BARWON SOUTH WEST
REGIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Inspiring Place

and

Robin Crocker and Associates

September 2009

2009-2019
BARWON SOUTH WEST
REGIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN

in association with

Robin Crocker and Associates

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SUMMARY

The Barwon South West Region of Victoria is comprised of nine local government authorities: the City of Greater Geelong, the Warrnambool City Council, the Shires of Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Moyne, Glenelg and Southern Grampians, and the Borough of Queenscliffe. The region has a significant number of tracks and trails of varying types and standards, a small number of which are of a high profile and attract visitors from both within and outside of the region.

Local government authorities and other land managers throughout the region have contributed to recreation trail development in response to increasing public demand. However, individual trail developments have typically been developed in isolation from other trail development elsewhere in the region. As a result, there is a lack of physical and promotional linkages between trails throughout the region and a range of trail construction and maintenance standards, funding sources and governance arrangements.

In response, the regional local government authorities and other key land management agencies, lead by the Colac Otway Shire Council, commissioned the preparation of the *Regional Trail Master Plan for the Barwon South West Region* (hereafter the Master Plan). The need for the *Master Plan* is supported by:

> a range of State government policy documents that highlight the value of trails for their health, economic, and social benefits;

> various trends in recreation that show increasing use of trails for recreation across a range of activities but notably for walking and bicycle riding; and

> continuing community and visitor pressures for improved trail facilities.

The aim of the *Master Plan* is to:

> *"establish a detailed master plan for the development of existing and proposed regional trails throughout the Barwon South West Region"*

Within the *Master Plan,* regional trails are defined as being trails that:

> are of a regional geographic scale and that link the region's settlements, activities or environments along a defined corridor;

> have the ability to deliver benefits across the region or substantive parts thereof;

> serve multiple recreational user groups where possible for day use rather than multi-day experiences (although they may be part of a multi-day experience);

> meet appropriate criteria for environmental sustainability;

> serve the whole of the community including visitors and regional residents (e.g. a user catchment that may involve several hours travel time);

> have good access from a number of points along their length and particularly to key parts of the trail where there is associated trailhead infrastructure;

> provide a quality focus/experience related to the unique character and features of the region (natural, cultural and landscape); and

> have key selling points that make the trail different/ unique for marketing and promotion.

The *Master Plan* also established criteria for the assessment of trails based on principles of sustainability, delivery of a quality visitor experience, the capacity of government and the community to develop, manage and maintain the trail and that the trail stimulate benefits to the community by way of environmental outcomes, economic development and/or improvements to the lifestyle of residents.

Preparation of the *Master Plan* has included consultation with each of the participating project partners representing the nine Council areas involved, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria, with other State agencies, stakeholder groups and residents of the region. The current document represents the project development to date including reviews by the Project Steering Committee and the Project Partners and is intended to inform further community comment about the project.

The *Master Plan* is in five parts:

> Section 1 provides an introduction to the project, including an overview of the methodology and purpose of the project;

> Section 2 introduces the Barwon South West Region, the broad policy framework relevant to trails, an overview of the trails audit compiled as part of the project, a review of the relevant recreation trends, trail benefits and issues, a summary of the community consultation, and the main findings from benchmarking;

> Section 3 defines regional trails, outlines the vision, criteria and principles to be used to assess the potential regional trails, and introduces the selected regional trails;

> Section 4 identifies the critical issues involved with the planning, development and management of regional trails; and

> Section 5 introduces the key strategies for regional trails, provides a 10 Year Action Plan and individual action plans for each selected regional trail.

The report is supported by 8 Attachments that provide further detail on a number of matters.

V I S I O N

The *Master Plan* introduces a vision for the regional trail network:

"*By the year 2020 the network of recreational trails in the south west Victorian coast, forests and hinterland will become recognised worldwide as offering social, environmental and economic benefits*".

I S S U E S

The issues challenging the achievement of the vision are:

> the need for enhanced governance and policy to support regional trails development;

> the need for coordinated planning, development and on-going management of trails;

the emphasis on the development of trail infrastructure to date and the lack of attention to the user's experience of the trails;

missed opportunities for marketing and promotion to date; and

the substantive funding required to establish and maintain a quality regional trail network.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE

A strategic review of the numerous trails with regional potential was undertaken and a selected list of 13 trails and 4 regional mountain bike hubs was identified to be treated as the regional trail network. The location of these trails and hubs in shown in Map 1.

The 13 regional trails include:

Great Ocean Walk

Surf Coast Walk

Coast to Crater Rail Trail

Old Beechy Rail Trail

Bellarine Rail Trail

Barwon River Trails and Parklands

Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail

Geelong Waterfront and Cycle Connections

Great South West Walk

Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail

Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail

Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade

Trans Grampians Walk (proposed)

The four regional mountain bike parks include:

You Yangs MTB Park

Map 1 Location of Selected Trails

Location of Selected Trails

Grampians National Park
Trans Grampians Walk (to Hollow Mountain carpark)
MTB HUB
Dunkeld

Melbourne

Hamilton

Mount Gambier

You Yangs Regional Park
MTB HUB

Geelong Waterfront and Regional Trail Connections

Glenelg River Canoe & Kayak Trail

Bellarine Rail Trail

Mortlake

Geelong

Nelson

Coast to Crater Trail
Camperdown

Barwon River Trails and Parklands

Queenscliff

Colac

Barwon Heads
Sorrento

Port Fairy - Warrnambool Rail Trail

Cobden

Queenscliff - Barwon Heads Coastal Trail

The Great South West Walk

Portland

Old Beechy Rail Trail

MTB HUB
Torquay

Port Fairy
Warrnambool

Timboon

MTB HUB
Forest

Anglesea

Surf Coast Walk

Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade

Lorne

Peterborough

Port Campbell

Princetown

Great Ocaen Walk

Apollo Bay

0k   10k   50k   NORTH

Map 1 Location of Selected Trails

INSPIRING PLACE

Back of A3 map

Anglesea MTB Park

Forrest MTB Park

Grampians MTB Park (proposed)

Of the trails and hubs in the regional network, all apart from the Trans Grampians Walk and the Grampians Mountain Bike Hub are existing trails that have had considerable investment in infrastructure and facilities.

As a group, the suite of trails and hubs has a number of strategic benefits including:

there is at least one trail in each of the local government areas in the Barwon South West area but with the larger number of trails in close proximity to Geelong as the major population centre in the region;

the mountain bike hubs are spaced equitably across the region, each providing a range of riding experiences, in a variety of settings;

there are a number of trails that begin or end in the major cities (Geelong, Warrnambool), towns (Portland, Port Fairy, Colac, Camperdown, Torquay) and tourism destinations (Nelson, Apollo Bay, Queenscliff) in the region;

the trails take in the full range of landscape settings across the region and from urban to natural environments;

the trails include both north-south and east-west routes;

there is a mix of trail use types i.e. walking only (3), walking/cycling trails (6), multiple use trails for walking, cycling and horse riding (3) and a canoe/kayak trail (1 at the Glenelg River with the potential for a further trail on the Barwon River between Geelong and Barwon Heads);

work on all but one of the trails and one hub has commenced with some being substantively completed (6);

the burden of land management of the trails is spread across the range of local governments and public agencies in the region and, therefore, does not fall singly or disproportionately onto one organisation to develop, maintain or promote;

existing trails are already providing economic benefits to the
region; and

there is evidence that all of the developed or developing
trails have broad community support and involvement in
their care and management.

The trails fit well into the *Victorian Nature Based Tourism Strategy* in that
several are located in the key regional campaign destinations of the Great
Ocean Road (Surf Coast, Coast to Crater, Great Ocean Walk) and the
Grampians (the proposed Wild Grampians Walk and the proposed Grampians
Mountain Bike Hub).

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations made are as follows. The ten-year action plan
identifies priorities (H-high, M-medium, L-low) for their implementation (shown
below in parentheses). The lead responsibility is also shown.

Recommendations for Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure for Regional Trails

1 The RMF should be the regional level trail governance body as it comprises
representatives from all major land management agencies within the region
(e.g. Parks Victoria), local government authorities, and key stakeholders. (H)
Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

2 Form a Regional Trails Sub-committee, loosely based on the current
structure of the Project Control Group for the *Barwon South West Regional
Trails Master Plan*. (H) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

3 Ensure there are clear lines of responsibility within each Council for the
management of trails and to liaise with the trail management bodies regarding
the development, promotion and management of trails in the Council area.
(H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

4 Develop and support Trail Management Committees for each regional trail.
(H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

5 Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for each trail as required
over the next 10 years. (M) Lead responsibility : Participating LGA's, agencies
and organisations

6 Adopt relevant 'codes of conduct' and develop local information about appropriate use for each regional trail. (L) Lead responsibility : Participating LGA's, agencies and organisations

7 Consult with the local community and key user groups (e.g. through clubs and/or peak bodies) in the planning stage of regional trail development and/or upgrade projects. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Participating LGA's, agencies and organisations

Recommendations for Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management

1. Adopt the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* as the over-arching guide to the planning, development and management of regional trails over the next 10 years. In particular, use the master plan and its definition of a regional trail, selection criteria and guiding principles to aid in the selection and prioritisation of future regional trails, if required. (H) Lead responsibility : Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

2. Adopt the design and development standards herein as a reference guide, in conjunction with other best practice guidelines including the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines for trail construction[1] and relevant Australian Standards for shared trails[2]. (H) Lead responsibility : Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

3. Prepare and implement a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan for each regional trail[3]. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

4. Undertake regular data collection regarding use of regional trails. (M-L) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

5. Facilitate the sharing of knowledge relating to trail planning, construction and management between all land management agencies, local government authorities, key user groups and organisations within the region. (M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

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[1] IMBA (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Single Track*, IMBA, California, USA.

[2] Austroads (1999) *Part 14 Austroads: Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice – Bicycles*, Austroads, Australia. It could also include reference documents such as Bushwalking Victoria's Policy Position of Sharing of Tracks and Trails.

[3] A number of the existing regional trails already have strategic directions plans, feasibility studies or similar (see Attachment 2 Policy Framework). New Joint Trail Development and Management Plans may not need to be developed for these trails. Alternatively, existing studies may be incorporated into a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan.

Recommendations for Experience-led Trail Development

1. Investigate opportunities for the development of new shared use trails and/or the upgrade to shared use trails where appropriate (shared trails may form sections of larger regional trails)[4]. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

2. Expand the opportunities for use of regional trails by people with varying abilities. (M) Lead responsibility : Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

3. Explore the feasibility of completing identified 'missing links' on individual trails as noted in Section 5.7. Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

4. Develop priority trailhead facilities to include parking, signage, activity specific facilities and/or toilets. (M-L) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

5. Prepare and implement Thematic Interpretation Strategies for each regional trail, to provide guidance for the creation of unique and memorable visitor experiences, provide a point of difference, and to aid in raising the profile of the regional trails. (M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

6. Collaborate with tertiary institutions to monitor ongoing impacts of individual trails, and to improve management practices over the long-term new construction techniques and materials, with particular attention to sustainability. (M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

7. Support development of new trail experiences in the Grampians. (M) Lead responsibility : Southern Grampians Shire Council, Parks Victoria and other key stakeholders

8. Support the further development and promotion of mountain biking as a core experience delivered by the regional hubs in the Barwon South West. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

- 8.1 Investigate the potential to develop a high quality long distance MTB trail within the Barwon South West Region. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

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[4]Austroads (1999) *Part 14 Austroads: Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice: Bicycles*, Australia.

- 8.2 Ensure that further development of the existing hubs is of a high standard and provides a diversity of riding experiences and associated infrastructure, (based on the IMBA trail construction and classification guidelines)[5], and are suitable for all levels of competition. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

- 8.3 Investigate the potential to better integrate the MTB hubs, reinforce their combined regional role, whilst ensuring that each offers unique experiences. (H-M) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

Recommendations for Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion

1. Prepare a brand position for regional trails in the Barwon South West Region. (M) Lead responsibility : Regional Managers Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

2. Prepare and implement a Trail Marketing and Promotion Plan for each regional trail (the marketing and promotion plan should respond to the regional brand and thematic interpretation plan). (M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

3. Investigate the potential of developing a central trails website for the Barwon South West Region, that may be linked to local government authority websites. The website could include downloadable maps and trail notes, with links to services, tours etc. (M-L) Lead responsibility : Regional Managers Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

4. Develop a suite of quality images of the regional trail that can be used to promote the experiences on offer, and in particular, the point of difference with other trails within Victoria. (M-L) Lead responsibility : Regional Managers Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

Recommendations for Increased Funding and Resources for Trail Planning, Development, Management and Maintenance

1. Preparation of feasibility plans for regional trails that identify the costs and benefits of the proposed trail, including the mechanisms for supporting the requirements for trail planning, development, management and ongoing maintenance. (H) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

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[5] See: IMBA (2007) *Managing Mountain Biking: IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding*, USA and (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, USA.

2. Opportunities for joint resource and funding commitment be sought from partners. (H) Lead responsibility : Regional Managers Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee in association with the Trail Committees of Management

3. Consideration be given to the incorporation of the Regional Trail Sub-committee to enable improved access to Commonwealth and State Government grants. (H) Lead responsibility : Regional Managers Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

4. The opportunities to generate a revenue stream from users of the regional trails be explored, consistent with relevant policies and management plans. (M) Lead responsibility : Trail Committees of Management

5. Maintain the audit of potential regional trails for future reference, and as a planning tool (GIS information may also be useful to collect regarding routes). (On-going) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

6. Priority be given to improving the recruitment, training, and management of volunteers associated with trail planning, development and maintenance across the region. (High) Lead responsibility : Regional Trails Sub-committee

SECTION 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Barwon South West Region of Victoria is comprised of nine local government authorities: the City of Greater Geelong, the Warrnambool City Council, the Shires of Surf Coast, Colac Otway, Corangamite, Moyne, Glenelg and Southern Grampians, and the Borough of Queenscliffe. The landscape encompassed by these local government authorities is diverse including urban, suburban and rural areas. Its rugged coastline celebrated as one of Australia's most popular touring routes – the Great Ocean Road, distinguishes the region. The Great Otway National Park hinterland is renowned for its waterfalls, tall trees and beech forest, whilst the rural landscape is characterised by volcanic soils, out crops and other features. In contrast, the City of Greater Geelong and the Warrnambool City Council and the towns of the region are well-serviced urban settings with strong social and cultural histories.

All settings offer opportunities to travel by foot, bike or horse on purpose built tracks or on disused rail trails.

The region has a significant number of tracks and trails of varying types and standards, a small number of which are of a high profile and attract visitors from both within and outside of the region. The Great Ocean Walk is widely recognised as a high quality bushwalking experience, and the Geelong Foreshore, the Surf Coast Walk and the Great South West Walk also attract visitors from elsewhere in the region, and connect towns and/or features of interest. Elsewhere in the Otways and other inland areas, a number of trails attract regional usage for walking, cycling and equestrian uses.

In recent years, local government authorities and other land managers throughout the region, including Parks Victoria, Foreshore Management Authorities and the Department of Sustainability and Environment, have contributed to recreation trail development in response to increasing public demand. However, individual trail developments have typically been developed in isolation from other trail development elsewhere in the region. As a result, there is a lack of physical and promotional linkages between trails throughout the region.

The large number of stakeholders involved in trail development and management has also resulted in a range of trail construction and maintenance standards, funding sources and governance arrangements.

Local government authorities and other land management agencies throughout the region recognise the missed opportunities, in terms of joint tourism, funding, and management possibilities, as well as an inconsistency in the use of trail standards, on-trail infrastructure and targeted user groups, associated with isolated trail development projects.

In response, the regional local government authorities and other key land management agencies, lead by the Colac Otway Shire Council, are seeking to better coordinate trail planning throughout the region through the development of a *Regional Trail Master Plan for the Barwon South West Region*.

The Colac Otway Shire Council engaged inspiring Place and Robin Crocker and Associates in 2008 on behalf of the Project partners, to prepare the Trails Master Plan. It is intended that the Master Plan will provide guidance for improved trail planning, development, marketing and governance throughout the region, with benefits for health, recreation, regional tourism, and economic development.

1.2   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the project, as defined in the Project Brief is to:

> *"establish a detailed master plan for the development of existing and proposed regional trails throughout the Barwon South West Region"*

The Project Brief also outlines more specific project objectives, to:

provide a comprehensive audit of the planning undertaken throughout the region pertaining to regional trails;

provide a comprehensive audit of the existing and proposed regional trails including locations throughout the Barwon South West Region;

determine appropriate definitions or classifications of trails;

identify opportunities for a network of regional trails across the project region including the identification of new links and upgraded existing trails, key strategic links and missing connections;

identify and assess economic and tourism benefits associated with trails;

identify and assess recreation and health benefits associated with proposed trails;

identify appropriate trail management arrangements for current and proposed trails, in light of current best practice, and other initiatives that are supported by appropriate promotion, management and maintenance activities;

identify opportunities to develop and reinforce partnerships with local government, other State agencies and the private sector specifically with ongoing management and maintenance;

identify opportunities for private sector investment;

develop design guidelines for the proposed developments including minimum specifications and cost estimates;

create a mechanism that engages trail planners, managers, and practitioners to regularly interact to ensure regional trail issues are addressed and activities coordinated; and

document a detailed action plan, including but not limited to:

> trail development priorities;
>
> timelines and financial requirements; and
>
> opportunities for future local, state, and federal government funding.

1.3   APPROACH

The development of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* comprised seven main phases:

Phase	Outputs and Outcomes	Timing
1. Project Start Up	• finalisation of the work program • finalisation of the Communications Strategy	August 2008
2. Situation Analysis	• review the policy framework and existing strategies and reports • preparation of preliminary definitions and criteria for regional trail selection, and principles for the development of a regional trail network • benchmarking 'best practice' regional level trails, including Australian and international examples • undertaking a three-day team consultation intensive[1] • development of a 'best prospects' audit of potential regional trails	September – October 2008
3. Analysis and Scoping	• finalisation of the regional trail definition, criteria, and development principles • undertaking a three-day team intensive field study to 'ground truth[2]' trails listed in the 'best prospect' audit • assessment of the potential regional trails based on the findings of the field study, and compilation of relevant data • presentation of the proposed regional trail network to the Project Steering Committee	October – December 2008
4. Design Parameters and Cost Estimates	• preparation of a suite of standard trail construction details, including cost estimates for the various proposed elements	October - December 2008
5. Trail Management and Promotion	• presentation of governance approaches for multi-tenured trails, including trail promotion across the various agencies and other trail managers	October - December 2008

Table 1.1. Project Approach.

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[1] The team consultation intensive included meeting with key stakeholders in Melbourne and in the region, running community forums in Geelong, Colac and Warrnambool, and individual meetings with interest groups.

[2] 'Ground truth' refers to the on-site investigation of a trail, including the trail type, standard/condition, landscape setting, and existing facilities.

Phase	Outputs and Outcomes	Timing
6. Action Plan	• preparation of a prioritised action plan	January 2009
7. Project Completion	• compilation of the draft *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*, incorporating the findings from the earlier project phases • distribution of the draft master plan to the Project Steering Committee and the key stakeholders for review • preparation of the final *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*	April – September 2009

Table 1.1. Project Approach (cont.).

1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

The report is divided into five main sections:

Section 1 provides an introduction to the project, including an overview of the methodology and purpose of the project;

Section 2 introduces the Barwon South West Region, the broad policy framework relevant to trails, an overview of the trails audit compiled as part of the project, a review of the relevant recreation trends, trail benefits and issues, a summary of the community consultation, and the main findings from benchmarking;

Section 3 defines regional trails, outlines the vision, criteria and principles to be used to assess the potential regional trails, and introduces the selected regional trails;

Section 4 identifies the critical issues involved with the planning, development and management of regional trails; and

Section 5 introduces the key strategies for regional trails, provides a 10 Year Action Plan and individual action plans for each selected regional trail.

1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project team would like to acknowledge the support, advice and guidance of the Project Control and Project Steering Groups.

The time, expertise and input offered by the key stakeholders and community members who attended forums and workshops, is also greatly appreciated.

1.5 LIMITATIONS

Note that field investigations were limited by time, the size of the study area, the length of the trails involved and the project brief which focused on the strategic planning for a trails master plan rather than the detailed fieldwork required for the management of individual trails. As a result, further detailed investigations of individual trails will need to be undertaken as part of the implementation of the Master Plan (see Section 5.2.2).

Similarly, the level of community consultation reflects the requirements of the brief for a strategic level analysis of trails in the region. It is envisioned that further community consultation, and focused stakeholder involvement, will be undertaken in relation to specific trail projects recommended in this Master Plan.

Available user and visitor data regarding numbers of users, length of stay, spend, activities undertaken, etc. varies considerably across the region and at the level of individual trails is almost generally lacking.

Despite these limitations, the level of investigation undertaken strongly supports the strategic assessment required for the purposes of this master plan.

SECTION 2
THE BARWON SOUTH WEST REGION

2.1 STUDY AREA

The Barwon South West Region extends from Queenscliff on the Bellarine
Peninsula, to the South Australian border in the west, north to the town of
Balmoral and the southern Grampians, and south to the coast (see Map 2.1).

The Barwon South West Region is made up of nine local government areas:
the City of Greater Geelong, the Warrnambool City Council, the Surf Coast,
Colac Otway, Corangamite, Moyne, Southern Grampians and Glenelg Shire
Councils, and the Borough of Queenscliffe.

The region encompasses dramatic coastal cliffs, tall eucalypt and beech forest,
expansive rural landscapes, significant areas of riparian and estuarine habitat
as well as well known attractions, touring routes, small settlements, towns and
cities.

2.2 AUDIT OF REGIONAL TRAILS

There are a large number of trails within the region ranging from very short
nature trails, to local trails serving their nearby communities, to shared trails of
various lengths across a range of suburbs/communities to multi-day long
distance walking trails.

As a means of focusing the scope of analysis, stakeholders and the
community were given a definition for regional trails (see Section 3.1) and
asked to identify those trails that had the best prospects of meeting that
definition.

Councils and Parks Victoria completed an audit of trails that identified over 20
existing trails that could be considered to meet the definition of a regional trail
(Attachment 1 Trail Audit). The community, through the various public forums
that were held, identified a further dozen or so trails that they felt could be
considered as or developed as regional trails.

These lists were combined and used as the starting point for the analysis in
Section 3 and the eventual determination of the trails that are proposed herein
for inclusion in the Regional Trails Master Plan.

Map 2.1 Study Area

Note that the audit phase of the project also identified a range of driving trails, the opportunity for underwater trails and cycle touring opportunities as having potential 'regional trail' status. These have not been considered by the current study.

Underwater trails and cycle touring opportunities were excluded from the project as they require specialist skills and/or have significant user safety concerns and, therefore, did not provide access to a wide enough audience.

Driving trails were not included in the brief and do not fall within the definition of regional trails as used in the current study[3].

2.3 REVIEW OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

A wide range of policy and strategy documents help provide a basis for regional trails planning in Victoria. Key documents identified for this plan are outlined in Attachment 2 Policy Framework. Those considered to be of most relevance are outlined below.

STATEWIDE DOCUMENTS

> *Victorian Trails Strategy 2005 – 2010*;
>
> *Victoria's Nature-Based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012*;
>
> *Draft Regional Tourism Action Plan 2008-2011*;
>
> *Go For Your Life Strategic Plan 2006-2010*; *and*
>
> *Moving Forward: Making Provincial Victoria the Best Place to Live, Work and Invest (Update The Next Two Years 2008-2010).*

These documents support the provision of a network of trails in regional Victoria, identifying social, health and economic benefits, the need for environmentally sustainable management, and opportunities to improve marketing and promotion. These documents emphasise the importance of natural values, including the opportunities available to 'showcase' the Victorian landscape through the provision of quality trails, and quality facilities as important components of the experience of trail users. The benefits of non-motorised transport are also considered to be an important facet of trail planning, given the concern regarding global climate change and air pollution, and the resurgence of 'people-scale' urban planning initiatives.

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[3] It is worth noting, that driving trails are not typically sought out as experiences in their own right but rather that they are usually included as part of an overall touring itinerary. They are, therefore, better integrated within the Tourism Victoria travel planning framework and local touring strategies than with this master plan.

Regional and Local Documents

A number of policy and management documents were reviewed as part of the current study. These are summarised and their relevance to the current project outlined in Attachment 2 Policy Framework. The documents that were reviewed include, amongst others:

Great Ocean Road Region, A Land Use and Transport Strategy 2004;

Tourism Plan for Public Land in the Otway Hinterland 2005;

G21 regional plans (current/in preparation);

various municipal recreation, open space, cycle strategies and/or trail plans*;*

various National Park management plans; and

various individual trail plans.

2.4 Trends in Recreation Participation

Table 2.1 summarises the trends in recreation participation of relevance to regional trails and the current study:

National and State Recreation Trends	Relevance to the Barwon South West Regional Trails Plan
The following information has been summarised from the Participation in *Exercise Recreation and Sport Annual Report 2006*[4] (ERASS): **PARTICIPATION** • 66% of people aged 15 years and older participated in exercise at least once per week • in the 12 months prior to the 2006 survey, 25.3% of respondents indicated that they participated in an activity or sport organised by a club once per week – 60.9% indicated that they did not participate in any organised sport or physical activity during the 12 months prior to the survey • activities with the highest participation rate (undertaken at least once per year during 2006) were: walking (36.2%), aerobics/fitness activities (19.1%), swimming (13.6%), cycling (10.1%), and running (7.4%) • Victoria had a total participation rate of 40.7%, in comparison to 39.1% for Australia • Victorian women had a higher overall participation rate (41.6%) than that of Victorian men (39.8%), and Australian women (37.4%) • activities with the highest participation rate within Victoria were: walking (excluding bushwalking) 37.8%, aerobic/fitness (21.9%), cycling (12.2%), bushwalking (3.9%), and horse riding/equestrian activities (1.2%)	The ERASS indicates that recreational participation rate among Victorians is above that of Australia. The trends also indicate a shift towards informal or unorganised recreational pastimes over organised traditional sports. This shift has contributed to the recent increased demand for recreational trails, particularly in areas close to where people live, for jogging, cycling, walking for health, commuting, roller blading etc To ensure that urban, or frequently used trails provide safe opportunities for the range of potential users, consideration should be given to: • ensuring that the trail surface is suitable for the intended use (e.g. urban trails that are frequently used for jogging, walking and by people with prams, wheel chairs and the elderly should have an even and good quality surface) • adequate width to cater for shared use, where it is appropriate • the provision of multiple safe access points, and linkages to key social destinations, suburbs etc • directional and on-track signage/markers

Table 2.1 Recreation Trends

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[4] Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport (2007) ERASS. It should be noted that this survey applies only to people 15 years and over.

National and State Recreation Trends	Relevance to the Barwon South West Regional Trails Plan
WALKING • walking was the most commonly participated in activity • participation rate for females was 45.9%, the 26.2% for males • participation in walking was highest in the 45+ age group (~45% across these age groups), and lowest for the 15-24 year age group (13.7%) • 35.6% of people indicated that they participated in non-organised walking, in comparison to 1.0% for organised • participation in walking has increased over the last seven years	The continued national popularity of walking ('walking for health') is a trend that is also strongly evident among Victorian residents, and is one of the main motivators for the increase in demand for tracks and trails. Walking is an activity that is enjoyed by all ages, and is particularly popular in the older age groups. The demand for quality walking trails is likely to continue to increase in importance, particularly in and around population centres, as a result of the trends towards an ageing population. Regional trails should be designed, constructed and promoted so as to provide safe and efficient recreational walking opportunities and alternative transport linkages for local and regional residents. A well-designed and planned regional trail network will likely appeal also to visitors to the region, and provide a base level of infrastructure around which nature-based, adventure or cultural heritage tourism related businesses could develop.
CYCLING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING • cycling was the fourth most commonly participated in activity • the participation rate for females was 7.2%, and 13.2% for males • participation was highest among the 35–44 year age group (17.0%) • the majority of people indicated that they participated in non-organised cycling (9.7%), in comparison to only 0.9% who indicated they participated in organised cycling activities • participation has remained stable over the last five years (mountain biking is differentiated as a distinct activity, and therefore, this report does not pick up on the likely increase in participation) • a record number of bicycles were sold in Australia in 2007 - 1.47 million bicycles, outselling cars for the 8th consecutive year[5] • approximately 70% of the bikes sold in Australia throughout 2005 were mountain bikes[6]	Cycling, ranked as the fourth most popular activity nationally, and third for Victoria, should also be a strong component of a diverse regional trail network. Alternative modes of transport, such as cycling, are becoming increasingly important. In addition to the health and wellbeing benefits associated with cycling, non-motorised transport can also result in improved air quality, and less reliance on non-renewable fuel sources. Although there is limited statistical data relating to mountain biking participation in Australia, it is clear that participation has increased markedly over recent years. Whilst mountain bike specific trail facilities cater to the needs of a smaller segment of recreational users (it should be noted that this user group, has and continues to increase in numbers in Australia and internationally), opportunities for MTB activities should be considered as part of a regional trail network. There are also opportunities to provide shared walking and cycling/MTB facilities. Sections of the Surf Coast Walk (e.g. section between Torquay and Jan Juc) provide an example of the type of conditions suitable for dual use.

Table 2.1   Recreation Trends (cont.)

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[5] http://www.cyclingpromotion.com.au/content/view/299/9. Accessed on the 9th September 2008.

[6] Australian Bicycle Industry (2006) *The Australian Bicycle Industry Report 2006*, page 11.

National and State Recreation Trends	Relevance to the Barwon South West Regional Trails Plan
CYCLING AND MOUNTAIN BIKING (cont.) See above	Development of facilities for mountain bikes minimises the extent of illegal trail construction, which is proving to be a significant issue for many land management agencies and councils across Australia. Illegal trail and obstacle development can also result in unsafe infrastructure, with higher associated risks.
KAYAKING AND CANOEING • participation rates for river kayaking, sea kayaking or canoeing are not available in the ERASS, however anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been a growth in participation and boat sales (particularly in relation to sea kayaking). • the Victorian Canoeing Association indicated that the primary rivers used by canoeists in the region are the Barwon River and the Glenelg • sections of the regions coastline, including sheltered bays and less exposed areas, are known to attract sea kayakers, as well as recreational divers	Whilst water 'trails' do not require the same type or level of infrastructure required by those on land, regional level water trails should have: • good vehicular access • appropriate launching and retrieval locations at intervals along the length of a water trail • appropriate directional and risk signage • quality access, route and interpretive information available Water trails, where they are relevant, offer an important extension of regional trails framework, meeting the needs of a small but enthusiastic market and offer a valuable bundling/add-on for participants the larger walking and cycling markets.
HORSE RIDING/EQUESTRIAN • horse riding was rated as the fifth most popular activity undertaken by Victorians, in the ERASS 2006 •	The participation trends for Victoria also indicate the significant rates of participation in horse riding/equestrian sports within the State. The significant number of Pony Clubs, adult riding groups, and equestrian training facilities are also indicative of the strong participation rates in the region. Equestrian activities are an important part of the regions culture and therefore, this marked needs to be addressed within the regional trails framework.

Table 2.1 Recreation Trends (cont.)

National and State Recreation Trends	Relevance to the Barwon South West Regional Trails Plan
HORSE RIDING/EQUESTRIAN (cont.) See above	In considering the trail needs of horse riders, consideration should be given to: • the provision of suitable surfaces (e.g. large aggregates, rocks and very hard surfaces such as concrete or bitumen can be problematic over distances) • clearance heights – horse riders are much taller than other user groups – low hanging branches can be dangerous • the need to provide some separation, or a suitable width between horses and fast moving cyclists and other vehicles • the need to warn riders about the specific characteristics of the trail (e.g. trains, large vehicles and other users)

Table 2.1   Recreation Trends (cont.)

2.4   Visitor Numbers and Visitor's use of Trails

2.4.1 Visitor Numbers

Market research conducted for the *Victorian Nature Based Tourism Strategy* (2008) revealed that:

> Victoria received 8.1 million day trips and 6.3 million domestic overnights from domestic nature-based visitors[7] in the Year ending June 2007;

> there were 21.9 million nature-based tourism visitors' nights resulting from this market;

> the main domestic nature-based tourism markets were Melbourne (59%), regional Victoria (22%) and interstate visitors (20% of which nearly half were from NSW);

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[7] A nature-based visitor is defined as a visitor who undertakes at least one nature based tourism activity during their visit. The most popular activities are going to the beach, bushwalking or rainforest walks, and visiting national parks and state parks. Tourism Australia has referred to this market as being 'experience seekers' in the international market. The Victorian NBTS has classified visitors into two types of nature-based tourism visitors. These are 'skilled in nature' or 'comfort in nature' seekers. The 'skilled in nature' seek out harder physical challenges are more self-reliant and represent 15% of nature based tourism visitors. The 'comfort in nature' has a more causal interest in nature but still seeks out immersive experiences and requires a greater range of services accounting for 85% of the nature based tourism market.

37% of domestic overnight visitors undertook at least one nature based activity during their stay;

going to the beach, bushwalking or rainforest walks, visiting National Parks or State Parks and picnics/barbeques were the highest nature-based tourism activities undertaken by the domestic visitors (but at levels well below that undertaken by international visitors); and

high interest by domestic visitors in Victoria's National Parks especially those located close to Melbourne e.g. Dandenong Ranges National Park, Great Otway National Park and Yarra Ranges National Park.

A review of Tourism Victoria market research shows the following trends for the Great Ocean Road Region over the period 1999-2008:

a decline in domestic[8] daytrip visitation numbers of 9.4% (as compared with Regional Victoria decline of 10.8%);

a decline in domestic visitation of 2.5% (as compared with Regional Victoria decline of 7.3%); and

an increase in international visitors of 34.7% between 2000-2008 (as compared with Regional Victoria increase of 30.4%).

However during 2007-2008 there was a significant increase of 11.6% in domestic daytrip visitors and 7.9% of international visitors to the Great Ocean Road Region with only a small decline of 0.5% in domestic visitation. The average annual growth rate (AAG) in visitor numbers to Geelong and the Western part of the Great Ocean Road Region are shown in Table 2.2 below.

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[8] The domestic market refers to both interstate and intrastate visitors.

	Geelong %	Western Region %
AAG for Domestic day trippers 1999-2008	-3.2	1.7
AAG for Domestic visitors 1999-2008	-1.9	0.7
AAG for International visitors 2000-2008	3.9	3.5

Table 2.2 Average Annual Growth in Visitors to the
Geelong and Western Region

The table indicates that the western part of the region has been generally
increasing its market share of visitors over time.

2.4.2 Visitor's Use of Trails

There is little available information about visitor use of trails within the region.
The five most popular activities undertaken by the domestic market are 'Go to
the beach' (52.5%), 'Eat out at Restaurants' (48%), 'Visit friends and relatives'
(42.9%) and 'General sightseeing' (31.6%). However Parks Victoria's Visitor
Satisfaction Monitors from 2002 and 2004 indicate walking (28%) and
sightseeing (28%) as the most popular activities undertaken with short walks
(up to one hour) being undertaken by 84%, long or day walks (8.5%), cycling
(2.5%) and jogging/running (1%).

Parks Victoria research calculates that the Great Ocean Walk attracted
approximately 44,000 people walking sections of the track in 2007[9]. The
research was based on use of track counters and on-site interviews at 9 sites
during 2007. The majority of walkers (61%) were from Melbourne, 25%
interstate, and 11% from overseas. The *Travel to Warrnambool 2007/2008
Warrnambool Visitor Survey* indicated that 'walking the promenade' was the
fifth most popular activity undertaken (60%) by visitors.

For Victoria, the domestic nature-based tourism growth from 2006 to 2016 is
forecast to remain stable. It is expected that the growth in the international
nature-based tourism market will grow the market share of visitor nights from
56% in 2006 to 66% in 2016, resulting in the domestic market share falling
from 44% to 34% over this time period. For the international market, the
'experience seekers'[10] constitute 30% to 50% of the long haul market (Tourism

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[9] Parks Victoria 2008. Great Ocean Walk Pedestrian Monitoring Project

[10] The 'experience seeker' is looking for products that will deliver authentic personal experiences, self-fulfilment,
engagement with the locals, active learning, adventurous, provide variety and contrast with experiences of their
day-to-day lives.

Australia) and are a strong potential market for Victoria provided the right product is available. Visitation is expected to grow from 1.11 million visitors in 2006 to 1.61million visitors in 2016 with China being the largest source market (growing by over 200% to reach 409,000 visitors). It is also expected that the current core markets for Victoria - North America, New Zealand, Germany and the UK will grow significantly contributing an additional 840,000 visitors.

The *Victorian Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012*[11] identifies the current lack of high-yielding visitor experiences in regional Victoria and the need to develop such experiences to capture the expected growth in nature-based tourism visitors to Australia over the next decade. Market research[12] has indicated that the key campaign region of the Great Ocean Road was perceived as offering the highest natural attraction (40%) following by the Grampians (11%) and Victoria's High Country (10%). The Great Ocean Walk is currently seen as Victoria's best prospect for a market-ready nature-based tourism walk product that could generate high-yielding visitor interest.

The major benefits of the GOW being positioned as a leading walk product for Victoria is that it:

> connects to the high market awareness of the Great Ocean Road, Twelve Apostles and Great Otway National Park;

> helps strengthen the position of Victoria for the growing nature – based tourism visitor market;

> will be a catalyst for increased visitor stay and spend and will bring economic benefits to regional Victoria but also flow-on benefits to the wider tourism industry;

> has the potential to be a valued leader that derives market interest support for the emergence of other walk products in Victoria such as the proposed walks in the Grampians and the Victorian High Country; and

> will provide a showcase model demonstrating the capacity of Parks Victoria to manage outstanding nature-based tourism experiences.

In summary, the Barwon South West Region is well-positioned to attract more visitors that will undertake activities associated with the regional trails. The domestic and international visitor market has been growing in recent years and

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[11] Tourism Victoria 2008. Victoria's Nature-based Tourism Strategy Plan 2008-2012. This report was prepared in collaboration with Parks Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment and in consultation with the tourism industry, local government and key environmental and conservation groups.

[12] Roy Morgan Research. Regional Awareness and Perceptions Surveys conducted in 2001, 2003 and 2005.

the proposed investment into developing the Great Ocean Walk (and in the future, the Grampians Walk) will strengthen the awareness and positioning of the region as a stronger destination for trail-based activities. The current study will identify a number of potential regional trails for future investment and upgrading that will extend the choice of experiences available to the local community, as well as intrastate, interstate and international visitors.

2.5   POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF REGIONAL TRAILS

The following is an overview of the well-known and generally accepted benefits of recreational trails. Although not exhaustive, the summary does provide a substantive rationale for the government, and other stakeholders to be involved in, and to work together towards developing quality regional and local trails in the Barwon South West Region.

The benefits have been listed under the headings of:

> health and wellbeing benefits;
>
> social and community benefits;
>
> environmental and educational benefits;
>
> transport benefits; and
>
> tourism and economic benefits.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BENEFITS

Health and wellbeing benefits include:

> people who use trails may experience improved fitness, health and wellbeing;
>
> opportunities to undertake a range of informal recreational activities, in a safe environment, individually, or in a group; and

with increasing attention given to obesity and the need to increase rates of physical activity, planners are beginning to recognise the need for safe and accessible environments, such as trails that encourage physical activity and help to improve the health and fitness of local communities[13].

S O C I A L   A N D   C O M M U N I T Y   B E N E F I T S

Social and community benefits include:

trails provide for an egalitarian form of transport - walking or riding a bike is an accessible and cheap form of transport;

cycling provides mobility for young people and those unable to access a car or public transport;

communities with recreational trail networks experience improved safety and reduced crime through an increased physical presence in public open space areas;

people who use trails, interacting with each other, fostering a sense of community and pride of place;

off road trails provide a safe and controlled environment for the aged, children and the inexperienced to be physically active, particularly in cycling and horse riding;

trails linked to open spaces can add to the level of passive surveillance of public spaces and facilities;

the development of trail facilities which are well-suited to the needs of the community can alleviate issues associated with illegal trail construction (e.g. the development of mountain biking trails in inappropriate locations, with a poor standard of safety); and

new opportunities for community volunteering – skills development, enhancing sense of place and socialisation as well as a sense of ownership in the trail.

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[13] Gebel, K, King, L, Bauman, A, Vita, P, Gill, T, Rigby, A and Capon, A (2005) *Creating Healthy Environments: a review of links between the physical environment, physical activity and obesity*, NSW Health Department and NSW Centre for Overweight and Obesity.

In the region and elsewhere, trails construction and maintenance have provided the opportunity for meaningful tasks for offenders in the Justice system serving community based orders or in diversion programs[14].

Successful trails also add to the sense of place of a region and to a community's pride in its place.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Environmental and educational benefits include:

> walking and cycling are energy efficient forms of transport in comparison to cars;

> replacing car travel with physically active travel reduces the dependency on non-renewable fuel sources;

> lower motor vehicle use is associated with reduced air and noise pollution, and reduces the overall carbon footprint of a region, city or town;

> people using trails in natural areas tend to develop a greater awareness and appreciation of the natural environment, and are more likely to participate in its care;

> conservation of the natural environment can be enhanced through better management practices on and around formed trails;

> the formalisation and/or development of trails can help alleviate adverse environmental impacts associated with illegal trail construction, and better match the type of trail use to an appropriate ecological location; and

> enhanced opportunities for outdoor educational activities, including skill-based activities, environmental education programs, and hands on learning such as revegetation works.

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[14] Phillip Pettingill, Barwon South West, Department of Justice Regional Coordinator. *Personal communication.*

TRANSPORT BENEFITS

Transport benefits include:

> trails can provide linkages between settlements or suburbs that serve transport as well as other needs;

> help to reduce traffic and parking congestion when cycling or walking is used as a form of transport;

> cycling and walking, particularly for short trips, reduces the overall expenditure on car maintenance, fuel and parking;

> trails use land more efficiently than other forms of transport;

> there may be lower road construction and maintenance costs in the long term if trails contribute to the alternative means of transport system; and

> existing infrastructure can be retrofitted to allow for the development of alternative transport routes, resulting in cost effective multiple transport options.

TOURISM AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Tourism and economic benefits include:

> trails can play an important part in the tourism experience for people visiting regional Victoria - they can provide the vehicle for people to access experiences unique to the region (such as natural, cultural and historic sites), or provide space to undertake a particular activity;

> creation of jobs as a result of trail construction and maintenance;

> having quality trail facilities attract visitors and may encourage visitors to stay longer and, in turn, spend more money locally;

> trail based events and competitions have the potential to attract tourists to particular areas;

> purpose built trails may attract niche tourism markets (e.g. bushwalking, mountain biking, canoeing, kayaking, etc.);

improved health obtained through use of trails may result in a reduced financial burden on the health care system and/or greater productivity at work;

trail users spend at local businesses when purchasing equipment and supplies (such as shoes, boots, bikes, clothing, other gear and food), along with ongoing costs of maintaining equipment such as bikes and caring for horses (for example feed, agistment, farrier costs and vet bills);

trails may increase property values in houses adjacent to well developed trail networks;

high quality trails and trail networks provide commercial business opportunities (e.g. tour and guiding companies, transport companies and equipment hire companies); and

trails add to the 'lifestyle' of the region – economically this is rewarded as making a town/city a good place to work and an attraction for industry or small business to locate in the region.

2.6   OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The following provides a summary of some of the main points, issues, and ideas raised throughout the consultation including at: the Government Agency Briefing, the Stakeholder Workshops (including peak recreation bodies) and Community Forums in Geelong, Warrnambool and Colac.

In addition to the information summarised below, lists of potential regional trails were generated, primarily at the community forums and as a result of information supplied by representatives from the LGA's at the stakeholder workshop (see Section 2.2 and Attachment 1 Trail Audit).

A GENCY B RIEFING

The main points, issues and ideas raised at the Agency Briefing were:

a new walking track classification system is currently being developed by an inter-state working group, which is intended to provide an improved mechanism for the classification of trails based on a range of variables, including levels of infrastructure, elevation gain and the overall experience, rather than simply the standard of design and construction as is currently the case with the Australian Standard – AS 2156[15];

details regarding funding were described (e.g. the Regional Trails Upgrade Program, Provincial Pathways Program, and Sport and Recreation Victoria funding programs);

the perception of a significant increase in mountain biking in Australia[16], the need to better cater for this user group, including opportunities for local riders (to alleviate issues with illegal trail construction), and the potential to increase the economic benefit to the region through further development of high quality trail infrastructure;

safety and other conflicts between user groups (i.e. walkers, cyclists, dog walkers, etc) and opportunities for shared use of trails are being explored by DSE – the project is concerned with better managing the conflicts between trail bike users and others, as well as between walkers and mountain bikers, and horse riders within Crown Land reserves but the results may provide greater understanding of the issues more generally;

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[15] A background report has been completed Arias A. 2007. "Overview of Existing Walking Trail Classification Systems" unpublished Department of Sustainability and Environment Report, however, to date no firm recommendations have been made. Lacking the findings from the Committee, the current master plan has adopted the Australian Standard – AS 2156 as the basis for classifying walking trails.

[16]   Although there is limited specific data to support this assertion, trends noted in Section 2.4 indicated sales of mountain bikes represented 70% of all bikes sold in Australia 2005 suggesting a significant increase in those participating in mountain biking. Internationally over half of all recreational cyclists in Germany are mountain bikers (Koepke, J. 2005. "Exploring the Market Potential for Yukon Mountain Bike Tourism" Cycling Association of Yukon, Canada, page 4) and in New Zealand, mountain biking was the tenth most popular physical activity for adults (see http://www.sparc.org.nz/research-policy/research/sparc-facts-97-01/top-sports-and-physical-activities - accessed 25.09.08).

the need to consider how to increase yield and overall use of existing higher profile trails in the region (e.g. value adding and ensuring strong linkages with existing touring routes, towns, settlements), particularly given the current economic climate where reduced expenditure of disposable income is anticipated;

the need to ensure that the Regional Trail Plan considers the existing policy framework (e.g. *Nature-based Tourism Strategy for Victoria*, *National Landscapes Project, Go For Your Life* program, reserve management plans, etc); and

the need to consider trail governance issues (e.g. ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities).

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

The main points, issues and ideas raised at the Stakeholder Workshop were:

the need for improved access facilities for inland canoeing and kayaking (snags were noted as a significant issue in the region);

the potential of the proposed Trans Otway Waterfall Walk to provide linkages with the Great Ocean Walk and with the Surf Coast Walk (the potential for new trail opportunities in the Otway hinterland in general was also raised);

the potential for conflict between trail user groups – shared use is not always possible, and some trails are walking only;

there is a general need for the upgrade and maintenance of existing rail trails in the region (e.g. consistent surface suitable for cycle touring), and the need to consider road cycling, as it is very popular within the region;

Victoria, and the Barwon South West Region does not cater well for cycle tourists, including the need for high quality promotional information, increased marketing and road marking and signage to alert riders to safety concerns; and

the need to consider the potential commuting benefits, and therefore sustainable community outcomes, associated with regional trails.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY (LGA) AND AGENCY FORUM

The general points raised at the LGA and Agency Forum included:

high levels of participation in walking and cycling within the LGA's;

large portion of recreation funding allocation still going to structured, traditional sports, even though unstructured activities are now more popular;

the trend towards an ageing population, will impact all LGA's in the region, to varying degrees;

difficulties associated with managing and catering for the needs of different user groups (e.g. design standards, surfaces, and the availability of funds etc);

issues associated with volunteer involvement (e.g. maintaining interest, recruiting, 'burn-out', insurance and skill level, ageing volunteers) – potential for the development of a new volunteer model;

risk of eliminating opportunities for horse riders and dog access (e.g. the need for dedicated and promoted space for these activities);

difficult to monitor the economic benefit of trails, due to lack of base line data;

accessibility, 'step on-off' and linkages with towns and attractions seen as important from a tourism perspective, and to provide locals with more opportunities;

local and regional population participation, inclusion and health should be priorities in the development of a regional trail network;

need to ensure that the experience, natural and cultural values that are key features of trails are not compromised by over development and promotion; and

growth of events and sport tourism as economic opportunities for the region and the potential for trails to be a draw for such activities.

C O M M U N I T Y   F O R U M S

The main points from the three community forums include the:

> need to provide better information about the existing trail network - to promote local and regional opportunities, and aid in the management of user conflicts;

> need to package trails, trail activities and associated services and facilities, to promote a range of trail experiences to a range user groups;

> need for agencies and key stakeholders to work in partnership in the development, management and maintenance of trails;

> need for comprehensive feasibility studies to be prepared for higher level trail projects (studies should address ongoing maintenance costs);

> need to review existing trail standards, including a consistent trail grading system and consideration of risk management;

> difficulties with shared trails (the activities of some user groups are not considered to be compatible with walkers) and in response, the need for dedicated horse, dog and bike trails to be supported and marketed;

> level of facility and amenity provision associated with trails is increasing (e.g. potable water, toilets, and communications in remote areas);

> possibility of developing a comprehensive insurance policy for public liability, which all trail managers must comply with;

> need to support volunteers involved in trail development, management and promotion (e.g. including ensuring that they are covered by an insurance policy and have appropriate supervision and access to equipment);

> strong need for better interpretation along the trails including education about environmental issues and trail management

concern that environmental issues in some areas may be exacerbated by the development and/or upgrade of trails (e.g. spread of *Phytophthora* and weeds), and the importance of protecting environmental and cultural values;

possibility of generating increased revenue from trails through a 'user pays' system (e.g. National Park Pass);

development of 'user codes of conduct' for various user groups;

importance of loop trails within or close to towns (for both local residents, and opportunities for short-term visitors, including those with special needs);

need to consider the projected ageing population (e.g. opportunities for passive recreation and greater accessibility to trail opportunities); and

difficulties of managing illegal trail bike use in the region, and the associated impacts such as user conflict and safety concerns, and environmental damage.

2.7 BENCHMARKING OF REGIONAL TRAILS

A number of trails were benchmarked as part of the background research stage of the project. Some of the trails fall into the category of nationally significant trails with regional values, others are considered to be regional trails from elsewhere in Australia. The trails included the:

Bicentennial National Trail – 5,330km from Cooktown, Queensland to Healesville, Victoria;

Hans Heysen Trail – 1,200km from the South Coast past Adelaide to the desert ranges, South Australia;

Bibbulmun Track – 980km from Kalamunda in the Perth Hills to Albany, south coast, WA;

Great Ocean Walk (GOW) – 100km from Apollo Bay to Glenample, Victoria;

Port Phillip Bay Trail – 50km from Port Melbourne to Frankston, Victoria;

Great North Walk – 250km between Sydney and Newcastle, NSW;

Murray to Mountain Rail Trail – 98km between Bright and Wangaratta, Victoria; and

Hobart Intercity Cycleway – 15km between Sullivans Cove (Hobart City) and Box Hill Road in Claremont.

The key characteristics and similarities of these selected trails can be summarised as:

the majority cover long distances (up to several hundred kilometres), and a range of landscapes (including bushland, coastal, beaches and urban areas);

many serve local communities as commuting linkages and fitness routes where they intersect with towns and settlements;

many cater for multiple use (entire trail or sections of), including walking/bushwalking, cycling/mountain biking and horse riding;

have a range of commercial enterprises associated with them – primarily walking/cycling guided tours;

have multiple access points along the entirety of their length, and connect to cities, towns or smaller settlements, facilitating 'step on off' – the ability to complete the trail in sections;

are generally multi-tenured and managed cooperatively by a range of land managers (e.g. local councils, committees of management, government agencies and private landowners);

generally have high level and standard of on-track infrastructure, including trailheads, toilets, parking, directional signage and trail markers, seating and sometimes camping sites;

are actively marketed – electronically and printed media, and have specific trail notes and maps available for purchase; and

some are associated with branded merchandise.

SECTION 3
IDENTIFYING REGIONAL TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 DEFINITION OF REGIONAL TRAILS

For the purposes of the current study, regional trails are defined as those trails that:

> are of a regional geographic scale, providing links between the region's settlements, activities or environments along a defined corridor (or corridors emanating from a singular hub);

> have the ability to deliver potential benefits for the whole, or substantive parts of the region (economically, socially and environmentally);

> serve multiple recreational users groups where possible, and are designed to provide for day use rather than multi-day experiences (although they may be part of a multi-day experience);

> meet appropriate criteria for environmental sustainability;

> serve the whole of the community including visitors and regional residents (e.g. a user catchment that may involve several hours travel time);

> have good access from a number of points along their length and particularly to key parts of the trail where there is associated trailhead infrastructure;

> provide a quality focus/experience related to the unique character and features of the region (natural, cultural and landscape); and

> have key selling points that make the trail different/ unique for marketing and promotion.

Ideally regional trails (or sections of regional trails) should have the capacity to cater for multiple use, however, it is recognised that single purpose trails may be the best solution in some cases. Single purpose trails may be appropriate for some user groups with high numbers (e.g. walkers, canoeists, horse riders,

cyclists, etc) and/or specific needs (e.g. mountain bike riders), to ensure sustainability of a particular environment, safety, or in response to terrain, land ownership, etc. In any event the current study has focused on non-competitive, non-motorised uses because of the health and well-being and environmental sustainability benefits associated with such activities.

There are also opportunities to develop hubs along the length of the regional trails that allow recreational users to venture off the main trail to undertake shorter recreational trips.

3.2 VISION

A preliminary vision for regional trails in the Barwon South West Region was developed as a result of regional forums attended by local government authorities, state agencies and other regional organisations prior to the commencement of the current master plan project. The preliminary vision is as follows:

> *"By the year 2017, the Otways and Coast region will become recognised and valued as one of the best places in the world to bush walk[17]".*

Whilst the above vision captures the significance of bushwalking within the region, it fails to communicate the diversity of other recreational trail related activities, or the intent behind the development of a quality regional trail network.

Further consideration of these factors has given rise to the following vision statement, which responds specifically to the implementation of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*:

> "*By the year 2020 the network of recreational trails in the south west Victorian coast, forests and hinterland will become recognised worldwide as offering social, environmental and economic benefits*".

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[17] Colac Otway Shire Council (2008) Project Brief.

Four principles underpin the vision:

Sustainability – Regional trails should be sustainably developed, promoted and managed based on an understanding of sound environmental management to ensure protection of the environmental and cultural values of the region.

Quality Experience - Regional trails should be developed, promoted, and managed to ensure that users have the opportunity to attain a quality experience of the natural, cultural and landscape values of the region.

Capacity to Manage - There should be sufficient capacity within government, the community and the tourism industry to sustainably manage develop, promote and manage the regional trail.

Catalytic Benefits - The development, promotion and management of regional trails should provide a catalyst for environmental benefits, economic development and improvement in the community's lifestyle.

To aid in the realisation of this vision, the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* seeks to:

achieve better coordination in the planning, development and management of trails via a commonly agreed plan for the region;

reflect community needs and priorities, such as improving access to trails and incorporation of a diversity of trail related activities;

improve the lifestyle, health and wellbeing of Victorians, by providing opportunities for increased participation in regional trail activities;

facilitate the development of alternatives for non-motorised transport in urban and suburban areas; and

provide trail infrastructure that will contribute to economic activity within the region, and bring benefits to local communities.

3.3 CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING REGIONAL TRAILS

Criteria related to each of the above principles were developed to guide the identification and assessment of potential regional trails within the Barwon South West Region. The criteria were reviewed with the Project Steering Group and formed part of the package of information available to all stakeholders to assist the nomination of possible regional trails.

Table 3.1 sets out the regional trail development principles and trail selection criteria and the overall weighting given to the assessment criteria[18] to allow comparative assessment of each of the proposed regional trails. Attachment 3 Trail Selection Criteria contains an expanded version of the selection criteria, with further detail to assist in the assessment of potential regional trails against each criteria.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF NOMINATED BEST REGIONAL TRAIL PROSPECTS

The assessment of the nominated best regional trail prospects was based on:

> review of submissions and information that nominated a trail as having regional trail status;

> review of trail information from a variety of sources including the workshops, website research, visitor information brochures, past reports and presentations made by Councils or proponents/supporters of a trail;

> discussions with Council staff and proponents/supporters where required or requested;

> site visits to existing/possible access points along various trails nominated as having regional trail status[19]; and

> team review of the above information against the agreed definition of and principles for a regional trail, which analysed the merit of the various trails for inclusion as regional trails in the current master plan.

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[18] The weighting was developed in consultation with the Project Steering Group during Phase 3 of the project.

[19] Note: site visits were necessarily limited in number and time. Not all access points were visited, nor were trails fully investigated.

NO.	REGIONAL TRAIL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES	REGIONAL TRAIL SELECTION CRITERIA	WEIGHTING (Total 100)
1. SUSTAINABILITY	Regional trails should be sustainably developed, promoted and managed based on an understanding of sound environmental management to ensure protection of the values of the region	*1.1 Regional trails will be sustainable.*	30 points
2. EXPERIENCES	Regional trails should be developed, promoted, and managed to ensure that users have the opportunity to attain a quality experience of the natural, cultural and landscape values of the region	*2.1 Regional trails should be easily accessible to the local community and visitors to the region.* *2.2 Regional trails will provide quality experiences for users providing access to distinctive regional landscapes, and where appropriate should include support facilities, signage and interpretation.* *2.3 Regional trails will have the potential to cater for multiple use where possible.*	10 points (2.1) 10 points (2.2 + 2.3)
3. CAPACITY TO MANAGE	There should be sufficient capacity within government, the community and industry to sustainably develop, promote and manage the regional trail	*3.1 Regional trails will be feasible to develop, manage and maintain.* *3.2 Regional trails will have the support of the landowner/s and/or manager/s of the land or water where the trail is located.* *3.3 Regional trails should meet identified community need and will have the support of the general community*	10 points (3.1) 10 points (3.2 + 3.3)
4. BENEFITS	The development, promotion and management of regional trails should provide a catalyst for environmental benefits, economic development and improvement in the community's lifestyle	*4.1 Regional trails will have potential for improving local economic activity.* *4.2 Regional trails will provide opportunities for associated benefits.*	15 points (4.1) 15 points (4.2)

Table 3.1. Selection Criteria for Regional Trails

3.5 THE PROPOSED REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK

From the lists of potential prospects, thirteen (13) trails and four (4) mountain bike hubs were chosen to form a regional trails network (Map 3.1).

3.5.1 Best Prospect Regional Trails and Mountain Bike Hubs

Table 3.2 provides a summary of each trail and hubs based on the initial assessments (Section 3.4), site visits to each of the trails[20] and consultation with trail managers:

  showing the location of the trail (e.g. LGA);

  providing a brief overview of the existing and/or proposed trail;

  identifying the land owner/manager responsible for the trail; and

  listing potential trail development opportunities.

Attachment 4 Recommended Regional Trails provides greater detail on each of the 13 best prospect trails including:

  their location and description;

  their current trail management responsibilities;

  existing trails and infrastructure (supply);

  needs assessment (demand);

  potential trail development opportunities;

  trail development issues;

  an assessment of potential impacts – social, economic and environmental;

  any opportunities for private sector investment;

  any potential partnership opportunities; and

  recommended actions for trail enhancement (see also Section 5.7) .

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[20] This included site visits to many of the trails that were finally eliminated (as listed in Section 3.4.1)

Location of Selected Trails

Map 1 Location of Selected Trails

INSPIRING PLACE

Map 3.1 rear A3 Location of selected trails map

Map 3.1 rear A3 Location of selected trails map

Existing Regional Trails	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Great Ocean Walk	Colac Otway Shire Council and Corangamite Shire Council	104	W	Bushwalking trail extending 104km along the southern coastline of Victoria, from Apollo Bay in the east and finishing near the historic Glenample Homestead in the west (soon to be extended to the Twelve Apostles visitor site) Highly regarded and publicised walk	Parks Victoria	• Enhancing the regional use opportunities (e.g. short walks) through improved pedestrian access from Apollo Bay, and improved parking or summer shuttle service • Development of alternative loop trail/s in the nearby Great Otway National Park hinterland, to cater for larger groups and other day users (loop trails may be shared and provide opportunities for mountain biking and horse riding) • Investigating the way in which alternative loop trails could be linked to Apollo Bay, and provide a 'taste' of the GOW • Investigating the potential for the development of an iconic loop walk associated with the Twelve Apostles site • Investigating the long-term potential to connect to Port Campbell and to the Coast to Crater Rail Trail
Surf Coast Walk	Surf Coast Shire Council	66	W, B (some sections)	Trail is approximately 66km in length, extending primarily along the foreshore from Torquay to Jan Juc, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven and Moggs Creek (some inland sections exist north of Anglesea in the Eumeralla Scout Club area, and south between Anglesea and Aireys inlet), in various states of repair, and with missing links. The trail is used by mountain bike riders in sections.	Great Ocean Road Coast Committee, Parks Victoria/DSE, Surf Coast Shire Council. Alcoa	• *Surf Coast Walk Feasibility Study* indicates that the development of a route from one end of the Local Government Area to the other – from Bremlea north of Torquay, to the Cumberland River south of Lorne, is feasible (intend to also develop a branding and marketing strategy) • Alternative inland sections will provide different experiences and circuit opportunities, and be suitable for shared pedestrian and mountain bike use • Much of the proposed route already exists as far as Anglesea, although some realignments and upgrades are required • Potential for further use by commercial operators (a commercial MTB operator and a walking operator already have permits to undertake tours on sections of the trail), providing a source of management revenue for the land managers for trail/foreshore management • Opportunities for promoting 'walk and stay' and 'step on off' packages in partnership with surrounding accommodation places and tour operators based out of the towns along the route

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trails	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Surf Coast Walk (cont.)	Surf Coast Shire Council	66	W (B) (on some sections)	See above	See above	• Potential to develop walk-in campsites along the length of the trail • Intention to upgrade the walk to be a shared trail (some sections may not be appropriate) will provide a safer alternative to cycling the GOR for less experienced cyclists • Potential to link in with independent and/or guided activities in the Anglesea Heath area (already commercial tour guide operating in this area)
Coast to Crater Rail Trail	Corangamite Shire Council	34	W, B, H	34 km trail from Camperdown to Timboon, 190 km south west of Melbourne Follows route of former timber, goods and passenger railway, passing through attractive forest and farmland Sections close to Timboon most popular	Crown Land managed by Committee of Management	• Construct incomplete sections to high standard, improve trail surfaces, complete signage • Develop and implement an ongoing, funded maintenance program. • Improve safety of on-road sections near Camperdown • Improve links to Cobden facilities, define trail through golf course. • Develop on-road links to Old Beechy Rail Trail • Significant potential for proposed extensions to Pt Campbell and Princetown

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trails	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Old Beechy Rail Trail	Colac Otway Shire Council	46	W, B	46 km trail from Colac to Beech Forest, 150 km south west of Melbourne. Follows route of former narrow gauge railway, passing through attractive forest and farmland. Undulating grade with some steep sections – trail climbs about 500 m from Gellibrand to Beech Forest Includes some on-road sections, particularly near Colac (~ 10 km) - some forest sections can be rough following logging activities	Colac Otway Shire Council	• Complete section Dinmont to Beech Forest (LGA to undertake work shortly - $130,000 funding committed) • Increase off-road provision and integrate the rail trail with walking/cycling opportunities in Colac • Reinstate/upgrade surfaces, particularly following logging activities • Extend trail on road reserve to Ferguson and the Otway Fly, and eventually Crowes near Lavers Hill • Enhance on-road link Beech Forest to Apollo Bay
Bellarine Rail Trail	Greater Geelong City Council	33	W, B, H	Bellarine Peninsula, 75kms south-west of Melbourne, following former railway line route that connected Geelong to Queenscliff Largely completed recreational trail with some commuter use	Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee, Greater Geelong City Council, Geelong Steam Preservation Society	• Further sealing of the trail to increase accessibility for shared use and especially as alternative transport link • Safety upgrades – CoGG looking at traffic management requirements on roads crossed and connecting to rail trail • High priority to achieve accessible and safe connection from rail trail to train station and connection to waterfront and Barwon River trails (feasibility investigations indicate Swanston Street as potential on-road trail link) • Roll-out of the Stations Project

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trails	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Bellarine Rail Trail	Greater Geelong City Council	33	W, B, H	As above	As above	• Improving the management and maintenance of the trail experience between Drysdale and Queenscliff – native vegetation plantings, protection of remnant vegetation, signage, interpretation • Assessing the potential to manage the perceived risks of horse riders accessing the Drysdale – Queenscliff section of the rail trail in the future
Barwon River Trails and Parklands	City of Greater Geelong	20	W, B	Extensive parkland and trails network developed along Barwon River and potential to extend along tributaries within future urban area and to the coast Well developed infrastructure on existing trails, primarily shared use	Corangamite CMA, City of Greater Geelong, Parks Victoria, Barwon Water, Barwon Coast Committee of Management, DSE and private landowners	• Extension of the trail south from Breakwater Road to the historic aqueduct and bridge area in the short term • Upgrading of the shared trail along the Waurn Ponds Creek and planning for a link via Rosack Drive to allow extension of the trail along Armstrong Creek with the progressive staging of the new residential development in the future • Developing a bike connection between the Barwon River Trail to the Bellarine Rail Trail to the Geelong waterfront, possibly using Swanston Street

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Barwon River Trails and Parklands (cont.)	City of Greater Geelong	20	W, B	As above	As above	• Proposal for criterium track for cyclist training and skills course in open space off the Barwon River Trail • Promotion of kayaking and canoeing opportunities on the river with well developed access and egress points
Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail	Borough of Queenscliffe, Greater Geelong City Council	5	W B	Located to the southeast of Geelong and the proposed trail would connect the coastal settlements of Queenscliff, Point Lonsdale, Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads Currently the missing trail link joining these settlements is between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove with the public land along the coastline being the Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve bounded by freehold land including residential, commercial and a quarry operation	Borough of Queenscliffe, Greater Geelong City Council, Barwon Coast Committee	• Investigations would be required to look at the potential route for a shared trail located on public and private land (subject to negotiations with any private landowners) behind the dunes and without impacting on known natural and cultural conservation values • Upgrading of the Shell Road cycle path to better cater for the needs of experienced cyclists

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Geelong Waterfront and Cycle Connections	Greater Geelong City Council	5	W, B	An extensive promenade with boardwalk, open space, recreational, public furniture and commercial facilities and services are located along the waterfront making this an attractive and active place The waterfront connects major open space areas and recreational facilities including the Geelong Botanical Gardens, youth activities area, Royal Geelong Yacht Club, Rippleside Park and Corio Bay	Greater Geelong City Council	• Upgrade, extend and enhance the Geelong waterfront including upgrading of trails as identified in CoGG strategic plans and master plans • Identifying and upgrading the links between the waterfront and regional trails of Bellarine Rail Trail and the Barwon River and Parklands Trails, and eventually the proposed Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail • Investigate the opportunities of planning a cycle and pedestrian facility on the Moorabool Bridge to allow better connection to the Barwon River Trail • Developing the off-road trails and on-road trails to the northern shore of Corio Bay in line with the CoGG Cycle Strategy

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Great South West Walk	Glenelg Shire Council	250	W	The Great South West Walk (GSWW) is roughly 250 kilometres in length running along the coast between Portland and Nelson (the Discovery Bay Coast Park and including in part the Discovery Bay Marine National Park) and inland along the Glenelg River (the Lower Glenelg National Park) and then linking back to Portland through the Cobboboonee National Park to Portland. The GSWW also includes in an inland loop off the coastal portion of the track that takes walkers through the Mount Richmond National Park.	Parks Victoria/DSE, Glenelg Shire Council, Committee of Management, Friends of GSWW	• A high priority should be given to the development of the brand, experience, thematic interpretation and marketing for the GSWW • Well-intentioned and substantive volunteer support requires matching by professional guidance on the development of the product • After 25 years, the GSWW has been developed to a base level only and has not gone beyond the basic commodity to include related services and importantly development of the 'experience' of the trail • There is a recognised need to improve the standard of facilities and interpretation, particularly in high use areas • Parks Victoria has recently lodged a Provincial Pathways application through Regional Development Victoria to build better shelters, toilets, etc. at the three campsites in the Cape Discovery/Portland area (the 'three capes') to improve feedback from the higher user numbers of walkers along this length of trail • There is also a recognised need to encourage commercial product development that is based around the GSWW experience. Attention is being given by the Friends, PV and Council to the 'three capes' area and the potential to develop a loop track (~80kms) through this area using the upgraded facilities mentioned above, and possibly linking to the regional airport at Portland. This loop track could potentially provide a number of opportunities to link to off track accommodation on private land or at Cape Nelson lighthouse • Given, that most day visitor focus on the coast, greater attention to the quality of facilities and infrastructure in these areas is of high priority, particularly at the eastern end of the trail. Greater value could also be gotten at the Nelson end of the trail due to its proximity to the Adelaide market

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Great South West Walk (cont.)	Glenelg Shire Council	250	W	See above	See above	• A horse riding trail through the Cobboboonee NP that parallels GSWW and links to existing campgrounds has been mooted and has some potential merit for expanding the user base for GSWW infrastructure Horse riding also offers an expansion of the GSWW opportunity that could be combined with walking and canoeing, providing users and operators with a more varied experience of the GSWW • The potential to promote the Glenelg River as a separate regional trail experience to the GSWW is being explored as part of the current master plan • The Friends also noted that greater support for their group is required by way of a depot and home ('shopfront') for its operations
Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail	Glenelg Shire Council	52	C	The canoe trail would involve a 3-5 day (depending on conditions, fitness and user age) flat-water paddle running from either the Pines Camp or the Moleside Camp in the Lower Glenelg National Park[21] through to the town of Nelson where it ends in the vicinity of the Visitor Information Centre, a distance of roughly 52 kilometres.	Parks Victoria/DSE	• There is the opportunity to increase marketing of the trail as an entity (principally limited to Parks Victoria publications at the moment) and the products available in close relation to it. This may include bundling of available products • To enhance the return from the trail requires that a brand, an experience statement/strategy, thematic interpretation strategy and marketing be further developed • Higher end guided products could be developed that would enhance the 'experience' of the river. The *Strategic Tourism Plan* for the Glenelg Shire Council supported such a concept for 4-5 star fully supported eco-camping on the riverbank with the key marked being South Australian couples. They also noted, however, that this would require significant discussion with Parks Victoria

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

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[21]   Note that it is possible to begin paddling above these points but only by private arrangement with the landowners either side of the river. Historically, canoeists could put in at Dartmoor but river levels in recent years now preclude this.

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail	Warrnambool City Council, Moyne Shire Council, Trail CoM	37	W, B,	The Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail (PFWRT) will run between the town of Port Fairy via Koroit to Warrnambool a total distance of 37 kms (~11 kms within Warrnambool City Council and the remainder in the Moyne Shire Council) Currently under construction, likely to become popular	Warrnambool City Council, Moyne Shire Council and Committee of Management	• Extending the overall length of the trail or enhancing its links to other trails may be of benefit as there is some concern that it is slightly too short as a trail. There has been some discussion about linking the trail with Tower Hill and/or through to Dunkeld • Extending start of trail at Warrnambool to the link with the Breakwater and the Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade. • Of these two options, a link to Tower Hill has more immediate merit for investigation as it involves a shorter travel distance and potentially offers fewer obstacles to its development than the longer proposal to Dunkeld. A link to Tower Hill has the advantage of extending the experience of the rail trail and connections for users of that reserve to explore further a field • Car parking and trailhead development are a high priority at all of the town centres. In Port Fairy, the trail should be linked to the Port Fairy Visitor Information Centre as the official starting point. Cafe and bike hire could be developed in association with the Visitor Centre (although many bike riders prefer to use/bring their own bikes, some tourists without bikes would take advantage of this facility) or alternatively, this could be the basis for reuse of the historic rail station nearby • Thematic interpretation will enhance the experience of the trail

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing Regional Trail	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade	Warrnambool City Council	5.7	W, B	The Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade is located on the foreshore of Lady Bay in the Warrnambool City Council The trail is 5.7 kms in length and runs from the Breakwater (west), crossing the Hopkins River, and on to the Whale Viewing Platform at Logans Beach (east). The trail is a shared facility (walking/running, biking, in-line skating, skateboards) constructed to AS 2156 Class 1 standard throughout, being 2.5m wide and generally of concrete construction with some limited sections in bitumen	Warrnambool City Council	• The experience of the Promenade would be improved if a thematic interpretation strategy were prepared and implemented. This might best be done in conjunction with a citywide strategy and it would allow the messages that are promoted along the foreshore to be better integrated with those for the city as a whole • Explore opportunities to duplicate sections of the trail between the Yacht Club and Surf Lifesaving Club in response to congestion and safety concerns. • Trail improvements at the western end of the Promenade at the Breakwater are indicative of further improvements that could be made elsewhere along the trail • Consultation revealed an interest in extending the Promenade beyond the Whale Viewing Platform to Lake Gillear. Whilst passable, the foreshore through this area is entirely privately owned, with houses in close proximity to the shoreline, thus presenting substantive barriers to the negotiation of a route through this area • Consultation also revealed an interest in linking to the Mahogany Trail. Whilst the currently proposed extension to the trail (to a point just beyond the golf course) can be supported as a local walking trail opportunity, it is not seen as an extension of the Promenade but rather an entity in itself which principally meets the needs of local residents for walking • Further extension of the trail beyond current plans is not supported due to the difficulties of constructing the trail 'off-beach' and the dangers inherent in beach walking through the length of the trail to Port Fairy

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

Existing MTB Hub	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
You Yangs MTB Park	CoGG	55	MTB, W (other areas set aside for walking and horses)	Popular complex of MTB trails providing a wide range of trail experiences for all skill levels Venue for national level competition	Parks Victoria	• Continue to upgrade the You Yangs MTB hub in response to growing use and significance at the national and State level for events with investigation into the feasibility of providing a direct trail link between Little River railway station and the park through negotiation with existing landowners
Anglesea Bike Park	Surf Coast Shire Council	4X circuit	MTB (4X)	The existing small scale facility comprises a national/international standard 4X track with associated facilities A concept plan has recently been prepared, detailing opportunities for the development of a range of cross-country MTB trails in the adjacent Anglesea Heath area, utilising the existing facility as a trailhead.	Alcoa, Parks Victoria/DSE, Surf Coast Shire Council and local volunteers (including sponsorship from the local bike shop)	• Expanding the scope of experiences available in the Anglesea Heath and surrounding area, through the development of a cross country trail network, incorporating new single-track[22] sections, linked to the existing Bike Park, as described in the Concept Plan • Development of new trails in the Anglesea Heath area will require careful consideration of the potential environmental issues, as the area is known to have significant conservation values. Given the legislative requirements for net gain, consideration should be given to the upgrade of existing management tracks and footpads to provide linkages, in the event that significant new trail development cannot be accommodated. Mountain bike riders generally seek single-track experiences, and simply opening up fire trails is unlikely to be considered adequate by many riders. • Shared used trails should also be considered. In the area (e.g. where there are existing management tracks wide enough and with adequate line of sight to safely accommodate dual use. • Continue to liaise with Parks Victoria and other relevant land owners/managers to investigate the way in which mountain bike riding can be better accommodated in the Anglesea area

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

[22] Narrow, flowing trails that may incorporate a range of natural surfaces and obstacles.

Existing MTB Hub	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Forrest MTB Park	Colac Otway Shire Council	62	MTB, W	The 62 km network includes six trails south of the town extending close to Lake Elizabeth, and nine trails located north of the town The trail network was developed in response to a tourism strategy for the Otways hinterland that identified opportunities to expand mountain bike riding opportunities[23]. Constructed and managed by DSE, the trails include purpose built sections and existing fire trails and provide an outstanding range of riding opportunities Venue for national level competition and significant MTB events	DSE	• Continue work to link the Forrest MBT hub with the existing section of the Forrest – Birregurra Tiger Rail Trail

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails (continued)

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[23] DSE (2005) *Tourism Plan for Public Land in the Otway Hinterland*, Victoria.

Proposed Regional Trail/MTB Hub	Location (LGA)	Length (km)	Uses	Brief Overview	Land Owner and Manager	Potential Trail Development Opportunities
Wild Grampians Walk	Southern Grampians Shire Council	~148	W	The Wild Grampians Walk (the WGW), proposed by Parks Victoria, will run ~ 148 kms (~14 days walking) from Mt Zero in the north to the far southern boundary of the Grampians National Park (the NP) and then to the township of Dunkeld	Parks Victoria	• The linkage from the NP to Dunkeld is critical to the Southern Grampians Shire Council gaining best advantage from the WGW and should be developed as a priority • The proposed link should be to a shared use standard to enable bike as well as walking access, and commence at the Dunkeld Visitor Centre • The link to Dunkeld would be of further value if the proposed Mountain Bike hub within/adjacent to the NP were accessed using this same track • Achievement of the wilderness lodge proposed in the Grampians area would also have spin off benefits in cross-promotion for the WGW
Proposed Grampians MTB Hub	Southern Grampians Shire Council	-	MTB (W)	Discussions with Parks Victoria and the Southern Grampians Shire Council indicated a desire for the development of a Grampians Mountain Bike Hub (the Hub). From Council's perspective their preference is for the hub to be near the southern end of the Grampians National Park in the vicinity of Dunkeld. The scale of the proposed hub is for it to be on a par with that at Forrest where a series of single tracks of varying difficulty have been built in a compact area near town.	Southern Grampians Shire Council, Parks Victoria	• Support the planning including feasibility planning, site selection, environmental impact assessment, brand development and marketing materials, and trail and facilities design, documentation and construction of the proposed Grampians MTB

Table 3.2. Selected Best Prospect Trails

Attachment 5 Regional Mountain Bike Hubs provides greater detail regarding each of the hubs (as well as information about trends in mountain biking in support of hub development and a discussion of what a hub entails).

Table 3.4 provides an indicative priority for regional trails based on the criteria and weighting listed in Table 3.3.

Weighting Criteria	Comment	Numerical Weighting
potential revenue generation (see Table 5.3 report)	high	5
	medium	3
	low	1
proximity to regional population centres (if tied then this criteria lifts above similarly scored, un-connected)	Geelong	5
	Warrnambool/Surf Coast	4
	commencing within regional towns	2
	regional towns	1
proximity to tourism markets	less than 2 hours Melbourne or Adelaide	5
	2-4 hours on major touring route	4
	2-4 hours or rail access to trailhead town	3
	> 4 w/ regional air	2
	> 4 hrs w/out regional air	1
rail trail (if yes and numerically tied, lift above others)	yes/no	
where tied, upgrades take precedence over extensions and extensions over new trails		
key MTB site (if yes and numerically tied, lift above others)	yes/no	
stage of development	substantively developed and requiring little or no upgrade	5
	substantively developed and requiring some upgrade	4
	developed but requiring major improvements	2
	not developed (concept substantively developed)	1
	not developed (concept only)	0
landscape setting/experience	internationally valued landscapes	5
	nationally valued importance	4
	State landscape values	3
	regional landscape values	2
	local landscape values	1

Table 3.3 Criteria Weighting for Assessing Priority of Regional Trails

Rank/Trail Name	Nature of Proposal	Proximity to regional centres	Proximity to tourism markets	Key NBT destination	Landscape Experience/ Setting	Rail trail	State of Development	Potential Revenue Generation (see Table 5.3)	Total Score	Cost to Complete/Upgrade (see Table 3.4)	Priority
Geelong Waterfront and Cycle Connections	extend existing	5	5		2	N	4	5	21	$ 3,575,000.00	HIGH
Great Ocean Walk	upgrade existing	2	4	Y	5	N	4	5	20	$ 1,496,550.00	
Surf Coast	extend existing	4	5		3	N	3	5	20	$ 1,897,500.00	
Bellarine RT	upgrade existing	5	5		2	Y	5	1	18	$ 1,771,250.00	
Warrnambool Foreshore	upgrade existing	4	3		2	N	5	3	17	$ 832,300.00	
Barwon River Trails and Parklands	extend existing	5	5		2	N	1	1	14	$ 2,780,450.00	MODERATE
Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve to Queenscliff)	extend existing	4	5		2	N	0	3	14	$ 778,200.00	
Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (remainder)	extend existing	4	5		2	N	0	3	14	$ 130,000.00	
Trans-Grampians Walk (National Park)	new trail development	1	3	Y	4	N	0	5	13	$ 20,000,000.00	
Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Warrnambool)	upgrade existing	4	3		1	Y	3	1	12	$ 240,000.00	
Dunkeld-Grampians National Park link	new trail development	1	3	±Y	3	N	0	3	10	$ 506,250.00	
Great South West Walk	upgrade existing	1	2		3	N	3	1	10	$ 2,350,000.00	
Coast to Crater (Existing)	upgrade existing	1	3		1	Y	3	2	10	$ 1,423,828.00	
Old Beechy RT (upgrade existing)	upgrade existing	1	3		1	Y	3	1	9	$ 1,456,812.50	LOW
Glenelg River Canoe Trail	upgrade existing	1	1		3	N	3	1	9	$ 600,000.00	
Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Moyne Council area)	upgrade existing	2	1		1	Y	3	1	8	$ 262,500.00	
Old Beechy RT (connect to Colac off road)	extend existing	2	3		1	Y	0	1	7	$ 2,297,000.00	
Coast to Crater (proposed extension north to Camperdown)	extend existing	2	3		1	Y	0	1	7	$ 1,902,600.00	
Coast to Crater (proposed extension south)	extend existing	1	3		1	Y	0	1	6	$ 5,500,000.00	
Mountain Bike Parks											
You Yangs MTB	upgrade existing	5	5		1	n/a	5	3	19	n/a	High
Anglesea MTB	extend existing	4	5		1	n/a	4	3	17	n/a	Medium
Grampians MTB	new MTB	1	3	Y	4	n/a	0	3	11	n/a	Low

Table 3.4. Assessment of Priority Regional Trails

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The key findings from the assessment indicate highest priority for:

> those trails that were close to regional population centres generally (Geelong, Surf Coast, Warrnambool) as these would have the greatest value to the greatest number of people on a regular basis;

> those trails within range of the key tourism market of Melbourne (i.e. Surf Coast) and/or from key destinations (i.e. the Great Ocean Road and the Grampians) as these trails have the good prospects for economic benefits in the immediate term; and

> rail trails and regional mountain bike hubs, which are known drawcards.

The Great Ocean Walk and the Trans Grampians Walk are considered by Tourism Victoria to be a key driver for nature-based tourism across the State and have importance to the region as tourism products and their economic benefits but are of less importance the regional population for on a day-to-day basis for recreation or other values.

The Master Plan identifies a proposed regional trail/hub network and by definition, this network is the priority for development in the region. The staging of any implementation will be influenced by the availability of funding, project readiness and the support of committed partners.

3.5.2 Strategic Benefits of the Proposed Regional Trail Network

Sections 3.4 and 3.5 identified the trails and hubs selected for promotion as regional trails during the life of this plan. As a group, the suite of trails and hubs has a number of strategic benefits including:

> there is at least one trail in each of the local government areas in the Barwon South West area but with the larger number of trails in close proximity to Geelong as the major population centre in the region;

> having the mountain bike hubs spaced equitably across the region, each providing a range of riding experiences, in a variety of settings

there are a number of trails that begin or end in the major cities (Geelong, Warrnambool), towns (Portland, Port Fairy, Colac, Camperdown, Torquay) and tourism destinations (Nelson, Apollo Bay, Queenscliff) in the region;

the trails take in the full range of landscape settings across the region from rural to forested landscapes, from inland to coastal areas and from urban to natural environments;

the trails include both north-south and east-west routes;

there is a mix of trail use types i.e. walking only (3), walking/cycling trails (6 although, some are only cycling in parts), multiple use trails for walking, cycling and horse riding (3) and a canoe/kayak trail (1 at the Glenelg River with the potential for a further trail on the Barwon River between Geelong and Barwon Heads);

work on all but one of the trails and one hub has commenced with some being substantively completed (6);

the burden of land management of the trails is spread across the range of local governments and public agencies in the region and, therefore, does not fall singly or disproportionately onto one organisation to develop, maintain and promote;

existing trails are already providing economic benefits to the region (see Section3.7); and

there is evidence that all of the developed or developing trails having broad community support and involvement in their care and management.

The trails fit well into the *Victorian Nature Based Tourism Strategy* in that several are located in the key regional campaign destinations of the Great Ocean Road (Surf Coast, Coast to Crater, Great Ocean Walk) and the Grampians (the proposed Wild Grampians Walk and the proposed Grampians Mountain Bike Hub).

3.5.3 Evaluation of the Trails Within the Regional Network

Whilst the listed trails are seen as the best prospects as regional trails during the life of the master plan, not all trails achieve the same standard of development. Table 3.5 shows the findings of an evaluation of each trail against the criteria for selection of regional trails (see Section 3.1 and Attachment 3 Trail Selection Criteria) against a total score of 100.

The group with the highest rated trails were:

the Geelong Waterfront (95);

the Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade (91);

the Barwon River Trails and Parklands (86);

These results are not unsurprising in that all three trails are located in close proximity to a large population base and the quality of facilities associated with these trails.

The middle rated group of trails includes:

the Bellarine Rail Trail (80);

Surf Coast Walk (78);

Great Ocean Walk and the Wild Grampians Walk (74); and

Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (72).

These trails are recognised as having high use (Bellarine RT and Surf Coast Walk) or high catalytic benefits in the local economy (Great Ocean Walk and the Wild Grampians Walk) and all require further upgrading or development to achieve their highest potential.

The remaining trails (e.g. Coast to Crater Rail Trail, Old Beechy Rail Trail, the Great South West Walk, the Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail and the Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail) range in score from 59-66. The results between the trails vary given that different trails:

> have lower scores against the sustainability criteria because of questions about the management of weeds and/or plant pathogens (Criteria 1);

> are more distant from population centres or tourist markets (e.g. the Great South West Walk, Glenelg River Canoe Trail) (Criteria 2.1 and 4.2);

> have not achieved the quality of experience that is possible along the trail (lack of facilities, interpretation, singular landscape, etc.) (Criteria 2.2);

> have issues associated with the capacity of managers to care for them (i.e. long distances, smaller councils) (e.g. Old Beechy, Coast to Crater) (Criteria 3.1);

> have singular uses (e.g. the Great South West Walk: bushwalking, Glenelg River Canoe Trail: canoeing) (Criteria 4.1); or

> have not yet achieved their potential to provide catalytic benefits by way of tourism product development (Great South West Walk and Glenelg River Canoe Trail) (Criteria 4.2).

Note that a low score does not imply that a trail does not have merit as a regional trail but rather indicates the degree to which improvements are to be made if the individual trail is to be more in line with the higher scoring trails (see Section 5.7). In many instances this is reflected in the costs to develop, manage and maintain the various trails that are set out in Section 3.6.

The evaluation has also been applied to the nominated four mountain bike regional hubs as shown in Table 3.6. The two existing well developed and managed MTB parks in the You Yangs Regional Park and Forrest score highly. The proposed Anglesea and Grampians MTB park sites are yet to be approved or assessed by the land managers and consequently have receive a lower score overall.

Evaluation Criteria No. (see Attachment 3)	Score	Great Ocean Walk	Surf Coast Walk	Coast to Crater Rail Trail	Old Beechy Rail Trail	Barwon River and Parklands	Bellarine Rail Trail	Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail	Geelong Waterfront and cycle links	Great South West Walk	Glenelg River Route	Port Fairy Rail Trail	Warr-nambool Promenade	Wild Grampians Walk (proposed)
1.1. Regional trails will be sustainable.	1-30	21	20	20	20	26	25	23	30	20	25	20	30	20
2.1. Regional trails should be easily accessible to the local community and visitors to the region.	1-10	6	8	6	7	9	9	9	9	5	5	6	9	7
2.2. Regional trails will provide quality experiences for users providing access to distinctive regional landscapes, and where appropriate should include support facilities, signage and interpretation.	1-5	4	4	2	2	4	3	3	4	3	3	2	4	4
2.3. Regional trails will have potential for improving local economic activity.	1-5	5	4	2	2	3	4	3	5	3	3	3	4	5
3.1. Regional trails will be feasible to develop, manage and maintain.	1-10	9	9	5	5	9	6	6	9	6	6	6	9	9
3.2. Regional trails will have the support of the landowner/s and/or manager/s of the land or water where the trail is located.	1-5	5	5	4	3	5	4	3	5	5	5	4	5	5
3.3. Regional trails should meet identified community need and will have the support of the general community.	1-5	3	4	2	3	5	3	4	5	2	2	3	5	3
4.1. Regional trails will have the potential to cater for multiple use where possible.	1-15	7	12	10	12	13	14	9	13	7	7	12	13	7
4.2. Regional trails will provide opportunities for associated benefits.	1-15	15	12	10	10	12	12	12	15	10	10	10	12	15
Total	**100**	**74**	**78**	**61**	**64**	**86**	**80**	**72**	**95**	**61**	**66**	**66**	**91**	**74**

Table 3.3 Evaluation of the Proposed Trails within the Regional Trails Network

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Evaluation Criteria No (see Attachment 3)	Score	You Yangs MTB Park	Proposed Anglesea Bike Park	Forrest MTB Park	Proposed Grampians MTB Park
1.1 Regional trails will be sustainable	1-30	25	15	23	20
1.2 Regional trails should be easily accessible to the local community and visitors to the region	1-10	10	10	10	10
1.3 Regional trails will provide quality experiences for users providing access to distinctive regional landscapes, and where appropriate should include support facilities, signage and interpretation	1-5	5	4	4	5
2.3 Regional trails will have potential for improving local economic activity	1-10	7	7	9	7
3.1 Regional trails will be feasible to develop, manage and maintain	1-5	5	3	5	3
3.2 Regional trails will have the support of the landowners and/or managers of the land or water where the trail is located	1-5	5	3	5	3
3.3 Regional trails should meet identified community need and will have the support of the general community	1-15	15	10	15	10
4.1 Regional trails will have the potential to cater for multiple uses where possible	1-15	12	9	10	8
4.2 Regional trails will provide opportunities for associated benefits	1-15	12	10	12	8
Total	100	96	71	93	74

Table 3.6. Evaluation of Nominated Regional MTB Hubs

3.6   ORDER OF COST ESTIMATE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF TRAILS IN THE REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK

As mentioned previously, not all trails achieve the same standard of development, some require further extensions, linkages and upgrades to enhance their value and/or in the case of the Grampians, the trail there will need to be designed and constructed.

An indicative order of cost estimate has been prepared for the 13 trails in the regional trail network and is shown in Table 3.4.

The table outlines:

> planning costs [using a set cost of $50000 for feasibility planning, $50000 for the development of a Joint Trail Development and Maintenance Plan (see Section 5.2.2) and $25000 for a thematic interpretation plan (see Section 5.3.2)];

> trail construction and/or upgrading costs based on per metre rates for the type of surface material[24] and width of trail to be developed;

> a varying rate for the provision of trailhead and other facilities as a percentage of the total construction cost; and

> a contingency of 5% of the sub-total of these items.

In the case of the existing and proposed mountain bike hubs a budget of $200,000 per hub has been allowed for allocation towards future trail development, trail upgrading and facility enhancement. A budget of $60,000 has been allowed for assessment of the proposed Grampians hub and $40,000 for further environmental assessment of the Concept Plan previously prepared for the Anglesea Bike Park proposal.

Application of rates and percentages vary between trails in the tables based on assumptions of the level of planning already achieved, the provision of track

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[24] Construction rates assume commercially tendered works. Costs may be lower if volunteer or Council labour are used or in kind supply of materials is made. Concrete construction was assumed to be $130 per square metre including preparation and base course on a reasonably level natural surface. Gravel was assumed to be $50/sq.m. including preparation and base course on a reasonably level natural surface. Note costs would be higher on steeper portions of track where more major earthworks would be required. Similarly where, no earthworks were required and a base course existed rates for construction would be lower. The table attempts to balance these factors up in the application of the above rates in each instance.

and facilities already being made at some trails and the existing conditions at each trail.

Where figures are known from prior feasibility work, those numbers have been used, therefore:

existing information has been derived from feasibility studies for the Surf Coast, Crater to Coast, CoGG Cycle Strategy); and

gross estimates for the Trans-Grampians Walk was used as received from Parks Victoria.

The table excludes already committed funds such as the $1.8M that is currently funding construction of the Moyne Shire Council component of the Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail.

The table also indicates costs associated with the operation of the regional trail network in its first year including costs for

promotion and marketing (0.5% of the value of the network);

project support (1% of the value of the network); and

maintenance (3% of the value of the network); and

asset replacement (2.5% of the value of the network).

Overall it is estimated that in order of $54M will be required to upgrade and develop the identified regional trails and MTB regional hubs, of which the proposed Trans-Grampians Walk accounts for $20M. This cost increases to about ~$59.5M when allowing a budget for regional promotion and marketing, ongoing project support, maintenance and asset replacement for the first year.

These estimated costs should be viewed as a possible goal for seeking substantial investment in the planning, development and management of regional trails over the next 10 years, and that any works will be subject to political processes, statutory processes, available funding, partnership arrangements and community support. The roll-out of any regional trails works will also be influenced by the review of priorities, staging and resources identified within the feasibility plans and joint trail plans that will need to be prepared.

It is emphasised that Table 3.7 provides only an estimated order of cost of the total trail development costs and should only be used as an indication of broad costs required to implement the recommendations of the master plan.

The table is perhaps better seen as an indicative comparison between trails rather than a definitive sum required for any one trail. Site visits and more detailed feasibility investigations will be required to achieve more accurate cost estimates.

