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EASTER TRAIL BIKE CRACKDOWN A SUCCESS IN THE WIMMERA.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Victoria Police targeted rogue trail bike behaviour in the State's parks and forests over the Easter weekend.

Trail Bike Project Officer for DSE South West Region Simon White said several operations were conducted across the State over the weekend with a major joint operation conducted in the Wimmera. The focus of the operation was on trail bikes in Rocklands State Forest.

"Unlicensed riders, unregistered bikes and off road riding around popular camping and recreation sites were targeted in the Statewide operation," Mr White said.

Riders are only permitted to ride on official roads and tracks on public land if they have a motorcycle licence, their bikes are registered, and they are wearing an approved helmet. They are also reminded that normal road rules apply in State forests and parks.

Victoria Police and DSE officers issued several infringements to riders.

"Riders that were unlicensed received a fine of over \$500, and when the bike is also unregistered the total fine is close to \$900" said Mr White.

Sergeant Bernard Hair from Coleraine Police said the operation provided a great opportunity for agencies to work together to educate trail bike riders and the public to ensure the proper use of forests and public land.

"Unfortunately, some parents allow their children to illegally ride trail bikes in State forests and parks," Sergeant Hair said.

"People are clearly unaware of the possible civil litigation with regards to accidents and injuries if vehicles and or riders are unlicensed.

"The operation is an example of what's to come, with DSE and the Victoria Police planning more coordinated trail bike operations for 2008."

Compliance operations focused on unlicensed and unregistered motorcycle use will be conducted by DSE Officers and Victoria Police throughout the year as part of the State Government's \$5 million Trail Bike Project to improve the management of trail bikes on public land.

For more information on trail bike riding visit: www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes.