

Tracks and Trails

5th Biennial National Conference

Draft Program and Abstracts (last updated 11 December, 2007)

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Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 2:00-3:30pm

Theme: On your bike

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 2:00-3:30pm

Theme: The big picture

Trails over the South Australian Horizon

*Chris Halstead, Program Leader Trails, Visitor Management Branch
Department for Environment and Heritage, SA*

Abstract:

The South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) is responsible for setting the future direction for DEH managed trails. Trail strategic initiatives have been developed to establish realistic criteria and objectives for the sustainable management of some 9000 kilometres of trails covering South Australia's rich and varied landscapes.

Directions set by the South Australian Government State Strategic plan are reflected in the DEH Corporate plan. The DEH Corporate plan aspires to contribute to prosperity for South Australia that is sustainable in our rapidly changing world and contribute to a society that values, conserves and invests in its rich heritage and diverse natural environments.

Two trail strategic plans have recently been developed: the DEH Trail Strategy 2007 - 2012 On Track, a Trail Strategy for the South Australia Reserve Network and the Heysen Trail Strategic Plan 2007 - 2012.

Through staff and stakeholder workshops important challenges were identified for the DEH trail network and reflected in the development of the strategies.

Reflecting these challenges, DEH is seeking to establish a sustainable network of excellent (and popular) peri-urban, regional and remote trails that are in the right place, are well designed, provide an appropriate level of challenge to the user and are safe and accessible to a range of visitors.

Trail planning and design is fundamental to the strategies for the trail network. Planning will reflect reserve management objectives, protect biodiversity, and will encourage appreciation and responsible use of DEH reserves. DEH will actively engage with stakeholders and other trail management agencies to develop trail experiences that reflect changing tourism and recreational trends. It will promote trails and trail use to encourage active lifestyles and make strong links between trails and its Healthy Parks Healthy People Program.

Future Investment and maintenance resources will be directed to key DEH trails that showcase South Australia's unique and spectacular landscapes identified through the planning process. Key trails will be designed and promoted to encourage increased use by South Australians and visitors and will contribute to trail-based tourism seeking to boost economic growth to the regions and the South Australian community.

Work has commenced on the implementation of these strategies backed up by additional funding of \$5 million over five years. Funding has enabled the development of trail master plans for the Heysen Trail and four key reserves directing significant investment in trail upgrades across the State.

Biography:

Employed as Program Leader Trails within the Visitor Management Branch of the South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage, Chris has been in this relatively new position since its inception in June 2006.

Chris has been involved in conservation and park management since graduating from the University of South Australia in 1987. Previous roles have included managing parks on Kangaroo Island, Fleurieu Peninsula and the Adelaide Hills and he spent three years developing the States' Marine Park program.

Recreational interests include sea kayaking, water sports, walking the states trails and watching the family grow.



Irish Trails 2020 Vision

*Cormac MacDonnell, Executive Officer
Irish Sports Council, Ireland*

Abstract:

This presentation outlines the (Irish) National Trails Office implementation of the Irish Trails 2020 Vision – warts and all!

Biography:

TBA



Fail to plan strategically and you plan to fail

*Hugh Maclean, Recreation Development Officer - Trails
Department of Sport and Recreation (Western Australia)*

Abstract:

In the context of trail planning, development and management it is increasingly difficult to adopt an isolationist (single trail) position. At all levels of sustainability – environmental, social, and most of all economic - a strategic view is essential for initiation, completion and ongoing viability of trails. Adjacent trails with their related networks – on the ground, - and in the community - are important. Whilst local planning may be adequate on its own, if strategic issues on a regional or subregional scale are addressed competently overall higher standards and outcomes will be achieved. “Joined up” strategies clearly demonstrate economies of scale and ongoing success. Paying lip service to the development of strategic planning and developing networks is no longer enough.

Additionally – at a state and national level – if no strategic plan is established, planning, funding, development, and management of trails remains ad hoc, perhaps sporadic, and of reduced amenity relative to other competing projects of national significance.

Biography:

Hugh Maclean has extensive experience both in Australia and the UK in planning for capital development, governance, and experiential projects in community, and government trails contexts. As the Trails Consultant in the Department of Sport and Recreation (WA) Hugh currently oversees the development of a “Strategy for Recreational Tracks and trails in WA” and also manages an annual Lotterywest Trails Grant Program (\$750,000). He has previously supervised a community facilities fund of \$8million annually and as an applicant has facilitated achievement of significant capital

development and community projects. Work experience has been in the community, government, and private sectors both in the UK and Australia.



Implementing the Active Trails Strategy

Darryl Low Choy

Chair, Regional Landscape and Open Space Advisory Committee

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 2:00–3:30pm

Theme: Great trail – but it's a bit rough

Track Construction: Do Common Perspectives of Land Managers meet reality?

Shaun Elwood, Project Manager, Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project

Tim Lanyon, Project Planning Officer, Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment and Climate Change

Abstract:

In the late 19th century a significant network of walking tracks were constructed in the cliff escarpment and canyon country of the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, to entice tourists to the area and as a feature of difference amongst competing local townships. In the intervening 100 years the tracks have seen differing management 'ownership' and maintenance regimes and are utilised as a strong focus for regional and domestic tourism marketing.

In 2005 a four year project, The Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project, was established by the NSW Government to upgrade a range of heritage and high profile walking tracks within the Blue Mountains National Park.

This project has included; the re-construction of heritage tracks carved into sandstone cliff faces; detailed and time-consuming upgrades of significantly deteriorated natural surface tracks; and the re-emergence of the need to ensure that walking track construction and management is a professional skill that requires an investment in development and professional recognition amongst land managers.

A range of specific issues which have relevance to many track development and management projects have had to be addressed by the Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project, these include;

- How sustainable is long term track management in natural environments where criteria for material use and construction methods is dominated by a demand for 'traditional heritage value sensitive methods'?- but the demands of visitor risk management, use levels and ongoing maintenance and management costs are increasing?
- How sustainable is the capacity of skilled personnel and contractors to undertake works in the very specific fields of heritage and high standard walking track construction?
- What is the effect of a commonly perception amongst land managers that 'anyone' can build and maintain a walking track? Or is this view altering?
- Do traditional perceptions of bushwalking activity dominate track management? Are these perceptions relevant today?

Biography:

Shaun Elwood is the Project Manager for the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project. Shaun has previous wide experience in the management, marketing and development of walking tracks in New Zealand, including the renowned Great Walks network through to remote backcountry tracks and associated facilities.

Tim Lanyon is a project Planning Officer with the Blue Mountains Walking Tracks Project. Tim has held a range of previous Ranger positions with the NSW NPWS dealing with both high use urban interface track and visitor facility issues and visitor management in more dispersed and remote communities.



Track design: Knowing your country

*Neil Kershaw, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, QLD
Mathew Widt*

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Smart Track Design – Demonstration of Terrain Modelling techniques to design good tracks in difficult places

*Trevor Butler, Director, Frame Group Ltd, New Zealand
Drew Kenny, Senior Consultant, Frame Group Ltd, New Zealand*

Abstract:

The use of computer based terrain modelling to assist in the geometric design of tracks and trails on difficult topography has been pioneered by Frame Group over the past four years. Track route design is often limited by the need to minimise environmental and visual impact as well as meet geometric standards and minimisation of construction costs. Through the use of simple survey methods and simple road design software, better design solutions for accessible tracks and steps are being found. Using a case study, the presentation will demonstrate how the design procedures have been used to provide an accessible trail to an iconic vantage point and how ergonomically designed steps have been installed in a way that minimises impact on the key values of the site.

Biography:

Trevor Butler leads a team of consultants that specialise in track development including work on several iconic sites throughout NZ. He has a BE(Hons) Civil and an MBA and has been made a Fellow of IPENZ in recognition of his work in the application of design techniques to the development of structures and tracks in parks. He has presented several workshops on the planning and construction of tracks and structures on tracks and trails. The presentation will be co-presented by Drew Kenny, Senior Consultant, Frame Group.

The use of computer-based terrain modelling to assist in the geometric design of tracks and trails on difficult topography has been pioneered by Frame Group over the past four years. Track route design is often limited by the need to minimise environmental and visual impact as well as meet geometric standards and minimisation of construction costs. Through the use of simple survey methods and simple road design software, better design solutions for accessible tracks and steps are being found. Using a case study, the presentation will demonstrate how the design procedures have been used to provide an accessible trail to an iconic vantage point and how ergonomically designed steps have been installed in a way that minimises impact on the key values of the site.



Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:15pm

Theme: On your bike

Time to get dirty – practical MTB session

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:15pm

Theme: Trails to healthy communities

Physical activity levels during an Expedition on the Bibbulmun Track

*Mal Gilbey, Senior Lecturer in Outdoor Education, School of Health Sciences
The University of Notre Dame*

Abstract:

Physical activity is recognised as one of the most important factors for developing and maintaining good health (Baumann, Bellew, Vita, Brown & Owen, 2002), however levels of physical activity have been steadily declining among adults over recent years (McCormack, Milligan, Giles-Corti, & Clarkson, 2003). Among children, baseline levels of physical activity of Western Australian children and adolescents were established by the WA CAPANS study conducted in 2003 (Hands, Parker, Glasson, Brinkman, & Read, 2004b). We now have information about children's physical activity levels for 7- 16 year olds. When measured by pedometer, physical activity levels for adolescent children during the school week averaged at 13,741 steps per day for boys and 11,160 steps per day for girls (Hands, Parker, Glasson, Brinkman & Read, 2004). The survey also reported that physical activity levels started to fall as the children entered their secondary school phase. This drop occurred earlier for females at 12.8 years of ages and at 14.3 years of age for males (Hands, Parker, Glasson, Brinkman & Read, 2004a).

In the CAPANS study (Hands, Parker, Glasson, Brinkman & Read, 2004) physical activity levels were measured during a typical school week and weekend. As adolescents spend a significant portion of their life attending school, school based physical activity programs are important in supporting the foundation of active lifelong habits. However, competing curriculum results in limited time for physical activity opportunities for students. Further, not all school weeks are typical. Scotch College in Perth, WA, undertook to organise an expedition over the 5 years that students were in boarding at the college from Year 8 to Year 12, which results each year in the completion of 200 plus kilometres of the 1000 plus kilometres of the Bibbulmun Track until it is completed in Year 12. Such Expeditions enable teachers to have greater control of the physical activity levels of participants over the entire programme, and therefore offer a unique opportunity to motivate and enhance the development of healthy habits. It is probable that children's physical activity levels will differ from a typical school week.

To date, no robust research has been undertaken to establish a relationship between participation in outdoor activities, physical activity levels and forming the habit of subsequently leading an active lifestyle. However, there is ample circumstantial evidence and a chain of logical inferences that, even when the engendering of active lifestyles is not the primary purpose of the activity, it is more likely to result in more active lifestyles than if the activity had not taken place. There is also evidence demonstrating the appeal of outdoor activities and other benefits such as self-concept, (Ewert, 1983) (and therefore their potential for attracting young people to become more active). Unfortunately these

studies do not provide robust evidence of an enduring effect on lifestyle (McDonald, 1994), nor the immediate benefits of increased physical activity. However, this may be more a question of whether programmes were specifically designed to achieve this.

A small pilot study (n=86) undertaken in 2006/07 determined that the mean daily steps taken by 14-year-old boys during a Bibbulmun Track Expedition week was 23,151, which is 62% greater than in the same aged cohort in the CAPANS study.

Biography:

TBA



Healthy Parks Healthy People – trails connecting parks to people

*Scott Crabtree
Parks Victoria*

Abstract:

Parks Victoria's Healthy Parks Healthy People campaign aims to raise awareness of the importance of the Victorian parks and waterways system by establishing the link between a healthy environment and a healthy community.

Healthy Parks Healthy People is recognised nationally and internationally and recently adopted by other park agencies across Australia and around the world. Partnerships have been developed with peak health bodies including Asthma Victoria, the National Heart Foundation, Arthritis Victoria, the Department of Human Services and Maternal and Child Health Services.

The campaign has a number of elements, including promotions in General Practitioners surgeries, pram strolling for new mums, cycling for families, guided walks with Asthma and Arthritis Victoria self-help groups and is being integrated into the day to day management of Parks Victoria.

Trails are an integral part of Healthy Parks Healthy People and by forming relationships with groups such as Bushwalking Victoria, Mountain Bike Australia, Local Government and tourism operators, Parks Victoria has been able to provide a diverse range of recreation experiences in both Metropolitan and Regional areas.

Some recent trail successes include:

- Mountain Bike opportunities at Lysterfield Park and You Yangs Regional Park.
- The Metropolitan Trail Network – following the strategic document Linking People and Spaces (2002) Parks Victoria has worked with Local Government to plan and begin implementing a 1200km shared trail network across Metropolitan Melbourne.
- The Great Ocean Walk – a long distance walk along Victoria's spectacular southern coastline that has become one of Victoria's iconic trails.

This paper/presentation will expand on the success of Healthy Parks Healthy People and the diverse trail experiences Parks Victoria offers from Metropolitan Melbourne to the wild of Victoria's wilderness.

Biography:

Scott Crabtree has over 10 years park management experience and is currently working as a Recreation Planner for Parks Victoria. Scott biggest achievement to date is project managing the "Great Ocean Walk", which has become one of Victoria's iconic trails and he continues to have strategic input into the next great experience in Victoria's outdoors.



Presentation

Additional speaker TBA

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:15pm

Theme: Managing user conflict

Avoiding user conflict with bookings and reservation systems

Carla Jellum, Master of Science in Resource Management student, Central Washington University, USA.

Karl Lillquist, Professor of Geography, Central Washington University, USA.

Abstract:

Increasing demand for mountain bike use and resulting conflict between user groups requires land management agencies to develop and test new management strategies.

During summer 2006, a U.S. Forest Service recreation policy was evaluated which allows seasonal mountain bike access on alternate calendar days on the Middle Fork Trail in the Snoqualmie River watershed of Washington State's Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Evaluation of conflicts between hikers, mountain bikers, and stock users was conducted through administration of an on-site exit questionnaire to 233 trail users.

Chi-square analysis suggests some conflict occurrence between hikers and bikers toward biker etiquette and speed, and between odd and even days and the width of trail and for etiquette. However, over 90% of respondents felt safe, had a high level of enjoyment, and experienced positive interactions with other trail users.

This research provides insight into the success of a temporal separation policy and has potential application as a conflict management strategy for many recreation endeavours.

Biography:

Carla Jellum - TBA

Karl Lillquist – TBA



Minimising Pedestrian-Cyclist Conflict on Paths

Fiona MacColl, Executive Officer

Australian Bicycle Council

Abstract:

Increasing conflict between users on pathways, which is self defeating when we are trying to increase the use of expensive infrastructure and make cycling an easy and accessible modal option.

Presentation provides a series of tools to minimise the conflict before it arises:

1. Is the path the problem?
2. Integrated policy, strategy and planning
3. Urban design and place making

4. Infrastructure planning
5. Infrastructure design
6. Infrastructure construction and maintenance
7. Information
8. Education and awareness-raising
9. Regulation and enforcement
10. Travel behaviour Change
11. Resources

Biography:

Fiona is a landscape architect and recreation planner with 18 years experience in private industry and local government within NSW. Fiona has recently been appointed the Executive Officer to the Australian Bicycle Council. The ABC is a secretariat established to facilitate and advocate for increased cycling throughout Australia as both a recreation and a transport option.



Mountain biking in an urban oasis: Successful techniques in community engagement at Manly Dam, Sydney

*Nicole McVicar, Park Ranger/Supervisor, Manly Dam
Warringah Council, Sydney, NSW*

Abstract:

Manly Dam is a 380ha bushland reserve located on Sydney's northern beaches, 15 km from Sydney CBD. This Crown Reserve is managed by Warringah Council for public recreation and conservation. Mountain biking at Manly Dam exploded in the mid 1990s, with riders regularly accessing the entire walking track system. The existing Plan of Management made no recommendations for prohibition. There were many environmental and user conflict problems due to unmanaged mountain biking in the park and it became evident that proactive resource management was required. This philosophy was incorporated into the new 1998 Plan of Management. In 2000 a more acceptable new route through the park was designed in order to lure riders off walking tracks. This route used pre-existing trails primarily on the periphery of the reserve to minimise damage to core bushland. This was highly successful and the new route was attractive to bikers of varying abilities. It was during this time that volunteer trail maintenance days were initiated to engage the biking community in the management of the trail.

A recent survey in 2005 counted 250 riders on an average weekend day. The number is growing and park management techniques at Manly Dam have evolved to effectively manage this growth, primarily in terms of rider- Park Management relations. A generic email mtbiketrailinfo@warringah.nsw.gov.au is used to communicate wet weather closures, location of track maintenance works, and recruit volunteers for the trail maintenance program. This immediate communication, combined with temporary "trail closed" signage and ranger presence has resulted in high rates of compliance with closures. The system has fostered respect between the riders and Park Management as individuals clearly appreciate being informed of any changes before they arrive at the park.

The volunteer program been has refined. On these days individual riders and groups, under direct guidance from park staff address jobs that are labour intensive and relatively simple, however greatly improve the condition of the trail.

