. Each Council maintains its own section of the trail. Mitchell Shire uses a quad bike to inspect the trail and undertakes regular bridge inspections. A maintenance budget is in the process of being developed. • Additional signage is required along the Great Victorian Rail Trail to improve wayfinding. • QR codes could be used to provide interpretive information. • There is poor mobile phone coverage around the Trawool area. • A change to the name of the Great Victorian Rail Trail is being considered. • The Wandong – Kilmore – Heathcote proposed trail has some major challenges in terms of land ownership issues and ability to clear significant roadside vegetation. The trail could potentially go through High Camp, Willomaven and Kingsgate. Will be difficult to get access to land around Back Creek Road due to lots of studs in that area. Need to determine of how to get from Kilmore – Lancefield Rd to the other side of town where VicTrack land is located. VicTrack land restarts at Tootles St. Beveridge railway station is planned for development in the future. Therefore a link could be provided from Wandong to Beveridge to the Merri Creek Trail (in metropolitan Melbourne). There is also an opportunity to connect Wallan – Kilmore – Broadford – Seymour along VicRoads road reserve. • May need to increase rates to cover trail upgrades. • There are MTB trails on Mt Disappointment, but also many motorcyclists use this area too. • <u>Principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trails need to be a standard width – ideally 3m wide in a 10m reserve. ○ Provision of infrastructure needs to be considered, e.g. rest areas, toilets, parking areas and horse tie up areas. ○ Trails should be multi use and the surface designed for such use ○ There should be loops and linkages with connections to transport centres and housing

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trails need to be properly planned prior to development ○ Trails should be pleasant to use and create an enjoyable experience ○ Trails should be safe to use and emergency access (including emergency signage markers) should be used ○ Trails should adhere to minimum standards for areas such as connections at roads. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funds ○ Human resources ○ Lack of planning in relation to whole of life costs.
<p>Bicycle Network Victoria</p>	<p>8/11/12 3 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the extension of the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Seymour as the number one priority in the Hume region in relation to trail development. ● Many of the trails in the Hume region need to improve their linkages from the centre of towns to the commencement of the trail. ● Ability to transport bicycles on trains is a priority. ● Signage needs to be improved on many trails in the Hume region, including trail head signage and advertising of local businesses. ● Information about trails needs to be provided via the internet to help people pre-plan their visit, and also on trails themselves. ● Traditionally organisations have just marketed a trail, rather than the ‘experience’ that the trail contributes to when visiting a region. ● Need to consider developing partnerships with other organisations such as RACV. ● Accessibility of trails is holding the Hume region back in terms of trail development. ● Need to consider providing secure fenced car parking so that trail users are comfortable leaving their car somewhere while they ride / walk a trail. ● There are a lack of bicycle parks along trails, particularly at key business locations. ● Apps are supported as they are relatively easy to update. Could link apps to paid advertising and provide linkages to allow bookings for B&B’s etc. ● Should consider cross-promotion of trails – provide information about other trails along

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>each trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to change the name of the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • In order to secure funding for trail development, a feasibility study and solid business case is required. Feasibility studies will cost within the range of \$30-\$80K. Need to liaise with Councillors, MPs (on all sides), Rail Trails Australia, BNV, etc. • Potential to develop an on road cycle touring route around Lake Eildon. • A link from the train to Millawa could be popular. • The Tallarook to Yea section of the Great Victorian Rail Trail needs to be improved. Focus should be on improving what already exists. • Need to collect data on trail usage. Gippsland region uses infrared counters. These counters work off 3G and cost around \$5-\$7K to install. Information is received via mobile phone network. They also do a visual count once per year to provide details on the number of cyclists, walkers and horse riders, including the distance from towns. • Need to prove usage (where possible) for a reasonable period of time to develop a business case for trail developments / upgrades. • Most trail users travel by car between locations, however, ideally trails will be connected to public transport. • It is important to provide trails (or sections of trails) of different length so that there is something for everyone. • It would be great to increase visitation to the Alpine areas over summer by promoting trail usage. • The surface of the Great Victorian Rail Trail is not consistent. • Connections from hubs / town centres is very important on trails. • Hard copy maps and electronic apps should be provided for all trails. Deloraine in Tasmania has excellent podcasts along its trails. • Consider use of shuttles (using existing or new transport operators) in preference to building new trails in some areas. • HCRT needs a link into the Wodonga railway station. • Cycling and walking should not be seen in

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>isolation from each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Key criteria for a successful trail:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close to a community ○ Track record for tourism and a welcoming culture ○ Natural features, wineries, indigenous culture, European history ○ Green conservation (green corridor, flora, fauna, etc.) ○ Off peak community use ○ Strong community support, e.g. Friends of Group ○ Ancillary transport use, i.e. in areas where there are no existing footpaths.
<p>Regional Development Victoria</p>	<p>8/11/12 1 person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North East Victoria is seen as a mature trails destination. • Linkages are not worth developing if they are not going to be used. • The experience created on a trail is important so that it encourages trail users to return. • The Wodonga section of the HCRT needs to be improved. • SRV is focussed on creating commuter linkages and connecting communities. Report needs to reflect all different types of trails – tourism, commuter and connecting communities. • Need to understand that a trail is ‘an enabler’, not the total experience for visitors to an area. • Traditional industries have moved from many regional areas – tourism (and cycling tourism) can offer economic development opportunities. • Need to grow the HCRT • A link from Tallarook to Seymour is important on the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • The name of the Great Victorian Rail Trail should be changed. • It will be very difficult to develop a link between Kilmore and Heathcote as much of the VicTrack land has already been sold to private landholders. • From an RDV perspective, iconic or nationally significant trails include Great Ocean Walk and the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Trails of statewide significance include Mt Buller MTB Park, Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail and potentially the HCRT. Regionally significant trails include Great Victorian Rail Trail, Lake

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>Mountain-Marysville Trail, Great Southern Rail Trail. Below that are local level trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been goodwill generated for the Marysville trail, but that has yet to be converted to increased usage. • We need to ensure that we are building tourism product, rather than just moving people from one trail to another. • MTB riders are constantly seeking new experiences. • Experiences should have a focus on quality. • Data collection is important in order to support developments and to attract funding. RDV needs evidence of high usage levels. <p><u>Barriers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sealed paths available for riding on • Narrow width of some trails, particularly at key intersections / crossings • People’s knowledge and perceptions of trails and opportunities • Limited packaging of trail opportunities • Poor marketing of trails, particularly to the domestic market • Lack of programs to teach people the skills required to enjoy trails (like the Mt Buller MTB program for women) • Lack of consistency along an entire trail in relation to surface and signage • Lack of bicycle friendly businesses • Lack of suitable supporting infrastructure, e.g. secure car parking, toilets, bike wash down areas, etc.
Tourism Victoria	8/11/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Victoria is developing a trails strategy in 2013. • Tourism Victoria focuses on 4 iconic walks: Great Ocean Walk, Grampians, Croajingalong and the Australian Alps. • Platforms have been established for camping for the Australian Alps Walk. The second stage will involve engaging potential trail users to determine the exact route and the types of facilities required (e.g. huts, eco-lodges, etc). The walk is for 3 days and 2 nights. There are tracks leading to the platforms so that tour operators can drive in and set up camp in advance. Some operators have already expressed an interest in doing so.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on trails in Victoria is hard to get hold of. Tourism Victoria will address this issue in its Trails Strategy. Signage is also recognised as an issue. • <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to information, including maps, on the internet ○ Lack of marketing of trails internationally ○ Difficulties in transporting bicycles on public transport ○ Ability to access trails, e.g. from a train station to the trail head and knowing whether or not there are shuttle services ○ Great Victorian Rail Trail needs to change its name.
State Bodies	8/11/12 5 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Victorian Rail Trail is too narrow in some sections. • Star pickets at the Mitchell end of the Great Victorian Rail Trail can be problematic for horse riders and there are several pinch points. The fence should be 1m off the path, but at present it is right next to the path. • Larger car parks are required along the Great Victorian Rail Trail to cater for horse floats. • Ideally there would be a separate bridle path running alongside the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • Horse and cycling groups in South Australia have merged to further develop shared trails. • There are 35,000 pony club members in Victoria – this is largely untapped market in relation to trail usage so far. • Opportunities exist to develop horse package deals along trails or family packages involving some horse riding and some bicycle riding or walking. • Need to encourage and develop end of trip facilities along trails, some of which will be operated by private businesses. • Accommodation is limited along the Great Victorian Rail Trail. There is no camping available along the trail, only in towns. Many people only want to ride 20-30km per day, so the gap is too big. • There is a general lack of information available in regards to trails. • Improved maintenance is required on many trails to ensure that the surface is kept in good

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>condition and foliage is kept trimmed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some shires are reluctant to develop trails because of the ongoing maintenance requirements and costs. • Connections to public transport are considered to be very important. • A priority is to extend the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Seymour. • Generally there is less user conflict on rail trails due to the straightness of the trail. • More market research is required for trails to ensure that decisions are based on evidence and to determine what works and what does not. • Many trails are poorly signed or hidden in towns, thereby limiting their 'walk up trade'. Need signage on highways to show location of trails. • Business support of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail has been good. • Additional work is required on the Great Victorian Rail Trail to bring it up to a better standard. • There is a need for a centralised knowledge base for all types of trails. Tourism Victoria could potentially take on this role. • Some bridges on trails are over-engineered. • Need to approach trail development from a regional perspective where possible. • Opportunity to use some trails for horse riding events. • In relation to marketing, we need to find out where people are coming from so that we can better target them. We also need to know how local people find out about trails. • Council websites are critical marketing tools for trails. • Need to consider cross-promotion of trails and locations. • Consider developing discount cards attached to trails. • Wayfinding can be an expensive undertaking on regional trails. Apps are a cheaper alternative – and can also cross-promote trails on apps. • Parks Victoria has placed trail maps on avenza (a mobile application). From avenza, hema maps can be downloaded as PDFs. These maps are GPS coded so that your location can be identified.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Shire of Strathbogie – staff meeting	12/11/12 3 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All rail reserves in Strathbogie are active. • There are rabbit holes on a lot of trails in the area, hence there is a concern that horses could break their legs. • Trails are generally not considered core business and the Council budget is very limited. However if funds were available, Council may put an application in for trail development. • There is potential to develop a MTB park at Balmadle Hill on Crown Land near Euroa. A service centre featuring fuel and fast food outlets recently opened at the foot of Balmadle Hill. This could form the trail head as there are already toilets and car parking at this site. Ned Kelly’s cave is in this area too. • Strathbogie Ranges is a popular place to ride for road cyclists from Shepparton and elsewhere. • Crystal Mines, in the south east of the Shire features a number of walking tracks managed by DSE and Parks Victoria. • Ride the Ranges is an annual event held in the municipality. Triathlons are also held at Nagambie to Kirwin’s Bridge. • There is a boardwalk in Nagambie that is popular with walkers and the 6km Apex Track in Euroa. • Council wants to link the Nagambie regatta centre to a boardwalk. As there are private land issues, it is considering placing a floating boardwalk on a concrete bridge on the inside of the lake to help create a full circuit of the lake. Goulburn Murray Water would need to be involved in this proposed development. • Michelton Winery is currently developing 6km of tracks along the Goulburn River, as well as starting up a boat tour for visitors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Infrastructure needs to have a long life, low maintenance requirements and be reasonably vandal resistant ○ Infrastructure and trails need to be aesthetically pleasing ○ Trails need to be located in close proximity to where people live ○ Don’t develop trails in areas where locals have established themselves for peace and quiet ○ Need to ensure emergency vehicles can access

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>the trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider developing vantage points for officials and spectators, as well as viewing areas along MTB trails. • Signage and interpretation are important components of trails. • Support development of apps. • Need to establish a budget for map development.
<p>Shepparton City Council – staff meeting</p>	<p>12/11/12 6 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council’s first priority is to finalise stage two of the Dookie Rail Trail and its second priority is to develop the Rushworth to Murchison Rail Trail. The idea is to extend both of these trails into Shepparton and other towns such as Mooroopna. The Rushworth to Murchison Rail Trail would ideally cater for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It could connect to Bendigo via Whroo Forest. The Dookie Rail Trail could ultimately connect to Lake Mokoan and the Winton Wetlands in Benalla Rural City. • Council is keen to connect its small towns by trails (preferably off road and sealed trails). • There have been no feasibility studies undertaken as yet for any trail developments. • Council is currently updating its maps of on road cycling routes. • Shepparton region is very popular for road riders. • There are MTB tracks at Mt Major on land leased from Melbourne University and also on Crown Land. There is a desire to develop MTB tracks closer to Shepparton. • A strength of the region is equine tourism. Tatura Park has stabling on site and could potentially link to a trail. World class show jumping opportunities exist at WB Hunter Reserve. • There is potential to develop a trail from Shepparton to Seymour via Nagambie along the Goulburn River. • <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The rail reserve at Dookie is still classified as an active rail line ○ A lease to the boundary of Campaspe Shire

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>(for the proposed Rushworth to Murchison Rail Trail) has not yet been secured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funds ○ Environmental considerations ○ Time to undertake planning ○ Concern over possible weed dispersal from horses along trails. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Could consider negotiating with V/Line to place the bicycle carriage on different trains throughout the region so that it is shared around. ● Need to move away from branding every trail as a rail trail. ● Need to standardise trail signage and trail markers across the state. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Considers whole of life costs ○ Provides good quality surfaces that are well maintained ○ Ensures that trails are feasible ○ Supported by the community ○ Encourages development of partnerships ○ Provides social, economic and environmental benefits ○ Protects and enhances the environment ○ Uses materials that are sourced locally, contain embodied energy, are recycled, long lasting and limit maintenance costs wherever possible ○ Ensures that interpretive opportunities are provided in a meaningful and engaging manner – natural, indigenous, European history ○ Develop trails where people want to go ○ Provides suitable supporting infrastructure ○ Ensures that land zoning is suitable so that businesses can start operating as soon as a trail is developed ○ Provides for emergency access ○ Designed to cope with flooding ○ Highlights unique features of an area. ● Need to develop a communication strategy for trails. ● Apps and QR codes would be good – perhaps developed at a state-wide level rather than at a municipal or regional level. ● Need to have a state-wide grading system for trails.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that everyone understands who is responsible for trails infrastructure maintenance and development if built on Crown Land. • The Goulburn River is Greater Shepparton's jewel.
Shepparton City Council – invited representatives	12/11/12 5 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dookie Rail Trail is a 5km long sealed trail located on land owned by VicTrack and leased from Grain Corp. It was established 9 years ago. Horse riding is not encouraged or discouraged, but due to position of trees along the path, space is very limited for this type of trail activity. The second stage of development is to Cosgrove Golf Course, a distance of 7km (1.4km of this trail is on Moira Shire land). Moira Shire not interested in this development at this stage. • Potential to develop a walking / horse riding track from Dookie to Mt Major, Saddleback and Skyline Walk. • Great Victorian Rail Trail has an issue with fences too close to the trail. Mitchell Shire didn't really plan for horse riding on the trail, despite the fact that there are a large number of horse owners in the Shire. Long grass is an issue at the Mitchell end of the trail. • Proposed Rushworth to Murchison Rail Trail is likely to feature a surface comprised of gravel and granitic sand. There is no feasibility study at this stage, although the route has been identified. \$90K has been pledged by City of Greater Shepparton. Could develop a loop around Doctor's Swamp. Some key attractions include prisoner of war camp near Murchison, Whroo goldfields, irrigation infrastructure, old railway bridges and great views over Waranga Basin. • Potential to develop a trail from Shepparton to Nagambie via the Goulburn River. • Michelton Winery is currently installing 6km of trails along the river. • Potential to develop a loop on the Great Victorian Rail Trail along Greenslopes Rd – Homewood Rd – Northward Rd, with a potential connection to Nagambie. • Mobile phone reception around Trawool is poor. • Report needs to focus on investment in health.
Wangaratta	13/11/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's number one priority is the

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Rural City Council – staff meeting	9 people	<p>development of a link along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M) from Oxley to Whitfield via the King Valley. Its second priority is a trail between the Warby’s and Glenrowan. Other priorities include: Wangaratta to Glenrowan, Oxley to Glenrowan and a bridle trail in Wangaratta incorporating the Turf Club, TAFE, Adult Riding Club and the equestrian centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail is deteriorating. Additional infrastructure such as shade and seating needs to be installed. Sealing of the trail has resulted in considerably less maintenance costs. There is a desire to widen the trail at the Alpine Shire end of the trail; however, this will be an expensive exercise for Alpine Shire. • <u>Challenges:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintaining good relationships with landowners ○ Keeping on top of maintenance and managing entire rail reserve (e.g. controlling vegetation abutting Crown Land leased by farmers along trail) ○ Dealing with capacity issues at the Bright end of the trail (it can get too busy at times) ○ Attracting cycle friendly businesses. • <u>Barriers:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintenance costs ○ Funding for promotions • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creation of loops ○ Sustainability ○ Create trail where people want to go ○ Ensure that there are interesting destinations along the trail ○ Adherence to standards ○ Safety ○ Trail width a minimum of 2.4-2.7m ○ Supported by the community ○ Accessible for people with disabilities ○ Easy for people to access ○ Well signed and promoted ○ Suitable infrastructure such as car parking. • There are no designated MTB clubs in Wangaratta as yet, although MTB occurs

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>throughout the Shire in places such as the Warby's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to better promote the Bicentennial Trail. • Council is keen to link communities. • Report should incorporate a renewal program. • Need to improve signage in towns. • Need to maximise visitor yield. • Tourism North East is now promoting the M2M Trail. There appears to have been a decrease in the amount of promotion occurring. • El Dorado – Woolshed Valley – Beechworth is suitable for horse riding. • Potential to link Glenrowan to Winton Wetlands near Benalla.
Wangaratta – State Government key stakeholders	13/11/12 2 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process to develop trails on Crown Land is still unclear. • DSE is keen for other organisations to look after trails on Crown Land reserves where possible. • DSE is under-resourced and its budget varies each year, hence ongoing maintenance can be problematic. • Catchment Management Authorities manage land on behalf of DSE. • CMA is keen to work with other organisations to promote environmental messages – trails provide good opportunities for such partnerships. Friends of Groups may be ideally positioned to take on such a partnership. The Biodiversity Fund (Federal Government grant) can provide finances to assist with trail developments. • Some DSE processes / considerations prior to developing trails: Cultural Heritage Assessments; roadside vegetation / biodiversity assessments; flooding zones; works on waterways permits. • Almost any track / trail in a riparian area will be covered with water at some stage. Consider future-proofing vulnerable areas such as bridges and boardwalks through the construction of rock armoury. • If trails are 'done on the cheap', it is highly likely that they will cost a lot to maintain.
Wangaratta – invited representatives meeting	13/11/12 8 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray to Mountains Committee of Management has developed a plan regarding installation of interpretive signage, but lack of funding has prevented much work from being

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>undertaken. A heritage and environment study was undertaken several years ago.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to install emergency markers on trails – perhaps stencilled on in a pale green colour. • All major highways should have sealed shoulders for their entire length. Oxley Flats Rd needs a sealed shoulder to create a loop, as does Tarrawingee and El Dorado bac kroad. • People want to be able to transport their bicycles by public transport. Some bus contractors in the local area will permit bicycles on board, but not all. When rail works occur on railway line, the V/Line train is replaced with buses, which then means no bicycles can be transported. • Need to consider accessibility for older adults using trails, e.g. disabled car parking spaces near trails. • Arts Rutherglen is currently installing art work along the M2M Rail Trail. • Potential to develop a trail (connected to M2M) from Whitfield to Mansfield via the King Valley (preferably off roads) and from Rutherglen to Bowser (possibly on road). • Signage is important – particularly to trails and for interpretive purposes. • Maintenance of trails is important. The Oxley to Milawa section of the M2M is in poor condition (related to tree roots). • Signage from the Wangaratta railway station to the start of the M2M trail in Apex Park is difficult to follow. • Potential to develop a horse riding trail from the equestrian centre in Shanley Rd to unsealed roads and potentially all the way to the Warby's. • Recreation Advisory Group could investigate demand for horse riding trail in the area. • Road cyclists want additional training routes. • Council often leaves table drains in a bad state, with lots of rubble hidden under long grass – this poses a hazard to horse riders. <p>• <u>Barriers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding • Lack of volunteers. •
Wangaratta – public meeting	13/11/12 2 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horse riding is popular in Mt Pilot National Park near Chiltern and El Dorado. It is also a good

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>area for MTB riding with an on road loop to El Dorado.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a proposed loop to El Dorado planned for the M2M trail. Signage is required to let people using M2M know what attractions and businesses can be found in El Dorado. • There is a very narrow road between El Dorado and Tarrawingee – this would need to be widened if cyclists are encouraged to use this road. • Mobile phone coverage is poor around El Dorado. • Apps are supported. • Need to be able to take bicycles on to public transport. • There is huge potential for horse riding on separate bridle paths in the region. • Consider running events on trails to promote healthy lifestyles, e.g. a music event incorporating small towns along the trail. • Signage on trails should say how long it is likely to take to get from point A to point B. • Trails need to be marketed to families. • Consider running programs to increase people’s awareness of trails, e.g. some sort of world record. • There are no cycling programs in Wangaratta secondary schools. • Schools are likely to use trails if they are given a package, e.g. an all inclusive camp package. • Need to encourage use of trails as an alternative to a gym and also as an alternative source of transport, instead of relying on parents, etc.
<p>Mt Buller – Mt Stirling Alpine Resort</p>	<p>14/11/12 3 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Buller-Mt Stirling has been awarded the only EPIC MTB trail in Australia. The MTB park features lots of x-country trails and several downhill trails. The resort intends to construct a jumps park and is in the process of developing indigenous interpretive materials and signage. The trails are multi-use. The infrastructure has been developed, now want to make sure that it’s a premium product. • Lots more operators intend to open over the 2012/13 summer period to cater for cyclists and walkers. TBJ will open its bistro. • The Summit Nature Walk on Mt Buller is a 4km half day walk suitable for families who are keen

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>to have a facilitated camping experience based in an apartment. Guided walks are offered on Mt Buller on weekends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 7 Peaks Challenge was originally designed for cyclists, but is now being marketed as a cluster of walks. Collective marketing of such experiences is important. • There are self-guided interpretive walks on Mt Stirling (13km / ½ day) and 70km of ski trails. • Could potentially develop a regionally significant designated horse riding trail (loop) starting at Telephone Box Junction, going over the summit of Mt Stirling, stopping at Craig’s Hut before returning to the starting point. • Existing horse riding operators come over to Craig’s Hut from Mt Stirling, using a whole lot of different trails such as fire tracks (often shared with other user groups). • The Alpine Resort has been improving horse infrastructure on Mt Stirling. • A location is not considered a product until it has everything, i.e. accommodation, food outlets, entertainment, attractions (such as trails), transport and information. • Lauriston and Timbertop schools walk in the area, but not on formal trails. • The Alpine Resort is in the process of improving maps for the region. • Trail managers need to keep abreast of trends and developments and aim to provide a quality, contemporary experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic yield ○ High number of users, or potential for high number of users ○ Existing infrastructure ○ Identified need ○ Support of key stakeholders ○ National or world class potential ○ Iconic attractions ○ Builds on existing features / enhances a significant feature / creates better access to significant features ○ Creates a sense of journey ○ Has a sense of personality ○ Trail users come away with more knowledge / education ○ Trail users develop a spiritual connection with

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>the trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing a safe and comfortable experience. ● <u>Challenges:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessing sufficient funds ○ Environmental restrictions in the alpine region and the need to provide the most minimal impact possible on the environment ○ Balancing environmental concerns with the desire to allow people to enjoy and appreciate the natural environment ○ Poor public transport options over summer, however the owner of the Merimba store provides some transportation and there is a Melbourne based operator offers MTB packages that include transport ○ Cultural heritage management processes ○ Providing consistency of product for trail users, i.e. trail standard at Mt Buller vary ○ Adherence to an agreed maintenance schedule by all partners ○ Grading trails and cyclists so that there is a shared understanding of expectations and conditions, e.g. there was an assumption that the Copperhead Trail would be used by downhill MTB riders, so it was classified as a green (easy) run, however, it was used by x-country riders who found it extremely challenging and potentially beyond the ability of some. ● There is demand for events and facilitated tours. ● Communication with other alpine resorts and trail managers needs to occur so that events can be spread out, i.e. the development of an events calendar. Having state and national downhill events two weeks in a row has a major impact on condition of the trail. ● Horses are not permitted on Mt Buller, but are allowed at Mt Stirling. Camping is also permitted at Mt Stirling.
<p>Mitchell Shire Council – invited representatives</p>	<p>14/11/12 5 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The formerly proposed Bendigo to Kilmore Rail Trail needs to be renamed as the Wandong to Heathcote Rail Trail within the Mitchell Shire. Potentially this trail, if developed, could link to the Great Victorian Rail Trail, the O’Keefe Rail Trail in Bendigo and possibly to Melbourne if it is extended south to Wallan and linked with the Craigieburn bypass trail.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a large estate being developed between Craigieburn and Beveridge (Mandalay) near the Craigieburn bypass (on Amaroo Rd) and another called Lockerbie estate north of Donnybrook. These estates could be linked to Wallan if a trail is developed. • As yet there is no feasibility study to support the Wandong to Heathcote trail. It is expected that some sections of this trail may be difficult to achieve as much of the rail reserve has been sold off to private landholders. • The proposed Wandong to Heathcote (W2H) trail received in principle support from Mitchell Shire in 2009. An additional meeting was planned with the Shire in December 2012 to further advance planning and to seek support to undertake a feasibility study [this meeting occurred]. • Trail surface on W2H is likely to be tertiary quartz gravel. Horses will be encouraged on the trail. First section to develop is Wandong to Kilmore to connect those two communities. • There will potentially be rail heads at each end of the trail (1. Bendigo, Epsom 2. Kilmore East, Wandong, Heathcote Junction and Wallan), so that trail user planning would have the option to arrive by train at one end, ride the trail and then catch a train at the other end if desired. Freeway road access from Melbourne and airport to both ends of the two connected trails, adds to the ease of user accessibility and connections. • A link to Seymour on the Great Victorian Rail Trail would be a 'nice to have' • Cycling culture in Mitchell Shire is limited at this stage.
Mitchell Shire - public meeting	14/11/12 3 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers struggle to maintain trails and find it difficult to source adequate funds to do so. • Good design will reduce maintenance costs. • Consider developing a loop from Greenslopes Rd to Gin Gin Road (near Yea tip) and link back to Seymour and possibly onto Nagambie via Northwood Rd. This would be an on-road loop. • Most trail riders on Great Victorian Rail Trail have been observed to be people around 60 years of age. • Farmers have built fences too close to the Great Victorian Rail Trail. This makes it very difficult to bring in bob cats and graders. For future trails

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>and extensions, it is critical that the full entitlement (trail width) is retained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitchell Shire has recently installed culverts along the Great Victorian Rail Trail. Guttering and drainage previously installed caused some damage. • Seymour connection for the Great Victorian Rail Trail could be via Lighthouse Park (a 350 acre park for horse riding), with the construction of a bridge over the river near Telegraph Rd. School House Lane may not be wide enough to develop a link. Another option is the development of a track through Three Chain Reserve or a trail along the river. • Trains are now stopping in Tallarook in the mornings. • Trail bike riders need a designated area so that they do not use the Great Victorian Rail Trail.
<p>Benalla Rural City Council – staff and Winton Wetlands Meeting</p>	<p>15/11/12 5 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winton Wetlands (WW) development is the priority of Council. The 8,000 hectare site consisting of wetlands will provide linkages to Benalla, Glenrowan and Wangaratta (on the M2M Rails Trail). A master plan has recently been prepared. Stage one involves the development of a series of trails and boardwalks suitable for walking, riding and potentially horse riding with some supporting infrastructure. Stage two involves the refurbishment of the yacht club, development of camping sites, etc. • Council and WW will undertake the design work. • A Friends of WW has been established, comprising of scouts, canoeists, star gazers, bird watchers, etc. • Recreational Van market should be tapped into – there are currently 360,000 members in Australia. They will need large parking areas and dumping points. • Good opportunities exist for indigenous involvement by the Yorta Yorta Nation at WW through guided tours; growing and harvesting of indigenous food; establishment of a co-op incorporating interpretive information and art / craft sales; story telling; etc. It is envisaged that the bushtucker trail planned between Albury and Echuca will go via WW. • Council is working in partnership with businesses in the area to construct a cycling trail from Benalla to WW (via new industrial areas).

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The land between Benalla and WW has been secured from DSE and Goulburn Murray Water. It is a bit rough at present. • WW will connect to Benalla via Nelson Rd; to Wangaratta via Taminack Gap Rd. • Need to ensure that there is signage on the freeway to direct through motorists to the WW. • An underpass under the freeway may need to be constructed to provide a linkage to Mansfield eventually. There is a road reserve all the way to Mansfield along the Midland Hwy (Swanpool) which is currently used by walkers. • Council has had an inquiry from someone who wishes to operate horse trail rides through WW. • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainability ○ Connectivity ○ Identity ○ Diversity ○ Personality / integrity / opportunity to immerse yourself ○ Something for everyone ○ Soft adventure ○ Economic potential ○ A number of access points ○ Designed to capture the through market as well as those who pre-plan their visit • Support development of apps and QR codes. • Regional strengths: connections to farms and local produce. • Benalla Rural City wants to create an off road network of trails through the city to the north, south, east and west. • A major challenge is to encourage businesses to become more bike friendly and to freight goods purchased by trail users. Council is considering providing relevant businesses with a bike pump and a repair kit. • Tallas Winery at Dookie has bikes available for hire – there is potential to link the Dookie Rail Trail to WW. • There are a limited number of bicycle racks in Benalla, however a lockable bike station is being developed in Denny St. • Council would like to establish a bicycle hire program similar to the blue bikes in Melbourne through its Transport Connections Program. This way visitors to Benalla could get off the V/Line

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>train, swipe a card and pick up their hired bicycle at the train station, before returning it just prior to their departure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to transport bicycles on public transport is important. • The Benalla Police and Benalla Rotary Club refurbish bicycles and give them to local children. • Need to consider width of trailers towed behind bicycles and size of horses when designing barriers on trails such as gates. • Funds may be accessed through Regional Development Australia, Small Towns funding, TEFR funding, etc.
<p>Murrindindi Shire Council – staff meeting</p>	<p>15/11/12 5 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council intends to undertake a feasibility study to develop a link from Alexandra to Eildon on the Great Victorian Rail Trail. This would also help improve safety for pedestrians walking between the caravan parks near Thornton and Eildon, if considered feasible. • Potential to extend trail from Eildon to Mansfield via Jamieson eventually - part on a trail and part on the road. • Very little support for Marysville – Buxton – Taggerty – Narbethong trail concept. • Could potentially connect Lake Mountain to Lake Eildon via Bullfight and Torbreck with onward connections to the Bicentennial Trail. • The Tall Trees Trail has links to the Bicentennial Trail, however, there are a few kilometres missing. • Would like to connect Kinglake to the Bicentennial Trail. • There is a section of trail between Kinglake and Toolangi that is missing. • MTB trails exist at Kinglake on Parks Victoria owned land under powerlines. Some downhill and x-country MTB tracks also exist at Lake Mountain and around Eildon. • Parks Victoria does not allow horse riding in Kinglake National Park. • A product audit has been undertaken for the Great Victorian Rail Trail – examining location of toilets, seats, signage, etc. A branding, interpretation and wayfinding strategy is about to commence. • Extension of the trail from Tallarook to Seymour is required.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a timber tramway in Alexandra which could be an added attraction to track / trail users. • Need to be able to book bicycles onto V/Line trains. • The majority of Council's effort in regards to the Great Victorian Rail Trail has been on construction. It now needs to change its focus to marketing. It also needs to set aside more funds for maintenance – a realistic level will be able to be determined within 12 months when ongoing costs are more likely to be known. • Each of the three shires along the Great Victorian Rail Trail has different capacities. Murrindindi has the largest section of the trail to maintain. Council staff believe that a different model should be implemented for maintenance contributions as at the moment, Murrindindi pays the largest amount, even though Mansfield reaps the benefits. Staff believe that counters on the trail may help to determine a different methodology. • Technical cooperation on the Great Victorian Rail Trail between the three shires is very good. • Having three different tourism regions adds a layer of complexity. The Murrindindi section of trail is promoted via Goulburn River Valley Tourism. • The Great Victorian Rail Trail is a good trail, but not yet a good product for business investment. • Could link the Yarra Valley High Country Touring Route (Healesville to Wodonga) to tracks and trails via its car route. • <u>Planning principles:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainability ○ Economic development ○ Community benefit ○ Connects known destinations and creates a more steady flow of tourism (i.e. helps level out peaks and troughs) ○ Should be appealing to young people, older people and families ○ Accessibility ○ Access points ○ Genuine historical points of interest ○ Provision of suitable infrastructure, e.g. car parks for floats, hitching rails, yards, troughs, etc ○ High quality landscape.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that star pickets are a problem on the Great Victorian Rail Trail for horse riders • Need to encourage establishment of Friends of Groups • The Tallarook to Trawool section of the Great Victorian Rail Trail is heavily infested with Pattersons Curse. • Landcare group is undertaking an environmental assessment of the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • Yea Wetlands are being developed adjacent to the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • Need to retain good relationships with landholders who abut the Great Victorian Rail Trail. <p>Update: 3/7/14 – Current Council Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing management and promotion of the existing Great Victorian Rail Trail including implementation of the marketing and signage strategy • Undertaking a study which explores the feasibility of an extension of the Great Victorian Rail Trail from Alexandra to Thornton and Eildon, an initiative of the Advancing Country Towns Program. • Advocacy to the State and Federal Governments in relation to the need for financial assistance, not only for capital but also for management and maintenance responsibilities - in the same manner that road maintenance is supported - to enhance the tourism and economic benefits to the region. • Advocacy to State Government authorities to create an environment that is more conducive to private sector investment in complimentary infrastructure/development to encourage increased visitation. • Consideration of a feasibility for the proposed Giant Trees Trail from Murchison Gap to Snobs Creek and Eildon via Toolangi, Murrindindi Scenic Reserve, Lake Mountain and Mt Torbreck. • Consider the growing significance of the Buxton Mountain Bike Trail and the concept of a Great Forest National Park.
Rail Trail Bike Tours	15/11/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail Trail Bike Tours (RTBT) provides bike transfers, bike hire and all inclusive bike tours. It only takes phone bookings at present as online

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>bookings are too restrictive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTBT plans on introducing a 3 trail trilogy – 3 rail trails in 8 days (HCRT, M2M and Great Victorian Rail Trail). Day 1 – Wodonga to Tallangatta on HCRT; Day 2 – Tallangatta to Beechworth via road; Day 3 – Beechworth to Bright; Day 4 – bus to Mansfield; Day 5-7: Mansfield to Tallarook. • Clients are generally retired couples – usually travelling in a group of 6-8. • Most clients spend 3-4 days on trails and then an extra day in the region. • 70% of clients only want to ride in one direction on a linear trail. • Believes that there is a big demand for bikes on public transport. About 50% of clients would have used public transport to get to and from the trail if it was available. • There is very little data about trail riders, their needs and their usage of trails. • Estimates that trail users spend \$200-\$250 per day on trails. • Links between trails are important – helps to create a world class destination that is more appealing to international visitors. • Need to change people’s ideas about careers in hospitality – need better training and better customer service levels. There is a role for Tourism Victoria in relation to training of people working in the tourism industry. • Businesses need to understand the culture of cycling and the potential value to their businesses. Businesses should sell items that cyclists are seeking, e.g. energy gels, etc. Businesses need to be trained to be more bicycle friendly on the Great Victorian Rail Trail. • Secure parking would be useful at or close to trail heads. • Trail users need to be educated about tank water etiquette. • Great Victorian Rail Trail is not ‘business ready’ yet. Additional accommodation options need to be provided in Yarck if the trail is to grow. • Several businesses in the region have got together to develop an app which will feature all accommodation and services on the one website. It is important to promote both the destination and the businesses in that area. • Three tourism bodies in Hume is not ideal. • There should be a body that promotes cycling

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>and one that promotes walking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion would be more successful if given to private enterprise, i.e. handed back to business owners. Collaborative marketing is important. • We need to give people a reason to come back to the region. We need to understand that they come for the whole experience, not just to ride or walk a trail. • Consider the development of a rider passport whereby riders get a stamp at each railway station along the trail. The passport becomes a collector's book with a map and history of the trail. The passport would cost around \$10 to buy, with profits funding the maintenance of the trail. Each passport would contain a slip which could be sent in to win a prize – this helps create a database. Businesses could also advertise in the passport to help increase revenue. • Audax Classic held in Bright each Australia Day attracts around 2,500 riders and 7,000 spectators.
<p>International Mountain Bicycling Association of Australia</p>	<p>29/11/12 1 person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mt Buller EPIC ride is the only EPIC trail in Australia. It allows riders to go from the top of the mountain to the bottom on a purpose built trail. It is suited to intermediate and advanced riders. • Should consider the development of 'gateway trails' in other locations, e.g. Mt Beauty. These trails cater for beginners. Valmont Bike Park in Boulder, Colorado, USA, cost \$4m to build and is located on a 20 acre site in town. It provides opportunities for children on training wheels, cycle cross, pump, dirt tracks, oval shaped tracks, etc. • In Rotarua, New Zealand, MTB tracks have been built by hand by correctional services workers. Businesses in Rotarua are very bike friendly. • Gap in the Australian MTB market is for long distance trails where a company drives riders to the top of a mountain and they spend most of the day riding down it, e.g. Moab Whole Enchililada in Utah, USA, where riders descend from high alpine areas into the desert by mountain bike in one day. This trail is not downhill specific. Although it is rated as a double expert, most intermediate riders would manage. It does not require full face mask and armour to ride.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider connecting Falls Creek to Mt Beauty so that longer rides can be developed and marketed as the only place in Australia where you can have such an experience. • Need also to cater for people who are not so fit and introduce them gradually to mountain bike riding – starting out in back country areas. • Better to focus on downhill riding with the Dirty Dozen trails where riders are transported to the top of the mountain, rather than riding to the top themselves. • Baranduda could be a significant MTB park, given that it is essentially a greenfields site. • Ideally MTB parks would be accessible from public transport. Hence the need to transport bikes on public transport needs further lobbying.
Outdoor Education Group (provider of outdoor experiences and camps)	21/11/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OEG is one of the largest employers in Murrindindi Shire and provides outdoor education experiences for 25,000 young people each year. • Supports extension of Great Victorian Rail Trail from Alexandra to Eildon and is prepared to contribute financially to this development. Potential to then connect from Eildon to the Warburton Trail. In the short term, low use tracks through the bush could be used to make this connection. • Would like to see huts developed along the Great Victorian Rail Trail (like in Norway) that are staffed by a lodge manager and provide food. Community groups could operate these huts. • Would like to see some more off road unpowered campsites along the Great Victorian Rail Trail. Need to highlight existing commercial and non-commercial camping opportunities on all marketing materials. The camping site at Bonnie Doon is not suitable when there are high winds. Campsite operators need to be trained so that they understand what constitutes a good camping spot (i.e. not right next to the toilets and not right next to a noisy freezer in a camp kitchen). • OEG has built 3km of trails from Marysville to Taggerty River using a local bob cat operator. The cost of developing this trail was significantly below commercial costs.

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
Warby Walkers	4/12/12 4 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like a north south route developed in the Warby Ranges as a designated walking track. Warby Walkers are happy to assist Parks Victoria to develop this trail. • Acknowledge that Parks Vic is under-resourced. • Needs to be an off road connection between Rutherglen and Wangaratta. • Bogong to Falls Creek should be a key focus area of trail development. • Would like to see backpacker style accommodation developed near trails, with transport to take people to trail heads. • Facilities in some areas are so poor that people no longer use them. Need to focus on upgrading a section at a time. • A park ranger in the Warby's has negotiated with Booze Winery to develop walking trails through its property to a nearby waterfall. • The Oxley Whitfield section of the M2M may be hard to develop as a lot of the rail easement has already been sold to private landholders. There is not enough space for an off road trail all of the way. • Access to water along the Australian Alps Walking Track is the main issue. Would like to see a shelter constructed every 10-15km featuring a wall, a roof, a water tank and a drop toilet (like the Bibbulman Track in Western Australia). Hotham and Falls Creek are the most used areas of this trail. The rest of it is quite under-developed at present. Wonganaran Wilderness is too environmentally significant for a trail. Need to investigate legislation to determine where trails can and cannot be developed. • Potential for historic bridle trails to be redeveloped: Tolmie-Buckland Mining Bridle Track (previously used by Chinese miners to travel between Tolmie to the Buckland Valley – this could become a 3-4 day walk) and Wonnangatta-Bennies Bridal Track (previously used by farming families in Wonnangatta to travel to Wangaratta). These could be linked.
Australian Trail Horse Riders Association	19/11/12 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA) has 30 affiliated trail riding clubs in Victoria. • Bicentennial Trail is 5,000km long. It is the largest unbroken horse trail in the world and

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>there are campsites every 25km. The Victorian end is the most spectacular. In relation to Hume, the trail goes through the Marysville area. Just outside the region it goes through Dargo and Omeo. The Australian Alps Walking Track crosses the Bicentennial Trail at certain points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fires have taken their toll on parts of the trail. • Trail can get very busy on weekends with 4WDs and trail bike riders. • Most riders travel an average of 25km per day comprised of a half day of riding and a half day allowing your horse to have a pick, so that you don't need to carry horse food with you. • Lots of the Bicentennial Trail is on 4WD tracks. Mt Terrible is very steep for horses, but there are loops around it. Signage along the trail is quite poor. Triangular markers are nailed to trees at intersections. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Design criteria:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bridges need to be constructed so that the a horse's hoof cannot slip between a crack ○ Well defined tracks and signage are important ○ Surface needs to be well drained ○ Surface should be natural earth ○ Creek crossings need to be easy to negotiate – anything more than 1m depth is too risky ○ Provide information about weed dispersal on signage, brochures and internet sites (refer to ATHRA website) ○ Access to water is critical – troughs, dams, etc. ○ Need car parking for horse floats at trail heads (although often horse riders will start their ride at a private property as they know their vehicle and float are less likely to be damaged in their absence) ○ Need access points at regular intervals along the trail to allow people to do short rides ○ Need shorter loop rides to the trail from towns ○ Yards for horses aren't a necessity – a camp night line has less impact. • Generally a trail ride will comprise of 5-15 people on horseback. Often these people will share a horse float to get to the trail head. • Great Victorian Rail Trail needs to have • Horses may be frightened by MTB riders, as they often don't hear them coming. Similarly 4WDs

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>are travelling faster all of the time due to technological advances with these vehicles.</p>
<p>Action Bike Ski (private business)</p>	<p>7/12/12 1 person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates a sports shop in Yarrawonga and canoeing trips on Lake Mulwala at Bundalong (east of Yarrawonga). • At present doesn't see a lot of people canoeing and don't think that canoeists are necessarily high yielding visitors. • Would like to see a trail built from Yarrawonga to Bundalong, potentially along NE Water's water pipe. However Moira Shire is concerned about the risk and the cost of developing a bridge across the waterway. • Would also like to see a trail developed from Yarrawonga to Wangaratta via the gas line easement. • Would like to see a trail east of the Ovens River – Boorhaman – Murray Valley Highway to Warrabilla - Bundalong - Yarrawonga • Would like a link from M2M to Moira Shire to increase local revenue. • Would like to see more sealed commuter trails in Yarrawonga as there are very few footpaths and on road bicycle lanes in some areas. Feels that this would encourage more children to ride to school and develop an interest in recreational cycling.
<p>Friends of the Bendigo-Kilmore Rail Trail</p>	<p>10/12/12 2 people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempting to develop a Wandong to Heathcote Rail Trail to connect to the O'Keefe Rail Trail (Bendigo to Heathcote). As yet the group does not have a feasibility study. The organisation primarily focuses on lobbying, but feels that it needs to focus more on marketing. Mitchell Bicycle Users Group (MBUG) is a joint supporter of the Wandong to Heathcote Rail Trail. • The age profile of the Friends of Group members sees the majority in the older age brackets – need some younger volunteers. Acknowledged that volunteer recruitment takes time. • Limited communication has occurred in the past between City of Greater Bendigo and Mitchell Shire Council staff, regarding trail developments. • Options proposed, where access to privately owned former railway alignment land is unavailable, is for the trail to be constructed on bush tracks or within road reserves. For the Kilmore to Heathcote Junction section of the proposed trail, the majority of this land is owned

LOCATION	DETAILS	DISCUSSION
		<p>by VicTrack with the remainder of the former railway land privately owned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to link to Wallan and onto new Craigieburn bypass trail into Melbourne. • Need to influence the Urban Planning Group that has taken over growth planning on behalf of Mitchell Shire. • An option of linking this trail with the Great Victorian Rail Trail, would be to utilise the low traffic Pyalong to Tallarook rural roads (i.e. Pyalong-Seymour Rd plus Tallarook-Pyalong Rd) initially, with other connection options at Kilmore to be investigated.
Tourism North East	February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism North East is focussing on 3 pillars – food, accommodation and nature based tourism (including trails). • Keen to link three major rail trails together. • Provide support to new operators. • Biggest focus from marketing perspective is digital platform. Developing a website that serves local government authorities. Use e-marketing, social marketing and template marketing from Tourism Victoria. Cooperative approach to marketing works best. • Believe that people are willing to drive an hour to experience activities in the region. • Regional tourism bodies all need to work together.
High Country Horse Operator	February 2012 1 person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 horse riding operators currently use area in which the proposed Mt Stirling Horse Trail is proposed. • Howqua Feeder Track may be more authentic and historically significant than the proposed Mt Stirling Horse Trail as it has gold mining relics, lots of river crossings, spectacular scenery and leads up to huts in the Alpine Park. • Two horse riding businesses in the area currently use Telephone Box Junction to Craig's Hut route. • Would be good to incorporate demountable accommodation along the proposed trail.

7.0 Written Submissions

The following written submissions were received during the project outlining proposed track / trail developments desired by community groups and individuals:

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
1	25/10/12	Maxine Brockfield	Chief Executive/DON Upper Murray Health & Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link High Country Rail Trail from Tallangatta to Corryong
2	2/11/12	Adrian Twitt	Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Advisory Committee and Warby Range Bushwalkers Committee Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of a north-south walking track through the Warby Range (We recently have conducted a three day walk of this nature promoting the Warby Range). Currently there is no track of this nature except at the southern end. • The need to restore/upgrade the Australian Alps Walking Track most of which goes through the Hume Region to a standard which will attract a greater number of people. It has the potential to be a track of national and international standard. Many sections are not maintained or signed.(Both of these would require National Parks involvement as they are largely in NPs) • I would also like to indicate that the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail cannot be completed in its initial concept unless the section of trail from Rutherglen to Springhurst is developed along the former railway track.
3	29/10/12	Allison Skinner	Yackandandah resident, Albury worker and a regular cyclist commuter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to offer my strong support for development of the strategy and offer my suggestion that the strategy has a strong focus on cross-region (including interstate) linkages. • I am a strong advocate of improving transport networks for cyclists and more sustainable modes of transport. I believe there would be a large number of Yackandandah residents who would cycle (more) regularly to Albury if a safer route existed. I am sure the same would go for Beechworth-Albury commuters. • I note that RDA is already a partner in the development of this strategy. Pending the

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				date of strategy completion, the new round of RDA funding for regional infrastructure seems an ideal source of funds for implementing the project's recommendations (funding linkages with NSW networks).
4	30/10/12	Lennie Lister	Tourism Officer, Destination Rutherglen	<p>1. Extension of the Wahgunyah-Rutherglen Rail Trail to Chiltern. The current 9km section of trail is a great centrepiece for local cycling, and well utilised by visitors and locals alike. That said it is limiting in that it is only 9km, and we see a link with Chiltern as the solution.</p> <p>Currently those wishing to cycle the 20km to Chiltern are directed by a series of on-road markers via the relatively quiet Cornishtown Road, through the Chiltern Box Ironbark Forest (fully sealed road) and into Chiltern itself. Whilst a quiet country road, there are a number of blind rises and narrow sections that give rise to some safety concerns. Our ideal scenario is the construction of an off-road (roadside) cycling trail that follows this same route.</p> <p>This would create a trail of 30+ kms linking Chiltern, Rutherglen and Wahgunyah, and in terms of access provide a safe and direct route for train commuters hopping off at Chiltern – the potential of this element alone is incredibly exciting. Importantly this ride would also incorporate the great natural assets in the region from the Box Ironbark State Forest around Chiltern to the Murray River at Wahgunyah.</p> <p>Whether the trail extends from Chiltern to Beechworth is not necessarily our place to comment, but I don't think the region is disadvantaged by not linking to the main spine of the MMRT. Also worth noting that the relatively sharp climb from Chiltern to Beechworth no doubt appeals to a completely different class of cyclist who isn't necessarily looking for a 'rail trail' experience.</p> <p>We are not against the extension of the existing trail along the Rutherglen-Springhurst line as proposed by the guys from the Springhurst Butter Factory, though the Chiltern route ticks more boxes for more stakeholders (principally cyclists!).</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				<p>2. Completion of the Lake Moodemere loop in Wahgunyah. A priority project for the Wahgunyah Progress Association, the proposed Lake Moodemere loop has our strong endorsement. Continuing from the existing Wahgunyah-Rutherglen rail trail the Lake Moodemere loop follows the Sunday Creek (a tributary of the Murray) from Wahgunyah, traverses through a stand of native forest reserve, follows the course of the Murray for a short distance to Lake Moodemere, a scenic Murray River fed lake of great cultural and ecological significance. From Lake Moodemere cyclists could continue by road into Rutherglen, or loop back into Wahgunyah via an existing bush track and re-join the Wahgunyah-Rutherglen trail.</p> <p>This option has huge appeal for us in that it is a natural extension of the existing trail, adds much needed off road product to the region, and incorporates key natural features in the Murray River and Lake Moodemere. The Lake Moodemere element also adds cross market appeal being a significant indigenous site, haven for bird watchers and venue for numerous water sports.</p> <p>3. Infrastructure We have a pressing need to build infrastructure along our existing trail to remain competitive with neighbouring regions and meet the expectations of visiting cyclists. This includes signage (business, directional, entry/exit points), shelters and picnic tables, interpretive signage/pause points), mapping and digital resources and some sort of identifier for our on-road loops that set out from Rutherglen (currently 8).</p> <p>I think it safe to assume we are not alone here. We would welcome some sort of centralised resource where operators/associations could access detail/pricing/specifications and other advice on such items. We have limited funds like all tourism groups, but if such assistance was available and easy to access we would be more inclined to self-fund some infrastructure upgrades rather than wait cap in hand for the next grant opportunity to come along.</p> <p>Whilst listed as three projects the result would of course be one significant trail of approximately 45kms with great sealed and off-road options, easy entry and exit points</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				and good access by car and rail.
5	30/10/12	Simone Hogg	Manager Community Culture, City of Wodonga	Some priorities for the High Country Rail Trail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linking of rail trail to the Bonegilla Migrant Experience (safer crossings etc for Children) • signage from rail trail to the Bonegilla Migrant Experience • better signage and linking from Wodonga to Gateway Village • trail marketing strategy promoting tourism opportunities
6	31/10/12	Rohan Christmas	President Albury Wodonga Cycling Club	<p>This is the route planning scheme used throughout Belgium and Holland. http://www.fietsnet.be/routeplanner/default.aspx</p> <p>It is real simple to use. You type your desired starting locality into Zoek Locatie. For example Roeselare. You then click on a number then another and so on.</p> <p>You then have a bike route and you can print the route or upload it into your GPS device. Most road cyclists have such devices these days.</p> <p>The trick is that intersections each have a number and these intersections are chosen so that they connect three (or more) segments. These segments are chosen so that they are quiet roads suitable for cycling. At these intersections there are these signs. They show the intersection number the direction of the adjoining intersections and sometimes a designated route.</p> <p>Standard intersections along the segments have confirmation signs like these.</p> <p>Such a system should be relatively easy to set up in our region and it would be a huge aid to help promote cycling tourism in our region. There is also no reason why the same system couldn't be used for mountain bike paths and fire trails in our region.</p>
7	2/11/12	Wayne John	Health and Wellbeing Officer, Mitchell	I think it useful to factor health into the rationale supporting trails. This can link directly to national and state health priorities particularly as regards chronic disease prevention, reducing the prevalence of overweight/obesity and promoting physical activity. I have compiled a

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
			Shire	preliminary health snapshot on Mitchell shire which you are welcome to use. It includes a higher prevalence of overweight/obesity in Mitchell and a higher prevalence of chronic disease compared to state average. These two are linked as cause and effect factors. I don't know how the data on physical activity is derived as 35% not meeting the PA guidelines is actually exceptionally good. The PA guidelines are for 150 minutes of moderate and vigorous exercise per week. Moderate exercise is sufficient to cause a noted increase in respiration and heart rate. Using a trail could be a way of achieving the PA guidelines and as an offset for chronic disease.
8	6/11/12	Frank Kinnersley	Administration Manager / Secretary Rail Trails Australia Inc	<p>The rail trails we would suggest could be considered and further supported are:</p> <p><u>High Country Rail Trail</u> Currently open between Bandiana and Old Tallangatta with the recent opening of the Sandy Creek Inlet Bridge But significant difficulties at the Kiewa River flats Needs further development on the rail alignment for a safe connection to the Melbourne to Sydney Rail Service (the corridor is currently available) and east of Old Tallangatta to include the highest elevated sections of line in Victoria</p> <p><u>The Great Victorian Rail Trail</u> This has recently been completed and has many attractions There will be several opportunities for enhancements as user number grow The horseriders particularly feel adequate provision has not been made for them in some areas but great opportunities exist</p> <p><u>Murray to Mountains Rail Trail</u> This is Australia's best known off road walking and cycling trail While the main spine of Wangaratta to Beechworth and Bright is well established it would benefit from upgrades to accommodate the high usage The recent Wangaratta to Oxley section could be supported to develop more of the corridor to Whitfield The Rutherglen to Wahgunyah section can be connected to other parts so users can travel</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				<p>significant distances away from traffic</p> <p>The <u>Murchison to Rushworth RT</u> has significant potential</p> <p>The <u>Dookie Rail Trail</u> would provide a much needed facility in that area</p> <p>Then there is the <u>Bendigo to Kilmore Rail Trail</u>; the Kilmore end is in the study area. This would be a unique trail with a regular train at each end and with a little more trail could connect to the extensive Great Victorian Rail Trail</p>
9	14/11/12	Fiona Smith	Resident in Trawool Valley near Seymour (Mitchell Shire)	<p>Trawool Valley and opportunities for tourism off Greenslopes Road - the entrance to our 6.6 km track is identified in the Shire of Mitchell Draft Fire Management Strategy as a fire track to be maintained and established, identified as "Smith's track". As the track is across granite soil, it is highly erodible and prone to degradation easily. However, there might be a synergy between establishing and maintaining a firefighting track and any horseriding access track. (Photos attached).</p>
10	14/11/12	Gerry Laws	Secretary Alexander Timber Tramway	<p>The Alexandra Timber Tramway ("the ATT") is a tourist railway and museum based in the former Alexandra Railway Station precinct. The group started in 1968 as the Alexandra & District Historical Society. The tourist railway operates under the Rail Safety Act 2006 and the Tourist and Heritage Railways Act 2010 and associated Regulations and is accredited by Transport Safety Victoria (TSV). The ATT was incorporated in 1985 and has managed the precinct since then. Further information is available on our website www.alexandratramway.org.au.</p> <p>Our displays help tell the story of the people who lived and worked in the Rubicon Forest, when the sawmills were located deep in the forest from the turn of the 20th century until around 1953. The Timber Tramway also preserves technologies that have largely disappeared, such as modern sawmilling machinery and techniques. The light railway or tramway was the transportation technology that made the bush mills possible and without it, the history of the Rubicon Forest would not have developed in the way it did.</p> <p>The Alexandra Timber Tramway has grown over the past three decades into an important local</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				<p>tourist operation. Entirely developed and staffed by volunteers, it has been self-funding apart from some small grants for capital works. It makes an important contribution to the district tourism industry and increasingly, the ATT has become a de facto interpretive centre for the Rubicon Historic Area.</p> <p>The Timber Tramway has initiated a steering group to explore the potential for developing a masterplan of the precinct that will be driven by the ATT. The masterplan would take into account linking the Rail Trail to the existing Timber Tramway & Museum, amenities and associated infrastructure. It will also explore opportunities to optimise the use of existing buildings, as well as recommending future building and infrastructure needs. The plan would include recommendations for linking into a proposed Alexandra-Thornton-Rubicon-Eildon combined walking, cycling, bridle trail. A plan developed over the past five years details recreating the original tramway back towards Rubicon, with Phase 1 terminating at the junction of the Goulburn Valley Highway and Lethbridge Street. There are existing guidelines compiled for Transport Safety Victoria that are intended to act as a resource in the initial stages of developing a rail trail on an operational tourist and heritage railway (THR) corridor.</p> <p>It will also take into consideration other users of the precinct including the Alexandra Racecourse, Alexandra Golf Club, Alexandra Lapidary Club and the Eildon Woodworkers Guild. Similarly, it will identify the best way to link the precinct, complete with parking, toilets, cafe, extended timber transport museum, retail experience, etc to Alexandra. This would maximise the positive impact provided in particular by visitors to this significant regional attraction cluster.</p> <p>The ATT is of the opinion that any extension of the rail trail should also consider the further expansion of the tourist railway network.</p>
11	16/11/12	Ant Packer	Community Ranger Parklands Albury Wodonga	<p>With an increase in general enquiries about the High Country Rail Trail over the past few months, in the lead up to the official opening of the Sandy Creek Bridge, Parklands Albury Wodonga, Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group and Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group have taken this opportunity to seek feedback from the general public on type of trail surface that would be appropriate for the location and to attract the appropriate type of visitors.</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				The overwhelming feedback is that a sealed / paved surface between Wodonga and Tallangatta would generate return visits. Given the remoteness, lack of services and steeper grades, the feedback is that a gravel surface would be adequate from Old Tallangatta through to Cudgewa, with an off road link via Colac Colac to Corryong.
12	20/11/12	Bonny Schnorrenberg	River Connect Education Project Officer, Greater Shepparton City Council	Want a path from Mooroopna, across the Kialla bridge to the new Shepparton Botanic Gardens. A second path is from KidsTown on the Causeway to Gemmills Swamp East Mooroopna.
13	6/12/12	Ben Morgan	Trail user	<p>In the survey, I answered several questions about the Great Victorian Rail Trail, the track I have used the most. One limiting factor that I would have liked to point out was public transport is somewhat poorly timed. There is a bus along most of the trail every day; however, the short gap between arrival and departure from Mansfield makes it very difficult to walk a meaningful length of trail, unless it is done at great speed (it also makes a day trip to Mansfield somewhat pointless). It would perhaps be useful to encourage the bus company to give a longer layover time at Mansfield, thus increasing the appeal of the Great Victorian Rail Trail to walkers.</p> <p>Another thing I would like to bring up is the role of public transport. I appreciate that people who prefer not to drive are a minority, but a significant (and growing) number of people will travel by public transport to tourist attractions – if such transport exists. Additionally, public transport can be combined with car travel, allowing the walker / cyclist (I have seen bikes taken on buses to Warburton) to walk / ride a greater distance then travel back to their car by bus or train – thus allowing them to see more of the trail.</p> <p>Another system of tracks that I would like to walk, but probably will not be able to, is the Murray to the Mountains network near Wangaratta. Like many people, I am somewhat time poor in that I find it difficult to take time off work for multi-day walking; for this reason, most of my hiking is done as day walks on weekends. Although the lengths of the various sections would make it ideal for walking as a series of day walks, the utterly useless timetable for the</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				<p>Wangaratta – Myrtleford – Bright bus makes it impossible to do so. On Saturdays, the bus returns from Bright after a very short stop. This bus timetable does not seem to have been devised with anything in mind other than minimising overtime for the bus driver: it deposits passengers back in Wangaratta two and a half hours before the next train to Melbourne departs. Again, slightly improved bus connections would be of use to walkers. An even better option would be a mini-bus with bike trailer run, say, one Saturday a month – a service of this type is offered on the East Gippsland Rail Trail (a charter service already exists on the Murray to Mountains trail, but it is unclear if it is organised).</p> <p>The walking tracks in the far southern fringe of the Hume Region, especially around Marysville and Kinglake, also have poor accessibility due to infrequent (or non-existent) public transport. It is not possible to visit Marysville from Melbourne on a Saturday as there is no outbound morning / inbound afternoon bus service (there is one on a Sunday). There is no public transport to Kinglake at all, aside from a commuter bus on weekdays. Once again, it may be of worth recommending that a bus company undertake a trial to see how well such a service would be taken up by the public. Both towns are still trying to regain the tourism business lost after Black Saturday; surely being able to get there would help.</p>
14	6/12/12	Shayne Preer	Action Bike & Ski	<p>I have several ideas in regards to cycle/walking trails, Paddling trails and also perhaps a jet-ski trail. (I do an education day with NSW Maritime that involves a tour of the Murray, Ovens river and Backwaters). There is no reason why this couldn't be promoted to the tourists.</p> <p>My big plan would be for The Wangaratta/Bright trail to continue on to Yarrawonga with an intersecting trail from Rutherglen. I believe this to be do-able, but getting three shires or councils together would be harder than the actual construction.</p>
15	6/12/12	Ed Barry	Trail user	<p>I have ridden the Corryong to Colac Colac bike walking track for four out of the five past weekends firstly to get fitter, secondly to see if it was usable and more recently to see if it had been repaired.</p> <p>I think the current condition of the track is potentially dangerous and will damage tourism in the Upper Murray. This is very disappointing; especially with our Xmas season fast approaching.</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
				It is in urgent need of repair and should be graded and rolled to properly form and drain the track asap.
16	11/12/13	Dr Maureen Rogers	Resident and founding member of the Bendigo Equine Industry Cluster (which undertook an economic scoping study of the equine sector)	<p>Trails are of considerable interest to horse riders but they are not well advertised for horse riding use. There is a large cohort of women riders who would be particularly interested in the ability to follow well marked, organised trails which could take them on a journey for a few days - but they would need to know about water spots, accommodation / camping for horse and rider - and the tracks would need to have a verge wide enough to enable all users to get along.</p> <p>There is a huge number of horse people in this region - who probably use the trails that are near where they live... but it would be terrific to have access to wider opportunities via the web... to be able to plan a trip.</p>
17	10/1/13	Iris Joss	Resident	Would like to see several 5-15km loop tracks developed around Corryong emanating from the one location, e.g. Mt Elliot or Mittamatite.
18	11/1/13	Peter Mitchell	Member of the Mitchell Shire Environment Advisory Committee, Secretary of the Broadford Land Management Group, convenor of the Friends of Mount Piper and committee member of BEAM Mitchell	<p><u>Great Victorian Rail Trail:</u> This is a wonderful trail, but the final result (to date at least) is disappointing. The rail reserve is very wide and contains corridors of old trees in many places. But much of the trail is reduced to a very narrow track between fences (and even some diversions around some sites where landholders have built on or close to the original easement). This fenced-in situation detracts from the feel of the rail trail as a trail through the country side. The opportunity for a separate horse trail has mostly been lost. Where horses are sharing the trail, there will be issues of safety and track quality for cyclists and horse riders. And the opportunity to create a wide and sustainable vegetation corridor has also been lost. Most of the vegetation along the trail is outside the fenced area and is likely to deteriorate with grazing resulting in gradual loss of vegetation. The corridor needs to be at least 40m wide and preferably the full width of the easement to allow regeneration and reduce ecological "edge effects".</p> <p><u>Heathcote Railway Trail:</u> This starts at Heathcote Junction and ends in Bendigo. Some sections</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
			Environment Group	<p>towards Bendigo are already built as a rail trail and there has been interest in extending this further south. In Mitchell Shire, the easement is mostly intact and has high conservation value in many sections including the High Camp Reserve and Northern Highway/Ladder Hill Road to Tooborac. The section through Kilmore has gradually been lost to other developments and alternative routes are needed through the area. There are some suitable reserves and little-used road reserves that would be suitable. The old rail reserve has great potential as a rail trail and conservation corridor. As a rail trail it offers a long weekend ride with rail connections at both ends. As a conservation corridor, it has great potential. Local Landcare Groups with other local groups and agencies have been developing the Piper Biolink between the Cobaw Ranges and Mount Disappointment. The nearest point to the Cobaw Ranges is a High Camp and this link has been enhanced recently by the purchase of property near High Camp by Trust for Nature. The Biolink is not a single east-west line across the countryside but a network of interconnecting patches and corridors meandering through the landscape, following roads and waterways and corridors created by private landholders and Landcare. The Heathcote Rail Trail is a great opportunity to create a long corridor through the Landscape that is away from roads. And the vegetation that is protected and enhanced along the corridor would greatly improve the experience of the ride.</p> <p><u>Mount Disappointment and the Tallarook Ranges:</u> These are large areas of forest close to the growing edge of Melbourne. I rarely visit them because they are dominated by 4WDs and motor bikes particularly at weekends. My last weekend trip involved two near-misses with speeding vehicles. Yet the ranges offer opportunities for a much wider diversity of recreational activities. There are even old railway cuttings and embankments from high on Mount Disappointment to Wandong. Zoning of vehicle-free areas and some controls on speeding vehicles are needed.</p> <p><u>Wallan Regional Park:</u> Finally, there are proposals from some local groups for a large Regional Park encompassing the southern end of the Wallan Swamp and Mount Fraser (the northern part of the swamp is now the Wallan East housing estate). According to plans for Melbourne, this area will eventually be surrounded by suburbs. Provision of a large regional park for recreation and conservation will be a wonderful asset that any politician would gladly acknowledge.</p>

No.	Date	Name	Organisation	Comments
19	24/1/13	Anita Seiter	Resident	Consider creation of a bike/walking track from Numurkah to Nathalia via the old railway line. Concerned about the amount of traffic on Katamatite-Nathalia road.
20	8/2/13	Peter Edgar	Cobram Barooga Kiwanis Club	Cobram Barooga Kiwanis Club is keen to develop a shared cycling / walking trail between Cobram and Koonomoo (site of the Big Strawberry). They have worked on this initiative since 2001 when they committed \$7,000 to the funding of a walking and bicycle strategy for Moira Shire. The Club received support from VicRoads (pending results of an environmental study), Goulburn Murray Water, landholders and community representatives for the development of a trail. However, the environmental assets study funded by Moira Shire and concluded that the proposed route was of very high conservation significance. DEPI has since stated that it does not support the development of the trail because that particular site has an environmental overlay. Members of the Club don't believe that the proposed trail will cause a major disturbance and believe that the trail will help to clean up the roadside. The club intends to lodge a planning application shortly to develop the trail.
21	3/7/14	Bob Elkington	Murrindindi Shire Council	<p>Clarified a few points in the report, provided an update of Council's current priorities and has asked that the Steering Committee note the following issues for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more up to date information on horse riding opportunities / infrastructure • Focus on the challenges of securing funds (internal and external) for maintenance and whole of life costs of tracks and trails • Consider how many tracks and trails should be built across the region as there may only be a finite number of tracks / trail users • Consider the need for additional signage and bike racks in towns to support tracks / trails • Consider the need for LGAs to seek funding to develop resources to promote private sector tourism infrastructure such as B&Bs, shuttle services, etc.

8.0 Funding Opportunities

It is not possible for municipalities and Alpine Resorts in the Hume region to fund the upgrade of all existing tracks and trails and the development of new tracks and trails on its own, due to resource limitations. Wherever possible, trails should be developed in partnership with other organisations, i.e. through Government grants or agreements with the private sector. Some potential funding opportunities to consider are:

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
<p>Department of Planning and Community Development Community Facility Funding Program – Minor Facilities Program http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/home/grants/all-grants/community-facilities-funding-program</p>	<p>Program is currently closed but is expected to re-open in latter half of 2013.</p>	<p>Grants of up to \$100,000 (where the total project cost is up to \$500,000) are available on a RDV \$2:\$1 Local basis. Only local government authorities are eligible to apply.</p>	<p>The Community Facility Funding Program helps provide high quality, accessible community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria. The program encourages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing sport and recreation participation • increased community access to leisure opportunities • better planning of sport and recreation facilities • innovative sport and recreation facilities • environmentally sustainable design <p>The Building Community Infrastructure category is designed to improve places where communities meet, interact and participate in sport and recreation. The Minor Facilities sub-category is for community groups, working in partnership with local councils, to develop or upgrade community sport and recreation facilities.</p>
<p>Department of Planning and Community Development Community Facility Funding Program – Major Facilities Program http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/home/grants/all-grants/community-facilities-funding-program</p>	<p>Program is currently closed but is expected to re-open in latter half of 2013.</p>	<p>Grants of up to \$650,000 (where the total project cost is more than \$500,000) are available on a RDV \$1:\$1 Local</p>	<p>The Community Facility Funding Program helps provide high quality, accessible community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria. The program encourages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing sport and recreation participation • increased community access to leisure opportunities • better planning of sport and recreation facilities

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
		<p>basis. Only local government authorities are eligible to apply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • innovative sport and recreation facilities • environmentally sustainable design <p>The Building Community Infrastructure category is designed to improve places where communities meet, interact and participate in sport and recreation. The Major Facilities sub-category provides funding to develop major sport and recreation facilities.</p>
<p>Department of Planning and Community Development Putting Locals First Program http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/home/grants/all-grants/putting-locals-first</p>	<p>This program is open for applications on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>Improved Local Infrastructure grants of up to \$500,000. If the grant is up to \$300,000, the funding ratio is: RDV\$2:\$1 Other (excluding land). If it is over \$300,000 to a maximum of \$500,000 the ratio is: RDV\$1:\$1 Other (excluding land). Up to 50% of the applicants contribution can be sourced from in-kind works.</p>	<p>The Putting Local First program, which is part of the Regional Growth Fund, is designed to enable regional communities to devise and deliver service and infrastructure responses which reflect local priorities. The key focus areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved infrastructure, facilities and services • increased business and employment opportunities • improved community connections • communities taking action on their own behalf <p>Under the type of activities it may fund, the guidelines state that the Putting Locals First Program will consider “pathway projects connecting communities and attracting visitors, such as rail trails and walking tracks”. It will not fund purchase of land or routine or ongoing maintenance activities of walking tracks.</p>
<p>Regional Development Victoria</p>		<p>No specific funding amounts</p>	<p>The Economic Infrastructure program aims to improve the productive potential of regional Victoria by strengthening regional industries,</p>

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
<p>Economic Infrastructure Program - Building Strategic Tourism and Cultural Assets</p> <p>http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/infrastructure-programs/economic-infrastructure</p>		<p>set, however, projects seeking more than \$5m need approval from the Minister and the Treasurer. Applicants are expected to make a financial contribution or source third party funding. Projects should maximise their funding support from a range of sources, including Federal and local government, community, private sector and regional organisations. 'In kind' contributions are not accepted as part of the funding</p>	<p>supporting and growing local economies, and providing opportunities for regional Victoria through investment in enabling strategic infrastructure. The four key funding categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing and sustaining regional industries and jobs • Transporting and transitioning local economies • Building strategic tourism and cultural assets • Energy for the regions. <p>The specific aim of the Building Strategic Tourism and Cultural Assets sub-program is to develop strategic, targeted tourism and cultural assets that grow the tourism and cultural product mix across Victoria, stimulate increased visitation, and enhance the liveability of regional towns. Priority will be given to projects that are considered to be of State or regional significance.</p> <p>Under the type of activities it may fund, the guidelines state that the Economic Infrastructure Program - Building Strategic Tourism and Cultural Assets component will consider projects that “facilitate nature-based tourism opportunities including iconic walks and cycling trails.”</p>

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
<p>Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts & Sport</p> <p>Regional Development Australia Fund</p> <p>http://www.regional.gov.au/regional/programs/rdaf.aspx</p>	<p>Grants generally between \$500,000 and \$15 million. Rounds 3 & 4 closed on 6 December 2012. Opening dates for the next round have not been released.</p>	<p>contribution.</p> <p>Maximum grant of \$15 million. Preference is for applications that demonstrate partnership funding of 1:1 for grant requests of \$5 million and less, and 1:2 for grant requests of more than \$5 million. At least 50 per cent of partnership funding must be cash.</p>	<p>Projects must benefit the broader region or other parts of Australia. Projects asked to develop a full application (following an expression of interest process) under Round Four were extremely broad and included initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability services • Sporting precincts • Airport expansions • Regional infrastructure upgrades • Saleyard developments • Community and tourism hubs • Libraries • Aquatic centre developments • Community environment centres & recycling projects • Arts and cultural developments • Rail Trail • Transport interchange
<p>VicRoads</p> <p>VicRoads Bicycle Facilities Program</p> <p>http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/SafetyAndRules/SaferRoads/BuildingSaferRoads.htm</p>	<p>Opens around September to November each year.</p>	<p>No upper limit specified.</p>	<p>VicRoads seeks bids from Council between September and November each year for cycling infrastructure projects. Each project is judged on its individual merit according to the following type of criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of route • Number of cyclists who use the trail • Crash factors • Proximity to schools, shops, recreation centres, employment, community hubs, etc • Links with other modes of transport • Level of support from Council.

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
			<p>Each project is entered onto a spreadsheet and weighted against the selection criteria at a local level, and then at a state level. Whilst the majority of projects are for on road bicycle lanes and associated works, occasionally VicRoads will fund off road trails if they can be justified, e.g. they remove cyclists from busy roads, they provide an important link, or they provide a safe route to schools.</p>
<p>Australian Department of Infrastructure and Transport Roads to Recovery Fund http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/r2r/</p>	<p>Allocations have been made through to 2014.</p>		<p>The Roads to Recovery Program operates uniformly across Australia. Under current arrangements, each council is guaranteed a share of the total available funding. Under simple administrative procedures whereby spending decisions are made locally and reported to the government, money is paid directly from the Australian Government to each council. Much of the administration is via the internet.</p> <p>Money provided under the Roads to Recovery Program is not intended to replace council spending on roads or State and Territory Government assistance to councils for local road construction or maintenance.</p> <p>Local councils nominate the repair and upgrade projects to be funded.</p>
<p>Department of Environment and Primary Industries Biodiversity Program http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/conservation-and-environment/biodiversity</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>The objective of this program is to enhance stewardship and catalyse positive changes in biodiversity outcomes across Victoria.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Program aims to address five broadly defined areas of effort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • securing key biodiversity assets such as threatened species populations or habitat, through both core protected areas and a mosaic of strategic linkages • implementing on-ground interventions such as weed and pest animal control that retain and enhance existing habitat to

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
			<p>ensure that it remains healthy and resilient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-establishing strategic populations and revegetating habitats in the locations that are needed to protect and connect important biodiversity assets • developing and disseminating essential knowledge to land managers to enable sound decision-making in policy development, program design, standards, investment and regulation • influencing key land managers to use natural resources sustainably and to manage threats appropriately.
<p>Department of Environment and Primary Industries Communities for Nature Grants http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/conservation-and-environment/biodiversity/communities-for-nature-grant-program</p>	<p>Last round closed on 19 December 2012</p>	<p>Small grants up to \$10,000</p>	<p>This funding program aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support practical community action in the environment • Create visible and lasting improvement • Foster greater enjoyment of the natural environment • Strengthen partnerships and participation by equipping communities with the ability, skills and knowledge to take action safely and with the capacity to optimise resources. <p>The grants are competitive and targeted towards local community groups and organisations, and are for projects focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and habitat preservation • Threatened species recovery • Sustainable management of native wildlife • Revegetation • Cleaning up waterways • Control of weeds and pest animals.
<p>Department of Environment and</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>Not specified</p>	<p>The Victorian Landcare Program aims to:</p>

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
<p>Primary Industries Victorian Landcare Program http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/land-management/land/landcare</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobilise community volunteers and leverage community action • positively influence the management practices of private landholders • build the skills and capacity of the community to undertake natural resource management activities. <p>The Victorian Landcare Program will invest in projects through a regional grants program. Victorian Landcare Grants will support Landcare and other community based environmental groups by funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-ground works that link local priorities to regional and State priorities • capacity building activities for land stewardship and on-ground change • projects that promote innovation through experimental trials and pilot programs • maintenance and start up funding to ensure a strong Landcare base across the state • opportunities to promote Landcare and increase membership and volunteer numbers. <p>There is no restriction on where on-ground projects can be located, however, preference is given to projects aligned with regional and/or state priorities.</p>
<p>Murray Catchment Management Authority Murray River Frontage Action Plan - On Ground Targeted Works www.malleecma.vic.gov.au</p>	<p>Opens in September each year</p>	<p>Most grants between \$10,000 and \$50,000.</p>	<p>Only available to preferred suppliers such as Council and Parks Victoria. Available for projects such as trail development, bollards, signage, etc. Priority in 2012 is for maintenance projects to repair infrastructure damaged in the floods. Council typically applies for 1-2 grants each</p>

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
			year, and Parks Victoria may apply for 10-20 projects per year. There is no limit on the amount of projects that may be applied for, however, funding amounts vary from year to year; hence there is no guarantee that all projects will be funded. Applications are assessed on their ability to meet a range of different criteria.
Murray Catchment Management Authority Murray River Frontage Action Plan - On Ground Grants www.malleecma.vic.gov.au	Opens in September each year	Not specified, although grants are generally fairly small	These grants are available to community groups and schools for works such as tree planting and bollards. Funding amounts vary from year to year; hence there is no guarantee that all projects will be funded. Applications are assessed on their ability to meet a range of different criteria.
Transport Accident Commission Community Road Safety Grants https://www.tacsafety.com.au/campaigns/community-road-safety-grants	Round 13 closes on 9 August 2013. Assessments usually made within eight weeks.	\$25,000 or less.	The program aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage community involvement in local road safety programs that are consistent with Victoria's Road Safety Strategy, <i>arrive alive</i> (www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au) • provide opportunities for local community groups to develop and implement effective road safety projects targeting specific local road safety issues.
Australian Government Caring for Our Country - Community Action Grants http://www.nrm.gov.au/projects/cag/index.html	Last round closed on 27 March 2012.	Grants are between \$5000 and \$20 000	Community Action Grants are a small grants component of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative that aims to help local community groups take action to conserve and protect their natural environment. The grants are targeted towards established local community-based organisations that are successfully delivering projects to support sustainable farming and/or protect and enhance the natural environment.

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
			<p>Community Action Grants funds activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging community participation in protecting, restoring endangered ecological communities • educating farmers in sustainable agricultural techniques • holding field days • improving land management practices • recording and using traditional ecological knowledge • developing natural resource management plans • developing land and sea country plans • training in the latest practices for sustainable agriculture • increasing and improving biodiversity • reducing critical threats to native habitats • reducing the spread and impact of Weeds of National Significance • tree planting and other revegetation activities • dune rehabilitation • restoring endangered ecological communities • reducing the impact of vertebrate pest animals • increasing wildlife habitat
<p>Arts Victoria Community Partnerships http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/Funding_Programs/Community_Partnerships</p>	<p>Currently closed. Previous funding rounds closed in August 2011 and March 2012.</p>	<p>Funding for Community Partnerships projects is capped at \$65,000.</p>	<p>The Community Partnerships program supports collaborations between professional artists, arts companies and Victorian communities.</p> <p>Projects may involve a single art form or a combination of art forms and can include new and experimental forms. The role of the professional artist(s) and the project's artistic elements must be central to achieving its overall purpose.</p>

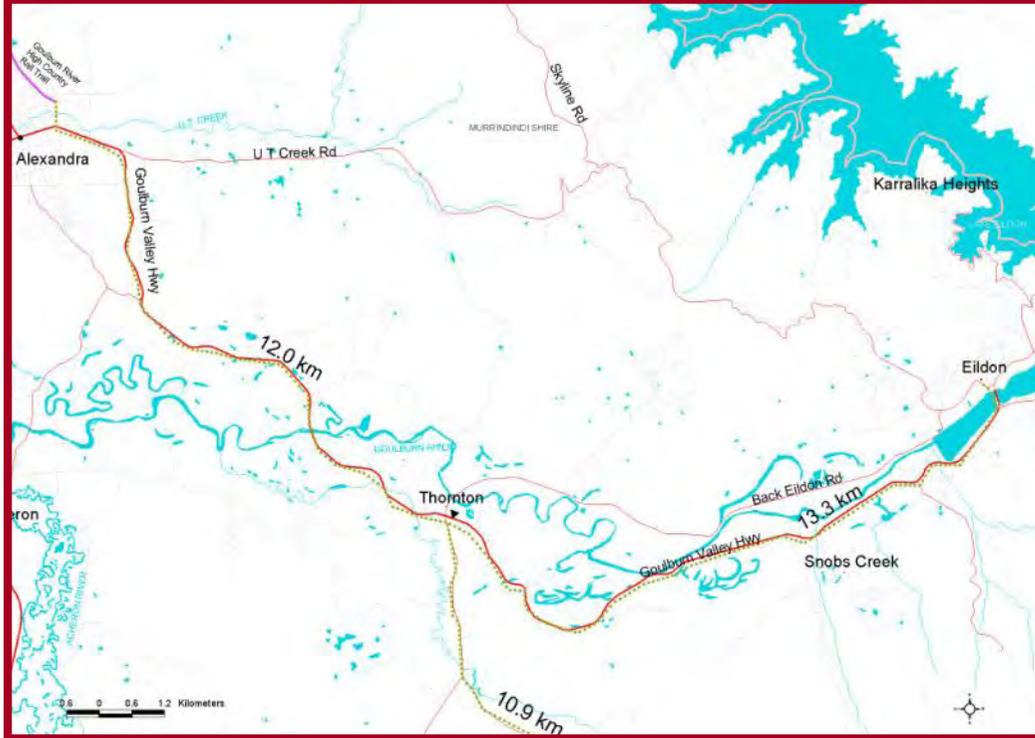
Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
			<p>Proposals to the program must demonstrate capacity to develop a collaborative relationship between the artist(s) and a defined community group.</p> <p>The Community Partnerships program aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all Victorian communities are able to access, engage with and participate in a diverse range of artistic and cultural experiences • Enable collaborations and partnerships involving professional artists, arts companies and Victorian communities that bring about mutually beneficial and positive results • Provide opportunities for artists and arts companies to develop their professional practices and extend the reach and viability of their activities
<p>Australian Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism</p> <p>T-QUAL Grants</p> <p>http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/business/tq/tgrants/Pages/default.aspx</p>	<p>Strategic Tourism - Suggestions for projects are invited to be submitted at any time. Details for each project, including opening and closing dates for submitting</p>	<p>T-QUAL Grants are offered in two separate programs:</p> <p>Strategic Tourism Investment Grants - funding for up to \$1 million to support a small number of larger scale projects to</p>	<p>T-QUAL Grants is a competitive merit-based grants program aimed at stimulating sustainable economic growth in the Australian tourism industry.</p> <p>By providing matched funding to large and small-scale tourism projects, the program aims to increase Australia's supply of quality tourism products and experiences.</p> <p>The program actively encourages private sector investment in the development of Australia's tourism industry products, services and experiences. It is underpinned by the National Long-Term Tourism Strategy and Tourism 2020. All projects funded under the program must align with Tourism 2020 priorities.</p>

Name of Funding Body and Grant	Opening and Closing Date	Funding Amount and Conditions	Eligibility
	<p>applications, are then publically advertised. Tourism Quality – previous round opened on 15 March 2013 and closed on 3 May 2013</p>	<p>support Indigenous tourism, economic development and tourism employment.</p> <p>Tourism Quality Projects -funding of between \$15,000 and \$100,000 for smaller-scale projects to support collaborative tourism industry development projects, particularly those which stimulate private sector investment.</p>	

9.0 Track / Trail Development Profiles

Great Victorian Rail Trail — Alexandra to Eildon Trail Link

Distance: 25.3km
Surface: granitic sand
User Groups: Walkers, Cyclists and Horse riders.



Location:
Alexandra and Eildon, Murrindindi Shire

Key Features and Attractions:
Lake Eildon, Goulburn River, attractive hilly countryside

Opportunities:
Trail could ultimately extend to Mansfield via Jamieson, though maintenance costs may be prohibitive. Would improve safety of pedestrians between Thornton and Eildon. Seasonal usage will increase average length of stay.

Challenges:
May be difficult to find room in road reserve particularly in steeper sections where switchbacks may be required. Universal access may be difficult to achieve. Goulburn River crossing will require cantilevered structure or separate bridge for trail. Ongoing maintenance costs may be difficult for Murrindindi Shire.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
\$3M*

Score: 60%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
Murrindindi Shire is currently undertaking a feasibility study supported by Mansfield Shire Council, Outdoor Education Group, survey respondents and 30 local businesses that attended a workshop. Victorian State Government has committed \$50,000 to the planning of this project and has \$300,000 set aside if project is feasible.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Extending the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Lake Eildon is likely to increase appeal to trail users. The upper Goulburn River valley, which incorporates the Goulburn River and Lake Eildon, is very picturesque and attractive hill country.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

Lake Eildon and the Goulburn River are renowned playgrounds for water sports and currently attract significant numbers of visitors. A high quality trail through attractive countryside will increase both visitor numbers and the average length of stay while creating opportunities for new tourist enterprises or the expansion of existing businesses, thereby enhancing economic development of the area. Thirty local businesses have indicated it is their #1 priority.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

An alignment for the trail has not yet been determined and so potential impact on the natural environment or cultural heritage values is not known. In steeper sections a rolling contour design and some switchbacks may be required which will increase the overall length of the trail and potential vegetation disturbance. A detailed concept plan has not yet been developed however it is expected that it will aim to highlight natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity.

Supported through Planning:

Whilst receiving strong support from key stakeholders, this trail is not yet supported through planning. However preliminary planning is underway at present.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Murrindindi Shire has a good track record of developing quality tracks and trails according to industry standards and best practice methods as is evident with the existing Great Victorian Rail Trail .

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This trail will provide a physical connection between Alexandra (pop 2,141) and the smaller settlements of Thornton and Eildon. It will provide access for residents and visitors to the river valley, Lake Eildon, Lake Eildon National Park and Fraser National Park.

Alexandra offers a range of accommodation and dining options while Thornton and Eildon have excellent caravan parks and some motels.

Transport to this region is most often by car. Bus services run from Seymour and Lilydale to Alexandra daily.

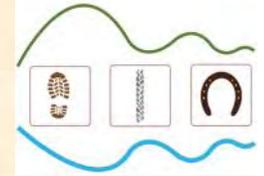
This trail will link with the existing Great Victorian Rail Trail and also the network of management tracks in Lake Eildon and Fraser National Parks.

Photos kindly provided by Lisa Wallace, Murrindindi Shire Council

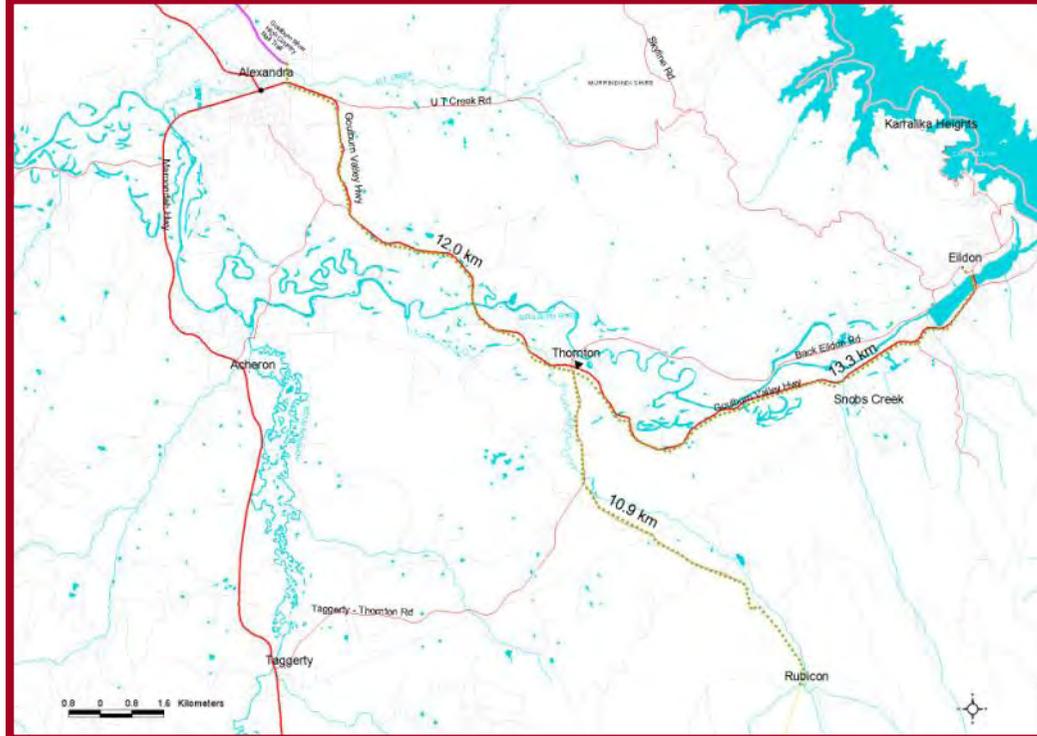
*Cost estimate based on 25.3 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



Great Victorian Rail Trail — Alexandra to Rubicon Trail Link



Distance: 22.9km
Surface: Granitic sand
User Groups: Walkers, Cyclists and Horse riders



Location:
Alexandra and Rubicon, Murrindindi Shire

Key Features and Attractions:
The intention of this trail is to recreate the old tramway back towards Rubicon from Alexandra. This will allow the historic tramway to feature as a key attraction on the trail.

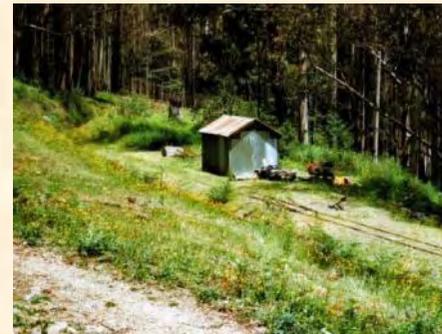
Opportunities:
The trail could ultimately create a connection into the Cathedral Ranges. With its inclusion of the Timber Tramway, additional historic or tourism funding sources may be available.

Challenges:
Major engineering challenges with many culvert and trestle bridge crossings. High rainfall and steep topography (limiting incipient sunshine hours) makes granitic sand unsuitable for surface.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
\$2.75M*

Score: 45%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
Murrindindi Shire has been pursuing State and private investor interest in the potential development of the Rubicon Historical Area incorporating the old tramway and potential trail linkages to Alexandra.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Many years ago a timber tramway ran between Alexandra and Rubicon; a small section near Alexandra is operated once a month by the Alexandra Timber Tramway Museum. The remaining relics of this tramway and the history around it would serve as a significant point of interest and create appeal for users of the trail. The green farmland in the valley and the timbered foothills will also greatly enhance the appeal of this trail.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The interest and appeal of this trail is likely to increase visitor numbers in Alexandra, Thornton and Rubicon, thereby encouraging the development of cafes and additional retail opportunities associated with the museum. Due to the linear nature of the trail, shuttle services may also be enhanced in the region, and perhaps some form of guided tours may be offered along the trail. Local accommodation providers may also benefit from additional visitors in the region.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The trail has not yet been scoped nor an alignment proposed however it is expected that it will aim to highlight natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity.

Supported through Planning:

A T-QUAL application has been placed for funding to develop a Master Plan by the Alexandra Timber and Tramway Museum Inc. for the railway precinct in Alexandra. However, this application does not include a trail extension to Rubicon.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Murrindindi Shire has a good track record in developing quality tracks and trails according to industry standards and best practice methods as is evident with the existing Great Victorian Rail Trail.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This trail will connect Alexandra (pop 2,141) with the features of the Rubicon Valley including Rubicon Valley Horse Riding, the Rubicon Outdoor Centre and the historic tramway.

Alexandra offers a range of accommodation and dining options while Thornton has a caravan park and a motel.

Transport to this region is most often by car but a bus service runs from Seymour to Alexandra daily.

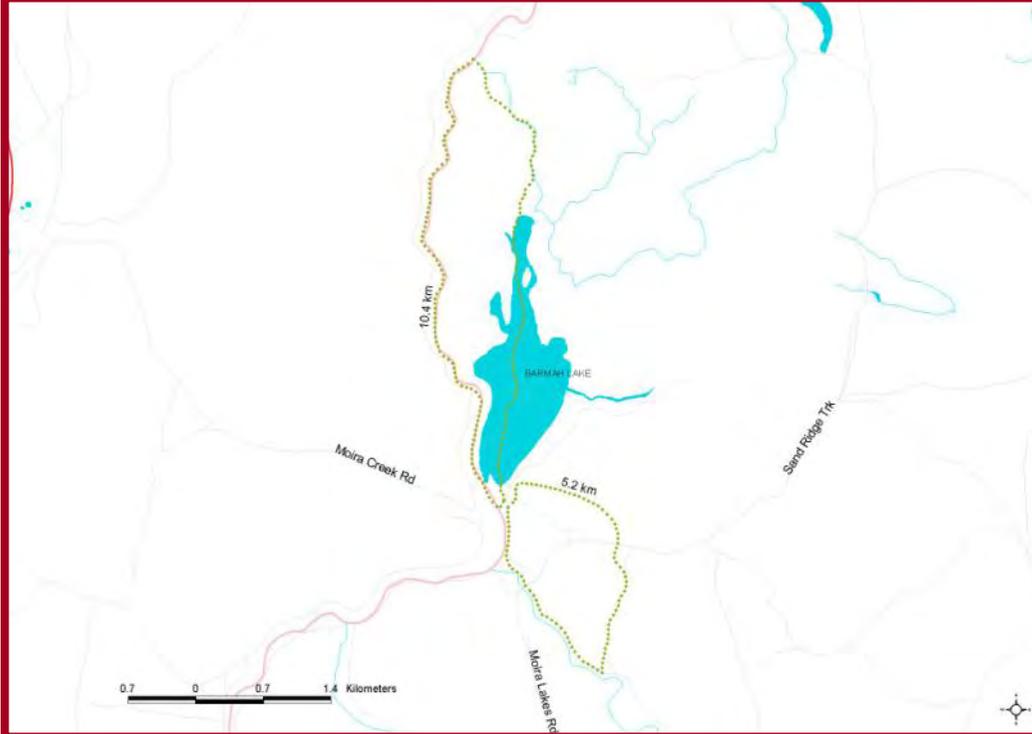
This trail will link with the existing Great Victorian Rail Trail via the proposed Alexandra to Eildon trail.

*Cost estimate based on 22.9 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



Barmah State Forest and Moira Lakes Canoe Trail

Distance: 10.4km (canoe trail) and 5.2km (walking / cycling)
Surface: water and natural earth **User Groups:** Canoeists, Walkers and Cyclists



Location:
Barmah National Park, Moira Shire

Key Features and Attractions:
Murray River, Barmah Lake, largest River Red Gum forest in the world, large variety of wildlife, particularly water birds, Aboriginal cultural heritage and artefacts. Good opportunities for fishing, horse riding, bushwalking, swimming and canoeing. One of six Murray River Icon Sites listed under the Ramsar Convention.

Opportunities:
Would be one of the few canoe trails in Victoria and could provide a truly unique trail experience in the Hume Region. Longer term potential to develop remote 'chickee' style campsites on the water. There are two existing walking trails at Barmah Lakes which form a 5.2km loop. The intention is to improve the trail and associated interpretations.

Challenges:
Construction of camping platforms in aquatic environment (pile driving can be difficult), accessing sufficient funding.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
Currently in investigation phase; cost yet to be determined.

Score: 52%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
Concept led by Parks Victoria and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; supported by Moira Shire (#1 priority).



Appealing to Trail Users:

A canoe trail and paired cycling / walking trail in Barmah State Park could provide immense appeal to trail users seeking a truly unique experience in the largest River Red Gum forest in the world. The inclusion of this location as one of six Murray River Icon Sites as listed under the Ramsar Convention is testament to the highly significant natural values contained here. The broad range of recreational opportunities here including fishing, bushwalking, swimming, horse riding and canoeing increase the appeal to a range of users and particularly larger groups with members who may not all be interested in the canoe trail.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

While this trail will attract people accustomed to being self-sufficient (i.e. people who camp and bring all their own supplies), there is likely to be increased patronage of businesses in service centres on-route or adjacent to the park such as Shepparton, Echuca, Nathalia and Barmah. A significant proportion of the market will choose accommodation options in nearby townships and take day trips into the park. Increased visitation to the park will create opportunities for tourist based service enterprises such as guided tours, serviced camping trips and canoe / bike / horse hire.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

This proposed trail is intended to provide wilderness / adventure experiences whilst showcasing the natural and cultural heritage values of **this highly significant site. By increasing visitors' appreciation and respect for these values a broader community determination** for protecting such natural assets will be fostered. Parks Victoria will be the responsible agency for developing these trails and will adhere to internal guidelines for protecting the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Supported through Planning:

Barmah forest is identified as a nature based tourism asset in *Victoria's Nature Based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012* and Chris Townsend of Latrobe University is currently profiling the project as part of his Masters thesis. Parks Victoria is supportive of the concept.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

As the responsible agency, Parks Victoria will adhere to internal guidelines for developing the trails to industry standards using best practice methods.

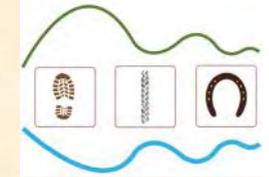
Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

As this proposed trail is intended to offer a wilderness experience it will not feature a direct physical connection to communities. However residents in nearby communities may choose to take advantage of such a high quality nature based experience. Barmah Forest features a large network of unsealed vehicular tracks providing access to these trails however Moira Lakes Rd offers a simple and direct route from Barmah township to the proposed trail head.

A train / bus service is available to and from Melbourne and Barmah township on Saturdays only. There is potential for a shuttle bus service to be provided from Barmah township either by an existing business or a new tourist based enterprise established around the new trail development.



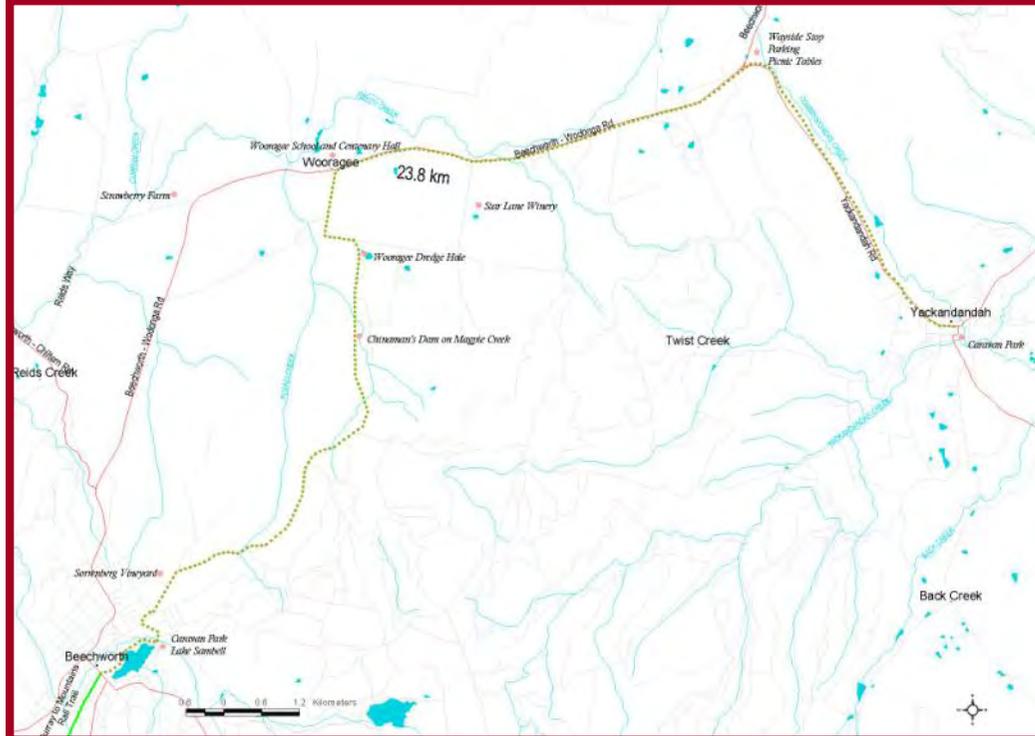
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Beechworth to Yackandandah Trail Link



Distance: 23.8km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Beechworth and Yackandandah, Indigo Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Connects two attractive gold mining towns and creates an extension to the existing Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Likely to be very appealing to visitors. Connects to a mountain bike trail that runs alongside the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail between Everton and Beechworth.

Opportunities:

Trail could ultimately extend to Huon to connect to the High Country Rail Trail.

Challenges:

Land tenure issues such as Crown Land currently under license to be resolved. Some engineering challenges to be resolved. Funding from external bodies required to offset cost of construction.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$3.05M*

Score: 66%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

This potential trail has strong support from Indigo Shire and the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee and from local residents. It is Indigo Shire's number one trail development priority.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to attract the same market as the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M). It is likely to appeal to visitors from all over Australia and internationally as a result of: featuring two very attractive gold mining towns; an off road sealed trail through scenic bush land **with wildlife viewing opportunities; several man made and culturally significant features along the way (Chinaman's Dam on Magpie Creek, Wooragee Dredge Hole and Wooragee School and Centenary Hall)**; well established gourmet food opportunities and a trail length that is within easy riding distance for many cyclists (23.8km) and within a reasonable day walk for hikers / walkers.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The trail has potential to bring a significantly higher number of cyclists and walkers to Yackandandah and at the same time, increase the number of visitors to Beechworth. Opportunities will be made available to establish tourism related industries between Beechworth and Yackandandah such as farm gate sales, cafe, etc (pending feasibility studies by private operators), as well as additional accommodation and food opportunities in Yackandandah. Privately operated tourism companies may identify the potential to develop packaged or guided tours between the two destinations or perhaps the potential to establish additional shuttle services.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Detailed concept plan has not yet been developed however the current plan aims to highlight natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity.

Supported through Planning:

Concept supported through Indigo Shire Council Plan 2012-2016, Indigo Shire Council Recreation Plan 2008, Indigo Shire Council Bike Plan, Indigo Shire Access and Inclusion Plan 2012, Indigo Shire Healthy Communities Plan 2011 and Indigo Shire Economic Development Strategy. M2M Rail Trail Committee of Management has listed the extension from Beechworth to Yackandandah as a key priority in its 2010-2013 Strategic Plan.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

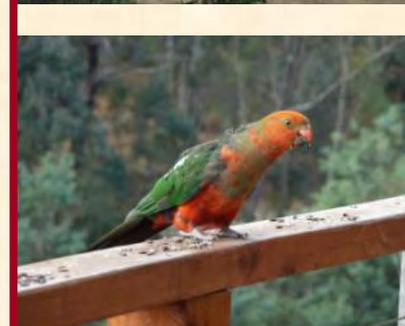
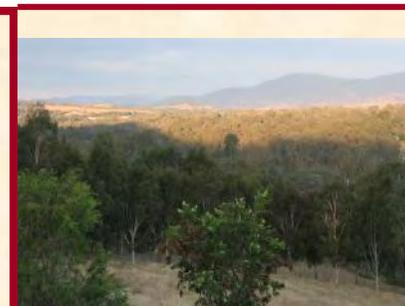
Preliminary plans have identified detailed alignment and cost estimates based on industry standards and best practice methods. Indigo Shire has a good track record in designing quality tracks and trails.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

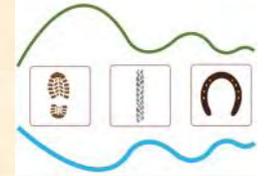
Beechworth has a population of 2,800 in the urban centre alone hence regular use by local residents is expected. It also connected to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail so it is a well known destination for cycling. Other nearby attractions such as the Beechworth Mountain Bike Park may help attract trail users interested in using the trail as a connector from Yackandandah to the Park. There are a variety of accommodation options (from motels, hotels and luxury B&Bs through to 2 caravan parks and many private holiday rentals) and quality food outlets in Beechworth. In terms of public transport there are 3 direct services between Beechworth and Albury on weekdays but the daily weekend service takes over 4 hours (for a 60km trip). There is however a shuttle bus that operates on the Murray to Mountains Trail that could feasibly provide a shuttle service between Beechworth and Yackandandah. Between Beechworth and Yackandandah there is a wayside stop with picnic tables and parking on the intersection of the Beechworth Wodonga Road and the Yackandandah Road.

With a population of approximately 950 in the urban centre alone, the Yackandandah end of the proposed trail is also likely to attract regular use by local residents. Public transport is very limited (i.e. Bus from Myrtleford stops at 7.50am in Yackandandah and Albury to Yackandandah stops at 4.10pm on Mondays to Fridays only), however there are several accommodation options available (including two motels, a hotel, a caravan park, several bed and breakfasts and private holiday rentals) and some quality food outlets. From Yackandandah **it is possible to ride into Stanley State Forest to join up with mountain bike trails or onto Allan's Flat Waterhole.**

* Cost estimate provided by Indigo Shire Council



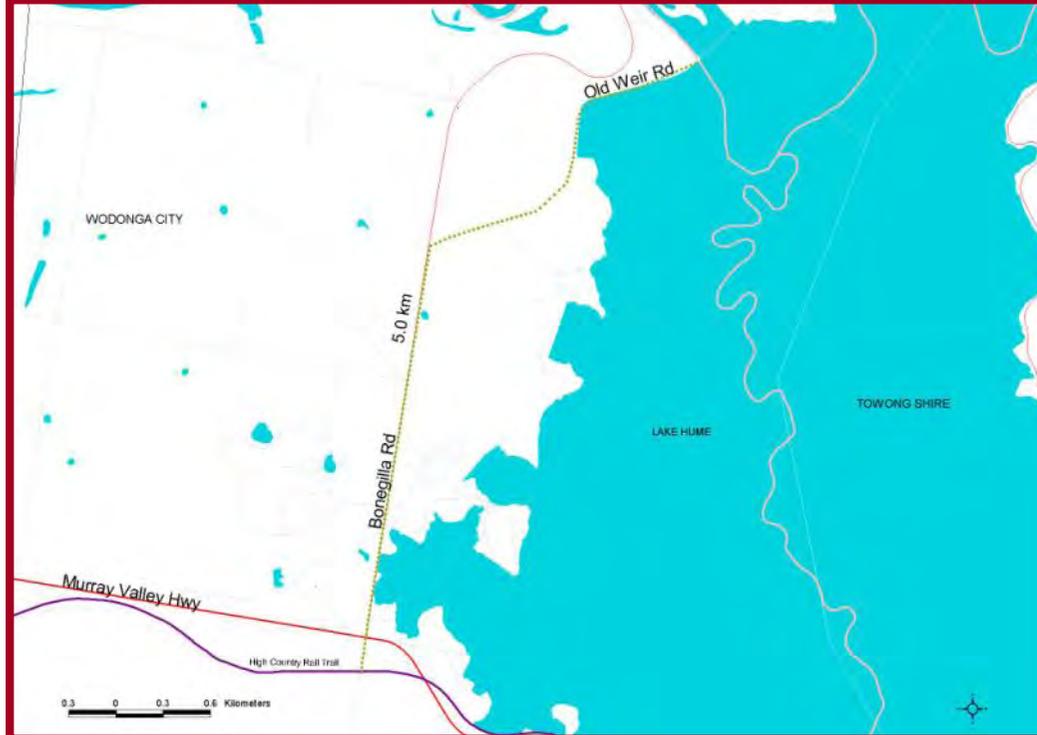
High Country Rail Trail — Bonegilla to Lake Hume Trail Link



Distance: 5.0km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Bonegilla and Hume Weir, City of Wodonga

Key Features and Attractions:

Bonegilla Migrant Experience, Lake Hume, Hume Weir, Lake Hume Resort, Point Jackson Nature Reserve, Boathaven Resort, flora and fauna.

Opportunities:

Trail could ultimately be connected to trails currently being developed by Albury City Council and then back to the start of the High Country Rail Trail forming an interesting and appealing local loop.

Challenges:

A narrow stretch of roadway along the edge of Lake Hume allows no room for an off-road trail, unless placed in lake bed, which is rarely inundated here. Some significant engineering solutions may be required.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$900,000*

Score: 54%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Supported by Wodonga City, Bonegilla Advisory Group, Parklands Albury Wodonga, survey respondents.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This short (5km) section of trail will appeal to users of the High Country Rail Trail as it adds several points of interest including Bonegilla Migrant Experience, Lake Hume, Hume Weir and Boathaven Resort. It could serve as a short, interesting side trip from the High Country Rail Trail or form the start of a circuit through to Albury and back to the start of the High Country Rail Trail. A store and other facilities at Boathaven Resort and the BME will be appealing to trail users.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

By adding to the points of interest associated with the High Country Rail Trail, its overall appeal and usage will be enhanced which will in turn strengthen the tourism potential of the region and provide opportunities for tourist related businesses and product development. Patronage of both the Bonegilla Migrant Experience and the Boathaven Resort will be assisted by this trail. Events such as the 'Hume Weir Waddle' will attract a higher number of participants (due to the better safety of an off-road trail) thereby enhancing economic yield.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The trail will be constructed along the Bonegilla Road reserve running through an agricultural landscape and so impacts on the natural environment or cultural heritage are likely to be minimal. Trail construction will be guided by a planning permit which will stipulate appropriate techniques for avoiding damage to the natural environment or cultural heritage values. Tree planting along the new trail will augment the patches of remnant vegetation and enhance habitat and ecosystem value of the area.

Supported through Planning:

Whilst not formally supported through planning documents, the concept has broad support within council and the Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Whilst the project is yet to be scoped, the City of Wodonga in conjunction with Parklands Albury Wodonga has a good record of developing tracks and trails according to industry standards and best practice methods.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This trail will provide a strategic connection between the populations of Wodonga, Albury and satellite communities with the Bonegilla Migrant Centre, Hume Weir and the Lake Hume Resort. The resort could provide accommodation and refreshments to trail users whilst the weir and Migrant Centre offer appealing points of interest.

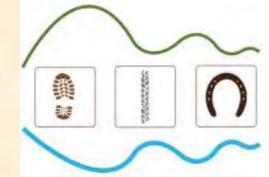
Should a connecting trail be developed into Albury along the Riverina Highway from the Hume Weir, access between the High Country Rail Trail and the Albury Trails Network will be facilitated. The circuit route created will be achievable for trail users seeking a suitable day-trip with points of interest and cafes / food outlets available along the way.

Regular transport services from Melbourne and Sydney are available in Albury / Wodonga.

*Cost estimate based on 5 km of sealed trail at \$120/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Bright to Harrietville extension



Distance: 24.6km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Bright, Germantown and Harrietville, Alpine Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Ovens River Valley, mountain views, river environment, small hamlets / communities, farm gate produce. Likely to be very appealing to visitors as it will consolidate the 'Mountain' end of the M2M RT without extreme grades.

Opportunities:

Could extend to Mt Hotham to offer a true mountain trail experience.

Challenges:

Sections must be located along Great Alpine Rd which will require collaboration from Vic Roads. Funding from external bodies required to offset cost of construction.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$3M for Bright to Germantown jointly funded by North East Water and Alpine Shire. State government has committed \$1m for section back from Harrietville. 10km section in middle not funded and estimated at \$1.8M.*

Score: 78%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Alpine Shire's #2 priority. Support by North East Water.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail will attract the same market as the existing Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M) and will attract visitors from all over Australia and internationally due to the stunning mountain scenery and river environment of the upper Ovens Valley. It is likely to expand overall usage of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail as it will offer an alternative trail destination and experiences to the existing sections.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

To some degree this trail extension may share the total quantity of tourists currently drawn to the region by trail opportunities. However by expanding the range of environments, experiences and products available, the number of visitors is likely to grow more quickly than it otherwise would have. Opportunities for new tourist based enterprises around the extension will strengthen economic development of the region.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The first section of trail to Germantown will follow the NE Water pipeline reserve which will contain limited natural or heritage values owing to prior disturbance during installation of the pipeline. The current plan aims to highlight natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity and these standards will extend to the subsequent section as it is developed.

Supported through Planning:

Concept supported through The Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities and the Murray to Mountains Cycle Tourism Strategy. Cycle Central's #2 priority.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Preliminary plans to Germantown have identified detailed alignment and cost estimates based on industry standards and best practice methods. These same standards will be applied to the subsequent section as it is developed. Alpine Shire has a good track record in designing quality tracks and trails.

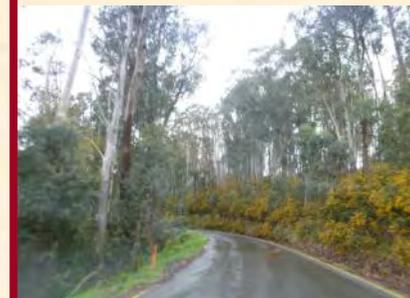
Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This extension to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail will enjoy immediate access to the burgeoning numbers of tourists drawn to the region by trails based activities. Its own unique appeal will entice greater numbers of visitors to the area. It will connect both the local and tourist communities centred around Bright fluidly with a new and different trail experience by being physically connected to the existing Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Existing tourist enterprises will be boosted by the increased numbers visiting the region and new enterprise opportunities will be created in the geographic area accessed by the new trail.

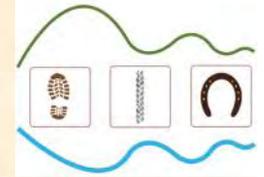
The trail will provide access to the network of tracks and trails that exist in the bushland areas flanking the Ovens Valley.

Transport to Bright is most often by car however V/Line runs a bus that connects to the train in Wangaratta to and from Melbourne.

*Cost estimate based on 10 km of sealed trail at \$120/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



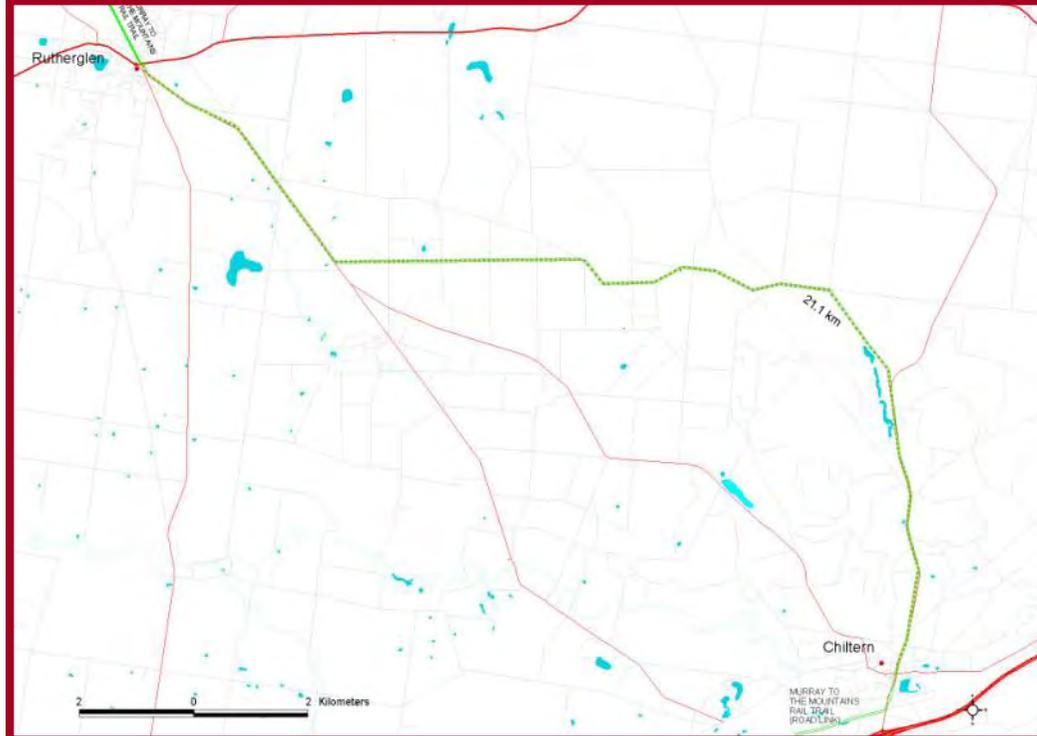
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Chiltern to Rutherglen Trail Link



Distance: 23.8km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Rutherglen and Chiltern, Indigo Shire.

Key Features and Attractions:

Murray River (at Waghunyah), wineries, farmland, historic towns and Chiltern Box-Ironbark National Park.

Opportunities:

This trail provides an added extension to the Murray to Mountains Trail, incorporating the township of Chiltern (which has a train service and very close access to the Hume Highway). Long term the trail could potentially connect from Chiltern to Beechworth or to Wodonga.

Challenges:

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$4.3M*

Score: 47%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

This potential trail has strong support from Tourism North East as well as some support from Indigo Shire, the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee, and from local residents.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to appeal to visitors from all over Victoria and possibly Australia interested in the historic town of Chiltern, farmland and the Chiltern Box-Ironbark National Park, with onwards links to the wineries of Rutherglen and the Murray River at Wahgunyah. The distance between Chiltern and Rutherglen (approximately 23.8km) and then onto Wahgunyah (an additional 10km) provide a reasonably easy riding distance for many cyclists.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The trail has potential to bring a higher number of cyclists and walkers to Chiltern and at the same time, increase the number of visitors to Rutherglen and Wahgunyah. Opportunities will be available to establish tourism related industries between Chiltern and Rutherglen such as farm gate sales, cafe, etc (pending feasibility studies by private operators), as well as additional accommodation and food opportunities in Chiltern. Privately operated tourism companies may identify the potential to develop packaged or guided tours between the two destinations or perhaps the potential to establish additional shuttle services. The train service to Chiltern is a big plus, as it provides an opportunity for walkers / cyclists to travel to Chiltern from Melbourne for a weekend of riding or walking, possibly staying overnight around Rutherglen or Wahgunyah.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

As no planning has yet been undertaken, it is not known what type of natural environment or cultural heritage barriers may exist and what processes need to be put into place to address these issues.

Supported through Planning:

Key stakeholder interviews with Indigo Shire staff indicate that the proposed Rutherglen to Chiltern trail is not a priority at present and has not yet been scoped.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Although no planning has yet taken place, Indigo Shire has a good track record of designing quality tracks and trails which meet industry standards and best practice methods.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Rutherglen has a population of 2,125 in the urban centre alone hence regular use by local residents is expected. It is also part of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail so it is a well known destination for cycling and walking. There are a variety of accommodation options, wineries, historic buildings, parks, gardens, recreation reserves and quality food outlets in Rutherglen. In terms of public transport there are daily bus-train connections to Melbourne from Rutherglen.

With a population of approximately 1,128 in the urban centre alone, the Chiltern end of the proposed trail is also likely to attract regular use by local residents. The township itself features a variety of accommodation options and food outlets, as well as a medical clinic, parks, gardens, a lake, recreation reserve and retail businesses. It is less than 1km off the Hume Freeway and also has a several train services available each day between Melbourne and Wodonga. The Chiltern Valley Loop road ride has already been developed and is popular with road cyclists.

*Cost estimate based on 23.8 km of sealed trail at \$120/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.

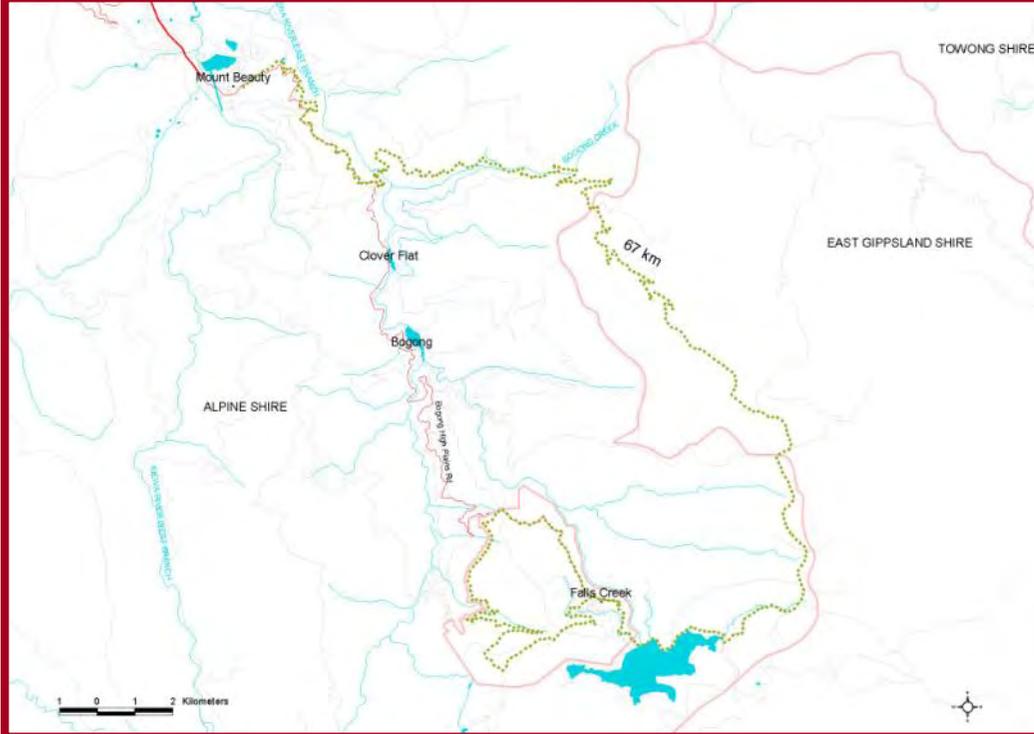


Falls Creek to Mount Beauty Mountain Bike Trail

Distance: 67km

User Groups: Mountain Bike Riders

Surface: natural earth, gravel



Location:

Falls Creek and Mount Beauty, Alpine Shire and East Gippsland Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Spectacular alpine scenery, adventure mountain bike route, mountain bike events.

Opportunities:

Option to connect two nationally recognised MTB destinations (both included in the 'Dirty Dozen' cluster of MTB trails). Races & events.

Challenges:

Few challenges as route is already recognised through 'Alpine Assault' MTB event. Installation of way finding signage may be challenging over this distance.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

No trail construction required. Cost for signage \$100,500.*

Score: 64%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Supported by IMBA Australia.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail follows a course contained on fire access roads, management vehicle tracks (open to cycling) and MTB single-track in the Mount Beauty MTB Park. It is used annually for the Alpine Assault marathon MTB event and consequently has an established reputation amongst the mountain biking community. The route offers some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in Australia a very significant physical challenge, both of which will generate a very high level of appeal to mountain bike riders.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

A trail of this nature is likely to generate a steady flow of users to the area and in the case of events such as the Alpine Assault will bring many hundreds of people into the region producing a significant economic benefit.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The trail would be located entirely on existing tracks and so avoid any potential negative impact on natural or cultural heritage values.

Supported through Planning:

Falls Creek and Mt Beauty are identified amongst the 'destination clusters' in *Australian Alps National Landscape Tourism Strategy—for the International Experience Seeker Market*, but otherwise not supported in planning documents.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

This will not be a constructed trail but rather a formalised route along pre-existing roads, fire trails and mountain bike single track. As such design will be dictated by the standards applied to these respective categories.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This trail will strategically connect two nationally recognised MTB facilities and the communities of Mt Beauty and Falls Creek. During the Alpine Assault a shuttle bus operates to ferry participants between Mt Beauty and Falls Creek. The Falls Creek Coach Service runs between Melbourne, Albury, Mt Beauty and Falls Creek in snow season with only limited services in summer. V/Line operates regular train services to Wangaratta linking with a coach service to Bright and Mt Beauty three times per week.

Mt Beauty offers a range of accommodation options, cafes, bakery and other tourist services. Falls Creek has a supermarket open all year but other services may be limited in summer at this stage.

Photos kindly provided by The Alpine Assault / Finish Line Events.

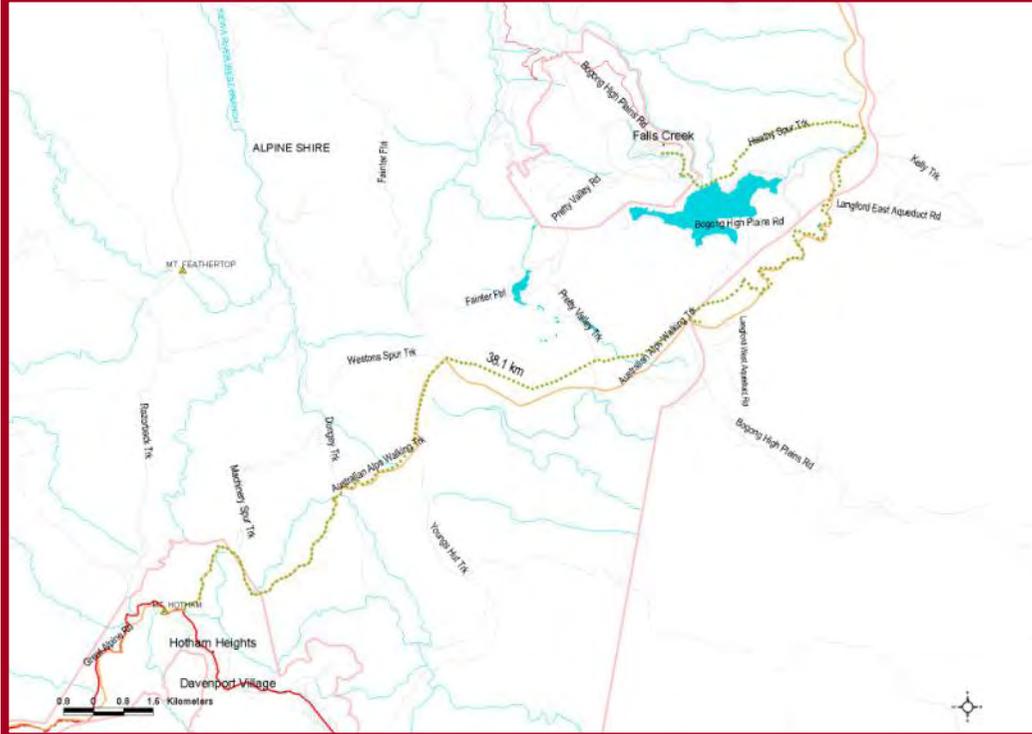
*Cost estimate based on installing signage over 67 km of unsealed trail at \$1000/kilometre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, and contingencies.



Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing

Distance: 38.1km
User Groups: Walkers

Surface: Natural surface



Location:

Falls Creek and Mount Hotham, Alpine Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Alpine National Park, Mt Hotham and Falls Creek Alpine Resorts, stunning alpine scenery, wilderness experience.

Opportunities:

Establish roofed accommodation within short walking distance of the trail. Further develop trail and alignments.

Challenges:

Any proposals for new trail or facility construction would require careful planning to ensure protection of sensitive environmental and Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

A master plan is currently being developed and will include detailed cost estimates.

Score: 74%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Supported by Tourism North East, both Alpine Resorts, Alpine Shire and Parks Victoria



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail creates a link between two premier Alpine resorts through some of the most stunning Alpine landscapes in Australia. Phase 1 is complete (trail upgrade works, markers/signage and establishment of two camping areas). Phase 2 is subject to the master plan and funding. This could see the provision of a range of accommodation options, such as cabins or an eco-lodge, appealing to a broader range of users. This is one of four proposed icon walks in Victoria as identified in the Victorian Government's Nature Based Tourism Strategy.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The Victorian high country around Falls Creek and Mount Hotham already attracts many hikers each year. The Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing is destined for iconic status and as such will stimulate higher visitation, in turn boosting tourism potential and economic development of this region. The possibility to broaden the appeal of the trail through provision of roofed accommodation options and further upgraded trails could increase this potential.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

This trail is located almost entirely on existing tracks and trails and so will not involve significant ground disturbance that may damage natural or cultural heritage values. Some disturbance may result from infrastructure development; appropriate permits and offsets will need to be determined. Parks Victoria are very experienced at constructing sustainable trails and infrastructure in sensitive environments.

