

# Trail Bike Project

Newsletter

Issue No 4 February 2009

## Statewide Information



### Ride for Tomorrow

Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Trail Bike Project staff took the Ride for Tomorrow message to three major motorcycle events in late 2008. Participants in the Stockman's Rally at Big River and the Blue Light Ride near Noojee had their bikes tested for noise compliance, learned more about sustainable riding, and then were joined by DSE staff who rode the event course with them.

Trail Bike Project Officers distributed thousands of Ride for Tomorrow brochures to visitors at the four day Australian Motorcycle Expo in Melbourne. Working jointly with the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council (VMAC), project team members spoke to many hundreds of riders about responsible trail bike riding and what riders can do to promote sustainable riding.

For more Ride for Tomorrow information go to [www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes).

### Trail Bike Rider Research

DSE contracted the research company Instinct and Reason in late November 2008 to improve government's understanding of what riders want out of their recreation as well as their views on other issues such as conflict with other forest users and residents over noise, environmental impacts of forest use and current legal requirements (such as the need to be licensed and registered). The rider research involves:

- one on one in-depth interviews with 20 riders (mixture of age groups, gender, frequency of

use and location - rural and metro based riders) - completed in December

- 12 Focus Group discussions with small groups of riders (mixture of age groups, gender and location) - to be completed in late January
- On-line survey of 500 riders - to be completed in February/March

In addition to talking to riders, the researchers will also be talking to trail bike retailers to better understand their perceptions of what information riders want as well as their understanding of what types of motor bikes can be legally registered, and what types of mufflers meet legal noise emission requirements.

The researchers will also talk to rural residents who live adjacent to popular forest riding areas, to better understand the issues they may have with trail bike use in their area.

### Trail Bike Operations

Visitors to State forests across Victoria are increasingly likely to meet DSE forest officers conducting patrols on trail bikes. Fifteen DSE staff with motorcycle riding experience have undertaken additional training to become qualified to ride the Yamaha, Kawasaki and Honda trail bikes.



"People may be a bit surprised at first to see Forest Officers on trail bikes but it makes a lot of sense. Staff can travel around the forest very easily, and get to meet lots of visitors; it certainly helps our information and education work to be more effective", said Roger Pitt, Trail Bike Project Manager

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# Gippsland Regional Information

## Trail Bike Visitor Area

Work is progressing well at the Latrobe River Rd Trail Bike Visitor Area, Neerim East with the toilet now being installed early February, we will have an official launch once everything is completed.

## Signage

The most important aspect of our Trail Bike visitor Areas will be the information board advising trail bike riders of good riding opportunities, at the same time making sure they are aware of local residential properties and other forest users. Supporting road signage is now being initiated at Latrobe River Rd and we have worked closely with the Baw Baw Shire and Vic Roads to develop relevant signage.

## Compliance

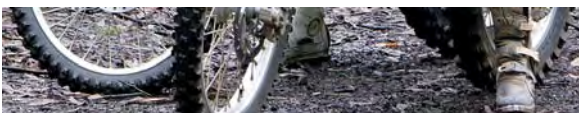
DSE trail bikes are now used on all our joint DSE/VicPol compliance operations and are proving to be very useful when engaging with trail bike riders. There is a noticeable increase in compliance with regard to unlicensed/unregistered bikes out in the forest as riders recognize we will be out and about on a regular basis.

## Working with Motorcycle Groups

Warragul motorcycle club have agreed to 'adopt' the Latrobe River Rd Trail Bike Visitor Area and we look forward to working with them.

## Community Involvement

We have been fortunate to have local community groups assisting in developing these visitor areas and Rokeby Crossover Friends Group and Green Corp have agreed to help maintain the Latrobe River site.



## Events

The Blue Light Ride event held at Nayook in November was well attended and the Police Association liaised with the Department to make sure any damage to the forest was minimised.

## Rawson Community Reference Group

A meeting was held January 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss future plans for a Trail Bike Visitor Area to be developed to cater for riders in the Rawson/Erica area. Local residents and other forest users were also present to ensure their needs were also taken into consideration.