The benefits to the community and Park Management from community engagement are immense. The partnership and effective communication facilitates respect, encourages self-policing on the trail, it has become a forum for new ideas and has balanced out the opposition from concerned community groups. The volunteer days provide a willing and free labour force, and users becoming better informed about their impact on the land.

It is envisaged that this model of community engagement could be adapted to manage mountain biking in other natural areas inside and outside the Warringah LGA.

Biography:

Nicole McVicar is a Park Ranger at Manly dam, Warringah Council. Nicole developed the bike email system and manages the mountain bike volunteer program. Nicole is also a keen mountain biker in her spare time. Having worked in natural resource and park management for five years, her primary interest is preservation and rehabilitation of native bushland.



Day: Tuesday 11 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:15pm

Theme: Great trail – but it's a bit rough

Developing a standard classification system for walking trails

Rosalie Bent, Project Officer

Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria

Abstract:

Walking is the easiest physical activity for Victorians to undertake and is the most popular physical activity undertaken in Victoria's parks and forests. Victoria has more than 2,000 trails with a total length of some 8,000 kilometres. These walks vary from short walks of a few hundred metres to long-distance trails that take many days to traverse.

Victoria's network of walking trails range across diverse landscapes and environments and provide for a great variety of experiences.

The Walking Trails Classification and Improvement Project is funded under Go For Your Life, which is a whole-of-government initiative aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians through healthy eating and increased participation in physical activity. Walking is seen as an inexpensive activity that can be undertaken by the majority of the population in a variety of settings. The Walking Trails Classification and Improvement Project is funded for 4 years and is coordinated through DSE.

There are two parts to the project:

1. Developing a standard classification system for walking trails across Victoria
2. Facilitating upgrades to selected forest walking trails.

Biography:

Rosalie Bent is the Project Officer for the Walking Trails Classification and Improvement Project at the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) in Melbourne. Rosalie joined DSE in 2002 and spent 4 years working in the area of alpine resort management and the promotion of Victoria's alpine resorts as year round destinations.

Prior to 2002, Rosalie worked in the communications field and in the tourism industry. She lectured at La Trobe University in Melbourne and at Mt Buller in the field of resort management, heritage tourism and related fields from 1996-2000.



Standardised Track Grading

Garry McDougall, Author, NSW Heritage Walks; Co-Initiator, Bicentennial Great North Walk, Sydney

Abstract:

The multiplicity of grading systems by trackmakers, recreational clubs and individuals is a confusing situation. The lack of standardised track grading in Australia causes anxiety for recreationalists, particularly new and inexperienced users, dissuading them from participation.

A national or international grading system is now being developed under the name, IWAS, International Track Assessment System. It is based on the physical qualities of track only, regardless of aesthetic considerations.

The process of development, adoption, usage and propagation of the standardised track grading is the responsibility and domain of the recreational users, not the professionals.

Recreational professionals nevertheless have an opportunity to assist in this development in the following ways:

- initiating an Australian (perhaps international) forum
- providing valuable information that encourages IWASCEs development supporting its broad adoption
- financial support for internet and other information sources that track assessment results.

The advantages for Professionals and various Government Authorities are:

- the ability to enmesh IWAS with existing professional trackmaking standards and designs
- trackmakers usage of IWAS information available on the net
- developing positive relationships with recreational users
- boosting the attractiveness of recreational walking
- advancing various public policy objectives in health, safety and professional leadership at a low cost.

Biography:

- Author of IWAS, I/national Walks Assessment System. The Great North Walk, New South Wales Heritage Walks and a 'photo-novel', Belonging.
- Co-creator of the Official Bicentennial Project, The Great North Walk.
- Exhibiting artist, teacher and photographer.
- Proprietor and guide for Great Australian Walks and Walking the World, 1988-2007.
- B.Commerce(Economics), Dip.Ed.(Soc.Sc.), Grad.Dip.(VisualArts).



Sustainable Recreational Trails – Guidelines for the Planning, Design, Construction and Maintenance of Recreational Trails in South Australia

*Anthea Shem, Asset Management and Development, Office for Recreation and Sport, SA.
Craig L. Grocke, Tourism Development Group, South Australian Tourism Commission, SA.*

Abstract:

This project is an initiative of the South Australia Trails Coordinating Committee, which includes representatives from State, Local Government and five industry groups.

While it is acknowledged that South Australia has a strong and varied network of trails, there are many aspects of the existing trail system that can be improved through enhancements to trail design, better linkages between trails and other community assets and attractions, consistent trail policy, management, marketing and support for on-going development of the network.

The guidelines have been prepared to provide a comprehensive and coordinated document to provide standards for trails or guidelines to assist the planning, development, construction, management, and promotion of recreational trails. While there are Australian Standards for Walking Tracks, there are no national standards for mountain bike and horse trails. This document is designed to provide comprehensive guidelines for shared-use trails that accommodate horse riding, mountain bike riding and walking.

The presentation will provide an overview of the guidelines and how they have been prepared to assist all trail stakeholders. The guidelines will be of particular interest and assistance to:

- trail users
- trail builders

- trail managers
- parks and reserve managers
- clubs and Associations that use trails
- owners of land through which trails pass or are proposed.

Biography:

Anthea Shem's qualifications include a Bachelor of Education and a Grad. Diploma Spatial Information Sciences. Over the past 20 years Anthea has worked in the area of Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Education as a community volunteer, instructor, educator and administrator. She is currently working with the Office for Recreation & Sport in the area of Asset Management and Development, overseeing the management of a number of shared use trails.

Craig has worked in the field of tourism and recreation planning in New Zealand, Western Australia and South Australia over the past seven years. Currently working with the Tourism Development Group of the South Australian Tourism Commission, Craig has a professional and personal interest in trails, cycle tourism and sustainable development. Craig has a B.A. Planning, Grad. Dip. Recreation Planning and Management and a M. App. Sc. Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 9:30-10:30am

Theme: On your bike - TBA

Abstract

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 9:30-10:30am

Theme: All aboard

From Rails to Trails in Australia

Vince Aitkin, Treasurer

Railtrails Australia Inc

Abstract

Australia has thousands of kilometres of disused railway lines. Slowly governments are succumbing to public pressure and where appropriate disused rail corridors are being converted to recreational trails. We call these Rail Trails and they form part of a worldwide move governments to convert disused railway infrastructure into community facilities.

This presentation will detail what is happening in Australia – who uses rail trails – how they come about and the economic benefits they provide to communities through which they pass.

Biography

Vince Aitkin is a long distance cycling tourist with experience in Australia, North America, China, New Zealand and elsewhere. He is a foundation member of Railtrails Australia Inc and currently its national treasurer. Other interests include bushwalking, friends groups, sea kayaking and trying to retire.



Making the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail a reality

John Rush

Office of Urban Management, QLD

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Rail trail building and township partners

Michael Oxer, Secretary

East Gippsland Rail Trail

Abstract:

One of Australia's longest rail trails, the East Gippsland Rail Trail which threads its way for nearly 100 kilometres from Bairnsdale to Orbost on the Snowy River, is building significant partnerships with several towns along its length.

What contribution does this Rail Trail make to these town communities?

This practice-based presentation will outline the development of three township area trails projects where the Rail Trail forms both a spinal component to additional township area side trails, and provides support and additional rationale for funding applications based on multi-use benefits.

A further emerging element of this Rail Trail is the complementation of what are called Side Trips, adding other options especially for tourist visitors to the region. This aspect will be shown through the design of the current information and map brochure and integrated with the Trail web site.

Adding trip value to the Trail brings economic benefits to local communities through the support for emerging tourism related businesses.

A third part will include a brief outline of the trail user counting program which is beginning to add hard data on trail patronage (using infra red technology) as part of the ever necessary economic justification for rail trail establishment and ongoing management.

The three points presented will be summarised as a process which can be replicated for other rail trails.

Biography:

Michael Oxer is a long time cycling advocate, from local to international levels. A former president of Bicycle Victoria, former executive officer of Australia's national bicycle industry associations.

Onetime president of Railtrails Australia Inc. Since 2002, secretary of the East Gippsland Rail Trail. Interests include sustainable building, sailing, and a BUG for East Gippsland. Retired.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 9:30-10:30am

Theme: The big picture

SEQ Outdoor Recreation Strategy

*Dave Batt
Office of Urban Management*

Abstract:
TBA

Biography:
TBA



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 9:30-10:30am

Theme: A burning issue

Lobbying – a black art or refined science

*Hugh Maclean, Recreation Development Officer - Trails
Department of Sport and Recreation, WA*

Abstract:

The art of influencing treasury, private sponsors, community members and government to support a trail development is a subtle skill with potentially many road blocks and risks along the way. In addition ongoing funding for maintenance, promotion, and governance is difficult to achieve.

