

An extensive track network gives 4WD access for a range of activities such as camping, walking, hunting, fishing, horse riding or just going bush.

The natural beauty of Victoria's bush attracts more and more visitors each year. The increasing numbers of visitors have the potential to cause serious damage to the natural environment.

Escapes from campfires, expansion of campsites, trampling and cutting of vegetation and deterioration of roads and tracks have all become more common.

Seasonal Road Closures

To help protect track surfaces, water quality and the environment and to ensure driver safety, roads and tracks in parks and forests throughout Victoria are seasonally closed during the year, especially in winter.

The actual roads to be seasonally closed are scheduled by DSE and Parks Victoria each year, in consultation with the Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs and other key user groups.

Most winter closures on bush tracks take effect from the Thursday after the Queens Birthday long weekend in June and remain in force until the Melbourne Cup Day long weekend.

Some areas, such as the Thomson Catchment and Otway Parks & Forests may have closures in place for longer periods.

It is also sometimes necessary to temporarily close tracks for short periods outside these periods during wet track conditions.

Enquiries about seasonal road closures can be made to the Parks Victoria Information Line on ☎ 131 963 or the DSE Customer Service Centre on ☎ 136 186. Maps showing the closures are also available from Parks Victoria. For further information on closure dates please contact Parks Victoria (☎ 131 963).

Permanent road closures

Roads may be also be permanently closed to all vehicles and rehabilitated or allowed to revegetate, where they are no longer used for their original purpose and cannot be justified for other purposes. Many former logging and fire suppression roads fit into this category.

Management Vehicle Only roads

Some roads are needed for management purposes, such as fire protection, but unrestricted use would lead to unacceptable damage to the road or the environment. Alternatively there may be safety concerns, or preference may also be given to non-vehicle-based recreation, as in wilderness areas.

Temporary road closures

Roads may need to be temporarily closed because of landslips, major roadworks or unseasonable wet weather. Where this occurs, appropriate public notifications will be given, although timely public notification may not always be possible.

Plan your trip – think safety

To avoid disappointment, plan ahead. Before leaving on a trip, check road conditions with the local DSE office (for trips into State forest) or Parks Victoria (for trips into National & State Parks) be aware of weather forecasts and check to make sure your maps are up to date.

For more information

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for managing Victoria's State Forest. For further information and maps about where to go in State forest, contact DSE's Customer Service Centre on ☎ 136 186.

Parks Victoria Contacts

For further information about road status in national parks and reserves, contact the Parks Victoria hotline on ☎ 131 963 or visit their website at <http://www.parks.vic.gov.au/>

Other Useful Contacts

The Victorian Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs can provide information about 4WD club activities and events, 4WD driver training programs, and track conditions:

Victoria Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc.
PO Box 596 Balwyn North VIC 3104
☎ 9857 5209

<http://www.vafwdc.org.au/>

Visit DSE's website

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au>
then select "Forestry".

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