Supported through Planning:

Supported through the *Mount Hotham Tracks and Trails Draft Strategy* and the *Victorian Trails Strategy*. The *Draft Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan* supports initiatives to enhance visitation during the 'green season'. This walk is currently the subject of a feasibility assessment. Recommended in *Non-Winter Nature-based Tourism Destination Development Study for the Victorian Alpine Resorts* to become the region's 'hero' or 'iconic' product.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Parks Victoria have extensive experience at developing trails to industry standards using best practice methods.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

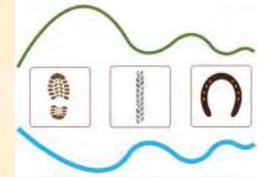
Connects the Alpine resort communities.

Connected to a network of existing trails including the Australian Alps WalkingTrack.

Accommodation and tourist services available at the Alpine resorts and could be augmented with the development of new rustic accommodation options.



High Country Rail Trail — Trail Head / CBD connection



Distance: 6.3 or 3.0 km
User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists

Surface: Sealed

Location:
 Wodonga, Wodonga City Council

Key Features and Attractions:
 Will greatly enhance High Country Rail Trail by providing essential link to Wodonga CBD.

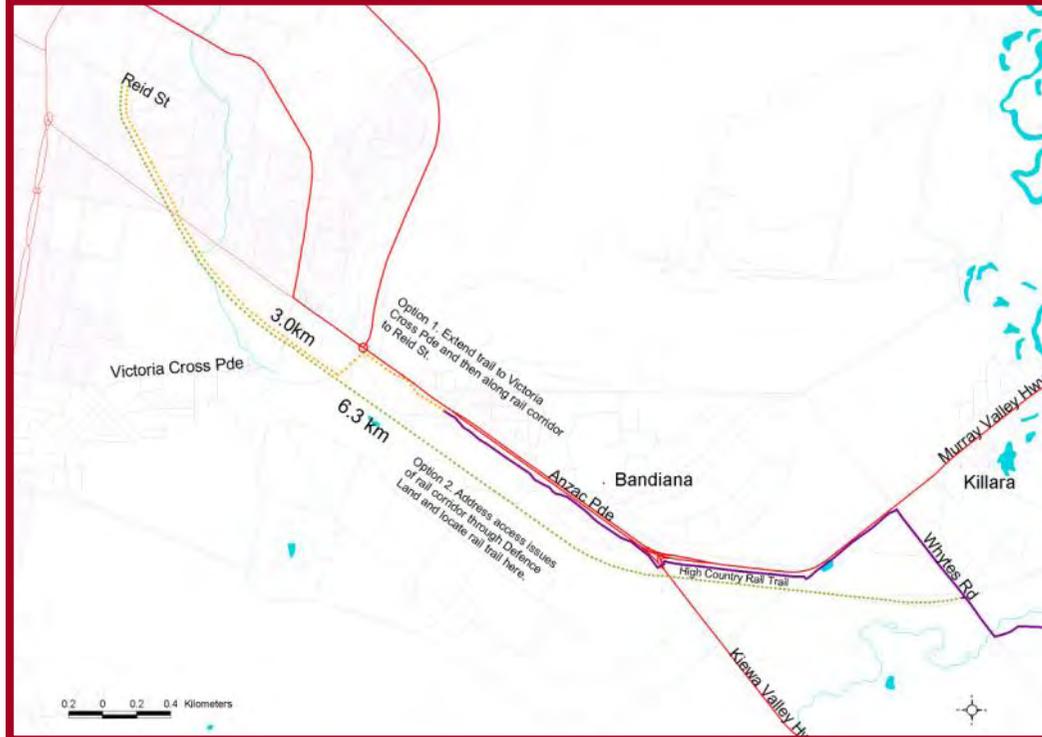
Opportunities:
 Rail line now inactive providing opportunity to complete the CBD connection. Could connect to Albury trails network via rail corridor over causeway. Parklands Albury Wodonga have applied to VicTrack for lease over corridor which is currently being considered. There are plans for on-road cycle lanes and off-road paths through Belvoir Park to connect to train station.

Challenges:
 Rail reserve between Kiewa Valley Hwy and Victoria Cross Parade runs across Dept of Defence land prompting security and safety concerns. Wodonga City Council and Parklands Albury Wodonga should discuss options and secure lease of rail corridor if appropriate. Option 1 is preferred.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
 \$395,000 for option 1 (3.0km)*

Score: 62%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
 Supported by Wodonga City Council, Parkland Albury Wodonga and Friends of the High Country Rail Trail.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This extension will be of great appeal to users who currently must navigate busy roads from Wodonga to the start of the trail proper on Whytes Rd. An off-road trail from the CBD to the current terminus of the trail will offer a much safer and more attractive alternative.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

A more appropriately located and constructed trail head in the CBD will enhance the overall appeal of the trail and thereby attract more visitors to Wodonga intent on using the trail. It will also increase the number of ad hoc users who discover the trail inadvertently or via the Visitor Information Centre. The increased number of trail users will provide economic benefit both to Wodonga and other communities along the trail as providers of goods and services increase in number and economic yield.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Impact on natural and cultural heritage values are likely to be minimal along this rail corridor but municipal planning overlays will indicate any sensitivities and guide their protection. Opportunities to revegetate sections of the corridor will enhance natural vegetation communities.

Supported through Planning:

Supported through the High Country Rail Trail Strategic Plan 2012-2015 (2012), High Country Rail Trail and Public Pathways Development Plan (2012).

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Design specifications have not yet been determined but given the urban environment, the trail is likely to be a bitumen path a minimum of 2.4m wide. Flood prone sections will require an appropriately designed boardwalk or other trail design tolerant of temporary inundation.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

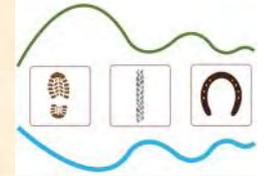
This trail will provide a physical connection between Wodonga CBD and the communities of Bandiana and Killara. Future trail development will further connect these communities to the Albury trail network and a potential circuit to Hume Weir, Bonegilla and back to the High Country Rail Trail. Completion of this section will provide a crucial link to the Visitor Information Centre which will assist promotion of and access to the trail. The railway station is within easy cycling distance but will benefit from way finding signs in the absence of a physical trail link. Consideration is being given to developing a trail link to the railway station, preferably along the river or through scenic parkland.

Photos courtesy of Travel Victoria

*Cost estimate provided by Wodonga City Council.

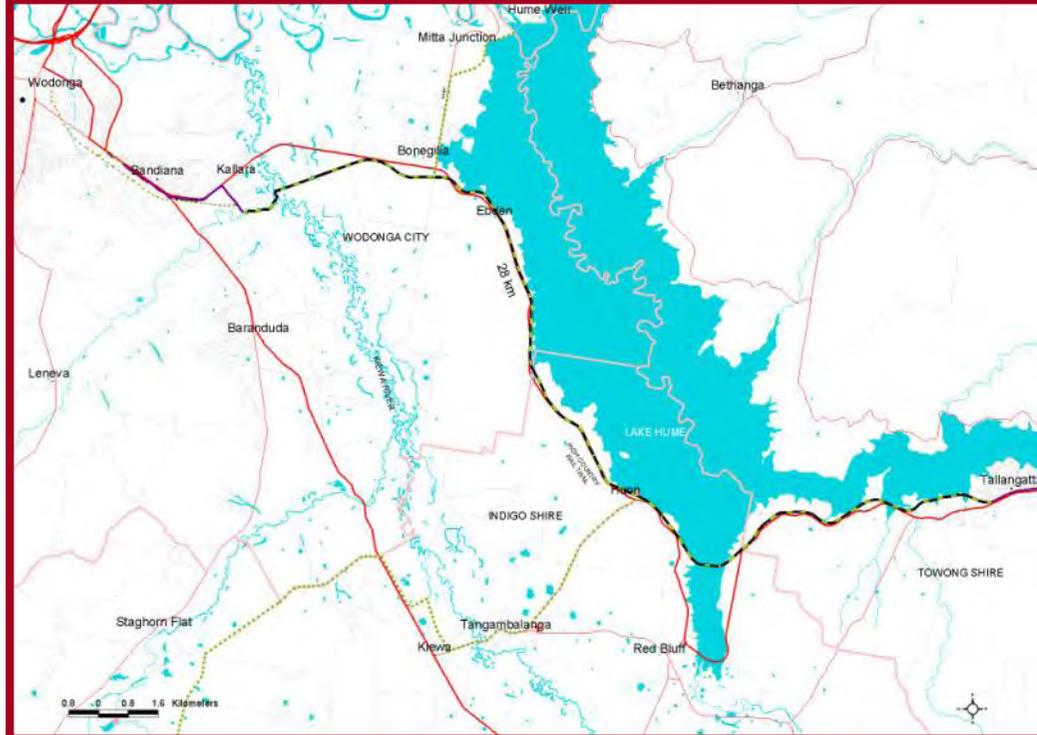


High Country Rail Trail — Sealing Wodonga to Tallangatta section



Distance: 28km (from Whytes Rd)
User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists

Surface: Sealed



Location:

Wodonga to Tallangatta, Wodonga City Council, Indigo Shire and Towong Shire.

Key Features and Attractions:

High quality surface that improves accessibility and broadens appeal to users.

Opportunities:

Can significantly increase usage of trail and reduce future maintenance costs.

Challenges:

High cost will require securing of external funding. Form of path and drainage design must be suitable, especially for riparian sections and other areas subject to inundation.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$1.2M*

Score: 60%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Supported by Wodonga City Council, Indigo Shire, Towong Shire, Parklands Albury Wodonga, Friends of the High Country Rail Trail and the Bonegilla Rail Trail Advisory Group.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Many trail users prefer a sealed surface that is easier, cleaner and safer to use. A well constructed sealed surface will broaden the appeal to a larger suite of potential trail users with a range of tolerances / preferences for trail surface type.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

An improvement to the quality of the trail surface will most likely increase the number of trail users significantly. The increased number of trail users will provide economic benefit both to Wodonga and other communities along the trail as providers of goods and services increase in number and economic yield.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

As the trail already exists, there will be no significant negative impact on environmental or cultural values. A non-eroding sealed surface will provide some further protection of these values.

Supported through Planning:

Not formally supported through planning at this stage.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Design specifications have not yet been determined but the trail is likely to be a 2.4m wide bitumen path . Flood prone sections will require an appropriately designed boardwalk or other trail design tolerant of temporary inundation.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This trail will provide a connection between Wodonga and the communities of Bandiana, Killara, Bonegilla, Ebden, Huon and Tallangatta. Future trail development will further connect these communities to the Albury trail network with a potential circuit across Hume Weir connecting to a trail following the Riverina Highway in NSW. It is anticipated that the High Country Rail Trail may ultimately be completed all the way to Corryong.



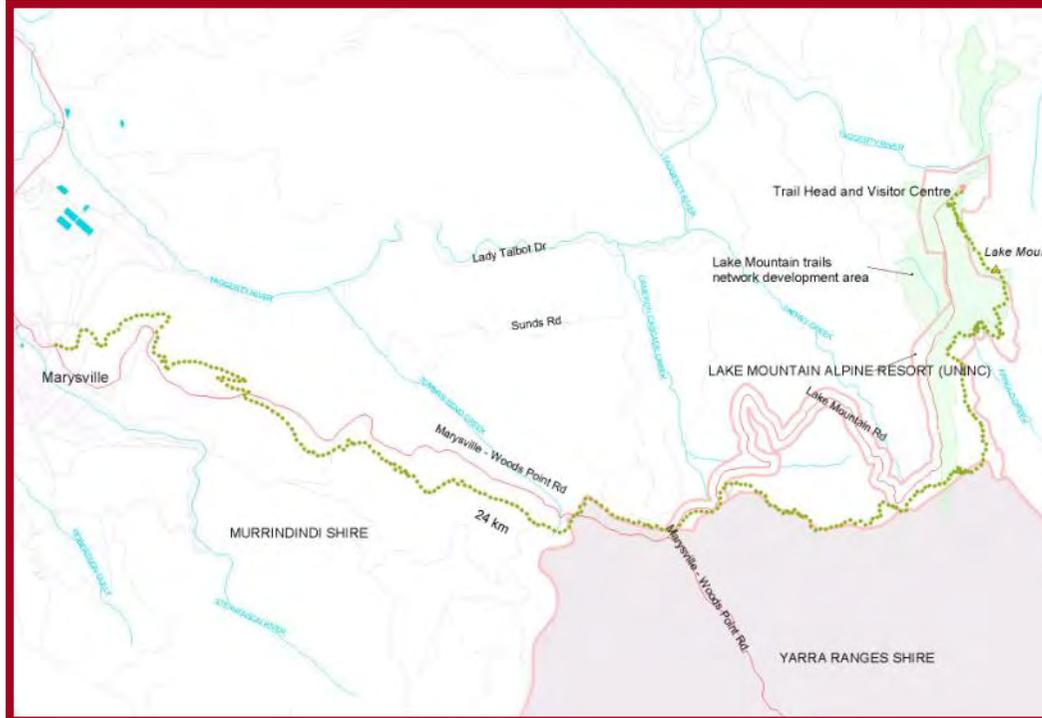
*Cost estimate based on information provided by Towong Shire via Parklands Albury Wodonga.

Lake Mountain to Marysville Mountain Bike Trail

Distance: 24km

Surface: natural earth

User Groups: Mountain Bike Riders and walkers



Location:

Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, Marysville and Murrindindi Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

27km shared trail (mostly single track), stunning views, descends through several vegetation zones, granite features. Intermediate difficulty rating appealing to large user base.

Opportunities:

Tourism growth through, large scale events, shuttle services, interpretive guided tours, bike hire, food and accommodation. This trail will greatly enhance the appeal of Lake Mountain in the 'green season' thereby augmenting the economic potential of the resort and help the township of Marysville return to being a viable accommodation and services centre for recreational visitors.

Challenges:

Several descents will need to be designed to maintain maximum environmental sustainability and provide a trail that is achievable for less experienced riders but also appealing to those who want to go faster.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$595,000 (World Trail full design and construction). Over a third of the trail is completed and in use.

Score:

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, DEPI, Marysville Chamber of Commerce, Mystic Mountains Tourism, Murrindindi Shire Council, Murrindindi Cycle Club, Parks Victoria, Tqal and RDV funding for concept plans and approval process.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Mountain bike riding in alpine areas is becoming very popular and several Alpine Resorts have developed MTB trail networks. Lake Mountain is the closest Alpine Resort to Melbourne and offers spectacular scenery, a sealed access road and an expanding network of trails. This long distance trail connecting the resort trails with Marysville will be very appealing to users.

The trail will be constructed to an intermediate difficulty rating meeting IMBA guidelines and so will appeal to both inexperienced riders **looking for a slightly higher challenge and also to MTB enthusiasts. The trail has the potential to meet 'International Epic Trail' status** which will also create appeal to users. Granite Grind, Warrior Challenge and Alpine Skyrun are events that already use some of the route.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

A trail of this nature is likely to generate a steady flow of users to the area and in the case of events such as the Granite Grind will bring several hundred people into the region producing a significant economic benefit. The trail could provide commercial opportunities such as guided tours, bike rental/sales, shuttle services, skills clinics, events, food and drink sales, retail and accommodation in Marysville. Mountain Bike tourism growth will assist the bushfire recovery of the region and help Lake Mountain to diversify its green season product and year round viability.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Less than 4 km of new trail is required to complete the proposed 27km trail length between Lake Mountain and Marysville. A comprehensive planning report for the development including vegetation removal has already produced by land development consultants Millar Merrigan. The report indicates that no trees will be removed and ecosystems listed under State and Federal Legislation, including damp areas considered to be environmentally sensitive will be avoided.

Supported through Planning:

A concept plan has been developed by World Trail and a Planning Report prepared by Millar Merrigan. These reports have been included in a submission to the Lake Mountain Alpine Resort Management Board recommending adoption of the concept plan. The concept is supported in **the Draft Lake Mountain Strategic Management and Master Plan in Direction Statements such as 'Achieve excellence in the delivery of recreational and nature-based tourism experiences through all seasons of the year.'**

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

The concept plan developed by World Trail stipulates that the design will meet IMBA standards. World Trail is currently regarded as the preeminent mountain bike trail design and construction group in Australia, and is renowned for using current best practice methods.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

The connection with Marysville is highly significant given that this town was devastated by the wildfires of Black Saturday in 2009 and this trail development will aid the rebuilding of this popular tourist town. The trail will link the network of existing trails at the Lake Mountain Resort and the town trails close to Marysville. McKenzies Tourist Services provides buses to Marysville from Melbourne on bus route 684. There is no public transport to Lake Mountain although opportunities for shuttle services will arise once the trail is completed.

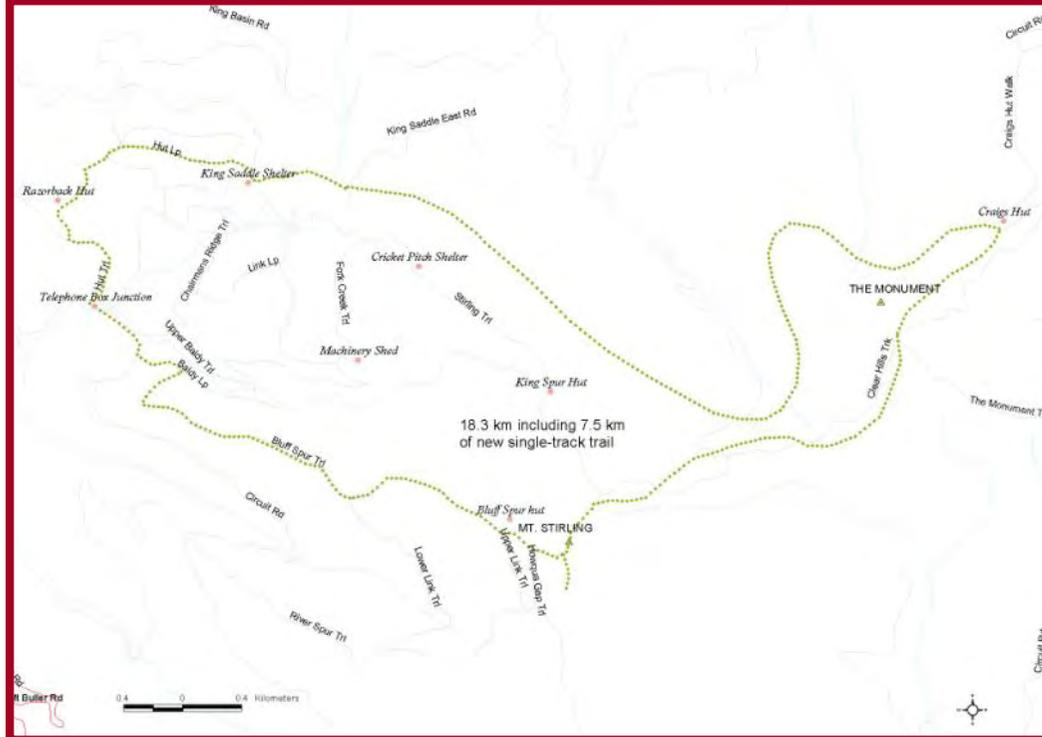
* Images courtesy of Lake Mountain Alpine Resort.



Mount Stirling Horse Riding Trail

Distance: 15.1km
User Groups: Horse riders

Surface: natural earth



Location:
 Mount Stirling, Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort

Key Features and Attractions:
 Mountain huts in an extremely scenic area with tall Alpine Ash forest and Snowgum woodland. Mt Stirling summit offers 360° views of the High Country.

Opportunities:
 Links with Delatite River Trail (popular with horse riders), Mt Stirling ski trails (available to horses), Mansfield State Forest and Alpine National Park. Co-locating with Epic MTB trail will increase usage as non cyclists in family groups may opt to use horse trail.

Challenges:
 Stirling summit road is open to 4WD vehicles in summer which could lead to conflict of interest.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
 \$300,000 including planning and trail construction.*

Score: 62%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
 Keen support from horse groups, ride operators and Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management. Informally supported by Mansfield Shire Council.



Appealing to Trail Users:

The area and its trails are already very appealing to trail users. This project enhances the experience by offering a horse-only trail to access the Mt Stirling Resort and summit and Craig's Hut without having to use existing 4WD tracks. It is currently proposed that the trail be one-way to maximise commercial and recreational opportunities and experience. The trail moves through various iconic high country landscapes and forests with the highlights of the Stirling summit and Craig's Hut. The trail also passes several rustic refuge huts and shelters and also provides camping with horses opportunity at Razorback Hut (traditional cattleman's hut).

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

This project has the potential to build on local, regional, state and interstate tourism opportunities which are already present in the region. Improved economic benefits will result via increased visitation and commercial tours, overnight stays, day rides, job creation, hospitality/ accommodation and packages.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The trail will use an existing environmental and cultural heritage interpretive trail (Bluff Spur Trail) which has information totems along its length and to the Mt Stirling summit. This interpretive trail has been designed to be viewed on foot, by horse, ski or mountain bike. The trail will provide increased opportunities for education about the natural and pre and post contact cultural values of the alpine, sub-alpine and montane zones and the rich history (both indigenous and non-indigenous) of the sites (Mt Stirling, Craig's Hut, The Monument and Razorback Hut). Evidence of various land uses can also be highlighted from the trail – pre-contact indigenous sites exist in the vicinity and the pioneering activities of logging and cattle grazing, followed by the appreciation of the area for nature-based activities (cross-country skiing, bushwalking, mountain biking, horse-riding and environmental education) can be described and experienced.

Supported through Planning:

Not specifically mentioned in planning documents at this time.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management has constructed over 40km of sustainable multi-use and mountain biking trails to industry standards and international best practice over the past eight years. This trail would be constructed in the same manner to ensure high quality is delivered for the user and sustainability is delivered for triple bottom line benefits and management.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

The trail makes best use of existing infrastructure and new purpose-built horse-only trail to link key features and sites within the Mt Stirling Resort and Craig's Hut areas. Multiple parts of the trail will intersect with other existing trails broadening opportunities in the area. The trail has the potential to improve links between horse-riding communities and groups, as well as connecting with other visitors/commercial groups through the development of packages etc. The trail will be accessible from the Stirling Road off Mt Buller Road – the main arterial route into the area.

Photos kindly provided by Louise Perrin, Mt Buller Resort.

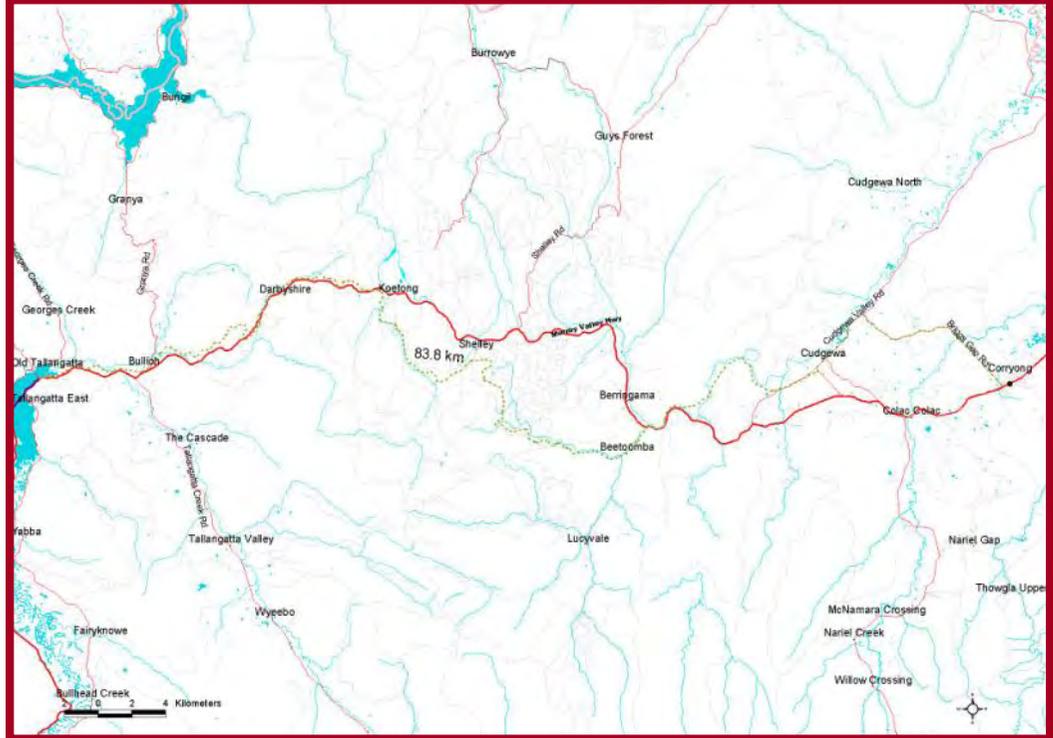
*Cost estimate provided by Mt Buller - Mt Stirling Resort Management



High Country Rail Trail — Old Tallangatta to Corryong Trail Link



Distance: 83.8km **Surface:** Gravel
User Groups: Walkers, Cyclists and Horse riders



Location:
 Old Tallangatta and Corryong, Towong Shire

Key Features and Attractions:
 Murray River, Lake Hume, mountains, small towns, forests, open farmland, views of snowfields, unique design trestle bridges, highest rail trail in Australia.

Opportunities:
 Will complete the 132km High Country Rail Trail. Parklands Albury Wodonga and partners have made significant progress with establishing basic access and restoring timber trestle bridges utilising a volun-tourism model. HVP support to utilise 6km Crown corridor through plantations.