This presentation will provide practical examples of how to get it right first time and how to adopt varying tactics depending on the outcome required and the barriers presented.

Despite a known physical activity participation rate of 80% in unstructured outdoor recreation – predominantly on walking and cycling trails- trails groups still struggle to gather the crumbs from the funding table. This presentation provides guidance on how to re-dress that balance.

Biography:

Hugh Maclean has extensive experience both in Australia and the UK in securing funding for capital development, governance, and experiential projects in community, and government contexts. As the Trails Consultant in the Department of Sport and Recreation (WA) Hugh currently manages an annual Lotterywest Trails Grant Program of \$750,000. He has previously supervised a community facilities fund of \$8million annually and as an applicant has facilitated achievement of significant capital development and community projects. Work experience has been in the community and government sectors both in the UK and Australia.



Promoting Cycle Ways and Cycle Ways as the Modal Choice

*Fiona MacColl, Executive Officer
Australian Bicycle Council*

Abstract:

For cycling to become a viable modal option we need to make it 'easy' for cyclists to get around and promote the infrastructure that exists, both on and off road cycle ways. To this end ABC and Whereis.com are working together to make cycling maps highly available and include 'by bicycle' as a modal choice when getting directions. Future options will include regional tourism routes, cycle friendly retail and service industries on route, and cycle destinations e.g. mountain bike facilities.

This is a where we are heading session, with a “what would you include / level of information necessary?” audience input session??

Biography:

Fiona is a landscape architect and recreation planner with 18 years experience in private industry and local government within NSW. Fiona has recently been appointed the Executive Officer to the Australian Bicycle Council. The ABC is a secretariat established to facilitate and advocate for increased cycling throughout Australia as both a recreation and a transport option.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 11:00-12:30pm

Theme: On your bike – Sustainable downhill

The Answers are in the Forest: Creating Sustainable Downhill Mountain Bike Trails in Cudlee Creek Forest.

Nick Bowman, Bicycle SA

Abstract:

The Cudlee Creek Forest is a hub of innovation. Experimental techniques in land care restoration, community involvement and trail sustainability are the result of numerous partnerships that have evolved over the last 15 years. Now, State Government, local government, non profit organizations, members of the community and sporting clubs have banded together to develop a holistic approach to trail network development that balances the needs of conservation with the recreational and sporting demands of the local population.

The truly remarkable aspect of the trail network in the Cudlee Creek Forest is the ambition of the project. The primary objective is to return an area that was once a commercial pine forest into native vegetation that will one day become a conservation area of regional significance. With some several hundred hectares of land that are to be revegetated and managed to achieve this, there is also the need to balance the needs of the community through sustainable trail development. It is here, in the Cudlee Creek Forest that an all-encompassing partnership has been initiated to develop sustainable downhill mountain bike trails to provide recreation, tourism and racing opportunities for a broad range of mountain bike riders.

This presentation will detail the methods for facing any challenges that stand in the way of progressive, positive and creative ideas for managing downhill mountain bike riding and maintaining the partnerships that are necessary to make such an undertaking a reality.

Biography:

Nick has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Conservation and Park Management, which led to specialization in sustainable trail development in conservation areas. Since 2002 Nick has been heavily involved in promoting sustainable mountain bike trails and proactive management techniques for trail networks in South Australia. Nick has worked in many roles in various organizations to achieve trail sustainability. These organizations include Bicycle SA, Greening Australia, Cycle Tourism Australia and now the City of Mitcham. Nick also works as a consultant in developing sustainable trail networks but also ecologically sustainable gardens in urban and residential areas.



Glen Jacobs
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Abstract:

TBA

Biography
TBA

Mark Urquhart
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Abstract:
TBA

Biography
TBA

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Joey Klein, IMBA

Abstract:
TBA

Biography
TBA

Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 11:00-12:30pm

Theme: The big picture

The (Sunshine Coast) Coastal Pathway

*Matthew Horder, Acting Senior Development Officer, North Coast Region (as facilitator)
Sport and Recreation Queensland*

Abstract:

This presentation will be a coordinated presentation from four presenters showcasing the Sunshine Coast's Coastal Pathway to raise/discuss some issues that may be common across other areas. There will be a 15 minute presentation from each of the following:

- Graeme Pearce - the overall concept, the coordination of the councils, how it fits in with other things like Suntrans Study etc.
- David Cooper (Caloundra City Council)- implications for Caloundra in particular, the construction of boardwalks and bridges in sensitive areas.
- Ron Coyle - implications for Maroochy Council, with a focus on the approach used with developers using the Hyatt development as an example.
- Nigel Walker - implications for Noosa Council, how it fits in with their initiative to increase cycling and pedestrian movements and their role with Travel Smart.
- Matthew Horder - as a facilitator for the session.

Biography:
TBA

The development of metropolitan linear park networks: Coast Park and Tramway Park Case Studies

*Matthew Lang, Senior Project Officer, Open Space Unit
Planning, SA*

Abstract:

The provision of a sustainable and diverse network of quality trails that enhance lifestyle, public health and environment opportunities is a policy of the South Australian Planning Strategy for Metropolitan Adelaide. This presentation will examine the coordinating role that Planning SA plays in the development of metropolitan trail networks; from state-wide strategic planning to the detailed design and construction.

The key element of open space planning in Adelaide is the Metropolitan Open Space System (MOSS). The system is an integrated network of both public open space and private land designed to provide a greenbelt in and around Adelaide. MOSS includes the foreshore, the Hills Face Zone and designated major waterways crossing through the metropolitan area.

In 2001, the Government of South Australia released the Parklands 21 Strategy. The objective of the strategy was to set a blueprint for future open space development in South Australia and the implementation of MOSS. Two of the initiatives identified in the strategy were the development of a coastal linear park and the development of parkway trails along transport corridors.

Since releasing the Parklands 21 Strategy, Planning SA has been working in cooperation with state and local government agencies to facilitate the establishment of Coast Park and more recently, Tramway Park.

Coast Park

Coast Park is an initiative to develop a coastal linear park from Sellicks Beach to North Haven, a distance of approximately 70km. A major feature of Coast Park is the development of a shared use recreation path that caters for a wide range of users including walkers, joggers, cyclists, wheelchairs, prams, etc.

There is an enormous diversity of natural and built environments along the length of the metropolitan coastline. The planning of each individual Coast Park project therefore recognises this diversity and includes consideration of a wide range of environmental, social and economic factors, as well as seeking the involvement of a wide range of community, local and state government agencies. This process aims to recognise and enhance the local environment while delivering multiple benefits for the environment and the community.

Since the launch of the Coast Park Concept Plan in 2001, the State Government has provided approximately \$15 million to local government for the development of Coast Park. Approximately 50% of Coast Park has now been constructed.

Tramway Park

Tramway Park is an initiative to create a new linear park along the length of the Adelaide-to-Glenelg tram corridor, a distance of almost 10 kilometres. The linear park will provide a formal 'green' corridor incorporating an off-road recreation path for walking and cycling.

The Tramway Park Concept Plan was completed in 2006 and since this time \$725,000 has been provided towards developing the trail. The implementation of Tramway Park is being undertaken progressively through a series of individual projects in cooperation with the five local councils along the tramline.

Biography:

Matthew has University qualifications in Environmental & Park Management and is a member of the South Australian Trails Coordinating Committee.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 11:00-12:30pm

Theme: Symbiosis

Incubating Business Partnerships – Trails and Tourism Dollars

*Craig L. Grocke, Tourism Development Group,
South Australian Tourism Commission, SA*

Abstract:

State Tourism Organisations can play a role in partnering with Government, private and not for profit sectors to develop trails for tourism. While spending money to make money is a good philosophy, engendering local ownership and stewardship for a trail is critical to the trails long-term economic sustainability.

This presentation will feature how the South Australian Tourism Commission incubates business partnerships to capture the tourism dollar, engender stewardship, as well as develop and diversify tourism product associated with a trail. Projects discussed include the Riesling Trail, Yurrebilla Trail, Sea to Vines Rail Trail and the new Flinders Ranges by Bike. Samples of marketing collateral for each trail will be provided to promote further discussion.

Biography:

Craig's qualifications include a B.A. Planning, Grad. Dip. Recreation Planning and Management and a M. App. Sc. Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Craig has worked in the field of tourism and recreation planning in New Zealand, Western Australia and South Australia over the past seven years. Currently working with the Tourism Development Group of the South Australian Tourism Commission, Craig has a professional and personal interest in trails, cycle tourism and sustainable tourism development.