Table 3.7 Order of Cost
Implementation South West Regional Trails Master Plan

Trail Requirements	Feasibility Plan, Joint Trail Development and Maintenance Plan and Interpretation Strategy*	Construction or upgrading (km rates unless known)	Trailhead (car park, ± toilets, paths), signage, facilities (seating, bins, bike racks, etc.) (% varies)	Construction Contingency (5%)	Sub-Total	Comment
Surf Coast Walk	$ 75,000.00	$ 1,350,000.00	$ 405,000.00	$ 67,500.00	$ 1,897,500.00	per feasibility study for proposed extensions
Great South West Walk	$ 75,000.00	$ 1,750,000.00	$ 437,500.00	$ 87,500.00	$ 2,350,000.00	based on PV submission for upgrading of Portland end of track ($1.5M) plus some minor improvements elsewhere
Crater to Coast (Proposed extension south)					$ 5,500,000.00	per feasibility study
Crater to Coast (Proposed extension north to Camperdown)	$ 125,000.00	$ 1,616,000.00	$ 161,600.00		$ 1,902,600.00	8 kms link to Camperdown using road ROW, gravel constuction
Crater to Coast (Existing)		$ 1,139,062.50	$ 227,812.50	$ 56,953.13	$ 1,423,828.13	25% upgrade, 45km, upgrade existing gravel
Bellarine RT	$ 50,000.00	$ 1,620,000.00	$ 20,250.00	$ 81,000.00	$ 1,771,250.00	5% to upgrade, 16km, gravel
Barwon River Trails and Parklands	$ 125,000.00	$ 1,967,000.00	$ 590,100.00	$ 98,350.00	$ 2,780,450.00	5% to upgrade existing plus extensions to Aqueduct and along Waurn Ponds Creek
Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve to Queenscliff)	$ 50,000.00	$ 662,000.00	$ 66,200.00		$ 778,200.00	5 kms new Point Lonsdale to Ocean Grove, bitumen, 2.7 wide, bitumen per COGG *Cycle Strategy*
Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (remainder)	$ 25,000.00	$ 100,000.00		$ 5,000.00	$ 130,000.00	
Geelong Waterfront and Cycle Connections	$ 125,000.00	$ 3,000,000.00	$ 300,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 3,575,000.00	COGG *Cycle Strategy* used as a reference
Glenelg River Canoe Trail	$ 50,000.00		$ 550,000.00	-	$ 600,000.00	upgrade 11 camps/ramps/locations
Old Beechy RT (connect to Colac off road)	$ 75,000.00	$ 2,020,000.00	$ 202,000.00		$ 2,297,000.00	Excludes existing funding ($130000) to complete section to Beech Forest.
Old Beechy RT (upgrade existing)	$ 75,000.00	$ 1,164,375.00	$ 116,437.50	$ 101,000.00	$ 1,456,812.50	Upgrade gravel surface along length of trail (50% cost of new trail)
Trans-Grampians Walk (National Park)	$ -				$ 20,000,000.00	includes business case, construction and 5 years operation, bush track with extensive gradient changes - based on Parks Victoria estimates
Dunkeld-Grampians National Park link	$ 100,000.00	$ 325,000.00	$ 65,000.00	$ 16,250.00	$ 506,250.00	new construction, gravel shared path (2.0), 2.5km to NP boundary
Great Ocean Walk	$ 75,000.00	$ 1,053,000.00	$ 315,900.00	$ 52,650.00	$ 1,496,550.00	develop high quality foreshore promenade at Apollo Bay
Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Moyne Council area)			$ 262,500.00		$ 262,500.00	allows for Management and Interpretation Strategy plus trailhead development, signage and other facilities
Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Warrnambool)	$ 75,000.00		$ 150,000.00	$ 15,000.00	$ 240,000.00	allows for Management and Interpretation Strategy, completion of existing
Warrnambool Foreshore	$ 25,000.00	$ 702,000.00	$ 70,200.00	$ 35,100.00	$ 832,300.00	allows for duplication of promenade between the Yacht Club and Surf Club and for minor improvements, enhanced interps (based on 10% upgrade)
Sub-total all trails	$ 1,125,000.00				$ 49,800,240.63	
	Add and upgrade of trails and facilities	Pre-assessment investigations				
You Yangs MTB Park	$ 200,000.00				$ 200,000.00	
Forrest MTB Park	$ 200,000.00				$ 200,000.00	
Proposed Angelsea MTB Park	$ 200,000.00	$ 30,000.00			$ 230,000.00	
Proposed Grampains MTB Park	$ 200,000.00	$ 60,000.00			$ 260,000.00	

Regional Requirements

Promotion and marketing (0.5%)					$ 249,001.20	
On-going project support first year (regional and local government level) (1%/annum)						
Maintenance (3% of the above construction costs less planning and regional requirements) **					$ 498,002.41	
Asset replacement first year (2.5%/annum)					$ 1,460,257.22	
					$ 1,245,006.02	
Sub-total trails plus above					$ 54,142,507.47	
Other Contingencies (10%)					$ 5,414,250.75	
Total government ask					**$ 59,556,758.22**	excluding GST

* Note; Feasibility Plan @ $50K, Joint Trail Development and Maintenance Plan @ $50K, Thematic Interpretation Strategy @ $25K

** Note the maintenance is based on the planned construction works and there would remain ongoing maintenance costs with the balance of the regional trail (significant cost for long trails such as Great Ocean walk, Trans-Grampians Walk and Great South West Walk).

Table 3.7 Order of Development Costs for the Selected Regional Trails

3.7 ESTIMATE OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS

As noted in the limitations (Section 1.5), there is a significant lack of data on which to develop reliable indicators of the economic and other benefits of the regional trail network. No data was available for any of the regional trails that provided details on the numbers of users, origin of the user, their frequency of use, and their direct spend on the use of trails (as opposed to simply while they are visiting the region)[25]. Similarly there is no reliable available data on the current use levels at the existing mountain bike regional parks.

Nonetheless, a calculation of the economic benefits associated with the trails has been attempted using a range of variables including the estimation of visitor spend and the potential job creation that this generates in addition to jobs created during trail construction;

Estimated visitor spend has reviewed previous feasibility studies of the likely spend based on the average spend that a day or overnight visitor spends within the region. However, whilst these studies use the entire average daily spend for visitors in their region, the current study assumes that regional trails are only likely to be part of the experience being sought by most visitors and that of their average spend on transport, accommodation, attractions, services and food and beverage per day only a portion is directly related to the use of a trail.

Research[26] backs this assumption up, generally showing that a very high proportion of the visitor market seeks short trail experiences and thus only a proportion of their daily spend relates to trail use.

It is also unlikely that regional trails will be the main trigger for attracting the bulk of visitors to the region – it is more likely that regional trails will compliment and add value to the total visitor experience provided by the wide mix of product and activities available in the Barwon South West.

However, it is recognised that for some users, especially day-trippers and some overnight users especially from Melbourne, that use of a regional trail may be the prime reason for visiting the region (this is particularly so for cyclists who will travel to a region to specifically do a rail trail).

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[25] In reality, very little research information is available on trails within the region. Whilst work has been undertaken on the feasibility of commercial walks elsewhere in Australia, this information is not considered directly useful for the regional trails.

[26] For instance 84% of those visitors using trails outside of metropolitan areas within Victorian National Parks are undertaking short walks (less than 1 hour) with 8.5% undertaking a long walk (more than 4 hours) or day walk [Victorian Trails Strategy 2005-2010}.

Consequently for the purpose of the study, a gross estimate of potential economic benefits has been calculated as follows:

> 1. An estimate of the proportion of local residents (based on the population of residents within the Cities or local LGA within which the trail is located) and visitors (number of day trippers, intrastate, interstate and internationals taken from visitor statistics for the Geelong Otway, Shipwreck Coast, Discovery Coast and Warrnambool tourism areas) using the trail was made as both a low and a high figure[27].

> 2. An average daily spend of $2 was estimated for local users[28] and $10 for visitors[29].

> 3. Numbers of users and estimated expenditure were then multiplied to get a total low and a high range of expenditure for all users.

Table 3.8 shows the results of the above approach. It estimates that the local users may spend between $640,000 - $1.1M per annum in relation to the use of the regional trails and regional MTB hubs. It is estimated that visitors to the region may spend between $23.7M - $35.4M per annum in relation to the use of the regional trails and regional MTB hubs.

A general understanding within the tourism industry is that an expenditure of about $80,000 per annum will directly create the equivalent on one job and that a multiplier of 1.3 will create indirect employment within the region. This suggests that some 289 – 465 jobs would be directly created by the regional trail and MTB hub spend and some 117 - 141 jobs would be indirectly created.

In addition it is expected that the equivalent of 400 jobs could be created during construction, assuming that works are commercially undertaken, an expenditure of $49M (see Table 3.4) and that wages, on-costs and profit at valued at $120,000 per person.

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[27] A review of sport and recreation participation rates for trails in Victoria and allowing for very variable levels of frequency and accessibility to the proposed regional trail, an assumption of 30% participation was used for the low range and 50% for the high range. Accordingly this allows for frequent users of the trail to compensate for those unlikely to use the trail.

[28] The $2 spend/trip was based on judgement of likely spend (given the high use by local residents for regular recreation) and past survey findings (e.g. Mundaring Shire Council research in WA during 2001 indicated an average $1.44 spend per person per visit). No allowance has been made for the purchase of recreational equipment, if required for the trail, and it is assumed that most local users would be using this equipment on trails/activities other than the regional trails over a extended time period.

[29] The average spend of $10 per person per trip is considered to be a realistic average spend based on review of past surveys and experience. It assumes that the majority of visitors will be undertaking limited time on the regional trails as part of their overall visitor experience and that applying the average spend compensates for the smaller number of visitors where the trail is the main purpose of the visit.

In summary, the gross costs of the regional trail program ($58M as indicated in Table 3.7) would be 'repaid' through the estimated gross economic benefits to the region (as indicated in Table 3.8) within a period of 19 months (high range estimate) to 29 months (low range estimate).

The continuing economic benefits from use of the trail would clearly outweigh the ongoing estimated annual costs for the regional trails associated with ongoing management, promotion, maintenance and asset replacement over a 40 year cycle (valued in Table 3.7 at $3.4M per annum).

The job creation estimates would be sustained through local and visitor use of the regional trails and could be expected to increase over time with the quality of experiences and ongoing management of the trails. There is also the potential that future investors or existing operators may add the regional trails into their accessible activity base for their accommodation/tour or provide opportunities for developing new guided trail experiences.

Accordingly, it is expected that the initial investment in regional trails will bring substantial social, environmental and economic benefits to the region with the capacity to generate ongoing economic flow-ons and jobs to the region.

		Local Day Trips				Visitors Trips				Comment	Total Spend Range	Employment Benefit
		low number	estimated spend	high number	estimated spend	low number	estimated spend	high number	estimated spend			
1	Surf Coast	7,200.00	$ 14,400.00	12,000.00	$ 24,000.00	590,000.00	$ 5,900,000.00	737,500.00	$ 7,375,000.00	30-50% locals, 10-15% of visitors	$5.9 - $7.4M	74 - 93 jobs
2	Great South West Walk	5,775.00	$ 11,550.00	9,625.00	$ 19,250.00	32,500.00	$ 325,000.00	48,750.00	$ 487,500.00	30-50% locals,10-15% of visitors	$0.34 - 0.5M	4-6 jobs
3	Coast to Crater (Proposed extension south) Coast to Crater (Proposed extension north to Camperdown) Coast to Crater (Existing)	4,980.00	$ 9,960.00	8,300.00	$ 16,600.00	12,530.00	$ 125,300.00	25,060.00	$ 250,600.00	30-50% locals, 1-2% of visitors	$0.13 -$0.27M	2-3 jobs
4	Bellarine RT	63,300.00	$ 126,600.00	105,500.00	$ 211,000.00	59,190.00	$ 591,900.00	118,380.00	$ 1,183,800.00	30-50% locals, 1-2% of visitors	$0.72 - $1.4M	9-18 jobs
5	Barwon River Trails and Parklands	63,300.00	$ 126,600.00	105,500.00	$ 211,000.00	147,500.00	$ 1,475,000.00	295,000.00	$ 2,950,000.00	30-50% locals, 5%-10% of visitors	$0.27 - $3.2M	3-40 jobs
6	Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve to Queenscliff) Queenscliffe to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail (remainder)	63,300.00	$ 126,600.00	105,500.00	$ 211,000.00	147,500.00	$ 1,475,000.00	295,000.00	$ 2,950,000.00	30-50% locals, 5%-10% of visitors	$1.6 - $3.2M	20-40 jobs
7	Geelong Waterfront and Cycle Connections	63,300.00	$ 126,600.00	105,500.00	$ 211,000.00	590,000.00	$ 5,900,000.00	885,000.00	$ 8,850,000.00	30-50% locals, 10-15% of visitors	$6- $9M	75-112 jobs
8	Glenelg River Canoe Trail	5,775.00	$ 11,550.00	9,625.00	$ 19,250.00	9,000.00	$ 270,000.00	12,000.00	$ 360,000.00	9000-12000 using Vic Trails Data for use, $30/day spend	$0.28 -$0.38M	4-5 jobs
9	Old Beechy RT (connect to Colac off road) Old Beechy RT (upgrade existing)	6,300.00	$ 12,600.00	10,500.00	$ 21,000.00	12,530.00	$ 125,300.00	25,060.00	$ 250,600.00	30-50% locals, 1-2% of visitors	$0.14 -$0.27M	2- 3 jobs
10	Trans-Grampians Walk (National Park)** Dunkeld-Grampians National Park link	4,980.00	$ 9,960.00	8,300.00	$ 16,600.00	375,000.00	$ 3,750,000.00	450,000.00	$ 4,500,000.00	Estimated 1.5M visitors, 25-30% range	$3.7- $4.5M	46-56 jobs
11	Great Ocean Walk**	4,980.00	$ 9,960.00	8,300.00	$ 16,600.00	125,300.00	$ 1,253,000.00	187,950.00	$ 1,879,500.00	30-50% locals, 10-15% of visitors	$1.2- $1.9M	15-24 jobs
12	Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Moyne Council area) Port Fairy- Warrnambool RT (Warrnambool)	13,800.00	$ 27,600.00	23,000.00	$ 46,000.00	20,000.00	$ 200,000.00	40,000.00	$ 400,000.00	30-50% locals, 2.5%-5% of visitors	$0.23-$0.45M	3-6 jobs
13	Warrnambool Promenade	13,800.00	$ 27,600.00	23,000.00	$ 46,000.00	240,000.00	$ 2,400,000.00	400,000.00	$ 4,000,000.00	30-50% locals, 30-50% of visitors	$2.4-$4M	30-50 jobs
14	You Yangs MTB Hub	28,000.00	$ 56,000.00	40,000.00	$ 80,000.00	42,000.00	$ 420,000.00	60,000.00	$ 600,000.00	PV estimate of 70,000 based from major carpark , 60% Melbourne and 40% local Geelong	$0.11 -$0.68M	1-9 jobs
15	Forest MTB Hub	7,500.00	$ 15,000.00	10,800.00	$ 21,600.00	5,000.00	$ 50,000.00	7,200.00	$ 72,000.00	discussions with DSE allowing for events and regular use	$65,000 - $93,600	1 job
16	Existing Angelsea MTB Hub (does not include proposed trails if approved)	10,000.00	$ 20,000.00	12,000.00	$ 24,000.00	2,000.00	$ 20,000.00	3,000.00	$ 30,000.00	Average 100/weekend, 100 per total weekdays and allow for peak camp times	$40,000 - $54,000	0.5 job
		366,290.00	$ 732,580.00	597,450.00	$ 1,194,900.00	2,410,050.00	$ 24,280,500.00	3,589,900.00	$ 36,139,000.00			289 - 465 jobs

Estimated local spend directly related to the trail
Locals spend directly related to trail use estimated to be $2
Visitor spend directly related to trail use estimated to be $10/dav
** Excludes commercial walking tours and related spend

Table 3.8   Estimate of Economic Benefit of the Regional Trails

3.8   OTHER NOMINATED TRAILS

Some trails nominated by stakeholders were eliminated from the above assessment as they did not meet the criteria for inclusion as part of the regional trail master plan. In short, some of the trails were not considered to meet the requirements of a regional trail as defined for the purposes of this study (but may instead be sub-municipal or local trails) and/or have significant constraints in terms of realistically being developed as a regional trail in the near future (e.g. major infrastructure costs, potential for environmental or cultural impacts etc).

The trails that were not included in the current master plan include:

> Skenes Creek, Apollo Bay connection to the Great Ocean Walk;
>
> Great Ocean Road Cycling Route (following the Great Ocean Road from Torquay to Port Campbell);
>
> Trans Otway Waterfall Walk (traverses the Great Otway National Park);
>
> Round the Heads Trail (Barwon Heads);
>
> Bellarine Rural Tracks and Trails;
>
> Portarlington – Indented Head – St Leonards coastal trail;
>
> Hamilton - Coleraine Rail Trail;
>
> Koroit to Dunkeld Trail;
>
> Mahogany Trail (Warrnambool to Port Fairy);
>
> Forrest – Birregurra Tiger Rail Trail; and
>
> Lake Colac Circuit Trail.

Attachment 6 Recommendations for Nominated Trails Not Selected as Regional Trails indicates more detailed rationale for excluding each of these trails and indicates what the potential is for developing these trails in the longer term.

SECTION 4
CRITICAL ISSUES

This section provides a summary of some of the critical issues associated with regional trail planning, development, management and promotion. The issues have been identified from background research, consultation with the Project Control Team, stakeholders and the community (see also Section 2.7 and Attachment 1 Trail Audit).

The critical issues have been grouped into five main categories:

> the need for enhanced governance and policy (Section 4.1);

> the need for coordinated planning, development and management (Section 4.2);

> the current emphasis on infrastructure rather than experience (Section 4.3);

> opportunities for marketing and promotion (Section 4.4); and

> funding for the future (Section 4.5).

Addressing these main issues will be central to the successful implementation of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*.

4.1   GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Governance and policy issues include:

- the authorities, agencies and other stakeholders involved in the planning, management and promotion of trails across the region have differing legislative powers and capacities, management philosophies, resource capacities and priorities;

- a general lack of coordination between the parties involved in trail planning within the region (e.g. state agencies, regional authorities, LGA's and the community), including trail proposal assessment, development/construction requirements, ongoing management/ maintenance regimes, and risk management and monitoring responsibilities;

- uncertainty surrounding the management of multi-tenured trails (e.g. distribution of responsibilities, ongoing resourcing, maintenance and public liability arrangements);

- current practices that prohibit some multiple use activities where there is scope to achieve multiple use in a safe way, particularly horse riding and mountain biking, within many areas and along many trails where walking is permitted (e.g. National Parks);

- uncertainty relating to public liability (e.g. on private land);

- the policy of net gain can impose significant constraints on clearing of vegetation for new track alignments depending on the vegetation type[30];

- limited clarity relating to volunteer involvement in trail construction and management, including the lack of clear guidelines outlining land manager responsibilities relating to support, expectations, recruitment and liability insurance; and

- limited adoption of a trail user 'code of ethics', or 'code of conduct' applying across the region[31]

4.2   COORDINATED PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A number of issues of coordinated planning and development have arisen across the region from the lack of a regional trails master plan. These include:

- a lack of practical guidelines or 'tools' for the assessment of trail proposals at all levels of Government, to ensure that trails are developed according to an identified need/priority (particularly considering current trail supply and demand), managed according to agreed/adopted environmental and social standards, and that funds are allocated on a priority (rather than political) basis;

- the difficulty of ensuring that a diversity of trail opportunities are provided that cater for a wide range of interests and levels of ability, accessibility, skill, experience and confidence;

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[30] The view was expressed by mountain bike riding riders/clubs, that the application of the net gain policy has led to a preference by land managers for using existing track alignments that offer limited experience value, confusing junctions, unsuitable straight stretches, poorly drained trails and generally sub-standard trails which add to sustainability problems in the long term.

[31] There are examples where this has been applied in the region. For instance there is a mountain bike trail etiquette promoted at You Yangs Regional Park and Forrest mountain bike trails.

- the tendency to date to develop long distance/multi-day trails (versus shorter trail experiences which are more popular), longer trails being more difficult to manage and maintain, and not necessarily meeting the needs of the majority of the market; and

- general lack of disabled accessible trail experiences in natural areas within the region.

Other issues of planning, development and management that were identified include:

- difficulty with multiple land tenures to achieve co-ordination and commitment;

- general lack of uniformity in the design, construction and classification of trails between agencies, local government authorities and others (e.g. across tenure boundaries);

- potential environmental impacts in some areas as a result of trail construction (e.g. spread of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, weed species and soil erosion), and impacts on cultural heritage sites;

- potential spread of weed species as a direct result of trail construction activities, and ongoing use (e.g. the development of trail corridors can result in environmental conditions suitable for some weed species to thrive, which are then transported to other locations via shoes and/or car and bike tyres – specific examples include the spread of ragwort, serrated tussock and gorse, but there are a host of weed species that are present in the region that pose a threat to the environment);

- a lack of a coordinated and prioritised approach to the maintenance of many trails; and

- a lack of user data on which to base management decisions, predict future demand, project benefits, etc.

4.3 An Emphasis on Infrastructure not Experience

At the heart of the rationale for the use of a regional trail is the experience it provides. To date the emphasis with most of the existing trails has been on the provision of infrastructure i.e. the trail, its surface, bridges, drainage and to a lesser extent on trailhead facilities, amenities, etc.

Despite the good work being done, there remain a number of infrastructure issues that have been identified. These include:

- the need for continued and active care for the protection of the environmental and cultural values associated with the trails and regarding the trail maintenance and asset replacement;

- the potential adverse impacts of over-development on the unique environmental conditions of the region, resulting in a compromised experience of the landscape and its inherent qualities;

- concern about the standards of construction and in particular the surfacing of some trails;

Other, immediate concerns related to the experience being enjoyed by users include:

- the real and often perceived difficulties associated with managing conflicts on multiple use trails (e.g. conflicts between mountain bikers, walkers and horses);

- potential for conflicts between various users and their desired recreational experiences (e.g. the potential disturbance of an individual walker's experience in remote areas by large groups, illegal trail bike riding, or by jet skis in a river setting, etc.); and

- safety concerns associated with multiple use of trails in some situations (e.g. the speed of down hill mountain biking is not generally compatible, or safe to combine with walkers).

Importantly, the current study has identified that there are opportunities with existing trails to:

- broaden the user base of some trails by making them shared use trails (through linkages/loops off the main trail to accommodate additional uses);

- expand the opportunities for accessibility across the network (e.g. catering for all levels of accessibility);

- address missing linkages (including those that cross tenure boundaries) that would increase access to or usage of them;

- address the lack of access and arrival facilities associated with existing trails across the region (e.g. trailheads with signage, parking, information and toilets, and activity specific facilities such as bike wash or launching ramp for canoes/kayaks);

- develop comprehensive, and consistently presented trail related information (e.g. detailed maps, directional signage and trail markers) for the range of trails available in the region; and

- further extend the quality of the experience had by trail users through adding 'thematic interpretation' (see Section 5.3.2 Recommendation 5); and

- improve monitoring of impacts and in general enhance the strategic understanding of how trails are developed and managed.

Finally, the current study has promoted new trail experiences that will extend the value of the existing regional trails network including the development of a suite of mountain bike hubs to meet a growing demand for this type of trail experience.

4.4 Marketing and Promotion

Some of the main issues relating to marketing and promotional issues include:

- a general lack of uniformity in the delivery and quality of existing trail information (information categories, detail and reliability of the information provided) across the region;

- limited coordinated promotion of trail activities and experiences across the Barwon South West Region, and the lack of a centrally located source of trail information for the region;

- the significant resources required to regularly update trail promotional material, particularly paper material, indicating that further investigation into the most appropriate marketing mediums needs to be undertaken;

- general lack of quality interpretation (and in particular 'thematic interpretation' per Section 5.3.2) along, or associated with trails in the region; and

- limited trail related (nature-based tourism) bundling of products throughout the region, including indigenous experiences, and multiple activity guided recreation and training programs.

4.5 FUNDING FOR THE FUTURE

To date considerable resources have been spent in developing regional trails across the Barwon South West Region, however, some of the issues relating to trail funding within the region include:

- limited funding available for land management agencies (state, regional and local) to maintain existing trails and develop new trails, raising concerns about the region's capacity to develop and manage new trails in a sustainable way;

- limited direct revenue generated from existing trails within the region, therefore trail management funds are dependent on agency/authority budget availability or sourcing of external grants (the exception being the Great Ocean Walk that has some self-funding capacity, which is expected to be increased over time); and

- potentially higher costs associated with the construction of multiple use trails (e.g. larger minimum width required to cater for walkers and cyclists).

Funding also affects the availability of resources that can be applied to the management of trails at the officer level within the various management agencies.

Section 5 identifies the potential for partnership arrangements, funding and resource opportunities for the Barwon South West regional trails.

SECTION 5
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Five strategies have been identified for achieving the vision of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*, being:

> clear leadership, policy and <u>governance</u> structure for regional trails (Section 5.1);
>
> improved <u>co-ordination</u> of trail planning, development and management (Section 5.2);
>
> <u>experience-led</u> trail development (Section 5.3);
>
> effective and co-ordinated <u>marketing and promotion (Section 5.4)</u>; and
>
> increased <u>funding and resources</u> for trail planning, development, management and maintenance (Section 5.5).

The following sections provide a background context to each of these strategies and identifies a number of priority actions for achieving the vision of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan.*

5.1 CLEAR LEADERSHIP, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR REGIONAL TRAILS

5.1.1 Background

The lack of clear leadership and an agreed governance structure for regional trails were raised as critical issues by a number of parties (see Section 4.1).