Challenges:
 Funds to restore 4 trestle bridges and construct trail. Resources for DEPI to undertake the Committee of Management reservation and appointment. Route from Cudgewa to Corryong to be determined; may encounter issues with roadside vegetation disturbance depending on conservation status determined by DEPI during planning process. Potential landholder issues however PAW has good track record of successfully negotiating agreements with landholders. Vicroads support to establish 2km off road trail along Murray Valley Hwy to connect Colac Colac.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
 \$4.4M*

Score: 40%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
 Not a high priority for Towong Shire Council at present, but supported through community consultations and survey. High priority for PAW (land managers), partners and Cudgewa community.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This is a relatively long trail extension of 83.8km but once developed will complete the 132km long High Country Rail Trail which will be attractive to users seeking a long distance experience through attractive countryside featuring rivers, mountains, historic towns, agricultural landscapes and spectacular timber trestle bridges.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

Given the long distance, remote nature and paucity of significant service centres, user numbers are likely to be limited at least in the short to medium term. However, if marketed appropriately the trail could attract significant user numbers and stimulate the emergence of relevant tourist enterprises which will boost the economic development of the region. Completion of the Sandy Creek bridge has increased usage significantly and as the trail surface and facilities improve higher visitor numbers may be expected.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The trail will be constructed along the decommissioned rail reserve running through a mix of state forest, plantations and agricultural landscape and so impacts on the natural environment or cultural heritage are likely to be minimal. Rail reserves can often act as sanctuaries for rare or threatened plant species and so appropriate measures to protect any such populations will be required. The requirement for a planning permit will be determined by council zoning and overlays and such a permit will stipulate appropriate techniques for avoiding damage to the natural environment or cultural heritage values. Revegetation along the new trail could augment remnant vegetation and enhance habitat and ecosystem values.

Supported through Planning:

Mentioned in Indigo Shire Council's Strategic Bicycle Plan Update (2008) Priority in Parklands Albury Wodonga Strategic Plan (2010 – 2022) and the High Country Rail Trail Implementation Plan (2012 – 2015).

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

The project is progressing with minimal resources as initially suitable for mountain bikes. Puffing Billy Society is working with Parklands Albury Wodonga to ensure the trestle bridges are restored to industry standards using best practice methods and transferring skills in traditional bridge building. The gravel trail will be a standard 2.4 metre wide. The quality will be dependent on sufficient funding for materials.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

This proposed extension to the High Country Rail Trail will provide a connection between Tallangatta and Corryong and a physical connection back to the large rural centres of Wodonga and Albury via the existing trail. Infrastructure and services in the localities and rural areas en route is currently very limited but the towns of Tallangatta and Corryong offer basic services including motels, hotels, caravan parks, farm stays, restaurants and cafes. A bus service operates between Albury and Tallangatta also between Albury and Corryong. There are no direct services from Melbourne.

*Cost estimate based on 83.8 km of unsealed trail at \$35/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.

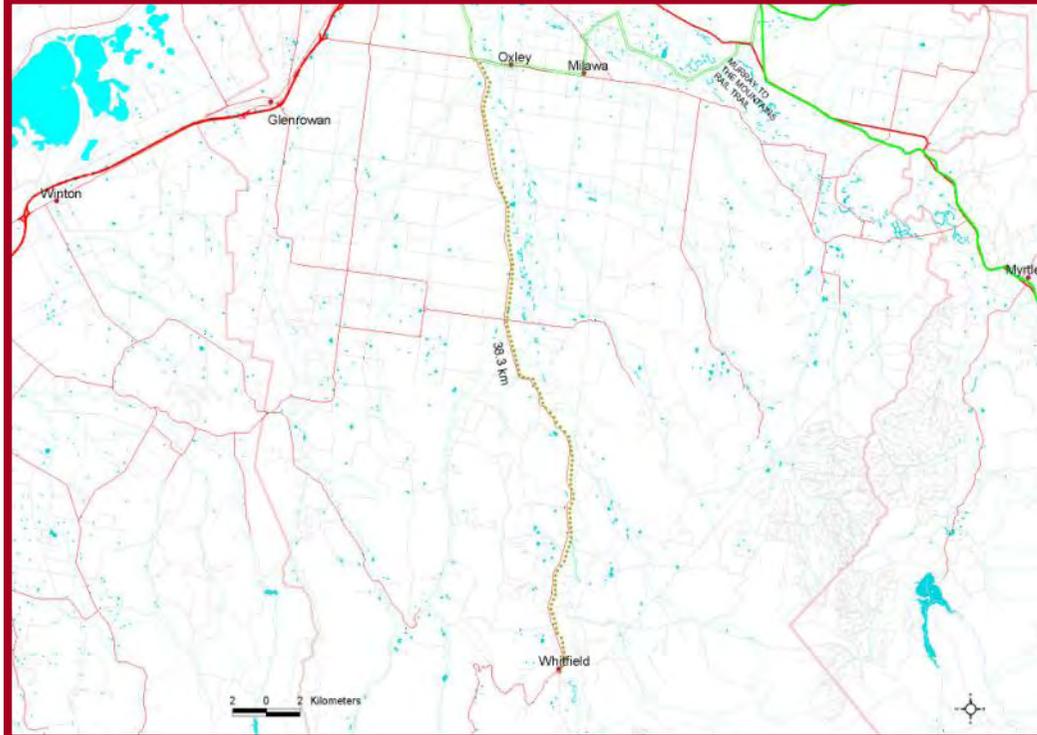


Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Oxley to Whitfield Trail Link

Distance: 38.3km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Oxley and Whitfield in the Rural City of Wangaratta

Key Features and Attractions:

This trail follows the King Valley from Oxley past a number of wineries and through farmland, ending in the town of Whitfield.

Opportunities:

This trail is a key connector between the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail.

Challenges:

It may be challenging to develop this trail along the old rail easement as a lot of this land has been sold to private landholders. Much of the proposed route is along existing road reserve; space may be limited in some parts of the reserve.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$6.9M*

Score: 66%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

This potential trail has strong support from both Mansfield Shire and the Rural City of Wangaratta (who have committed planning money to this project). The number one priority of each Council is to extend the regionally significant rail trails in their municipality to Whitfield. Concept strongly supported by King Valley Vignerons and Wines of the King Valley groups.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to appeal to visitors from all over Australia and internationally who are keen to undertake a multi-day journey along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M) and the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail through grazing and dairy country, vineyards and wineries. The trail length is likely to be appealing to intermediate to experienced touring cyclists (40km from Wangaratta to Whitfield). Loop opportunities will be limited. Some nearby features of interest to walkers and cyclists include: Lake William Hovell, Powers Lookout (where Ned Kelly once hid out) and Paradise Falls. There are several wineries in close proximity to the Whitfield township.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The trail has potential to make a major impact on the town of Whitfield in terms of new business opportunities such as increased wine sales and the development of farm gate sales, additional food and accommodation options and possibly tours and shuttle services. Whilst trail usage numbers are not likely to be as high as parts of the Murray to Mountains Trail due to the terrain and distances between towns, there is expected to be a steady flow of trail users who will break the journey between Oxley and Mansfield by staying overnight in Whitfield and contributing to the local economy. The trail is likely to have a positive impact on both the M2M Rail Trail and the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail as it essentially creates an even stronger tourism product in the region and may in fact encourage greater use of both trails.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Detailed concept plans have not yet been developed however it is expected that when plans are developed they will highlight the natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity.

Supported through Planning:

The connection from Oxley to Whitfield is supported through planning documents including the *Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities (2010)*; the *Wangaratta Open Space and Recreation Strategy (2012)*; the *Murray to Mountains Strategic Plan (2012)* and the *Indigo Shire Council Strategic Bicycle Plan Update (2008)*. There is strong support within Whitfield for this trail and also at officer level at Mansfield Shire.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Although detailed design work is yet to occur, given Wangaratta Rural City Council's good track record of quality trail developments related to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, it is expected that a similar level of detail and quality will be involved in a trail between Oxley and Whitfield.

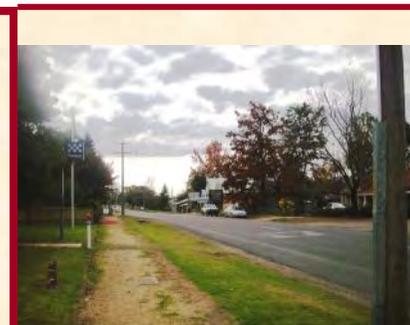
Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Oxley has a population of 354 in the urban centre alone hence regular use by local residents is expected. It also connected to the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail so it is a well known destination for cycling and walking. Oxley comprises of a recreation reserve, hall, general store, service station, park, cafe, self-contained accommodation and several wineries located nearby. There is no public transport available to Oxley. There is however a shuttle bus that operates on the Murray to Mountains Trail that could feasibly provide a shuttle service between Oxley and Whitfield if sufficient resources are available. Half way between Whitfield and Oxley there is a small town (Moyhu) which features a caravan park, holiday house, hotel, park, general store and post office. This trail would also provide good opportunities for Moyhu residents.

Whitfield, with a population of approximately 300, features a recreation reserve, community hall, public toilets, shelters, playground, a hotel, general store, cafe, guest house, several wineries and a caravan park. There is likely to be some use of the trail by local residents as there are no existing tracks / trails. Public transport is very limited. A bus departs Whitfield to Wangaratta on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10am, arriving at 11am and from Wangaratta to Whitfield on the same days at 3pm, arriving at 4pm. There is no weekend service.

Photos 1 and 3 on this page supplied by Mattingbgn, Wikipedia: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Whitfield,_Victoria. Photo 3 on previous page supplied by Oxley Residents Association as well as photo 2 and 4.

*Cost estimate based on 38.3 km of sealed trail at \$120/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.

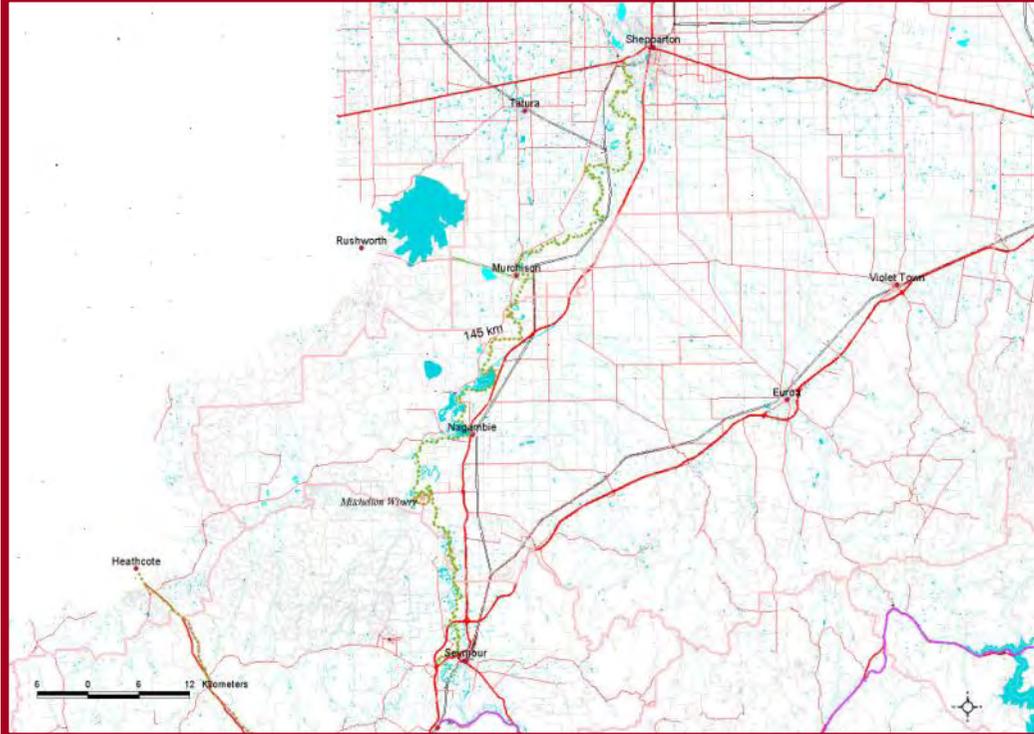


Shepparton to Seymour River Trail

Distance: 145km

Surface: unsealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Shepparton (Greater Shepparton City Council), Seymour (Mitchell Shire Council), and Nagambie (Strathbogie Shire)

Key Features and Attractions:

River scenery, farmland, wineries, wildlife, bird viewing.

Opportunities:

This trail could provide a connection from Shepparton to the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail near Seymour and economic development opportunities.

Challenges:

Cultural Heritage Management issues, private landholders, leases, considerable distances between towns, landscape amenity and cost are challenges associated with this proposed trail.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$17.4M*

Score: 40%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

This potential trail has been identified by several community members. It has not been identified as a major priority by Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie Shire or Mitchell Shire at this stage.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to have some appeal to potential track / trail users who are interested in travelling alongside or near the Goulburn River for either an extended period of time; or for those who may be interested in travelling along shorter linear sections of the trail between towns. Some of the challenges will be to receive permission to construct the trail close enough to the Goulburn River so that trail users are able to see the river often throughout the journey, as opposed to constructing the trail along bush tracks or low use roads nearby which are frequently used by other forms of motorised transport and don't necessarily offer river views or shade.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The trail has potential to attract some additional people to the Goulburn River, assuming that it provides the type of experience people are seeking. If the trail is established on existing forest roads or low use roads with some signage and away from the river frontage, it is most likely to appeal to local residents and people visiting the region already, rather than attracting new users. This scenario is not likely to have a significant impact on the creation of additional economic activities. However, if the trail provides a high quality experience, with regular river vistas and access points, it is much more likely to strengthen the tourism potential of this section of the Goulburn River and will encourage the development of additional accommodation options, food outlets and potentially bike hire, tour guiding and shuttle services .

If a link is developed from Tallarook to Seymour on the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail, this would significantly improve the range of tourism products available in the region as there would be a continuous trail from Seymour all of the way to Shepparton. Other proposed links from Shepparton include the Dookie Rail Trail and also the proposed Rushworth to Murchison Rail Trail, which would also provide opportunities for long distance cycle touring or hiking.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

As no planning has yet been undertaken, it is not known what type of natural environment or cultural heritage barriers may exist and what processes need to be put into place to address these issues. As much of the proposed trail is situated alongside the Goulburn River, cultural heritage issues are expected to be a priority to address.

Supported through Planning:

Support for a section of this trail between Shepparton and Murchison is mentioned in the draft Greater Shepparton Cycling Strategy (2012)

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

There are no plans as yet, so ability to comply with industry standards and best practice methods is unknown. Both Greater Shepparton and Mitchell Shire have constructed local and municipal level tracks / trails in the past.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Residents of urban areas of Shepparton / Mooroopna (42,471), Murchison (769), Nagambie (1,547) and Seymour (5,914) are likely to be major users of the proposed trail, if it is developed to a suitable standard and effectively marketed. Each of these locations offers a range of accommodation options, quality food outlets, parks, retail services, etc for trail users. Each of these towns has a network of urban trails that could ultimately connect to this proposed trail. A privately operated winery at Michelton has recently established 6km of trails along the Goulburn River, which should be incorporated into this trail.

In terms of public transport, there are regular daily train services between Shepparton and Seymour.

*Cost estimate based on 145 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure. Being a river trail final cost may be significantly higher due to requirements for bridges, culverts and other engineered structures.

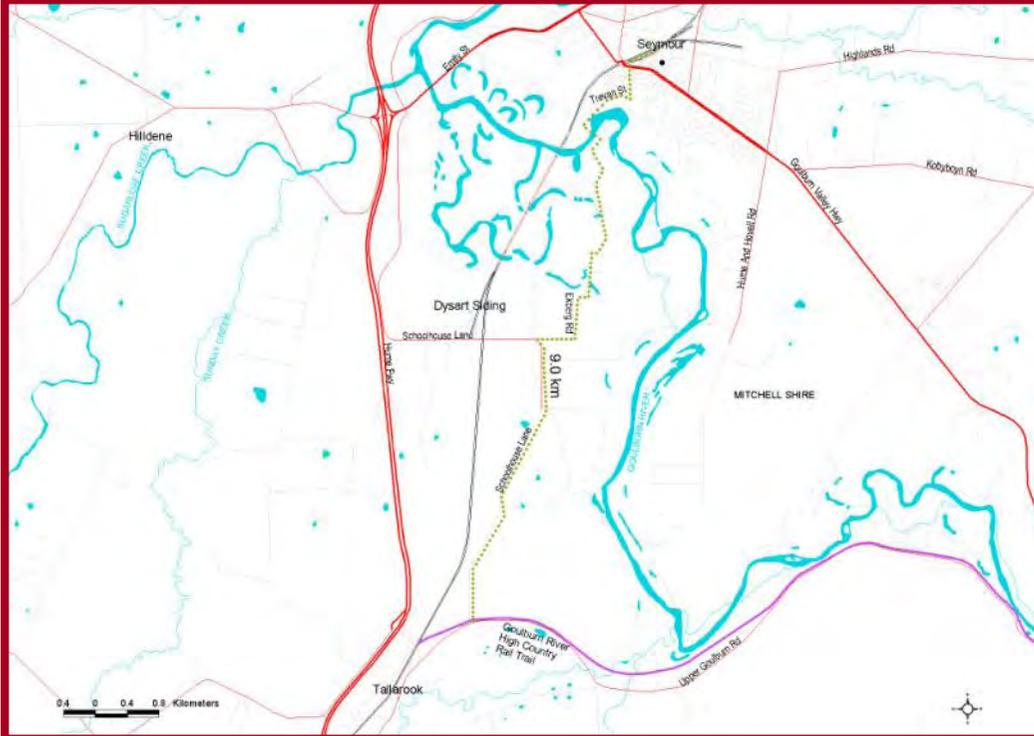


GRHCRT — Tallarook to Seymour Trail Link

Distance: 9.0km

Surface: granitic sand

User Groups: Walkers, Cyclists and Horse riders



Location:

Tallarook and Seymour, Mitchell Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Connects Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail to the population centre of Seymour.

Opportunities:

Could provide a link to Wallan via Broadford and Kilmore and ultimately connect with a Goulburn River Trail between Shepparton and Seymour (if developed) or the Heathcote to Wandong trail (if developed).

Challenges:

Potential issues with constructing trail in roadside reserve including disturbance of native vegetation. Potential cultural heritage issues around the Goulburn River.

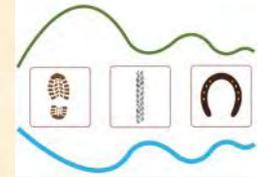
Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$1.08M*

Score: 49%

Key Stakeholders:

Mitchell Shire's #1 priority. Supported by Mitchell and Murrindindi Shire officers and survey respondents.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail extension will be of appeal to users of the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail as it will facilitate access to the tourist services available in Seymour. The tentative route will be attractive as it runs through agricultural landscapes and over the Goulburn River.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

With more accommodation, eating and tourist services available in Seymour, locating the trail head here will attract greater numbers of trail users requiring these services and enhance the economic yield of the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail in this area.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The exact path of this trail is yet to be determined and so detailed strategies for protecting and enhancing natural and cultural values have not yet been developed. However, adherence to guidelines contained in the Mitchell Shire's planning scheme will ensure protection of these values and opportunities to revegetate along the newly constructed trail will augment local plant populations and provide 'wildlife corridors'.

Supported through Planning:

Not formally supported through planning at this stage.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Mitchell Shire has a good track record and recent experience at designing trails according to industry standards and best practice methods.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

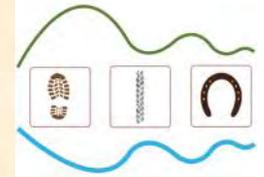
This trail extension provides a very strategic connection to the population centre of Seymour thereby offering better access to the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail for the local community and visitors planning to use the trail. Seymour offers a range of accommodation options, food outlets, other services and attractions. V/line operates frequent train and coach services daily between Melbourne and Seymour, as well as services on the Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton lines.

*Cost estimate based on 9 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.

Images from www.travelvictoria.com.au



Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Wahgunyah to Lake Moodemere Trail Link



Distance: 4.3km

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists

Surface: compacted granitic sand



Location:

Wahgunyah and Lake Moodemere, Indigo Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Lake Moodemere is a significant indigenous site, haven for bird watchers and venue for numerous water sports. There are several wineries in the area and the Winemakers Hall of Fame.

Opportunities:

This extension to the M2M trail will significantly enhance the experience of trail users by providing access to the cultural and natural features of the Murray River environment and Lake Moodemere. Opportunity to link with Corowa trails network.

Challenges:

None apparent.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$145,000*

Score: 61%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

This potential trail has strong support from Indigo Shire, the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee and the community (via the survey).



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to be very appealing to users as the cultural and natural features of the Murray River and Lake Moodemere will be of great interest and provide a contrast to the agricultural landscapes and different forest communities encountered elsewhere on the trail. Providing access to this unique environment at the start point of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail will enable users to fully appreciate the diversity of experiences indicated in the name of the trail.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

Enhancing the experience available at this end of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail will amplify the overall appeal of the trail and entice a greater number of users. Usage of the Murray to Mountains trail has to date been concentrated at the 'Mountains' end and so broadening the appeal to the 'Murray' end is likely to attract a greater number of visitors and encourage return visits from users wishing to experience the full suite of experiences available.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The Wahgunyah Foreshore Master Plan details practices for protecting and enhancing the natural environment and cultural heritage which serve as a guide in the development of this trail.

Supported through Planning:

The Wahgunyah River Trails Network Master Plan and the Wahgunyah Foreshore Master Plan support the development of this trail.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

The Wahgunyah Foreshore Master Plan stipulates that trail should be designed to meet Australian Standards for mobility impaired persons.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

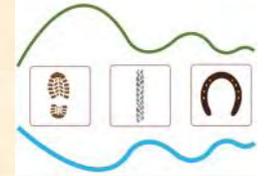
This trail will connect the communities of Wahgunyah and Corowa with the local trails network and Lake Moodemere. It links directly with the recently completed section of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail between Rutherglen and Wahgunyah.

A V/line train/coach service between Melbourne and Corowa runs every day except Saturday.



*Cost estimate provided by Indigo Shire.

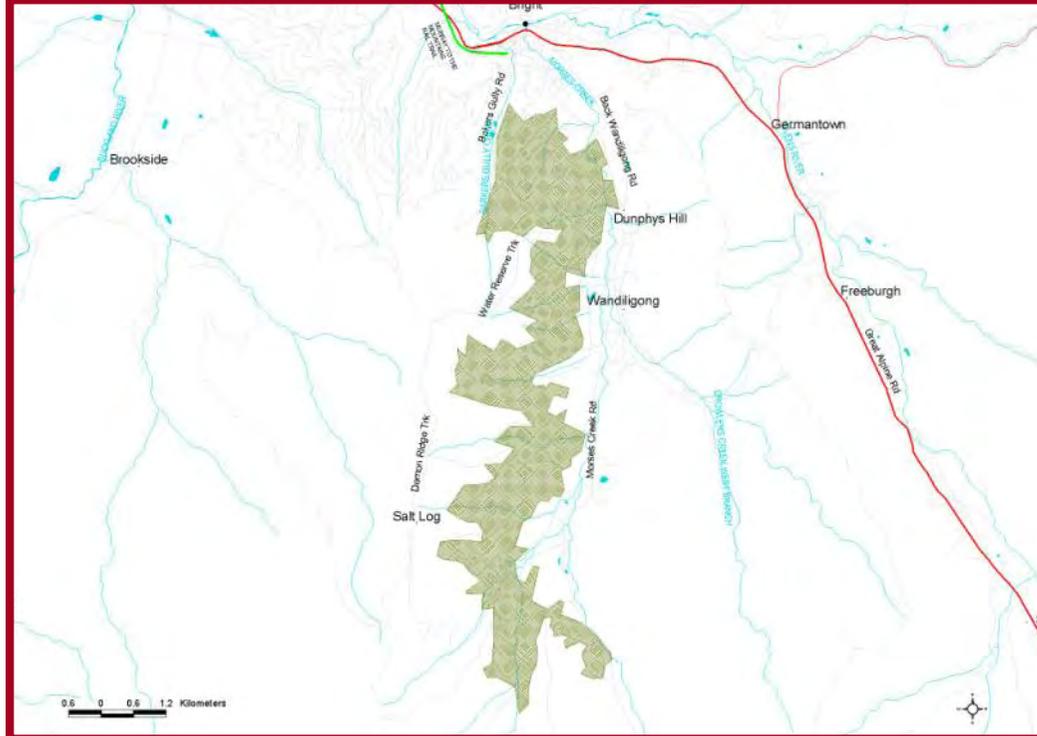
Wandiligong HVP Mountain Bike and Recreation Trails



Distance: 150km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Hancock Victoria Plantations, Wandiligong, Alpine Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

150km of purpose built mountain bike trails in a commercial pine plantation (70km already existing).

Opportunities:

Could ultimately connect with the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail. Potential to hold high profile races and events. Opportunity for HVP to provide interpretive or educational programs about forestry and timber production.

Challenges:

Trails will be in commercial timber plantations and will require reconstruction after harvesting operations.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$225,000* Will rely heavily on volunteer labour.

Score: 64%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Alpine Shire's #1 priority. Willing support from the landowner, Hancock Victoria Plantations and funding support from Regional Development Victoria.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Committed mountain bike riders will find great appeal in such an expansive network of purpose built trails. Pine forest trails are highly regarded amongst the mountain biking community.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

A high quality purpose built mountain biking facility such as this will draw good numbers of people to the region both for casual mountain bike riding trips and organised races and events. Bright is already well established to provide tourist services to cyclists and so will benefit economically from an increase in the number of cyclists visiting the region.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

A commercial timber plantation of an exotic tree species holds little in the way of natural environment or cultural heritage values, hence further development is unlikely to be a major issue.