The Kidman Trail: A Multi-Use Trail of Multi-Level Partnerships

*Julie Fiedler, Executive Officer
Horse SA*

Abstract:

The Kidman Trail is a proposed high profile horse trail from the Mc Laren Vale region, south of Adelaide, through the Barossa Valley to Kapunda. The trail is expected to become one of South Australia's iconic trails, similar to the Heysen, Mawson, Riesling, Yurrebilla and River Torrens Linear Trails. Just as the Heysen is primarily marketed for walkers and the Mawson for cyclists, the Kidman Trail will provide opportunities for people wishing to go horse trail riding and so further enhance the State trail network. Although developed by horse riders, the trail is a shared use community facility and will be marketed as such.

This presentation outlines the cooperation between government and non-government agencies to see this multi-use trail to completion.

Biography:

TBA



Innovative use of local and state government support to build a unique outdoor recreation experience

*Neal Ames, Senior Advisor, South West Region
Sport and Recreation Queensland, QLD*

Abstract:

In 2005 a fledgling mountain bike club set out to build the most challenging, demanding and exciting down hill mountain bike course in Queensland. This presentation will detail that adventure and the relationship between the three bodies involved: the club, local government and Sport and Recreation Queensland.

Biography:

TBA



Parri Yaamari – “Come This Way”: Collaborative Walking Track Planning and Development at Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Places – Some Case Studies and Observations

*Alan Ginns, Director
Gondwana Consulting Pty Ltd*

Abstract:

The planning and development of walking tracks at Aboriginal cultural heritage places, or on Aboriginal owned or managed lands, often presents an extra suite of considerations in addition to the issues more typically associated with track and trail projects.

This presentation would briefly overview a number of recent track planning and development projects to provide or upgrade visitor access to Aboriginal art sites or culturally significant places. Examples will be drawn from New South Wales (Gundabooka National Park, Mount Grenfell Historic Site and the Mutawintji Aboriginal Lands), Victoria (Bunjils Shelter), and Cape York in far north Queensland. Emphasis would be on describing different collaborative approaches employed to involve Aboriginal people/owners associated with these sites and places, as well as some of the additional planning and design issues (including interpretation sensitivities) addressed at these sites.

While not offering a definitive “how to” guide to track planning and development at indigenous heritage sites, it will give participants an appreciation of the possible additional issues that they may encounter at these places and some approaches of traditional owner/manger involvement and track design solutions that have been successfully applied elsewhere.

Biography:

Alan Ginns has over 25 years experience in the planning, development and management of national parks and natural areas - specialising in visitor use, tourism and collaboration with Aboriginal people. He worked with national parks agencies in the NT and NSW before establishing Gondwana Consulting in 2002. Alan has extensive walking track and recreation trail experience – across projects ranging from the long-distance Larapinta Trail to urban path networks.



Trekking Trials in PNG – an option for Conservation and Sustainable Livelihoods

*Geoff Lipsett-Moore and Warren Jano
The Nature Conservancy*

Abstract:

Papua New Guinea has an enormous, as yet unrealized tourist potential. With almost 2,500 trekkers through the Kakoda Trail in 2005 alone, the Kakoda Trail has already demonstrated the trekking potential of PNG. In many areas of PNG, conservation organizations are working with communities and local level governments to establish conservation and wildlife management areas. While these areas result in the long-term benefits for communities through the ecosystem services they provide, they lack immediate financial benefits. Trekking trails provide a powerful opportunity and framework to link conservation with sustainable livelihoods for remote area rural communities. The approach is discussed using the Adelberts Mountains and its people as a case study.

Biography:

Geoff Lipsett-Moore has more than 20 years experience as a Conservation Biologist/Landscape Ecologist. He has worked in numerous environments, ranging from wet tropical rainforests and coral reefs to deserts, the boreal forest and the sub Antarctic. For the last 13 years he has dedicated his life to the identification, establishment and maintenance of protected areas in Australia, Canada and South America. More recently Geoff was appointed as the Senior Conservation Planner for the Pacific Island Countries for The Nature Conservancy. In this capacity he works with in-country teams and communities in Melanesia and Micronesia to determine priority areas for protection and management that meet the needs of the people and biodiversity. In 1994 Geoff was awarded the Australian Antarctic Medal in recognition of: "unparalleled work in studying the ecology of king penguins through an unbroken thirteen month cycle at Sub Antarctic, Heard Island". When not working, Geoff and his wife Catherine are out exploring the world's remote and wild places.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 11:00-12:30pm

Theme: Crossing the boundaries

Crossing the boundaries

4 x QPWS staff

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Te Araroa, The Long Pathway – Engaging Communities, Local Govt and Central Govt to share a Common Vision

*Trevor Butler, Director
Frame Group Ltd, New Zealand*

Abstract:

Te Araroa is a 2920km walking trail covering the full length of New Zealand passing through a wide cross section of landscape including coastal beaches and cliffs, bush covered ranges, alpine tussocklands, open farmlands, remote river valleys and urban parklands. Led by Geoff Chapple, the visionary of the Trail, the Te Araroa Trust has mobilised volunteers the length of NZ to work on development of the trail. City Councils and District Councils on the route have embraced the concept and are proudly developing sections of the trail to provide links through their communities. With Government funding, the Department of Conservation is upgrading and signposting the sections of the Te Araroa trail that passes through National Parks and other Reserves land.

The presentation will outline how a single vision has empowered the enthusiasm and input of the public and private sectors, despite the difficulties of funding and land access rights. The experiences of Te Araroa may inspire and help other organisations proposing the development of a long distance walkway across a myriad of land ownership.

Biography:

Trevor Butler is a Trustee of the Te Araroa National Trust and chairs the Trust's Operations Committee. He is a consultant specialising in track and structure development in parklands for a range of public and private sector clients. He is able to share the experiences and achievements of the Te Araroa National Trust and its employees and the Regional Trusts.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 1:30-3:30pm

Theme: On your bike – Track standards

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Rod Annear

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



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Rod Worthington

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



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Brenton Collins

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



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Reece Guihot

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



???

Chris Maierhofer

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

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Nick Byrne

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 1:30-3:30pm

Theme: Footprints in the sand

16 million visitors - but who's counting?

Di Maclean, Senior Conservation Officer, Queensland Parks and Wildlife

Jamie Seeleither, ??, Queensland Parks and Wildlife

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

???

Scott Evans, Brisbane City Council

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

Gathering better facility usage data for pedestrians and cyclists

Michael Langdon, Senior Advisor - Cycle & Pedestrian Planning, Integrated Transport Planning Division

Queensland Transport

Abstract

The current situation with regard to gathering better facility usage data for pedestrians and cyclists is best summarised by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, in their 2000 publication, *Bicycle and Pedestrian Data: Sources, Needs, & Gaps, BTS00-02, Washington, DC, p53* 'Currently, major barriers to gathering better demand/usage data are cost and effort. Both counts and surveys are extremely labor-intensive, and mechanical counting technology is more difficult to apply to bicycles and pedestrians than to motorized vehicles'.

Queensland Transport (QT) has recently undertaken a research initiative and grants scheme to address these barriers to enable collection of bicycle and pedestrian count data. Research to date and test sites established by QT have identified a number of promising technologies, with preliminary results expected to be available in early 2008. The grants scheme will enable local governments to use this technology in developing Integrated Local Transport Plans (ILTPs) and to better understand and evaluate the role of bicycle and pedestrian transport at a local level. This presentation will focus on the research work undertaken to date and the way forward for measuring pedestrian and cyclist activity in the urban transport system. This presentation will also provide an opportunity to exchange information on automated counting technologies currently available and discuss implementation issues.

Biography:

Michael Langdon is a Senior Advisor with the Cycle & Pedestrian Planning Team of the Transport Planning Branch of the Queensland Department of Transport (Queensland Transport). Previous work has included: Regional Transport Planning, Transport Social Marketing, Passenger Transport Strategy, and Community Transport Development. Before joining Queensland Transport Michael did research work at QUT on the 'Walk to School' program and advocacy work as part of a university based bicycle user group. An avid cyclist for many years, Michael continues by riding his bike to/from work for transport (a 50km round trip).



Purposeful Data: Easier Said Than Done

*Narelle King, Parks and Wildlife Group
Department of Environment and Climate Change*

Abstract:

The Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC) has been developing and implementing a system to collect and use visitor data throughout NSW National Parks. Central to the system is the Visitor Data System (VDS), a user-friendly software package originally developed by National Parks and Wildlife South Australia and refined and extended by DECC in partnership with Parks Australia and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The VDS allows users to design and print visitor surveys and store and conduct basic graphical analyses of data from visitor surveys, vehicle and pedestrian counters and manual collection of visitor numbers.