At an over-arching level, there are no known examples of 'regional trails' governing bodies responsible for the implementation of a master plan similar to the current study. The most comparable organisations would be the State trails committees in South Australia.

The South Australian Trails Coordinating Committee is a cross Government/industry group with representation from the Office of Recreation and Sport, Department for Environment and Heritage, South Australian Tourism Commission, Transport SA, Planning SA, Forestry SA and Local Government. The peak recreational bodies of Bicycle SA, Horse SA, Walking SA, Canoe SA and the Scuba Divers Federation of SA Inc are also

represented on the Committee. The key to the success is the breadth of the groups involved and the whole of government approach to the issue of trails.

In considering potential responses to the need for leadership and a clear governance structure for individual trails, five long-distance Australian and international trails were benchmarked to provide an insight into existing governance models that might be applicable in the Barwon South West Region. The benchmarked trails were the Hans Heysen Trail (South Australia), the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Trail (New Zealand), the Bibbulmun Track (Western Australia), the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (Victoria) and the Noble Canyon MTB Epic (Southern California). Attachment 7 Benchmarking of Trail Governance Models provides information about the land owner/authority, managers and partners, and the management model in place for each of these trails.

The commonalities between the benchmarked trail management models, or partnerships, include:

>   strong representation within the partnership from the land management agency/s;

>   the responsibilities of the various partners being set out in a formal document, generally in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);

>   a Committee of Management model representing various government agencies, interest groups and local stakeholders;

>   volunteer involvement is a significant factor in the ongoing management of trails, particularly those in protected areas or on long distance trails;

>   funding/resource commitment made by the key partners (e.g. the land managers or lead agency);

>   public liability insurance is generally provided by the land manager, or lead agency, and covers volunteers (incorporated 'friends' groups can also obtain public liability insurance);

>   appointment of a trail officer, with the specific role of co-ordination and liaison between the partners, as well as managing the trail day to day; and

specific details of the governance/partnership model is tailored by the individual context of the specific trail context (e.g. one size does not fit all).

These common elements reflect, at a broad level, the 'success factors' identified elsewhere for successful tourism-protected area partnerships[32]. The key success factors therein identified and considered to be of relevance to the current project included:

involvement and support of the protected area agency;

communication, trust and commitment between and within the partnership;

supporting legislation [or policy]; and

adequate financial and organisational support for the partnership.

The most important partner-related features were found to be - having decision makers involved, support of the protected area agency and leadership by at least one of the partners.

Community involvement in public land management in Victoria often occurs through:

Local Committees of Management under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for Crown Land under the management of DSE; or

Section 86 Committees under the *Local Government Act 1989*, are not incorporated entities and not commonly used; or

Clubs and Groups formed under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*; or

Friends of Groups have become well-developed partners of public land management with protection under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 or the Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987,*

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[32] Moore, S.A., Weiler, B., Croy, G., Laing, J., Lee, D., Lockwood, M, Pfueller, S. and Wegner, A. (under review) *Tourism-Protected Area Partnerships in Australia: Designing and Managing for Success. Technical Report*, Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, The Gold Coast, Queensland. Submitted December 2008, Pg 45.

The above community involvement has provided valuable resources for public land management tasks but can suffer from having limited power arrangements to be true active 'partners', varying levels and often declining volunteer commitment over time, political interference and, at times, domination by self-interest groups or personalities.

5.1.2 Priority Actions

The priority actions for improving regional trail leadership, policy and governance through establishment of a layered approach to regional trail governance are considered to be:

1 Form a regional level trail governance body, comprising representatives from all major land management agencies within the region (e.g. Parks Victoria), local government authorities, and key stakeholders.

The existing Barwon South West Regional Manager's Forum (RMF) is considered to be an appropriate vehicle for higher-level coordination, policy and procedure development and decision-making, with all major stakeholders represented. Regional trails should be incorporated as a regular agenda item, and be co-ordinated by an appointed Regional Trail Sub-Committee.

The RMF would comprise a vehicle for senior-level input and decision-making regarding regional trails in the Barwon South West Region.

In particular, the RMF could provide high-level encouragement for the considered investigation of policies that promote or inhibit regional trail development (and related nature-based tourism activities), the latter including constraints on multiple use activities within National Parks and planning provisions which in rural zones that limit nature-based accommodation which might support regional trail development and use[33].

2 Form a Regional Trails Sub-committee, loosely based on the current structure of the Project Control Group for the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*.

The Regional Trails Sub-committee would act as an intermediary between the Regional Manager's Forum and on-ground regional trail projects. Responsibilities include liaising between individual Trail Management Committees, local government authorities and other stakeholders and the Regional Manager's Forum, implementing higher-level decisions and policy,

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[33]   the Department of Sustainability and Environment is currently reviewing appropriate planning provisions in relation to nature based tourism in Rural Zones. See Coomes Consulting (in prep.) "Providing a Facilitation Framework for Sustainable Development".

and coordinating regional promotion and marketing. The Regional Trails Sub-committee may also be responsible for completing further studies and plans as required.

Alternatively, the Regional Trails Sub-committee may act as the regional trail authority, in the event that the Regional Manager's Forum is not considered an appropriate vehicle for regional level decision-making regarding trails. This would require organisation of case-by-case meetings with senior-level decision makers.

3 Ensure there is a nominated officer within each Council responsible for the management of trails and to liaise with the trail management bodies regarding the development, promotion and management of trails in the Council area.

The objectives of the responsible party(s) may include: achieving a coordinated approach to the development of the trail, development of quality trail infrastructure, increasing yield for tourism operators, delivering the brand, business and infrastructure development and communications.

Responsibilities could include coordinating trail planning and development at the municipal level, representing the local government authority on individual Trail Management Committees, and liaising with the Regional Trail Sub-committee or others, including the implementation of regional trail policy and actions. Further roles could include development and delivery of a marketing program, development of cycle tourism related products and infrastructure, engagement with the tourism industry and tourists, maintenance of web sites and/or support for trail related events.

The responsibilities of the designated officer will vary depending on the degree to which the trail is already developed. In the initial stages, the emphasis would be on the development of a basic infrastructure and then in time on the experience of the trail (i.e. trail improvements/enhancement and/or the introduction of interpretation) and/or marketing and/or extending the trail to include better linkages, loops or the addition of other activities (i.e. initially a trail may only be for the use of walkers, but may in time be upgraded to include mountain bikers or cyclists).

There is also the opportunity for any proposed position to be shared between Councils where resources do not permit individual positions to be created[34].

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[34]   This is the case with the Cycle Tourism Officer for the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail whose position is shared between the Indigo and Alpine Shire Councils and the Rural City of Wangaratta.

4 Develop and support Trail Management Committees for each regional trail.

This recommendation may not be appropriate for all of the recommended regional trails as it is important that a flexible and adaptive approach to governance be adopted, which is able to shift in response to specific trail issues (e.g. fluidity in the role and responsibility of agencies and individuals represented at various levels of the governance structure, depending on skills required, location etc), to facilitate problem solving and innovation. Flexibility appears to be particularly important at the local, or on-ground level, as a 'one size fits all' approach to individual trail management will not capture the unique trail characteristics, local needs and development, management and maintenance requirements.

Where there are complex land ownership issues or multiple agency/interest group involvement as in most of the recommended regional trails, Trail Management Committees have been successful in creating working partnerships between relevant land managers, community organisations/special use groups, private landholders etc, and facilitate on-ground works and day-to-day management of regional trails.

Clear leadership is integral to a successful trail management partnership. It is, therefore, important for a Trail Management Committee to be championed by a representative from the partnership (ideally a partner from the land management agency or local government authority), to provide direction and general group facilitation.

5   Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for each trail as required over the next 10 years.

The MOU for each trail[35] should clearly:

> articulate the governance structure, resource sharing
> mechanisms, roles and responsibilities, funding
> arrangements, commitments by each party to further
> development and asset replacement and emergency
> response roles for each party:

> identify liability for risk and how certainty is to be given to all
> parties regarding their participation in the development and
> on-going maintenance; and

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[35] Some trails may not require an MOU as they are might be managed by a singular agency or other trails may not yet be at a stage of development where an MOU is required.

agree practices for construction and maintenance across the length of the trail.

Where Friends Groups are involved, the MOU should clearly articulate the expectations on the group in terms of participation, recruitment and liability and the support to be provided to the group by the government land agencies involved to promote the longevity of their organisation by way of funding, training, capital or asset replacement support, etc.

It should be noted, however, that whilst standardisation of the MOU's is desirable, the individuality of each trail and the local landscape should be maintained and celebrated.

6   Adopt relevant 'coded of conduct' and develop local information about appropriate use for each regional trail.

A code of conduct is an agreed set of behavioural guidelines that relate to a specific use such as how to be a responsible mountain bike rider or principles for low impact bushwalking.

Each trail, however, will also require a set of unique guidelines for users that, amongst other things:

> establishes where the code applies and the times and conditions of use (including any permits that may be required) and relevant legislation/by-laws/insurance requirements;

> sets out agreed user groups (including whether or not pets are allowed) and the need for respect between user groups (including right of way, passing, etc.);

> addresses appropriate behaviour on the trail including respect for the natural and cultural environment, control of the spread of litter, weeds or soil borne disease, safe usage, the use of fire, noise and the need to stay on the made trail;

> encourages respect for private land and property;

> identifies contacts for repair, damage, problems or emergency support;

> encourages involvement in the management of the trail and, in particular, users to leave the trail 'better than they found it'; and

> encourages pre-planning regarding travel to and from, equipment, weather and the general area prior to use.

Individual trail management committees should be responsible for drafting a code for their trail. Whilst the code of conduct for each trail will vary, the Regional Trails Sub-Committee (see above) should review and rationalise the various codes to create greater consistency across the region and ensure that significant issues for respect and safety of users are addressed.

The code of conduct should be widely displayed including at trailheads, in brochures and on websites.

> 7 Consult with the local community and key user groups (e.g. through clubs and/or peak bodies) in the planning stage of regional trail development and/or upgrade projects.

This recommendation reflects the significant level of knowledge that trail users can impart regarding the needs of their specific activity. Collaboration with key user groups can also engender a sense of ownership and cooperation, and result in innovative solutions to trail related issues, such as improving the experience and safety of shared trails, or dealing with potential environmental issues.

5.2 Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management

5.2.1 Background

Discussion in Section 4.2 and elsewhere in the current master plan identified a range of issues arising from a lack of coordination across the region in terms of the planning, development and management of regional trails.

5.2.2 Priority Actions

> 1. Adopt the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* as the over-arching guide to the planning, development and management of regional trails over the next 10 years. In particular, use the master plan and its definition of a regional trail, selection criteria and guiding principles to aid in the selection and prioritisation of future regional trails, if required.

The master plan has established a vision, principles and criteria for the selection of regional trails that prioritises a suite of 13 trails and 4 mountain bike hubs for further planning, development and management over the next 10-year period. The suite of trails has been selected because they appear to be sustainable, are well-supported by the various parties involved in their establishment and care (or by policies that promote their creation) and represent, in the case of existing trails, significant financial investments.

The suite of trails also incorporates a diversity of trails that incorporate a variety of shorter trail experiences suited to the local and visitor markets and offer opportunities for a wide range of interest, levels of fitness, accessibility, etc. across the broad geographical spread of the region.

2. Adopt the design and development standards herein as a reference guide, in conjunction with other best practice guidelines including the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines for trail construction[36] and relevant Australian Standards for shared trails[37].

Part of the intent of the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* is to provide direction for raising the profile of a suite of high quality regional trails within the region. To ensure that these trails are of a high standard, consistent with the definition, principles and criteria, requires a consistent approach to trail design, construction, classification, maintenance and the level of facilities and services be provided[38].

Table 5.1 provides indicative design, classification and construction guidelines for regional trails. The table indicates that there is no one set standard for the construction of a particular trail type, rather that surface materials, width, etc. vary in response to:

> location/setting (i.e. in urban setting surfaces would be expected to paved, where in a remote setting they would likely be soil);
>
> expectations for use (i.e. shared trails required wider surfaces than single use trails);
>
> level of usage (i.e. the width of shared trails can vary depending on whether safety dictates wide trail surfaces because of high expected numbers of users); and

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[36] IMBA (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Single Track*, IMBA, California, USA.

[37] Austroads (1999) *Part 14 Austroads: Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice – Bicycles*, Austroads, Australia.

[38] [38] This could include reference documents such as Bushwalking Victoria Policy Position on the Sharing of Tracks and Trails.

design and construction standards (i.e. in urban settings a
higher class of trails is expected where in remote settings
more challenging classes of trails are acceptable).

Further, the table suggests that the level of provision of facilities will also vary
in response to location, with the expectation that in more remote locations
fewer facilities will be provided than in more urban settings or at principle
trailheads.

Despite the flexibility of interpretation within the table, application of these
guidelines will provide greater certainty to users as to what they can expect
when undertaking use of a regional trail. Further it gives guidance to those
responsible for the planning, design and development of new portions of trails

or the upgrading of existing trails as to what is required in various
circumstances.

3. Prepare and implement a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan for
each regional trail[39].

The purpose of the Joint Management and Development Plan for each trail is
to ensure that environmental and cultural values are protected, that priorities
for further development and upgrading are identified, that on-going
maintenance is spelled out, that methods for generating income in support of
the former are identifies, opportunities for partnerships developed (i.e.
collaboration with Offices of Justice or others) and that responsibilities for the
implementation of development, upgrading and/or maintenance are clearly
established.

Ideally, the Joint Trail Development and Management Plans will:

have joint ownership by the relevant partners;

provide background about the environmental and cultural
values associated with the trail and appropriate
mechanisms for their protection;

provide a prioritised 'blue-print' for the future development
of the trail (e.g. required upgrades, new sections and loops,
including indicative cost estimates for required works,
interpretation);

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[39] A number of the existing regional trails already have strategic directions plans, feasibility studies or similar
(see Attachment 2 Policy Framework). New Joint Trail Development and Management Plans may not need to
be developed for these trails. Alternatively, existing studies may be incorporated into a Joint Trail Development
and Management Plan.

Use	Trail Type	Location				Facility Name	Design Features				Uses											Examples in Study Area
		Urban Area	Suburban/ Near Settlement/ Major Visitor Destination/ within 20 minutes of trackhead	Semi Remote (> 20 minutes from trackhead)	Remote		Surface	Width	Longitudinal Slope	Comment	Walking	Running	Dog Walking	Equestrian	Wheelchair	Skateboard	Rollerblade	Mountain Bike	Road Bike	Maintenance Vehicle	Fire Truck/ SES 4WD	
Single Use	1				✓	hiking (high challenge)	soil	0.6m	some steep sections requiring high fitness	Equates to Class 4, AS 2156	✓											Remote locations on GSWW, Trans Otway, Trans Grampians, GOW only
	2			✓	✓	hiking (moderate challenge)	soil	0.6m	some steep sections requiring moderate fitness	Equates to Class 3, AS 2156	✓	✓									◎	GSWW, Trans Otway, Trans Grampians, GOW
	3		✓			hiking (accessible)	soil / gravel	0.6-1.2m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections and/or steps allowed	Equates to Classes 1-2, AS 2156	✓	✓	✓		✓					◎	◎	Sections of the Surf Coast Walk, existing nature trails within the Otways hinterland
	4	✓	✓			walking	asphalt/ concrete/ gravel	1.2-1.8m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections and/or steps allowed	Equates to Classes 1-2, AS 2156	✓	✓	✓		✓	±	±			●	●	Barwon River Trails, sections of the Surf Coast Walk within vicinity of Torquay, and nature trails within the Otways hinterland
	5a	✓	✓			biking (on road)	asphalt/ concrete	1.0m	conforms to existing road topography (generally not greater than 1:6 and then only in very short sections)	Standards governed by AS 1742.9/Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14 - Bicycles (ARRB Transport Research)									✓	●	●	Bike paths within the Geelong urban area
	5b			✓		biking (on road)	asphalt/ concrete	1.0m	conforms to existing road topography (generally not greater than 1:6 and then only in very short sections)	Standards governed by AS 1742.9/Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 14 - Bicycles (ARRB Transport Research)									✓	●	●	Many rural roads through out the region
	6	✓	✓			bike track	asphalt/ concrete	2.0-3.0m	generally not exceeding 1:20	Equates to Classes 1-2, AS 2156, width as recommended in AS 1742.9						±	±	✓	✓	●	●	
	7					mountain biking	soil/gravel/ rock	0.6-1.8m	no set standard	Standards as set out by IMBA. Width relates to degree of difficulty, narrower yet for extreme difficulty (down to 0.18m)								✓		◎	◎	Forrest and You Yangs MTB Parks
	9		✓	✓	✓	equestrian	soil/ fine compacted gravel/ wood chips	0.9-1.8m (single file)	some steep sections requiring moderate fitness	No agreed standards. 1.5m at bridges, requirements for vertical vegetation clearance 5m plus 0.5m either side horizontally				✓						◎	◎	Some trails on the Bellarine Peninsula on private land
Multiple Use	10		✓	✓	✓	hiking and mountain biking	soil/ gravel	0.6-1.8m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections and/or steps allowed	Generally equates to Class 3-4, AS 2156	✓	±	±	±				✓		◎	◎	Sections of the Surf Coast Walk
	11		✓	✓	✓	hiking and equestrian	soil/ gravel/ wood chips	0.9-1.8m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections	Generally equates to Class 3-4, AS 2156	✓	±		✓						◎	◎	Coast to Crater Rail Trail
	12	✓	✓			walking and biking	asphalt/ concrete/ gravel	3.0-4.0m	generally not exceeding 1:20	Equates to Classes 1-2, AS 2156, width as recommended in AS 1742.9 (Shared path scenarios D-F)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	●	●	Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade, Geelong Foreshore
	12a			✓	✓	walking and biking	gravel	2.0-3.0m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections	width as recommended in AS 1742.9 (Shared path scenarios A-C)	✓	✓	✓		±			✓	✓	●	●	Tinboon and Old Beechy Rail Trails
	13		✓	✓		walking, biking and equestrian	asphalt/ concrete/ gravel	3.0-4.0m	generally not exceeding 1:20, some short steeper sections and/or steps allowed	Equates to Classes 2, AS 2156	✓	✓	✓	±	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	◎	◎	Sections of the Bellarine Rail Trail and the Coast to Crater Rail Trail

Table 5.1 Recommended Trail Standards

Key

±	possible but not encouraged
blank	activity may be possible but actively discouraged
◎	in some limited instances
●	in most instances

Abbreviations

AS	Australian Standards
ARRB	Australian Road Research Board
IMBA	International Mountain Bicycling Association

Based on a Trails Matrix Developed by the Portland, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

rear of Table 5.1 A3

outline the tasks and responsibilities of each of the partners required to implement the Plan;

identify costs for key works; and

include an agreed maintenance and asset replacement regime.

The preparation of the Joint Trail Development and Management Plans will be beneficial in the preparation of funding applications and an inducement to funding bodies to act positively on such submissions.

4. Undertake regular data collection regarding use of regional trails.

The current study has been constrained in its analysis by the lack of available data regarding usage of existing trails and related information regarding who the users are, how much they spend, what quality of experience they are having, etc.

Availability of such data would, in the future, enable better prioritisation of funding and expenditure and guide future upgrading/expansion of trails to meet demand.

Collection of data is, therefore, recommended for each trail. Surveys of users should;

be clear and readily understood, brief and easy to complete;

be conducted on a regular basis (minimally on a bi-annual basis and including both weekdays and weekends);

be consistent between the trails to allow meaningful comparisons over time;

seek quantitative and qualitative information and in particular should seek the age, gender and origin of users, their length of stay in the region, the anticipated expenditure in relation to trail use, comment on the quality of their experience and if on a shared trail what type of user they are; and

conform with national and international standards for social research.

5. Facilitate the sharing of knowledge relating to trail planning, construction and management between all land management agencies, local government authorities, key user groups and organisations within the region.

Establishment of an agreed governance framework as set out in Section 5.1.2 will go some way to achieving this recommendation. It would be reasonable, for instance, to assume that there might be some kind of annual gathering of the local government trail officers, or designated staff members and/or trail committee members each year to share information implementation successes and/or failures that would improve delivery across the region.

Information sharing may also extend beyond the region, and encompass liaison with trail specialists from interstate and internationally. For instance, the Forrest and Anglesea MTBs and the Glenorchy MTB in Tasmania were designed with the assistance of Glenn Jacobs an international expert in mountain bike course design. The conduct of the recent national championships at the latter course suggest the value of engaging critical expertise.

5.3   EXPERIENCE-LED TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

5.3.1 Background

The increasing popularity of trail related activities, including significant growth in the numbers of specific user groups (e.g. mountain bike riders, road cyclists, short walk users) has resulted in increasing pressure on land managers to provide a diverse range of high standard trail opportunities.

Beyond the mere provision of infrastructure, and critical to the success of the proposed network, is a growing emphasis of the user's experience of the suite of regional trails described herein.

Section 4.3 identified a range of issues that limit the ability of users to obtain the highest quality of experience possible from each trail. The mechanisms for addressing these issues are many.

Previous recommendations in Section 5.2 for the adoption of agreed trail construction standards and preparation of the proposed Joint Trail Development and Management Plan for each regional trail will address concerns for raised about impacts and standards of development. Whilst the recommendation in Section 5.1.2 regarding a code of conduct and in Section 5.2.2 for consistent trail standards should go some way to addressing concerns for conflict management and safety.

The following actions address the remaining concerns for the current experience of users, the potential to enhance that experience and new opportunities that will expand the experiences available within the region.

5.3.2 Priority Actions

1. Investigate opportunities for the development of new shared use trails and/or the upgrade to shared use trails where appropriate (shared trails may form sections of larger regional trails)[40].

Shared use trails are a resource efficient method of meeting the trail needs of a range of user groups (e.g. bike, pedestrian, equestrian, in-line skating, etc), within one location. However, they will not be appropriate in all circumstances. For example, where cyclists will be travelling downhill at speed, and where trails are narrow with poor sight lines, the safety of users may be compromised. Single purpose trails, therefore, should be used where safe conditions for shared use cannot be achieved, and where there is sufficient demand to justify development.

The development of 'codes of behaviour' to generate greater awareness by different trail users is worthwhile as a means of mitigating some conflict (as per Section 5.1.2). Implementation of consistent track standards (as per Section 5.2.2) will also go some way to reducing user conflicts on shared trails.

2. Expand the opportunities for use of regional trails by people with varying abilities.

Local governments and State agencies have statutory requirements under the Commonwealth *Disability and Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA) to make all reasonable attempts not to discriminate against people on the grounds of their having a disability. It is recognised that full access to some facilities, including trails, is not practical or possible without affecting the qualities of the places that they reach or without excessive cost.

If comprehensive access is not provided then strong justification is required to support this under the DDA. The DDA allows for exemptions where provision of disabled access places 'unjustifiable hardship' on the provider. Unjustifiable hardship includes "any relevant forms of detriment, not just financial burden". In particular, where the purpose of a facility is to present conservation/heritage values, "loss of those values would be relevant in showing unjustifiable hardship"[41].

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[40]Austroads (1999) *Part 14 Austroads: Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice: Bicycles*, Australia.

[41] D Mason *pers comm*. 14.10.02. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Whilst, disability access is not, therefore, an over-arching requirement, it is a reasonable objective to provide it where it can be readily achieved as a means of extending access to the regional trail network to the widest possible audience.

It is recommended, therefore, that trails emphasise achievement of

> Universal Design Principles where possible (see www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster/pdf); and

> that disability access trails form part of a regional trail/s experience (e.g. a short loop at the beginning built to a wheel cheer accessible standard), and be located within close proximity to towns or settlements.

The level of trail facilities should be consistent with the level of accessibility along the trail (e.g. provision of adequate information and toilets accessible by people with disabilities where their access is encouraged).

3. Explore the feasibility of completing identified 'missing links' on individual trails as noted in Section 5.7.

Several trails within the suite of regional trails suffer because they have missing sections or fail to reach logical beginning/end points. Such links include:

> the linking of Point Lonsdale through to Barwon Heads;

> improved off-road links and on-road links from Camperdown to the commencement of the trail;

> the connection of the Coast to Crater Trail from Timboon through to Port Campbell and along the coast to Princetown;

> improved off-road and on-road links from the start of the Old Beechy Trail north to the town of Colac; and

> the connection between Dunkeld and the Grampians National Park.

Section 3.6 identified the costs involved in making these connections. These links are discussed in Attachment 4 Recommended Regional Trails and specific actions to further their development are detailed in Section 5.7.

4. Develop priority trailhead facilities to include parking, signage, activity specific facilities and/or toilets.

It is important to the experience of a trail that good quality facilities are available on arrival. As discussed in Section 5.2.2, in urban settings or at major trailheads or hubs, a greater array and higher standard of facility may be provided as compared with remote settings.

Importantly, at all locations detailed signage should be provided that orients visitors and explains critical information about the use of the trail including the 'code of conduct'.

Along the route, users should find regular reassurance through directional signage/maps, interpretation or minimally through trail markers.

5. Prepare and implement Thematic Interpretation Strategies for each regional trail, to provide guidance for the creation of unique and memorable visitor experiences, provide a point of difference, and to aid in raising the profile of the regional trails.

Thematic Interpretation is based on more than two decades of communications psychology research identifying that the strongest intellectual and emotional connections arise from interpretation that is thought provoking rather than fact-oriented. It recognises that the most powerful impressions people take away with them from a place are the conclusions or meanings they have drawn from the information presented. It therefore aims to make it easy for visitors to form strong meanings and connections, by interpreting through the strategic delivery of themes – sometimes referred to as central or take-home messages. Once visitors attach meanings to the place being interpreted, the place matters to them. This leads to outcomes such as high levels of visitor satisfaction, word-of-mouth promotion. repeat visitation and philanthropic contributions to destination development[42].

While the provision of information is important, the information itself is tailored to assist visitors in understanding the trail experience in a way that informs their own lives. Themes sit at the heart of the interpretive program. They form a set of 'launching pads' from which the entire program is developed and delivered. They allow for considerable creativity in developing the program, providing for varying levels of layering and depth, while weaving together a range of topics – all geared to the delivery media, audience and location.

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[42] Anna Housego 2008. Interpretation Plan 2008-2013, Royal Tasmania Botanical Gardens

Themes are typically developed in a workshop setting involving key stakeholders and people with a passionate interest in the place such as traditional owners, long time residents, artists, etc.

The preparation of a thematic interpretation plan for the regional trails would help deliver the experiences in an insightful, creative, innovative, engaging and focused way to the different target markets. It would determine the best locations and techniques to deliver the take-home messages to locals and visitors in a more powerful way than most approaches to interpretation used within Australia, particularly in National Parks, where facts and stories dominate.

6. Collaborate with tertiary institutions to monitor ongoing impacts of individual trails, and to improve management practices over the long-term new construction techniques and materials, with particular attention to sustainability.

The various tertiary institutions in the region and elsewhere in Victoria often engage in research that would be beneficial to the development of the regional trails network. Whilst research is to be encouraged, it can be time consuming for managers and should be reviewed before agreements are entered into.

Already Parks Victoria is cooperating with Ballarat University to monitor environmental conditions on the Great Ocean Walk over the next five years.

Consultation during the current study indicated interest in research into:

> monitoring of impacts from various forms of trail use and measures to ameliorate or eliminate those impacts;

> sustainability matters including the origin of the materials, and long-term maintenance requirements;

> control of the spread of weeds and plant pathogens; and

> user satisfaction; and

> the role of interpretation in enhancing user experiences of trails.

7. Support development of new trail experiences in the Grampians.

The Grampians tourism region has been identified by numerous studies as having significant potential for enhanced revenues through a greater focus on nature-based tourism and particularly adventure activities. As a result, a

significant and sound policy basis has been developed for the creation of a 'Wild Grampians Walk' that traverses the length of the National Park (NP) and a mountain bike hub somewhere in or immediately adjacent to the NP.

These proposed trails are discussed in Attachment 4 Recommended Regional Trails and actions supporting their development are detailed in Section 5.7

8. Support the further development and promotion of mountain biking as a core experience delivered by the regional hubs in the Barwon South West.

8.1 Investigate the potential to develop a high quality long distance MTB trail within the Barwon South West Region.

The trail should be developed in a landscape representative of the region, provide a unique nature-based experience, and be challenging for a range of skill levels.

The Otway Forest Park and the Great Otway National Park are areas that would on initial consideration be suitable for such a trail, albeit the current National Park Management Plan does not allow mountain biking except on service vehicle trails.

8.2 Ensure that further development of the existing hubs is of a high standard and provides a diversity of riding experiences and associated infrastructure, (based on the IMBA trail construction and classification guidelines)[43], and are suitable for all levels of competition.

Opportunities include:

> preparing and implementing a MTB Hub Development and Management Plan for each regional hub, which:
>
> > have joint ownership by the relevant partners;
> >
> > provide a 'blue-print' for the future development of the hub (e.g. required upgrades, new sections and loops, required infrastructure to meet the needs of competition, indicative cost estimates for required works, interpretation and signage);
> >
> > outline the tasks and responsibilities of each of the partners required to implement the Plan; and

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[43] See: IMBA (2007) *Managing Mountain Biking: IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding*, USA and (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, USA.

include an agreed maintenance and environmental monitoring regime.

ensuring that all hubs have quality trailhead facilities, including signage, trail map and markers, toilets, parking and bike wash down facilities;

expanding the scope of experiences available in the Anglesea Heath area, through the development of a cross-country trail network, linked to the existing Bike Park, as described in the Concept Plan;

continued upgrading of the You Yangs MTB hub in response to growing use and significance at the national and State level for events with investigation into the feasibility of providing a direct trail link between Little River railway station and the park through negotiation with existing landowners;

completing the link from the Forrest MTB hub to the existing section of the Forrest – Birregurra Tiger Rail Trail (scheduled for 2009); and

supporting planning including feasibility planning, site selection, environmental impact assessment, brand development and marketing materials, and trail and facilities design, documentation and construction of the proposed Grampians MTB.

8.3 Investigate the potential to better integrate the MTB hubs, reinforce their combined regional role, whilst ensuring that each offers unique experiences.

Regional integration of the hubs may include:

ensuring consistency in the standard of trail construction and maintenance across the three hubs;

ensuring consistency in the difficulty classification of trails and obstacles, using the IMBA difficulty rating system;

the development of a regional MTB trail map, including scaled and topographic information of each hubs trail network and on-site facilities, other quality MTB/cycling trails in the region (e.g. the rail trails may be included);

preparation of a MTB Code of Conduct;

pursuing greater opportunities for integrated marketing and promotion of the regional MTB hubs (as is being done now with Bicycle Victoria's Getting Dirty brochure which promotes the You Yangs and Forrest mountain bike trails); and

investigate the potential for developing an 'iconic' long distance MTB trail in the Great Otway National Park and/or Otway Forest Park, with the opportunity to develop demountable 'bike barn' accommodation along its length, as outlined in *Victoria's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012.*

5.4 EFFECTIVE AND CO-ORDINATED MARKETING AND PROMOTION

5.4.1 Background

A range of issues were identified with the current marketing and promotion of regional trails in Section 4.4. In short, marketing and promotion is generally limited and fragmented across the region with the likelihood that both residents and visitors have a poor awareness of the product and experiences on offer.

Upgrading the marketing and promotional efforts within a regional framework will help provide a stronger platform to reach and attract interest in the trails from both residents and visitors. The regional tourism organisations, local tourism organisations, Councils and individual operators can all contribute to the overall marketing and promotion of regional trails. The mechanisms to trigger trail awareness interest (e.g. website, brochures, advertising, maps, brochures, video, photographic etc) will need to be identified in a Marketing Plan and will use different tools for the various target audiences.

Five main types of marketing and promotion have been identified as being of relevance to the Barwon South West Regional Trails:

destination marketing and promotion (e.g. broad, region wide material associated with the Great Ocean Road campaign region, regional website and linked websites);

organisational marketing and promotion (e.g. that undertaken by specific land management agencies, local government authorities, or other organisation, in a specific style, with a specific intent);

'like with like' marketing and promotion (e.g. joint marketing of rail trails, or all MTB hubs within the region);

individual regional trail marketing and promotion, based on a unique trail brand and thematic interpretation strategy; and

'bundling' of experiences, services, attractions and activities associated with a specific regional trail (e.g. packaging together trail experiences offered by local tour operators, with accommodation and dining, as has been implemented successfully in association with the Great Ocean Walk).

The promotion and marketing of the regional trails will be greatly enhanced through a commitment to:

installing better directional signs leading visitors on the access roads to the selected trails;

creating a defined parking area to signal commencement of the trail, utilising existing or new visitor facilities (e.g. picnic, seating, interpretation);

installing trailhead signs at the start of each trail;

adopting accepted standards for track construction;

using markers, where appropriate, along the trails that help lead visitors to the end point of the trail or side features of interest; and

celebrating the end point or a key feature of the trail with appropriate facilities e.g. lookout, seat, interpretation, artwork

Trailheads should include the trail name, a basic map of the trail route, the approximate time for completing the trail, the general difficulty of the trail, and any restrictions that apply to the trail area in the form of universal pictograms. Similarly, trail markers could include the universal pictogram for permitted activities and be discernable from distance. Construction materials will need to be hard wearing and low maintenance to withstand the expected level of use and prevailing conditions. The trailheads utilised for the 60 Great Short Walk Program (see Figure 5.1) are good examples of practical and 'promotional' trail infrastructure.

5.4.2 Priority Actions

1. Prepare a brand position for regional trails in the Barwon South West Region.

2. Prepare and implement a Trail Marketing and Promotion Plan for each regional trail (the marketing and promotion plan should respond to the regional brand and thematic interpretation plan).

3. Investigate the potential of developing a central trails website for the Barwon South West Region, that may be linked to local government authority websites. The website could include downloadable maps and trail notes, with links to services, tours etc.

4. Develop a suite of quality images of the regional trail that can be used to promote the experiences on offer, and in particular, the point of difference with other trails within Victoria.

60 Great Short Walks Trailhead

Trailhead and Trail Markers on Mt. Wellington, Tasmania.

Figure 5.1. Trailhead and Trail Marker Precedents.

5.5 Increased Funding and Resources for Trail Planning, Development, Management and Maintenance

5.5.1 Background

Section 4.2 identifies a number of funding and resource issues which impact on the capacity of the existing land managers to maintain existing trails and develop new regional trails in a sustainable manner. Currently there is limited direct revenue being generated from existing trails within the region to support the trail managers, therefore trail management funds are often dependent on agency/authority budget availability or sourcing of external grants.

There are a range of Commonwealth Government, State Government and other possible funding sources for regional trails that have been identified from web research, review of trail reports[44] and policy documents.

Commonwealth Government grant programs include:

- The new 'Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program' administered by Transport and Regional Services may provide funding for trail development

- Australian Tourism Development Program administered by Industry, Tourism and Resources provides different categories of funding support for tourism development (products and services)

- Sharing Australia's Stories administered by Environment and Heritage provides funding that may support interpretation related to Australia's natural and cultural history

- Envirofund administered by National Heritage Trust aims to help communities with projects for promoting sustainable resource use

Victorian Government grant programs include:

- Community Facility Funding program under the auspices of Sport and Recreation Victoria to allow for better planning, access and participation with funding for minor and major sport and recreation facilities

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[44] Transplan Pty Ltd and Mike Halliburton Associates (2007) Round the Heads Trail Feasibility Study provides a good summary of resource and funding opportunities.

- Regional Infrastructure Development Fund administered by Regional Development Victoria provides funds for capital works in regional communities including projects that support new industry development and improvement of tourism facilities

- The Victorian Transport Plan administered by the Victorian Government will provide funding opportunities (in the order of $10 million) for trail-related projects (e.g. to improve non-motorised transport opportunities in cities and regional towns)

- Provincial Pathways Program funded by the Victorian Government to promote cycling and walking trails that will help attract people to regional areas

- Small Towns Development Funds run by Regional Development Victoria that provides funds for capital works in small towns that create new opportunities for growth and developing economic and social infrastructure

Other funding sources may include:

- Resources through operational budgets, tourism marketing support and community grant programs managed by Local Government within the region

- Corporate sponsorship for maintenance of trails

- Community fund-raising efforts to support trail development

- Contributions directed towards trail improvements by bequests and philanthropy

- Possible private sector investment into upgrading, management or maintenance of parts of regional trails that have commercial use and/or exclusive rights of commercial operation on the trail

- Diversion of a fixed proportion of funds from existing infrastructure budgets to initiate and support trail development (e.g. a proportion of the State roads budget)

- Identifying opportunities for introducing user fees or contributions towards trail planning, development and management[45]

Other resources (especially for construction works and maintenance works) include:

- Department of Justice (Community Corrections) – The DOJ have offered assistance in the maintenance and construction of trails and trail facilities (i.e. shelters, seats, signs) through use of offenders on Community Based Orders and their Men's Shed program

- Community volunteers (e.g. local community groups – 'Friends' groups)

- Volunteer efforts of non-government agencies e.g. Conservation Volunteers Australia, Green Corps

5.5.2 Priority Actions

1. Preparation of feasibility plans for regional trails that identify the costs and benefits of the proposed trail, including the mechanisms for supporting the requirements for trail planning, development, management and ongoing maintenance.

2. Opportunities for joint resource and funding commitment be sought from partners.

3. Consideration be given to the incorporation of the Regional Trail Sub-committee to enable improved access to Commonwealth and State Government grants.

4. The opportunities to generate a revenue stream from users of the regional trails be explored, consistent with relevant policies and management plans.

5. Maintain the audit of potential regional trails for future reference, and as a planning tool (GIS information may also be useful to collect regarding routes).

6. Priority be given to improving the recruitment, training, and management of volunteers associated with trail planning, development and maintenance across the region.

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[45] For example bushwalkers are required to pay a $100 fee to the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service on the Overland Track with the funding dedicated towards track upgrade and maintenance. A user fee is also applied to all visitors to Tasmania's National Parks. Some nature-based tourism operators may include a conservation fee on customers that is paid to the land manager for ongoing maintenance of the natural values.

5.6 Ten Year Action Plan for the Region

The Ten Year Action Plan for the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Plan* provides regional level guidance for the implementation of the strategic framework. Section 5.7 provides individual action plans for each identified regional trail.

The Ten Year Action Plan indicates:

the five main strategies (as described in Section 5.1 - 5.5);

a series of recommended actions grouped under each strategy;

priority/timing for each recommended action based on:

- Critical – required in short term by legislation,

- High,

- Medium,

- Low; and

responsibility for implementing the recommended actions.

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 The Regional Managers Forum should form a Regional Trails Sub-committee, based on the current structure of the Project Control Group for the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan*	High	Lead: Regional Managers Forum Support: Other participating LGA's and agencies

	1.2 Implement the recommended layered approach to regional trails governance:
	
	    utilise the existing Regional Manager's Forum as a basis for regional trails governance;
	
	    develop and support Trail Management Committees for each regional trail;
	
	    appoint local government trail officers, or designated staff members (e.g. recreation planner or community development officer) to liaise with the trail management bodies regarding the development, promotion and management of trails in the Council area
		High	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee to facilitate implementation of the regional trail governance structure
			
			Support: Other participating LGA's and agencies

	1.3 Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for each trail as required over the next ten years	Medium	Lead: Participating LGA's, agencies and organisations Support: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee
	1.4 Allocate adequate resources to the various governance levels, to ensure required tasks can be carried out appropriately.	High - Medium	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum
	1.5 Consult with the local community and key user groups (e.g. through clubs and/or peak bodies) in the planning stage of regional trail development and/or upgrade projects.	High-Medium	Lead: Participating LGA's and land management agencies
	1.6 Adopt relevant 'coded of conduct' and develop local information about appropriate use for each regional trail.	Low	Lead: Participating LGA's and land management agencies
	1.7 Further develop and implement joint regional trail policy, procedure and guidelines, including standardised approaches to public liability, volunteer and stakeholder engagement, environment impact assessment, emergency/risk management, best practice trail construction and design techniques and classification	High - Medium	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trail Sub-committee

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1. Adopt the *Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan* as the over-arching guide to the planning, development and management of regional trails over the next 10 years.	High	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee Support: Trail Committees of Management and other key stakeholders
	2.2. Adopt the design and development standards herein as a reference guide, in conjunction with other best practice guidelines including the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines for trail construction[46] and relevant Australian Standards for shared trails[47].	High	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee Support: Trail Committees of Management
	2.3. Prepare and implement a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan for each regional trail	High - Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	2.4. Undertake regular data collection using track monitors, surveys or user interviews regarding use of regional trails. The basic purpose is to determine user numbers. Resources permitting, the information should then seek details of origin of user, activity undertaken, frequency of use, experience being sought and satisfaction level.	Medium - Low	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	2.5. Facilitate the sharing of knowledge relating to trail planning, construction and management between all land management agencies, local government authorities, key user groups and organisations within the region	Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management Support: External specialists engaged by the Committee of Management

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[46] IMBA (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Single Track*, IMBA, California, USA.

[47] Austroads (1999) *Part 14 Austroads: Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice – Bicycles*, Austroads, Australia.

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1. Explore the feasibility of completing identified 'missing links' on individual trails as noted in Section 5.7.	High - Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	3.2. Develop priority trailhead facilities (this may include parking, signage, activity specific facilities and/or toilets) as identified within the Joint Trail Development and Management Plan	Medium - Low	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	3.3. Prepare and implement Thematic Interpretation Strategies for each regional trail, to provide guidance for the creation of unique and memorable visitor experiences, provide a point of difference, and to aid in raising the profile of the regional trails.	Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	3.4. Collaborate with scientific institutions to monitor ongoing impacts of individual trails, and to improve management practices over the long-term new construction techniques and materials, with particular attention to sustainability	Medium - Low	Lead: Trail Committees of Management

	3.5. Support the further development and promotion of mountain biking as a core experience delivered by the regional hubs in the Barwon South West.
	
	     investigate the potential to develop a high quality long distance MTB trail within the Barwon South West Region
	
	     ensure that further development of the existing hubs is of a high standard and provides a diversity of riding experiences and associated infrastructure, (based on the IMBA trail construction and classification guidelines)[48], and are suitable for all levels of competition
	
	     investigate the potential to better integrate the MTB hubs, reinforce their combined regional role, whilst ensuring that each offers unique experiences
		High-Medium	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee
			
			 Support: Regional MTB Hub Committees of Management and other key stakeholders

[48] See: IMBA (2007) *Managing Mountain Biking: IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding*, USA and (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, USA.

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
3. Experience-led Trail Development (cont.)	3.6. Support development of new trail experiences in the Grampians	Medium	Lead: Southern Grampians Shire Council, Parks Victoria and other key stakeholders
	3.7. Expand the opportunities for use of regional trails by people with mobility impairments.	Medium	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee Support: Trail Committees of Management
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1. Prepare a brand position for regional trails in the Barwon South West Region.	Medium	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee
	4.2. Prepare and implement a Trail Marketing and Promotion Plan for each regional trail (the marketing and promotion plan should respond to the regional brand and thematic interpretation plan).	Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	4.3. Investigate the potential of developing a central trails website for the Barwon South West Region, that may be linked to local government authority websites. The website could include downloadable maps and trail notes, with links to services, tours etc.	Medium - Low	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee
	4.4. Develop a suite of quality images of the regional trail that can be used to promote the experiences on offer, and in particular, the point of difference with other trails within Victoria.	Medium - Low	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1. The preparation of feasibility plans for regional trails that identify the costs and benefits of the proposed trail, including the mechanisms for supporting the requirements for trail planning, development, management and ongoing maintenance.	High	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	5.2. The opportunities for joint resource and funding commitment be sought from partners.	High Ongoing	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee in association with the Trail Committees of Management
	5.3. Consideration be given to the incorporation of the Regional Trail Sub-committee to enable improved access to Commonwealth and State Government grants.	High	Lead: Regional Manager's Forum and Regional Trails Sub-committee
	5.4. The Trail Committees of Management assess the opportunities to generate a revenue stream from users of the regional trails consistent with relevant policies and management plans.	Medium	Lead: Trail Committees of Management
	5.5 Maintain the audit of potential regional trails for future reference, and as a planning tool (GIS information may also be useful to collect regarding routes).	Ongoing	Lead : Regional Trails Sub-committee
	5.6 Priority be given to improving the recruitment, training, and management of volunteers associated with trail planning, development and maintenance across the region.	High	Lead : Regional Trails Sub-committee

5.7 ACTION PLANS FOR THE PROPOSED REGIONAL TRAILS

Individual action plans have been prepared for each of the proposed regional trails.

The Ten Year Action Plan indicates:

recommended actions based on the five main strategies (as described in Section 5.1-5.5);

priority/timing for each recommended action, based on:

high priority;

moderate priority; and

low priority; and

responsibility for implementing the recommended actions.