Supported through Planning:

Not formally supported through planning documents.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Trails should be designed and built according to International Mountain Bike Association sustainable design principles.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Bright has a wide variety of accommodation options for people wishing to use this mountain bike park, as well as quality food outlets and many other retail services. There are a number of breweries and wineries in the area, and ample coffee shops. The Murray to Mountains Rail Trail extends from Bright to Wandiligong. Limited public transport opportunities are available to Bright.

*Cost estimate provided by Alpine Shire

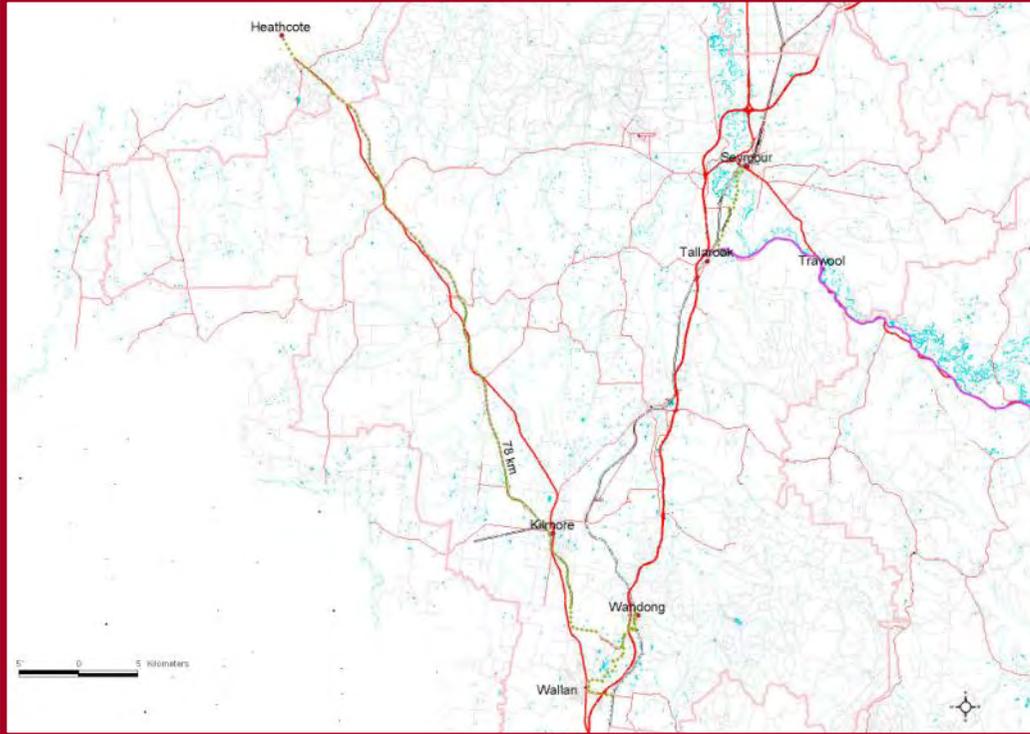


Wandong to Heathcote Rail Trail

Distance: 78km

Surface: Tertiary quartz gravel

User Groups: Walkers, Horse riders and Cyclists



Location:

Wandong and Wallan (Mitchell Shire) and Heathcote (City of Greater Bendigo).

Key Features and Attractions:

Attractive small towns, wineries, boutique breweries, variety of natural environments, Lake Eppalock, goldfields history, railway trestle bridges.

Opportunities:

Would ultimately provide connections to O’Keefe Rail Trail, Goldfields Track, Bendigo Bushland Trail, Bendigo Creek Trail, Great Victorian Rail Trail, proposed Rushworth-Murchison Rail Trail and Craigieburn Bypass Trail.

Challenges:

Land tenure— rail reserve from Heathcote Junction to Kilmore has sections under VicTrack plus some privately owned. The Kilmore to Heathcote section has been mostly sold, with crown reserves in place. Road reserves possible yet with potential vegetation clearance issues. May be private land barriers.

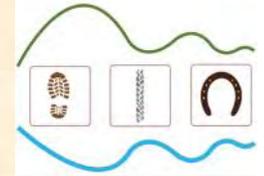
Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$9.4M*

Score: 64%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Supported by Mitchell Shire (#2 priority), Mitchell BUG, BEAM Environmental Group, Wandong Heathcote Junction Community Group, Pyalong Restoration Group, Friends of the Bendigo-Kilmore Rail Trail and City of Greater Bendigo.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail will have wide appeal as it has potential to connect a number of regionally important trails thereby offering a great range of trip lengths and experiences. Features include a number of attractive small goldfields towns with short connection trail distances interesting histories and architecture, wine districts of Bendigo and Heathcote, attractive and varied natural environments with wildlife viewing opportunities, historic railway attractions such as trestle bridges and replica platforms. Transport connections available at both end points including passenger rail and freeways connected to Melbourne. Will appeal to walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

This trail will attract high usage from both Bendigo and Melbourne into the region via improved access to a large suite of attractions and experiences. Increased visitation to townships along the trail and demand for services in these towns is likely to have a very positive economic impact on these towns and the broader region. As usage develops, opportunities for new tourist ventures will arise and viability of existing enterprises will be strengthened.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Sections of the trail traversing State Forest and other Crown land will follow an alignment designed to minimise impact on environmental and cultural values and will be guided by conditions set out in the planning permit and cultural heritage management plan (if applicable). Sections running through farmland offer opportunities for revegetation and enhancement of the natural environment. Educational / interpretive opportunities are also likely to increase trail user's appreciation and respect for these values.

Supported through Planning:

Feasibility not yet undertaken so not incorporated into planning. Potential importance of this trail is identified in the Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategy (2009).

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

Completion of the trail between Axedale and Heathcote is presently underway at a cost of \$3.22M. This section is being constructed according to industry standards and best practice methods; which would also apply to this future connecting trail.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

The complete trail (Bendigo-Wallan/Wandong) would become the only Victorian long distance rail trail to have practical public transport connections at both trail end points. This would include passenger rail services, buses, freeway connections to Melbourne, other provincial cities and Tullamarine Airport. The communities of Heathcote, Kilmore, Wallan and Wandong as well as the smaller settlements of Pyalong and Tooborac already have good tourist infrastructure with a variety of accommodation options, cafes, restaurants and wineries. The trail will provide a physical trail connection between these small towns and the larger population centre of Bendigo as well as an easy transport connection to Melbourne at both ends. Connections to existing trails will be provided including: Goldfields Track at Bendigo, Great Victorian Rail Trail at Tallarook, Bendigo Bushland Trail, Rushworth-Murchison Rail Trail via off road connection from Heathcote, Craigieburn Bypass Trail and Melbourne trails network via a connecting link to Craigieburn plus other local and municipal trails.

Images courtesy of Friends of the Bendigo Kilmore Rail Trail

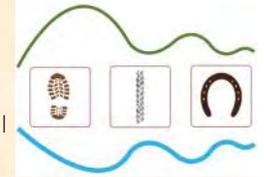
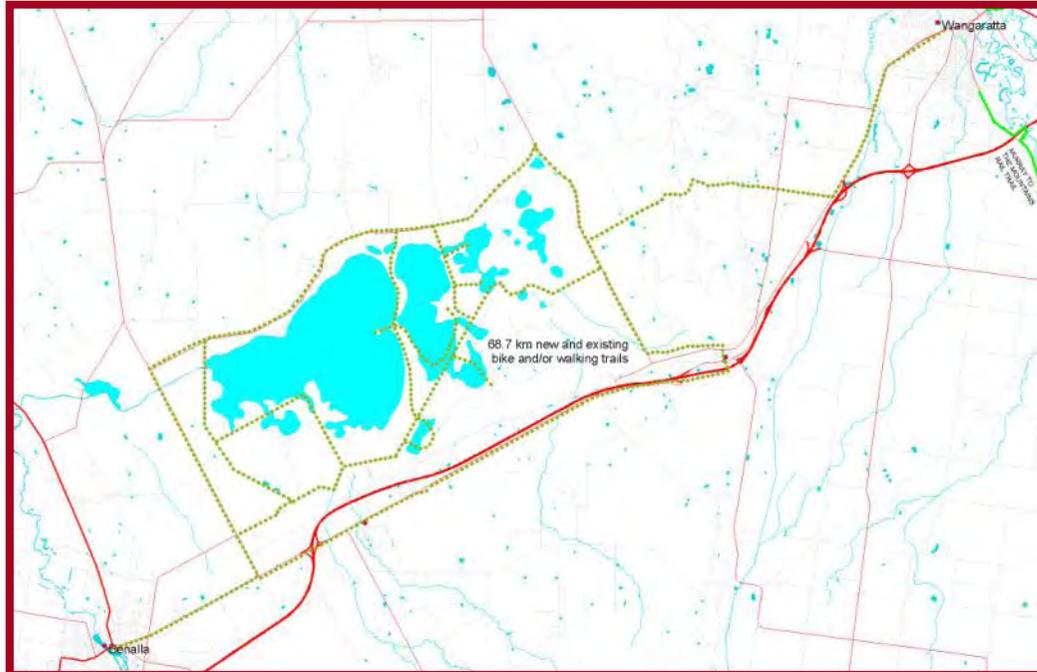
*Cost estimate based on 78 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



Winton Wetlands Trails

Distance: 68.7 km total
User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists

Surface: compacted granitic sand



Location:
Winton Wetlands near Benalla, Benalla Rural City Council

Key Features and Attractions:
Off road cycling, walking and horse riding amongst wetlands, featuring birds and wildlife. A variety of supporting nature based tourism opportunities including night tourism activities, services and facilities as a second stage of the development.

Opportunities:
Development of a brand new tourism product with a focus on trail. Grand Fondo and various mountain bike events planned in the nearby adjacent Warby Ranges. Opportunity to link Wangaratta to Warby Ranges and Winton Wetlands via Williams / Lindner Road or similar route.

Challenges:
Attracting sufficient funding to complete both stages of the project.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
The total cost of stage one and two of the development is estimated to be \$57 million.*

Score: 85%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
This development is the number one priority of the Winton Wetlands Committee of Management and Benalla Rural City Council. A Friends of Winton Wetlands has also been established. The Victorian Government has committed up to \$20M to restore the Winton Wetlands following the decommissioning of Lake Mokoan. **One of Benalla RCC's 3 pillars of economic development.** Supported by Glenrowan Vignerons Association.



Appealing to Trail Users:

Winton Wetlands has the potential to attract national and international bush walkers, cyclists, horse riders, bird watchers, star gazers, campers, wildlife lovers and photographers once fully developed. Stage one of the project involves the development of walking / cycling trails and interpretive information, as well as supporting recreational facilities such as camping grounds, BBQs, lookout areas, shade structures, playground, cafe and improved access to the water. The second stage of the project involves the development of nature based **tourism opportunities such as "guided tours of the Reserve, concerts and events, tethered balloon rides, night canoeing, guided fauna tours, a centre for culture and history, sound and light shows, local food and wine as well as a range of accommodation options."** The Yorta Yorta Nation has indicated that it is keen to ensure that indigenous cultural values are given prominence at the site.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

There will be numerous opportunities for the private sector and the indigenous community to offer a range of facilities and services associated with Winton Wetlands including guided tours, catering, concerts, accommodation, bicycle hire, canoe hire, trail rides, etc once established. Assuming that it is developed as per the master plan and effectively promoted, it could certainly encourage people to visit the site for extended periods of time. Given that a number of proposed activities are to be held in the evening and given that accommodation options will ultimately be developed, it is likely that the Winton Wetlands will eventually become a destination in its own right. Given its proximity to the Hume Highway, it is likely to attract people driving by, providing that quality signage and branding is in place. Hence from an economic development perspective, the Winton Wetlands offers significant potential. The development will also add to the appeal of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

The master plan developed to support this proposal focuses very strongly on restoring and regenerating the environment and working in partnership with the Yorta Yorta community to promote indigenous values and culture.

Supported through Planning:

The Winton Wetlands proposal is supported through the Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities Plan (2010); and Winton Wetlands Master Plan (2012). This development is ready to proceed. A three year strategic plan has also been funded and should be completed mid June 2013.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

The materials produced by Winton Wetlands Committee of Management thus far indicates strong adherence to industry standards and best practice methods, e.g. Fauna surveys, community engagement principles, fire preparedness maps, etc.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

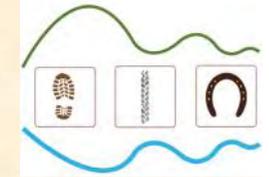
Benalla has a population of 9,328 in the urban centre alone hence regular use of the trails by local residents is expected, particularly when linkages between the town and Winton Wetlands are developed. The proposed cycling / walking trails to be developed at Winton Wetlands will link into Benalla via the Inlet Channel bicycle trail and then onto the Murray to Mountains Trail via a new link at Glenrowan on to Wangaratta. This link has the potential to create greater use and awareness of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and is also likely to attract a proportion of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail users to enjoy the facilities at Winton Wetlands. Long term, there is potential to link the Winton Wetlands to the Dookie Rail Trail and then on to Shepparton; or on to Mansfield along the Midland Highway road reserve currently used by walkers. Neither of these options are a high priority at this stage.

There are a variety of accommodation options (i.e. motels, hotels, B&Bs, caravan parks and self-contained accommodation) and quality food outlets available in Benalla. There are also parks, gardens, public toilets, recreation reserves and retail businesses. In terms of public transport, there are several rail services between Melbourne and Benalla each day of the week.

*As detailed in *The Winton Wetlands @ Benalla MASTER PLAN, 2012*
Images provided by Winton Wetlands Committee of Management Inc.



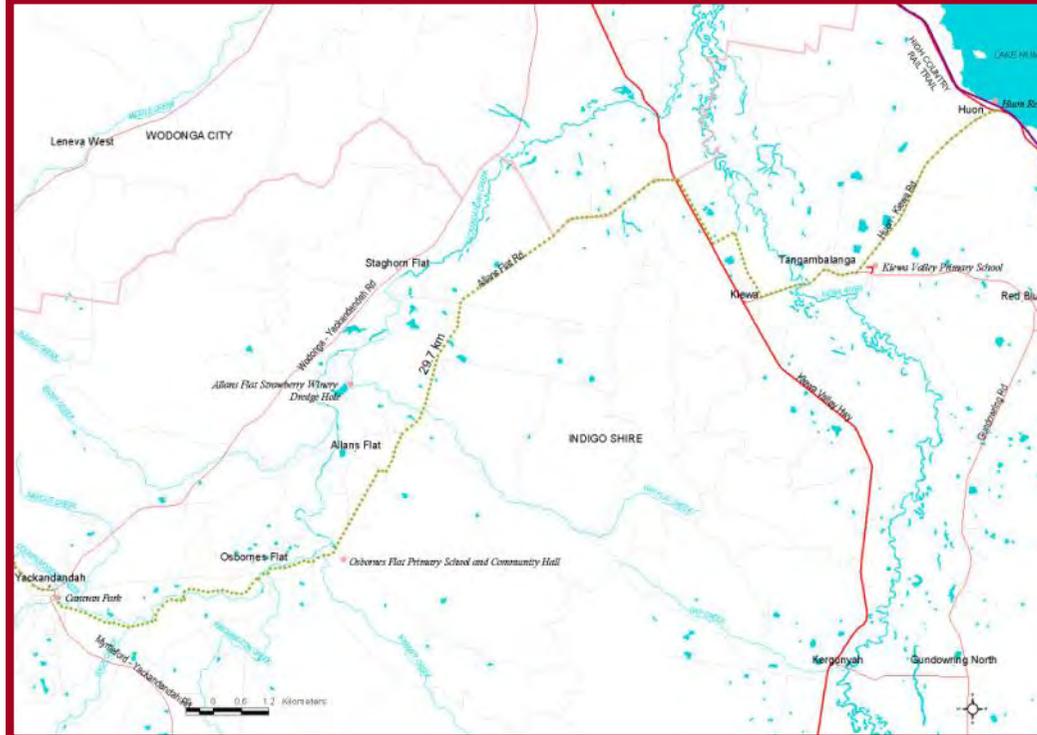
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail — Yackandandah to Huon Trail Link



Distance: 29.7 km

Surface: Sealed

User Groups: Walkers and Cyclists



Location:

Yackandandah and Huon, Indigo Shire

Key Features and Attractions:

Connects Yackandandah and M2M RT with Lake Hume and the HCRT. Likely to be very appealing to visitors. Features attractive countryside, waterways, gold diggings and points of interest.

Opportunities:

Will provide strategic connection between Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and the High Country Rail Trail. Linkages will be developed to Allans Flat and Osbornes Flat cycle / walking loops.

Challenges:

Land tenure issues such as Crown Land currently under license to be resolved. Funding from external bodies required to offset cost of construction.

Estimated Cost to Construct:

\$3.8M*

Score: 60%

Support by Key Stakeholders:

Strong support from Indigo Shire (#2 priority), the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee, Chambers of Commerce and community committees.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to attract the same market as the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (M2M) and in conjunction with the Beechworth to Yackandandah proposed trail, will form a strategic connection between the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and the High Country Rail Trail. Appeal to users will be very high given the presence of attractive historic townships, hilly countryside, cultural and historic points of interest, connection with local town trails, excellent accommodation options and good transport connections.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The variety of trip options presented to trail users by this connection will expand the market to a wider range of abilities, thereby increasing visitation to the area. The success of the current Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and cycle tourism in general in the North East has been built on the combination of great cycling with outstanding food and wine. The Beechworth to Huon route, via Yackandandah, will open up a wide range of established tourism product including wineries, berry farms and the attractions and businesses of the Yackandandah village. There are also a number of other opportunities for potential product development including the prospect of Murray Goulburn opening a retail shop front in Tangambalanga, farm gate producers along the route, and a number of new and significant Indigo Gold Trail sites.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

Detailed concept plan has not yet been developed however the current plan aims to highlight natural environment and cultural heritage features while avoiding and protecting areas of sensitivity.

Supported through Planning:

Concept supported through Indigo Shire Council Plan 2012-2016 (2012), Indigo Shire Council Recreation Plan (2008), Indigo Shire Council Bike Plan, Indigo Shire Access and Inclusion Plan (2012), Indigo Shire Healthy Communities Plan (2011) and Indigo Shire Economic Development Strategy. The Murray to Mountains Rail Trail Committee of Management has listed the extension from Beechworth to Yackandandah as a key priority in its 2010-2013 Strategic Plan.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

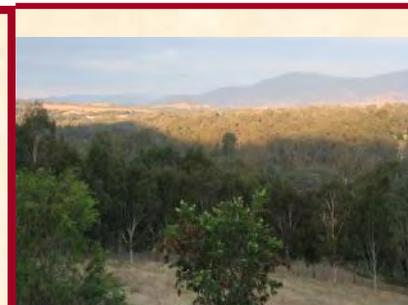
Preliminary plans have identified detailed alignment and cost estimates based on industry standards and best practice methods. Indigo Shire has a good track record in designing quality tracks and trails.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Yackandandah, with a population of approximately 950 will be the central community of the 2 stage Beechworth—Yackandandah—Huon trail. The first stage will connect Yackandandah with Beechworth (pop 2,800) and the second stage will connect with numerous small communities along the route to Huon. Importantly, this trail when 2 stages are complete, will connect the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail and the High Country Rail Trail. Many connections with local trails such as Yackandandah Gorge Walk and Kiewa River Trail at Tangambalanga will also be made. Access to the Beechworth Mountain Bike Park and MTB trails in Stanley State Forest will be possible.

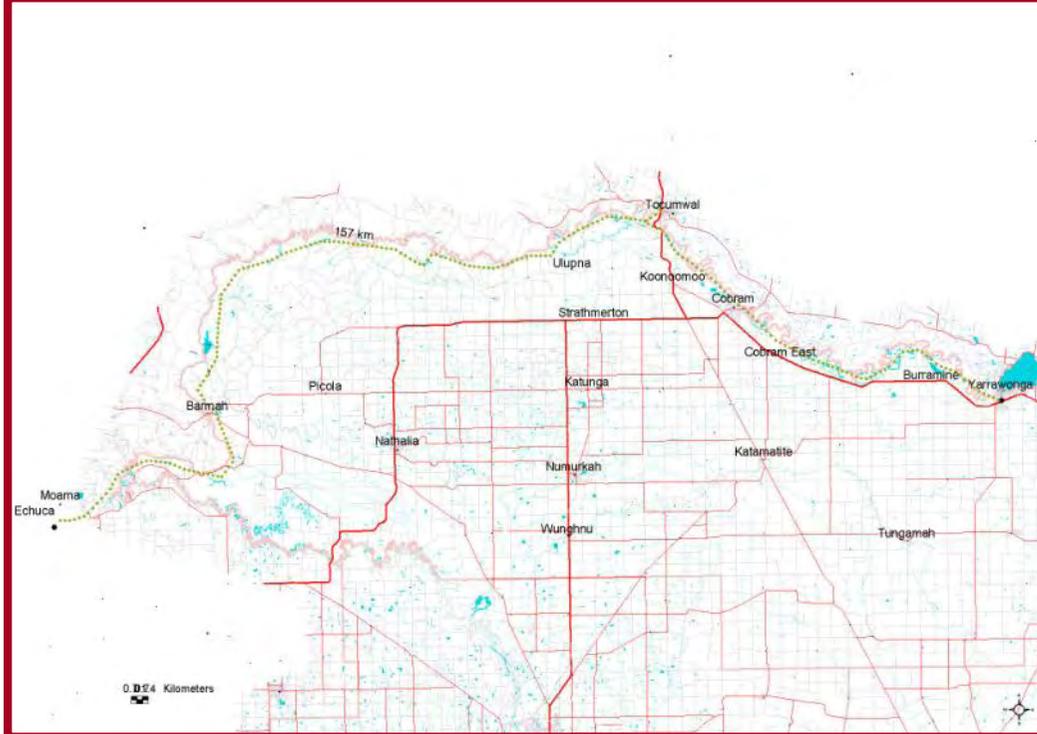
Yackandandah already enjoys strong tourist patronage and boasts a variety of accommodation options and food outlets. Transport connections are limited with none currently available to Yackandandah although a shuttle bus that operates on the Murray to Mountains Trail could feasibly provide a shuttle service between Beechworth and Yackandandah. Opportunities for private shuttle services may arise as demand dictates.

*Cost estimate based on 29.7 km of sealed trail at \$120/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.



Yarrowonga to Echuca River Trail

Distance: 157km
Surface: Granitic sand
User Groups: Walkers, cyclists and horse riders.



Location:
Yarrowonga, Cobram and Barmah in Moira Shire and Echuca in Campaspe Shire

Key Features and Attractions:
This long distance trail could connect many of the Murray River towns to each other.

Opportunities:
This trail could form the beginning of a connected trail along the entire length of the Murray River and provide economic development opportunities to towns along the route. Trail could be a major attraction for horse riders.

Challenges:
Cultural Heritage Management issues, private landholders, leases, maintenance costs, considerable distances between towns, and landscape amenity and cost are challenges associated with this trail.

Estimated Cost to Construct:
\$18.8M*

Score: 46%

Support by Key Stakeholders:
This potential trail has been identified by several community members. It has not been identified as a major priority by either Moira Shire or Campaspe Shire. interest.



Appealing to Trail Users:

This trail is likely to have some appeal to potential track / trail users who are interested in travelling alongside or near the Murray River for either an extended period of time; or for those who may be interested in travelling along shorter linear sections of the trail between towns. Some of the challenges will be to receive permission to construct the trail close enough to the Murray River so that trail users are able to see the Murray often throughout the journey, as opposed to constructing the trail along bush tracks nearby which are frequently used by other forms of motorised transport, don't offer river views or shade and can consequently become very dusty.

Strengthens Tourism Potential of a Region and Creates Opportunities for Economic Development:

The trail has potential to attract some additional people to the Murray River, assuming that it provides the type of experience people are seeking. If the trail is established on existing forest roads with some signage and away from the river frontage, it is most likely to appeal to local residents and people visiting the region already, rather than attracting new users. This scenario is not likely to have a significant impact on the creation of additional economic activities. However, if the trail provides a high quality experience, with regular river vistas and access points, it is much more likely to strengthen the tourism potential of this section of the Murray River and will encourage the development of additional accommodation options, food outlets and potentially bike hire, tour guiding and shuttle services. A previous trails study, the Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Tracks and Trails Strategy (2010), recommended that rather than one long trail along the Murray, that short, interesting sections be developed and marketed as the Murray River Trail Experience.

Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment and / or Cultural Heritage of a Region:

As no planning has yet been undertaken, it is not known what type of natural environment or cultural heritage barriers may exist and what processes need to be put into place to address these issues. As much of the proposed trail is situated alongside the Murray River, cultural heritage issues are expected to be a priority to address.

Supported through Planning:

An action point in the *Victorian Trails Strategy* is to investigate a Murray River Trail. It is also mentioned in *Tourism Victoria's Regional Marketing and Development Plan 2011-2012: The Murray*.

Designed According to Industry Standards and Best Practice Methods:

There are no plans as yet, so ability to comply with industry standards and best practice methods is unknown. Both Moira and Campaspe Shire have constructed local and municipal level tracks / trails in the past.

Connected to Communities, Existing Infrastructure, Transport and Other Tracks / Trails:

Residents of urban areas of Yarrawonga (6,793), Cobram (5,420), Barmah (181) and Echuca (12,613) are likely to be major users of the proposed trail, if it is developed to a suitable standard and effectively marketed. Each of these townships, particularly the larger three, offer a range of accommodation options, quality food outlets, parks, retail services, etc. Echuca has a network of trails along the river which this proposed trail could ultimately connect to, and both Yarrawonga and Cobram have a range of local and municipal level trails which could also provide connections. In terms of public transport, there are no direct connections between Echuca and Yarrawonga, however there are services to and from each town to Melbourne.

*Cost estimate based on 157 km of unsealed trail at \$80/metre, plus 50% mark-up for planning, management, engineering and infrastructure.