The VDS has been available to DECC staff for a number of years, but uptake of the system has been low, in part due to a lack of awareness amongst staff of useful purposes for the data. Published literature and manuals on visitor data emphasise the need to define clear objectives for data collection and ensure only purposeful data are collected, but links are seldom made between different types of visitor data and management questions and issues. Therefore, DECC has been working to identify management questions and provide advice on how to collect, analyse and use visitor data to help answer these questions. This paper will present some of the work produced so far in relation to tracks and trails, with the aim of stimulating discussion amongst the panel and audience members on uses for data and ways to improve the applicability of data collection.

Biography:

Narelle is the Visitor Data and Research Officer with the Parks and Wildlife Group of DECC. Narelle completed a PhD at Griffith University exploring the use of tourism to drive conservation and has worked on ecotourism and Giant Panda conservation with WWF China and as an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 1:30-3:30pm

Theme: Finding space for ... (Off-road trailbikes)

From mountain bike to trail bike – laying the groundwork for sustainable family-oriented trail bike riding on public tracks

*Steve Pretzel, Director
Trail Bike Management Australia Pty Ltd*

Abstract:

Recreational trail bike riding is one of the fastest growing pastimes in Australia, yet it is one of the most problematic. In every state of Australia land managers and those charged with encouraging a more active outdoors lifestyle are struggling to find the balance between catering for the legitimate needs of riders, protecting the environment and avoiding conflicts on tracks and trails.

A particularly challenging segment is those who have not yet attained an age where they can obtain a drivers licence and ride legally on public trails. Yet a recent survey conducted as part of the Western Australian State Trail Bike Strategy project found that a significant proportion of trail bike riders want the opportunity to ride with their families. Bushwalking and mountain bike riding are seen as family activities to be encouraged, and those families who defy the law to ride trail bikes together see little distinction when properly supervised.

But while there are many responsible and courteous trail bike riders there are also too many ratbags. Environmental vandals with little regard for others cause damage, ruin the experience for other trails users and pose a significant safety hazard.

It's a complex problem, and there is recognition that simply banning trail bike riding in public places is no solution. So why not start with a vision for what responsible family-oriented recreational trail bike riding could be, and identify the steps that would need to be taken to get there.

This presentation will challenge conventional thinking on issues such as the legal riding age and will discuss managing for sustainability and the value of social based marketing strategies in encouraging responsible environmental and social behaviour among trail bike riders. The presentation will also encourage a sharing and review of strategies being considered or implemented around Australia.

At the conclusion of the presentation participants will have a better understanding of the issues, some case studies to reflect on and a fresh perspective to apply to their own domains.

Biography:

Steve Pretzel has a background in media, marketing and information technology. He and his wife and long-time business partner left their multi-award winning technology company in January 2007 to set up Trail Bike Management Australia as a specialist consultancy to deal with the complex issues of trail bikes. They are currently finalising the WA State Trail Bike Strategy which has been funded and endorsed by several major WA government agencies.

Others TBA

SRQ

Abstract:

Biography:

TBA

Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 1:30-3:30pm

Theme: Balancing policy and user needs

Title - TBA

*Ian McDonald, Honorary President
Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc.*

Abstract:

Most bushwalkers listen to the discussion and presentation on new tracks and trails with great interest, and look forward to getting out on them. There is another dimension to bushwalking, enjoyed by a relatively small number of bushwalkers who like to walk Class 5 and Class 6 tracks. They are not the super-fit, although some are remarkably so. They are not necessarily the very old or the very young, although some are. Most simply have superior navigation skills, and bushcraft skills, and feel comfortable in the bush without a lot of equipment. They often seek the bush to escape the crowds. They wonder why it seems that bushwalkers are being increasingly herded onto the same trail and into the same campsites. They wonder why should this be? If demand ever eventuates the routes that they develop might one day become the constructed Class 1, 2 or 3 track enjoyed by much larger numbers of people.

Class 5 and Class 6 bushwalkers venture into parts of the bush that are impossible for vehicle bound rangers to visit. Most of the discouragement is inadvertent. It is most likely to be collateral damage from initiatives by land managers seeking to better preserve the countryside, made in ignorance of the needs of the Class 5 or Class 6 walkers, and possibly indicating that better communication systems are required. However there are some very discouraging initiatives by some authorities that leave many bushwalkers wondering what they could possibly have done to deserve such malevolence. They see inconsistent evaluations of risk; illogical, even absurd, rulings on mitigation; control of the least risky while the most risky remains un-managed; where advantages from relaxation are sacrificed against control for control's sake.

Biography:

TBA



Creating trails that walkers will want to walk

*David Reid, Barbara Guerin and Tony Walker
Bushwalking Victoria*

Abstract:

Bushwalking Victoria (formerly Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs (VicWalk)) is the peak body representing recreational bushwalkers in the state of Victoria Australia. Bushwalking Victoria has been developing relationships with track decision makers so as to influence design to ensure walkers can enjoy using tracks for environmental education and personal health and wellbeing.

Recreational walkers (as distinct from power walkers who walk for exercise alone) want to walk on trails that provide pleasant memorable experiences in addition to physical challenge.

When designing walking trails there is a need to look beyond the construction standard AS2156.1 and consider the qualitative factors that make trails enjoyable to walk and encourage return visits.

This paper looks at overseas experience, preliminary consultation with users in Victoria Australia and also encompasses the experience and observations of the authors. It identifies the factors that make walkers avoid a trail and those that encourage them to return again.

Before making a decision to create a trail there are three fundamental questions that should be asked.

- Why are we building this walking trail?

- Who do we want to use it? (Which category of walker)
- What will attract walkers to it? (What are the features, experiences and trail narrative that will help to make it walkable)?

In conclusion we discuss the processes needed to ensure we create trails walkers will want to walk based around a collaborative and consultative approach between users and designers.

Biography:

David Reid is President of Bushwalking Victoria. He was President of Waverley Bushwalking Club for 8 years and held other committee roles. He is a retired manager with experience in strategic planning and has many years experience in planning and leading on and off-trail hiking in Australia and overseas.

Barbara Guerin is vice President of Bushwalking Victoria. She is a member of the Locksley Bushwalking Club with whom she has shared many day and extended walks in Victoria and adjoining states for the last 25 years. She has science and computing qualifications and recently retired from the Victorian public service.

Tony Walker is Strategy Consultant to Bushwalking Victoria. He is Vice President of the Waverley Bushwalking Club, and President of a local environmental care group in the City of Monash. He has been a keen bushwalker for many years. Tony has an IT consulting background, particularly associated with IT and business strategy planning.



Fun runs in the wild – catching up with the rest of the world

*Greg Waite, Treasurer
Trail Running Association of Queensland Inc.*

Abstract:

This presentation will cover the following topics:

- case studies of Australian & overseas events showcasing the benefits of access
- review evidence of increasing participation in trail run/walks overseas
- discuss event formats which support conservation but don't exclude people
- discussion of the permits process; what's broken and what might fix it.

What are the chances of a voluntary organisation getting a proposal for a new run in a protected reserve today in Australia? Virtually zero. We are working towards a different approach more in line with Queensland's draft Regional Outdoor Recreation Strategy, specifically:

- annual regional user forums to increase liaison, discussion and negotiation;
- less reliance on inflexible guidelines, management plans and legislation;
- recognition of the value organised runs add through regional and tourism promotion;
- and recognition of the value organised runs add through promoting fitness and outdoor activity.

Fun runs are the simplest, easiest activity we know to keep a person healthy. The complete element which is so unacceptable to the parks service is exactly what inspires an ongoing commitment to fitness, providing an element of excitement and challenge.

Imagine a world where swimming pools allowed only play and excluded lap swimmers. Why is it so hard to create a system where individual walkers can share the trails with organised groups once or twice a year? Group activity permits should be welcomed for the encouragement they provide to active lifestyles and to developing communities.

There are real event-design issues to balance conservation, impacts on other users, and holding a fun run in a protected area. Based on case studies, we present the main elements required for a balanced proposal. Some of these are:

- gives priority to a short fun run/walk option on well-signed and well-maintained trails which have an even surface, for less fit and less confident people;
- access to areas of quality forest and good trails which will inspire runners into the outdoors;
- also likely to include sections of maintenance trails or urban footpaths to reduce loads on sensitive areas;
- takes account of local trail condition and usage in route selection;
- provides support so fun runners and walkers can feel safe when exploring relatively isolated areas;
- involves the local community.

Unfortunately there are years more groundwork and policy changes required in Australia before we reach the stage where a good proposal is sufficient to get permit approval.

Biography:

Greg is a keen trail runner, a race director and Treasurer of the Trail Running Association of Queensland. Coming from New Zealand, where complete events in national parks are supported by the authorities, Greg finds the Australian attitude of a new-total ban frustrating. He has a background in statistics and works as an analyst for the Department of Housing.