Great Ocean Walk

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1. Work in collaboration with other land managers and key stakeholders to implement the recommendations outlined below under Strategy 3.	High	Lead: Colac Otway Shire Council and Parks Victoria Support: Coastal Management Committee, local user groups (e.g. Otway Ranges Walking Group)
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1. Implement the *GOW Strategic Directions Plan 2008-2014* prepared by Parks Victoria	High Ongoing	Lead: Parks Victoria
3. Innovative Trail Development	The following trail improvements, whilst consistent with the recommendations within the *GOW Strategic Directions Plan 2008-2014*, are aimed at improving the day use experience of the trail and surrounding Great Otway National Park 3.1. Investigate the possibility of developing day use loop trails within the Great Otway National Park hinterland, to cater for larger groups (e.g. schools), and day visitation (e.g. the 'Wild Dog' Spur area may be a possibility) A loop encompassing the first section of the GOW and connecting back to Apollo Bay may be a possibility.	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria
	3.2. Investigate the potential for future loop trails associated with the GOW, or elsewhere within the Great Otway National Park/Forest Park, to be shared use (e.g. bikes, walkers and/or horses)	Medium - Low	Lead: Parks Victoria
	3.3. Investigate the options for improving the start of the GOW, to facilitate use by day visitors and local residents, and enhance the experience for overnight GOW walkers	Medium - Low	Lead: Parks Victoria and Colac Otway Shire Council
	3.4. Investigate the potential for upgrading the short walk experiences and interpretation at the Twelve Apostles site in light of the proposed GOW extension to the site	High - Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria
	3.5. Upgrade vehicle access points to trailheads to cater for day use, and improved access for 'step-on-off' overnight walkers.	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
4. Effective and Co-ordinated marketing and Promotion	4.1. Ensure GOW is included in destination/regional level marketing and promotion (particularly the day use trail opportunities available) as a high quality trail within the Barwon South West Region	High	Lead: Geelong Otway Tourism, PV and GOW Partners
	4.2. Ensure premium day experiences associated with the GOW are promoted, and lever off the high profile of the walk and its proximity to the iconic Great Ocean Road (e.g. best short walks, or 'a taste of the GOW in a day')	Medium	Lead: Colac Otway Shire Council and Parks Victoria
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1. Implement the recommendations relating to funding and resources outlined in the *GOW Strategic Directions Plan 2008-2014*	High	Lead: Parks Victoria
	5.2. Investigate the potential to access external (federal and state) grants for implementing the recommendations primarily aimed at improving the trail experience for day visitors and local residents	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria and Colac Otway Shire Council, Corrangamite Shire Council Support: BSW Regional Trails Sub-committee

Surf Coast Walk

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1. Continue to work in partnership, via the existing agency working group, to implement the *Surf Coast Walk Feasibility Study*.	High	Lead: Great Ocean Road Coast Committee, Parks Victoria, DSE, Surf Coast Shire Council, Alcoa (all agencies form the agency working group)
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1. Investigate the potential of appointing a dedicated Surf Coast Walk staff person, as outlined in the *Surf Coast Walk Feasibility Study*.	High - Medium	Lead: Agency working group
3. Innovative Trail Development	3.1. Prepare and implement a thematic interpretation strategy.	High	Lead: Agency working group
	3.2. Upgrade/realign/construct the following sections of trail: • Bells Beach to Anglesea • Anglesea to Aireys Inlet • Aireys Inlet to Lorne Construction requirements and cost estimates for individual segments of this section are outlined in the *Surf Coast Walk Feasibility Study.*	High - Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria, DSE, Great Ocean Road Coast Committee Support: Agency working group
	3.3. Upgrade on-trail directional signage and markers, using a consistent style, form and colour. Signage design should be informed by a branding and marketing strategy, and be consistent with the intent of a thematic interpretation strategy.	High	Lead: Agency working group
	3.4. Install and/or upgrade trailheads at key locations along the trail, including within towns and settlements, major junctions or popular visitor locations (e.g. Bells Beach).	High	Lead: Agency working group
	3.5. Upgrade/realign/construct, as required, the entire length of the Surf Coast Walk, from Torquay to the Cumberland River, as funding becomes available. The trail development recommendations outlined in the *Surf Coast Feasibility Study* should provide the basis for works.	Medium	Lead: Agency working group

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
4. Effective and Co-ordinated marketing and Promotion	4.1. Update printed and electronic information for the Surf Coast Walk, to reflect current trail conditions. Walk maps and notes should continue to be updated as the trail updates commence.	High	Lead: Agency working group
	4.2. Prepare a branding and marketing strategy, to inform new trail signage	High-Medium	Lead: Agency working group
	4.3. Ensure that the Surf Coast Walk is included in destination/regional marketing as a high quality trail within the Barwon South West Region	High	Lead: Geelong Otway Tourism and Local tourism association Support: BSW Regional Trails Sub-committee
	4.4. Ensure that the Torquay, Lorne and Anglesea Visitor Information Centres are kept informed of trail works, to ensure that visitors receive up to date information	Medium	Lead: Agency working group Support: Land managers undertaken works
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1. Determine resources available to each partner agency to implement (and maintain) the works outlined in the *Surf Coast Walk Feasibility Study*, in particular, to upgrade/construct the section between Lorne and Anglesea	High	Lead: Agency working group
	5.2. Continue to seek external funding as recommended in the *Surf Coast Feasibility Study* (e.g. through Regional Development Australia, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Australian Tourism Development Program) to implement the recommendations of the study. In the absence of funding for the entire trail, the section between Torquay and Aireys Inlet should be implemented as a first priority.	High	Lead: Agency working group

Coast to Crater Rail Trail

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1. Appoint a 'Section 86' committee under the oversight of Corangamite Shire Council for the existing trail and proposed extension to Port Campbell (in liaison with the existing Trail Committee). Parks Victoria to retain responsibility for small sections of land in Pt Campbell. Management arrangements need to be clarified between Parks Victoria, VicRoads and Corangamite Shire with Parks Victoria being the logical choice as a future manager. (Refer *Coast to Crater Assessment Project*, Corangamite Shire Council, 2007).	High – Medium	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council and Parks Victoria in cooperation with Trail Committee
	1.2. Develop policy integrating Coast to Crater Rail Trail into municipal open space network.	Medium	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1. Prepare a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan to guide future development of trail. Integrate with $5.4 m strategic plan for proposed extension (refer *Coast to Crater Assessment Project*, Corangamite Shire Council, 2007).	High	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council (and Parks Victoria for Pt Campbell-Princetown extension) in cooperation with Trail Committee and Friends Group.
3. Innovative Trail Development	3.1. Progressively upgrade/complete trail from Camperdown to Timboon. Include additional off road sections from Camperdown to Lake Bullen Merri, completion of bridge works and trail construction near Timboon, and improved user facilities including trailheads, parking and signs.	High	Lead: Trail Committee in cooperation with Corangamite Shire Council
	3.2. Following completion of 3.1, develop Pt Campbell-Princetown section (with link to Great Ocean Walk), then Pt Campbell-Timboon link. The overall trail length would then be approx. 78 km.	Medium	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council with Parks Victoria support

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
4. Effective and Co-ordinated marketing and Promotion	4.1. Ensure Trail is included in state-wide rail trail promotion and regional level marketing and promotion, particularly the day use trail opportunities available and adjacent town facilities. Build on volcanic/Geopark/heritage features at Camperdown, forest/heritage features near Timboon, town attractions, and food/wine component. Promote use of train to Camperdown.	Medium	Lead: Shipwreck Coast Tourism with support from Corangamite Shire, Parks Victoria and Trail Management Committee
	4.2. Review 'Coast to Crater Rail Trail' branding for existing trail and proposed extension to Pt Campbell. Develop new name for Pt Campbell- Princetown coastal trail (and promote to maximise non-car travel).	Low	Lead: Trail Management Committee in consultation with Shipwreck Coast Tourism
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1. Seek grants to fund upgrading works and increase LGA resources devoted to planning and management.	High	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council in cooperation with Trail Committee
	5.2. Continue to seek in-kind contributions from local businesses.	Medium	Lead: Corangamite Shire Council in cooperation with Trail Committee

Old Beechy Rail Trail

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1. Retain management arrangement with Section 86 committee responsible under oversight of Colac-Otway Shire Council.	Ongoing	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council and Committee of Management
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1. Prepare a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan to guide future development of trail.	High	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council in cooperation with Trail Committee and Friends Group.
3. Innovative Trail Development	3.1. Upgrade existing trail surface/vegetation management to consistent standard.	High	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council and Trail Committee
	3.2. Investigate opportunities to develop additional off road alignments near Colac and north of Beech Forest.	High	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council in cooperation with Trail Committee and landowners.
	3.3. Review long-term opportunities to extend trail to Otway Fly, Triplet Falls, Lavers Hill and Crowes.	Low	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council with Parks Victoria, Bicycle Victoria and local communities
4. Effective and Co-ordinated marketing and Promotion	4.1. Ensure Trail is included in state-wide rail trail promotion, and regional level marketing and promotion, particularly the day-use trail opportunities. Build on forest and heritage features and facilities available along trail, e.g. at Gellibrand. Promote use of train to Colac, and on-road links to other trails and attractions	Medium	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council (via Project Control Group/Regional Manager's Forum)
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1. Seek grants to fund upgrading works.	High	Lead: Colac-Otway Shire Council
	5.2. Seek in-kind contributions from local businesses.	Medium	Lead: Trail Committee

Bellarine Rail Trail

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Continue the Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee, as the main governance structure for the trail.	High	Lead : Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee
	1.2 Ensure commitment to and continued implementation of the *Bellarine Rail Trail Improvement Plan* and *Vegetation Management Plan*	High	Lead: CoGG, Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Investigate the opportunities for a 'whole-of-trail' joint management and maintenance approach by extending CoGG responsibilities to the Drysdale – Queenscliff section of the trail with the involvement of a wider range of interested stakeholders including the Geelong Steam Preservation Society, Bellarine Peninsula Landcare, Friends of Bellarine Rail Trail, DSE, CFA and other interested parties	High- Medium	Lead: CoGG Support: Geelong Steam Preservation Society, Bellarine Peninsula Landcare, Friends of Bellarine Rail Trail, DSE, CFA
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Prepare and implement a thematic interpretation strategy for the Bellarine Rail Trail	High	Lead: Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee
	3.2 Continue the CoGG program of trail upgrading and maintenance including the Stations Project, installing toilets, interpretation, revegetation and sealing of some sections of the trail	High	Lead: CoGG Support : Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee
	3.3 Continue to investigate the feasibility for creating safe and convenient links to the South Geelong railway station, Kardinia Park, Barwon River trails and Geelong CBD/waterfront	Medium	Lead: CoGG
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1. Encourage the 'packaging' of rail trail experiences - combined marketing (e.g. tours, attractions along the trail, accommodation, dining)	High- Medium	Lead: CoGG through Geelong Otway Tourism and Tourism Association in conjunction with commercial operators
	4.2. Ensure that the Bellarine Rail Trail is marketed in conjunction with other rail trail experiences in Australia, including continuing to upgrade the trail description available on the Rail Trails Australia website, and any associated publications.	Medium	Lead: CoGG Support: Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Increase the resource commitment of the CoGG for the Bellarine Rail Trail (currently 1-2 hours per week to 2-3 days per week)	High	Lead: CoGG
	5.2 Continue to seek external funding (e.g. through Regional Development Australia, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Regional Partnerships Program, Australian Tourism Development Program) to implement the recommendations of the study.	High Ongoing	Lead : Bellarine Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Barwon River Trails and Parklands

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Continue implementation of the Barwon River Trails through the *Geelong Management Plan 2006*, *CoGG Barwon River Land Use and Open Space Corridor Plan 2003*, *Barwon River Parklands Project* and other relevant management plans	High	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Other partners including CoGG, DSE
	1.2 Consider the potential benefits of formalising the current management arrangements with the formation of a Barwon River Trails Working Group, including representatives from all land managers and major stakeholders.	High	Lead: Parks Victoria, CoGG, Corangamite Shire Council, DSE/Parks Victoria
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Strengthen the mechanisms for co-ordination of trail planning, development, management and maintenance along the Barwon River Trails through the preparation of a Joint Trail and Marketing Plan	High	Lead: Barwon River Trails Working Group
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Investigate the potential to extend the Barwon River Trail south from Breakwater Road to the historic aqueduct and bridge area in the short term	High	Lead: Parks Victoria, CoGG Support : Barwon River Trails Working Group
	3.2 Upgrade the shared trail along the Waurn Ponds Creek and continue planning for a link via Rosack Drive to allow extension of the trail along Armstrong Creek with the progressive staging of the new residential development	Medium	Lead: CoGG Support : Barwon River Trails Working Group
	3.3 Develop a bike connection between the Barwon River Trail to the Bellarine Rail Trail to the Geelong waterfront, possibly using Swanston Street	High - Medium	Lead : VicRoads and CoGG
	3.4 Upgrade river access and egress points for kayaking and canoeing	Low	Lead : Parks Victoria Support : Barwon River Trails Working Group
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Promote kayaking and canoeing opportunities in the Barwon River Parklands with upgrading of the access and egress points	Low	Lead: Parks Victoria
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Continue to seek external funding to implement the recommendations of the study.	High Ongoing	Lead : Barwon River Trails Working Group

Queenscliff to Barwon Heads Coastal Trail

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Continue the existing trail management partnership, and investigate the need to, and options for formalising the partnership (e.g. via an MOU, outlining each partners responsibility)	High	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 A co-ordinated approach be taken to the future planning, development and management of the proposed Queenscliff – Barwon Heads coastal trail with the involvement of the CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe, Barwon Coast Committee of Management and other stakeholders, through the development and implementation of a Joint Trail Develop and Management Plan	High	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management Support: Other key stakeholders including the Friends of Buckley Park
	2.2 Consider engaging with other key stakeholders in relation to trail development, management and promotion (e.g. private landowners, commercial operators and local businesses)	Medium	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Feasibility investigations be undertaken into the options for the development of a shared trail between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove, located behind the dunes and consistent with the *Buckley Reserve Management Plan*	High	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management Support: DSE, Friends of Buckley Park
	3.2 Upgrading of the bike lane along Shell Road be undertaken to improve the safety for cyclists using this route (note the bike land could provide a safe cycle loop option if the proposed shared trail is developed behind the dunes between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove)	High	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1. Encourage the 'packaging' of coastal trail experiences - combined marketing (e.g. tours, attractions along the trail, local shops, accommodation, dining etc.)	Low (depends on timing of works)	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe, Barwon Coast Committee of Management and local tourism association
	4.2. Ensure that trail is promoted to target markets that may use the Sorrento – Queenscliff ferry route to access the trail	Low (depends on timing of works)	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Consider formalising the funding/resource responsibilities for trail development and management/maintenance via an MOU or similar agreement	High	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management
	5.2 Continue to seek external funding (e.g. through Regional Development Australia, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Australian Tourism Development Program) to implement the recommendations of the study.	High Ongoing	Lead: CoGG, Borough of Queenscliffe and Barwon Coast Committee of Management

Geelong Waterfront and Regional Trail Connections

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 CoGG continue to manage the overall planning, development and management of the trail opportunities within the Geelong waterfront and connections to regional trails.	High Ongoing	Lead: CoGG
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 The CoGG to continue to work with VicRoads to investigate the feasibility options for upgrading links between the Geelong waterfront and proposed regional trails	High	Lead: CoGG and VicRoads
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Continue to upgrade, extend and enhance the Geelong waterfront including upgrading of trails as identified in CoGG strategic plans and master plans	High	Lead: CoGG
	3.2 Continue to investigate and develop the off-road trails and on-road trails to the northern shore of Corio Bay in line with the CoGG Cycle Strategy	High-Medium	Lead: CoGG
	3.3 Continue to investigate the potential for a cycle and pedestrian bridge over the Barwon River near Moorabool Street	High-Medium	Lead: CoGG, VicRoads
	3.4 Develop and implement a Thematic Interpretation Strategy (incorporating existing themes) for the Geelong Waterfront and associated trails	High-Medium	Lead: CoGG
	3.5 Install trail directional signage at new trail linkages as required, in line with the CoGG standards and design guidelines for signage	Medium	Lead: CoGG
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Continue to promote the Geelong waterfront and regional trails as a 'package' (e.g. in a Geelong walking and cycling brochure and as a link on the Council website), and update regularly	Medium Ongoing	Lead: CoGG
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Continue to seek external funding (e.g. through Regional Development Australia, Sport and Recreation Victoria, Australian Tourism Development Program) to implement the recommendations of the study.	High	Lead: CoGG

Great South West Walk

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Maintain the existing management model – formalise with an MOU setting out responsibilities of the partners?	High	Lead: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Support Glenelg Council in the implementation of various strategies that support the GSWW including development of the surrounds of the Maritime Centre, multi-use trail facilities within the township and nearby surrounds.	High- Medium	Lead: Glenelg Council Support: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Engage professional assistance in the development of the GSWW brand, experience, marketing and thematic interpretation strategy	High	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Friends of the GSWW and Glenelg Shire Council
	3.2 Focus on the high value, eastern end of the trail between Bridgewater Lakes and Portland with a view to improvements in camp infrastructure, trailhead facilities, trail construction and trail marking per the current PV funding application (if successful) or other funding as necessary.	High- Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria
	3.3 Ensure standards of infrastructure of GSWW portion of the bundle match the quality of the existing products as funding permits.	High- Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Friends of the GSWW
	3.4 Explore promotion of the Glenelg River as a separate regional trail for canoeists	High- Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Discovery Coast Tourism
	3.5 Investigate opportunities to develop a horse riding trail through the Cobboboonee National Park, that parallels and uses the campsites along the GSWW	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Friends of the GSWW
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Encourage the development of a bundled product at Nelson that incorporates existing products (river cruise and caves) with the GSWW	High- Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Discovery Coast Tourism
	4.2 Explore the possibility of a multi-modal product using a portion of the GSWW, the Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail and the proposed horse-riding trail in the Cobboboonee National Park.	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW
	4.3 Resolve confusion between the GSWW route and related short walks/loops, perhaps promoting fewer of the latter whilst developing a core few to a very high standard.	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Explore fee for service opportunities by Friends group or a commercial operator to support users of the GSWW with trip planning, logistics, etc	Medium	Lead: Friends of the GSWW Support: Parks Victoria and the Glenelg Shire Council
	5.2 Investigate the opportunities for trail merchandising, with proceeds contributing to the ongoing maintenance of the trail	Moderate-low	Lead: Parks Victoria and the Friends of the GSWW

Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail (proposed)

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Continue to implement recommendations of the Lower Glenelg National Park Management Plan	On-going	Lead: Parks Victoria
	1.2 Promote the Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail as a stand alone experience from the Great South West Walk	High	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Discovery Coast Tourism
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Support development of a strategic plan/business feasibility study of the trail to determine the potential for/limitations to growth in the current market.	High	Lead: Discovery Coast Tourism Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Parks Victoria
	2.2 Examine ways to better promote the existing facilities to extend current use levels including greater promotion of canoe touring opportunities as an adjunct to the GSWW.	High	Lead: Discovery Coast Tourism Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Parks Victoria, Friends of the GSWW
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Encourage development of a high end trail product	Medium	Lead: Discovery Coast Tourism Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Parks Victoria
	4.2 Encourage the development of a bundled product at Nelson that incorporates existing products (river cruise and caves) with the Glenelg River Canoe and Kayak Trail	Medium	Lead: Discovery Coast Tourism Support: Glenelg Shire Council and Parks Victoria
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Explore opportunities to use current revenues from campsite hire for the development of the proposed trail	High	Lead: Parks Victoria

Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Maintain the existing trail management structure (MOU).	High	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Engage professional assistance in the development of the PFWRT brand, experience, marketing and thematic interpretation strategy	High	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management Support: Other key stakeholders
	3.2 Focus initial energies beyond the construction phase on the development of trailheads (including parking, signage and other facilities)	High- Medium	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management
	3.3 Investigate extending the trail to Tower Hill in the future	Medium	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Ensure that the Warrnambool Rail Trail is marketed in conjunction with other rail trail experiences in Australia, including continuing to upgrade the trail description available on the Rail Trails Australia website, and any associated publications.	Medium	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Outline agreed funding contributions for the development, management and maintenance of the trail that can be sourced internally by the partners	High- Medium	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management
	5.2. Investigate external funding opportunities	High- Medium	Lead: PFWRT Committee of Management

Warrnambool Foreshore Promenade

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Maintain the existing trail management structure	Ongoing	Lead: Warrnambool City Council
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Develop a thematic interpretation strategy for the City with a view that the first stage of its roll out might focus on the Promenade	Medium	Lead: Warrnambool City Council
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 There is scope to strengthen linkages from the Promenade to the CBD through a range of urban design treatments, signage and/or expanded/improved mapping indicating available links	Medium	Lead: Warrnambool City Council

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
	3.2 Construct duplication of trail section between Warrambool Yacht Club and Warrambool Surf Club	High	Lead: Warrnambool City Council
	3.3 Strengthen linkages with the Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail	Medium	Lead: Warrnambool City Council
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Continue existing marketing and promotional efforts	Ongoing	Lead: Warrnambool City Council
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5.1 Continue funding support for the maintenance and upgrading of the trail.	High	Lead: Warrnambool City Council

Wild Grampians Walk (Proposed)

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1. Parks Victoria to continue to lead the drive for the creation of this trail.	High	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Southern Grampians Shire
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Complete WGW feasibility investigations (PV)	High	Lead: Parks Victoria
	2.2 Commence feasibility and planning investigations for Dunkeld to NP portion of the WGW (SGS)	High - Medium	Lead: Southern Grampians Shire
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Ensure that the feasibility study for the project focuses on the experiences to be delivered and that these become the criteria for decision making	High	Lead: Parks Victoria
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Preparation of the Marketing Plan	Medium	Lead: Parks Victoria
5. Increased Funding and Resources	5. Seek funding support for the development of the trail.	High	Lead: Parks Victoria Support: Southern Grampians Shire Council

Regional MTB Hubs

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
1. Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	1.1 Utilise the proposed Regional Trails Sub-committee as a means to communicate and facilitate coordination between the individual MTB hub land managers	High	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee Support : Land managers with involvement of users
2. Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	2.1 Prepare and implement MTB Hub Development and Management Plans[49] for each regional hub, which; have joint ownership by the relevant partners; provide a 'blue-print' for the future development of the hub (e.g. required upgrades, new sections and loops, required infrastructure to meet the needs of competition, indicative cost estimates for required works, interpretation and signage); outline the tasks and responsibilities of each of the partners required to implement the Plan; and include an agreed maintenance and environmental monitoring regime.	High	Lead: Land Managers Support: Key stakeholders and users
	2.1 Ensure consistency in the standard of trail construction and maintenance across the three hubs, and the proposed Grampians hub (e.g. based on the IMBA trail construction and classification guidelines)	High	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee and Land Managers Support: Local/state MTB organisations
	2.2 Ensure consistency in the difficulty classification of trails and obstacles, using the IMBA difficulty rating system	High	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee and Land Managers Support: Local/state MTB organisations
3. Experience-led Trail Development	3.1 Ensure that further development of the existing hubs is of a high standard and provides a diversity of riding experiences and associated infrastructure, (based on the IMBA trail development and classification guidelines)[50], and are suitable for all skill levels. Development opportunities include: • ensuring that all hubs have quality trailhead facilities, including signage, trail map and markers, toilets, parking and bike wash down facilities • investigate the potential for developing an 'iconic' long distance MTB trail in the Great Otway National Park and/or Forrest Park, with the opportunity to develop 'bike barn' accommodation along its length, as outlined in *Victoria's Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012*	High	Lead: Land Managers Support: Key stakeholders

[49] Note: The regional MTB hubs already have some form of planning and/concept. These may include all of the information recommended to be included in the MTB Hub Development and Management Plans, however, it is likely that existing documentation will need to be updated and expanded as a means of improving coordination.

[50] See: IMBA (2007) *Managing Mountain Biking: IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding*, USA and (2004) *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, USA.

Strategy	Recommended Actions	Priority	Responsibility
3. Experience-led Trail Development (cont.)	3.2 Enhancing the existing MTB hubs, including: • expanding the scope of experiences available in the Anglesea Heath area, through the development of a cross country trail network, linked to the existing Bike Park, as described in the Concept Plan • continued upgrading of the You Yangs MTB hub in response to growing use and significance at the national and State level for events with investigation into the feasibility of providing a direct trail link between Little River railway station and the park through negotiation with existing landowners • Continued development of trail links and infrastructure at the Forrest MTB hub to support established and future events and continued promotional support of the 'ride Forrest' website and other promotional materials	High - Medium	Lead: Land Managers Support: Key stakeholders and users
	3.3 Support the planning, including feasibility planning, site selection, environmental impact assessment, brand development and marketing materials, and trail and facilities design, documentation and construction of the proposed Grampians MTB	Medium	Lead: Southern Grampians Shire Council, Parks Victoria Support: Local/regional MTB organisations
	3.4 Investigate the potential to develop a high quality long distance MTB trail within the Barwon South West Region. The trail should be developed in a landscape representative of the region, provide a unique nature-based experience, and be challenging for a range of skill levels. Note: IMBA Epics are generally developed as joint partnerships between local MTB clubs/enthusiast and land managers/LGA's	Medium - Low	Lead: Land Managers, local MTB club/LGA/land management agency Support: IMBA Australia (MTB Australia) and Regional Trails Sub-committee
4. Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	4.1 Develop a regional MTB trail map, including scaled and topographic information of each hubs trail network and on-site facilities, other quality MTB/cycling trails in the region (e.g. the rail trails may be included)	High-Medium	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee Support: Land Managers
	4.2 Continued use of IMBA Code of Conduct	On-Going	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee Support: Land Managers, user groups
	4.3 Pursue opportunities for integrated marketing and promotion of the regional MTB's (as is being done now with Park's Victoria's 'Getting Dirty' brochure which promotes the You Yangs and Forrest mountain bike trails)	High-Medium	Lead: Regional Trails Sub-committee

5.8   REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL TRAILS MASTER PLAN

The Barwon South West Regional Trails Master Plan is a document to help guide the development of existing and proposed regional trails over the next 10 years. It should be seen as a working document that can be altered and improved as further information and resource opportunities become available.

The Master Plan should be reviewed through:

- A brief assessment of what has been achieved in the implementation of the Master Plan on an annual basis by the proposed Regional Trails Sub-Committee.

- A more intensive 'internal' review of the implementation of the Master Plan at the end of Year 3, Year 6 and Year 9 by the proposed Regional Trails Sub-Committee.

- A comprehensive review of the Master Plan within 10 years by an 'outside' party on behalf of the Regional Trails Sub-Committee that utilises the above documented review evaluations to determine the scope and focus of the major review.