Fundamentals for providing High Quality Tracks and Trails Experiences

*Asso Prof Stephen Wearing, School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, University of Technology, Sydney
 Stephen Schweinsberg, School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, University of Technology, Sydney
 Kirsty Tumes, Monash Tourism Research Unit, Monash University, Berwick Campus*

Abstract:

This research is being funded by a Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Council Network grant and is being completed by researchers from the University of Technology Sydney and Monash University. The project aims to understand more about the issues which influence demand for high quality “track/trail” experiences in national parks. Some of the influences on trail usage being considered in this desk top review include: facility provision, interpretation practices and visitor demographics. A case study on the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has been developed in order to test the real world applicability of the project’s observations on how park managers can develop a strategic position on tracks and trails.

Biography:

Stephen Wearing is an Associate Professor at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). He has been responsible for a variety of projects in the area of Leisure and Tourism Studies at an international and local level. Dr Wearing has conducted numerous projects and lectures worldwide and is the author (co-author) of seven books and over 80 articles dealing with issues surrounding leisure and tourism and has published books on Volunteer Tourism and Ecotourism.

Stephen Schweinsberg is a Research Assistant in the School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). His current PhD research is on nature tourism focused land use change in Australian rural communities. This research is being undertaken with the aid of an STCRC Industry Scholarship, jointly funded by TTF Australia: Tourism and Transport Forum and the Australian Sport and Tourism Youth Foundation.

Kirsty Tumes is a Research Assistant with the Monash Tourism Research Unit and the School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). Her current PhD with the Monash Tourism Research Unit aims to understand the nature and extent of recreation conflict within protected areas in Victoria and Western Australia. Her PhD studies are supported by STCRC Industry Scholarship, Parks Victoria (Victoria) and The Department of Environment and Conservation (Western Australia).



Policy, track marking and visitor expectations – finding the right balance

*Danny Parkin, Ex TSO Recreation, Wellington Conservancy, Department of Conservation, NZ
Wayne Boness, Visitor Assets Programme Manager, Kapiti Area, Department of Conservation, NZ*

Abstract:

Visitor monitoring is a key technique for developing a sound understanding of the patterns and processes of visitor use, and for testing Departmental visitor management policy. In particular, monitoring contributes to the successful management of public conservation lands where it:

- i. informs conservation management, contributes to interpretation and education, or improves knowledge of natural processes;
- ii. its effects are consistent with the statutory purposes for which the place is held;
- iii. has no significant adverse effect on the enjoyment of the public; and
- iv. does not pose unacceptable risks to natural, historical and cultural heritage.

A questionnaire survey of visitors to the Tararua Forest Park, Wellington NZ alpine area over the 2006/07 summer was undertaken to gauge user expectations and to evaluate current Departmental policy in regards to the marking of tracks and trails across the alpine area.

Of the 175 park visitors who participated in the survey, 79 percent said the tracks and routes in alpine areas should be marked for reassurance and for safety reasons, especially during times of adverse weather or from becoming lost. Thus, confirming the Department's marking of alpine tracks and routes, and in the process validating the marking specifications detailed in the New Zealand Tracks and Outdoor Visitor Structures Handbook.

This presentation briefly outlines the results of this survey and how these results were used to develop a draft set of protocols that blend visitor expectations and departmental policy for the management of tramping opportunities in alpine area of the Tararua Forest Park.

Biography:

Danny Parkin – TBA

Wayne Boness - TBA



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Theme: On your bike – Track standards

Open discussion (cont'd)

Rod Annear

Rod Worthington

Brenton Collins

Reece Guihot

Chris Maierhofer

Nick Byrne



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Theme: Footprints in the sand

Time-Lapse Movies presented on Google Earth: A Suggested Method for Monitoring the Longitudinal Condition of Tracks and Trails

*Dr Martin Fluker, Lecturer in Tourism
Victoria University*

Abstract:

As the increasing usage of tracks and trails continues, so to does the increased burden on the resources of land managers charged with its environmental sustainability. According to Marion and Leung (p. 230, 2004), an "exceptional trail plan" should include a system of monitoring so as to "gauge management success in achieving prescriptive objectives". However, few research projects have been undertaken to assess changes in track conditions over extended periods of time (Dixon, Hawes and McPherson, p. 305, 2004).

In order to provide a track and trail monitoring system that is longitudinal, reliable, timely, economically viable and practical, this study suggests a new methodology for collecting and presenting information on the condition of specific sections of tracks and trails over time. The methodology utilises current digital and internet technology that allows data to be gathered by (i) researchers, (ii) land managers, and (iii) track and trail users from the general public.

The core of this monitoring system is the installation of a number of permanently and strategically positioned 3-sided "camera cradles". These cradles would be designed to accept any model of digital camera and would align the camera in such a way that the photo taken would be of a specific section (maybe no more than a few square metres) of track. This section may be, for example, of a sloping mountain bike single-track corner that could become prone to erosion, widening or short-cutting. A different cradle would be set up for each separate section of track that required monitoring.

The role of the researcher is to take a series of site photographs at predetermined intervals (weekly, fortnightly or monthly for example). Land managers would be asked to take site photographs either when it is convenient, or when new impacts are observed. Members of the general public would be invited to take site photographs at any time.

These time-stamped site photographs would then be collected in a central database and chronologically ordered. They could be lodged either electronically by email or sms (especially if taken by a camera installed in a mobile phone), or manually by the researcher. These photographs would then be formatted and inserted into an mpeg movie so that a time-lapse presentation of the one specific section of track is produced. These movies could theoretically show impacts over months, if not years.

In order to encourage participation by members of the public and to provide land managers with a practical and cheap track and trail impact observation tool, these site-specific movies would be embedded in Google Earth (this is a free software program available on the internet) showing the exact location of the site being photographed. The functionality for this system currently exists within the Google Earth program.

The benefits of this suggested system include the collection of data by the general public in such a way that does not involve extensive training (a set of instructions on the camera cradle would be sufficient), and in a way that allows them active involvement in the monitoring of a track or trail.

The system would show evidence of the effects of interventions such as trail hardening (the placement of a stone berm for example), or erosion caused by the natural seasonal elements.

In order to test this new methodology, permission and minimal funding would be needed from the land managers of an area such as the mountain bike park at the You Yangs Regional Park, Victoria. This park has an electronic counter which records the number of mountain bikers entering and leaving the park. This would further add to the richness of information available.

Biography:

Dr Martin Fluker has been a lecturer in Tourism at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia for 10 years. His prior background in tourism includes 6 years backbacking the globe, and 5 years working on Hamilton Island Resort. Dr Fluker has also spent 5 years working as a whitewater rafting guide, and 1 year as the Australian Marketing Manager for Peregrine Adventures. Dr Fluker's research interests include issues dealing with the areas of adventure tourism and nature-based tourism.



How New Technology Can Help Managers To Understand What Is Happening Out There.

Jean-Francois Rheault, Eco-counter

Abstract

The idea of my presentation would to first identify key steps in establishing a monitoring plan and then present one or two practical case studies illustrated with pictures and data.

Guidelines to establish for a monitoring plan:

1. Clearly identify your objectives. Objectives could be something like:
 - Identify the number of users in a certain period (Ex: Summer 2007)
 - Identify the increase in visitors number after a promotion campaign (Ex: Bike promotion campaign)
2. If possible, identify the main traveling patterns.
3. Elaborate your monitoring plan according to your objectives:
 - Fix and/or moving counters
 - Directional data breakdown
 - Period of monitoring
 - Manual counts for calibration
4. Identify the type of equipment you want to use.
5. Chose the number and the locations of the counting sites (Macro level) (Ex: Beginning of trail)
6. Chose installation sites (Micro level)
Ex: On the post next to the garbage can
7. Identify the meaning of the information (Ex: North bound on the trail; South bound; Main entrance of the park)
8. Make adjustments if necessary
9. Move the counters if relevant.
10. Analyze the numbers after the period and repeat in order to compare over time.
11. Use the information to justify investment, convince politicians, deploy staff appropriately, maintenance, etc

Case Study - Planning education on trail in Mont St-Hilaire, Canada

The Centre de la nature du Mont St-Hilaire is an island of protected land surrounded by a residential area and agriculture land. To access the park, the neighbor residents have to drive 3-4 kilometers around the park to enter via the main entrance. As a result of this, many visitors enter illegally through unofficial trails via a very sensitive area.

With limited resources, they park was doing once a year a full day of education teacher trespassers why them should not enter via this very sensitive zone. This was not very effective as even with a full day on the trail, they reached a limited number of people.

Using an automated counter gave them clear traveling patterns. Instead of sending a person for a fully day, they were able to identify the busy period of trespassers. With short and effective period on the trail, the staff was able.

Biography:

Jean-Francois Rheault is responsible for technical customer service for Eco-counter. Some of the major projects he has worked on involved trail monitoring in Norwegian National Parks, bike counting for the City of Montreal, the City of Vancouver and the Eurovelo6 in Germany and Austria.

Jean-François also represents Eco-counter in major events (Velo-City 2007 - PWPB 2006) and manage Eco-counter's network of partners in over 20 countries where the Eco-counters have been installed. On his time off, Jean-François enjoys cycle touring, hiking and kayaking. Jean-Francois Rheault is from Montreal, Canada but now is now living in France.



Development of the DoC track counter system

Rob Burns, Department of Conservation, New Zealand

Abstract:

The 'workhorse' of New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DoC) visitor counters has long been the hinged 'boardwalk' style counter that enthusiastic field staff have spent several decades trying to perfect. Unfortunately these counters were all too obvious to the track users, many of whom hyper-inflated visitor counts by bouncing on them. These boardwalk counters also require a regular program of maintenance and data collection to develop any useful trend information. These counters, and other commercial 'off the shelf' counters available have been expensive and time consuming, and have not delivered to the manager the data required to make informed decisions in the New Zealand context. DoC field staff wanted a counter that is cost effective, simple and easy to maintain and that delivered the information required for management.

What started in 1998 as an irregular part-time innovation project within DoC, lead to the development and testing of a new prototype counter in the early 2000s. The potential demonstrated by this counter, combined with the development of the Department's Visitor Asset Management (VAMs) database, lead to a more robust counter, intended to survive in New Zealand's climate and remain unattended for many months collecting the date and time of each visitor, with this data able to be managed and stored centrally (in VAMs). This initial design over time was developed and improved into a modular system, with a series of counter sensors for different track applications, that all attach to a common time-stamping logger. A module was also developed that connected a digital video recorder to the logger. The issues concerning moisture protection, false triggers and compaction of track surface materials were dealt with through the development of more appropriate sensors and the innovative use of materials and electronics.

The success of the DoC counter is best judged by the current demand from field staff. After initial doubts following false starts with 'new counters', increasingly field staff recognise the simplicity of the system, savings in time, centralised data management and the in-field installation and helpdesk support provided by the project, demand for the counters is currently stretching capacity to deliver. The data generated has provided useful daily and seasonal trends, down to hourly bins which is beginning to enrich managers understanding of visitor use patterns. By building a robust counter, providing ongoing support and centralised data management, DOC has been able to improve its visitor monitoring in an increasingly diverse range of settings.

Biography:

Rob Burns is the Track Counter Data Administrator and Technical Support for the Department of Conservation, NZ. Initially studying Parks & Recreation before dropping out and graduating in Industrial Design, Rob combines these interests to work with the Visitor Assets team designing and installing visitor counters.

Rob is a sometimes active rock climber and mountaineer.



Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Theme: Finding space for (Horses)

Title

*Andy Dutton, Senior Planning Officer and Emma Hobbs, Planning Officer
Terrestrial Planning Unit, Qld Environmental Protection Agency*

Abstract:

The South East Queensland Forests Agreement (SEQFA) was established in 1999 following the Queensland Government's decision to end logging in and protect approximately 406,000 hectares of State forest in south-east Queensland. The decision to transfer these areas to national park was an important conservation milestone, but required the resolution of a number of existing uses, including horse riding.

Due to the implementation of the SEQFA, horse riding opportunities that were allowed in State forests would be deprived of access as these lands were transferred to national park if the Government didn't meet the challenge to balance horse riding and other recreational opportunities with the importance of ecological protection.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) assured recreational users that the State Government had no intention of stopping access for outdoor recreational activities to forests that were part of the SEQFA process.

The guiding principle against horse riding is bound in the *Nature Conservation (Protected Area Management) Regulation 2006* where there are restrictions on bringing animals into a protected area.

How the EPA provided horse riders with continued access through areas being transferred to national park will be the subject of this presentation.

Biography:

Andy Dutton is a Senior Planning Officer with the Terrestrial Planning Unit of the Environmental Planning Strategies Branch of the Environmental Protection Agency. Andy completed a degree at the University of Queensland in Applied Science (Protected Area Management). Before coming to the EPA's Planning Division Andy spent 7 years as a Ranger with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service in a number of areas in South East Queensland.

Emma Hobbs is a Planning Officer with the Terrestrial Planning Unit of the Environmental Planning Strategies Branch of the Environmental Protection Agency. Emma completed a degree at the University of Queensland in Environmental Management (Natural Systems and Wildlife Management) and prior to joining the Planning Division worked on the environmental regulation of activities with the EPA.



Title

Tony Hart, Australian Trail Horse Rider's Association

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:
TBA

Day: Thursday 13 March 2008 Time: 4:00-5:30pm

Theme: Time to get dirty – practical workshop

Safe and effective installation of concrete steps

*Hansell, QPWS
Grayson, ??*

Abstract:
TBA

Biography:
TBA

Day: Friday 14 March 2008 Time: 10:30-11:30am

Theme: On your bike – Community engagement

Benefits of MTB Forum Steering Committee

*Joshua Bosschieter, Principal Project Officer, Tourism and Visitor Management Branch
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service/ EPA*

Abstract:

As natural places become rarer and more precious, the challenge for park management is to balance conservation with the increasing demands for different styles of visitation. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) aims to provide a range of visitor experiences across a spectrum of settings. Visitor settings, sustainable use and limits of acceptable change approaches are used throughout QPWS parks to ensure the appropriate activity occurs in the appropriate location.

Following the staging of a World Championship mountain biking event in 1996, the Smithfield site rapidly developed into a popular venue for local and national mountain biking activities as well as for general free and independent use. When Smithfield Conservation Park was gazetted on the 23 June 2000, a significant mountain bike track network had already been established as part of the pre-existing use. The Cairns Regional Mountain Biking Strategy (Cairns City Council, 2002) identified Smithfield Conservation Park as an area of land that should be managed to allow ongoing use for mountain biking activities. The QPWS have supported this strategy, and catered for the demand for biking through a Section 34 Authority agreement as allowed within the Nature Conservation Act 1992. This agreement outlines the conditions of use by the Cairns MTB club.

Biography:
TBA

Day: Friday 14 March 2008 Time: 10:30-11:30am

Theme: Sold!

Marketing the Great Walks

Greentree, QPWS

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA



Development of the Cycle Tourism Resource Kit For Regional Communities

Christian Haag,

Cycle Tourism Australia

Abstract:

Cycle Tourism Australia is developing a Cycle Tourism Resource Kit For Regional Communities as part of the Federal Government's Australian Tourism Development Program. Cycle tourism is a known economic driver in regional and rural Australia, not only as a stand alone sector but perhaps more importantly through its ability to bundle with other niche market sectors such as food and wine, the backpacker and soft adventure markets.

It's not just about putting a trail on the ground and expecting people to come.

Looking at established cycle tourism communities in WA, SA, QLD, Vic and Tasmania, this initiative will provide a knowledge base for regional and rural communities to adopt a more strategic approach to their investment in cycle tourism. This will be done through the development of a series of tool kits that will focus on:

- A regional audit of current tourism and natural assets
- A local government toolkit addressing the needs, expectation and requirements of the local authority
- A marketing toolkit providing advice on industry and product development as well as support knowledge for local operators
- A research toolkit will provide support during the assessment process as well as setting a base for measuring the success or failure of the communities investment

This presentation will look at the community consultation process across a national constituency of stakeholders, generic areas of agreement and specific areas of difference within each destination as well as key considerations when developing infrastructure, product, marketing and research projects.

Biography:

TBA



Day: Friday 14 March 2008 Time: 10:30-11:30am

Theme: Adding value to the journey

Signs of the Times

Cormac McCarthy, Open Space Coordinator

Maroondah City Council

Abstract:

Signage is one of the key elements that can make a successful trail. This presentation will focus on the importance of regulatory, warning, directional and interpretive signage for all types of tracks and trails in Australia. Based on the authors experience in managing the development, construction and maintenance of an extensive system of recreational trails for a local government authority, this session will highlight the opportunities and pitfalls of signage that is required to make a great user-friendly trail system.

Practical examples will be given of good and not so good design, materials to use that last, styles that incorporate local and State branding, and effective interpretation and orientation methods. The presentation will also show how to avoid overdoing the messages that you wish to convey, whilst ensuring adequate risk management.

Biography:

TBA



Enhancing visitor experience through trail signage

Morris & Flennady, QPWS

Abstract:

TBA

Biography:

TBA