## Gippsland - Mailing List

Would you like updates about meetings, web site developments, community workshops, or regular copies of this newsletter? To be added to a mail distribution list, please contact Joy (details below)

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# North East Regional Information

## Reform Hill State Forest

The trail bike project has been busy rehabilitating and installing fences in Reform Hill State Forest, near Beechworth, to help protect the local environmental.

Reform Hill is one of only three sites that is habitat to the Vulnerable 'Stony Bush Pea. So it is crucial that the area is protected from further damage.

Local DSE staff are constantly repairing damage to fences and rehabilitating illegal tracks. It's this type of damage that is placing the plant species at risk of becoming endangered.

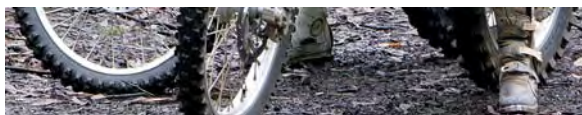
DSE will be increasing compliance in the area. Trail bike riders need to stay on formed roads as it is illegal to ride off road.

<b>Threatened Flora Revegetation Zone</b>	
	Reform Hill is one of only three sites that supports Stony Bush-pea ( <i>Pultanaea lapidosa</i> ) which is classified as 'vulnerable' in Victoria.
<b>Trail Bike Riders - Please stay on formed tracks.</b>	
	

## Mount Disappointment State Forest

The Mount Disappointment Community Reference Group met in November last year to discuss proposed actions to be implemented in Mount Disappointment to improve the management of trail bikes. The

- Trail Bike Visitors Area (TBVA) will be constructed on Leviathan track. The facility will provide riders with information, maps, toilets, shelter and parking. A Draft Design for this will be available on our website in the coming weeks.
- A Map of the State Forest is currently being developed to better inform riders of the public road network, the location of reduce noise zones and other important aspects e.g water catchments areas.



- Signage will be installed throughout the state forest to inform riders they are entering a reduce noise area.
- Compliance - on-going compliance with DSE and Victoria Police will occur throughout the forest. Off-road riding and noisy bikes will be targeted as well as unregistered and unlicensed riders.
- Rehabilitation and closure of certain un-used roads and single-lane track will be undertaken in priority areas. Refer to information below.

## Rehabilitation and Track Closure Guidelines

Road and Single-lane tracks rehabilitation plans are under development for the North East. The plans include the area and location of proposed track closures and rehabilitation and the process of consultation and opportunities for community input. The North east plan is expected to be made available by mid February 2009. Current rehabilitation plans for other regions can be viewed at : [www.dse.vic.gov.au/forests](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/forests)

## Who is the Trail Bike Team?

Introducing the Trail Bike Project Team...here we are in action on the new DSE Forest Patrol trail bikes.



**Back L-R:** Simon White (South West Trail Bike Project Officer TBPO), Richard Wadsworth (Statewide Recreation and Tourism Co-Ordinator, Felicity Wardlaw (North East TBPO), Roger Pitt (Project Manager), Joy Harte (Gippsland TBPO). **Front:** Adrian Parker (North West TBPO)

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# North West Regional Information

## Pyrenees State Forest

A small meeting of key agency staff met for the first time in December to discuss the possibility of establishing a Trail Bike Visitor Area (TBVA) at the foot of Fraser's Hill in the Pyrenees State Forest just out of Avoca.

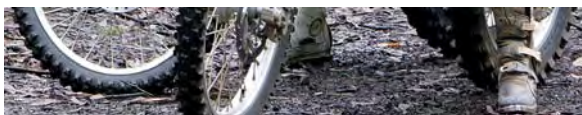
This represented the first stage with the next step to consult with the local community with notices in store windows and via the local papers.

It is anticipated that there will not be any great issues with the proposal as the site is being used at the moment by groups participating in motorised recreational pursuits. The proposal to establish a TBVA will formalise what is already occurring at the site and establish some control over what is occurring in the forest.

As well as the local community, consultation for the project has involved; Parks Victoria, Victoria Police, the Country Fire Authority, Green Triangle Enduro club, Pyrenees Shire, 4WD Victoria area representative and Fossickers.

Additional work linked to the Fraser's proposal includes;

- A Map of the State Forest is currently being developed to better inform riders of the public road network, the location of *Reduce Noise* zones and other important aspects e.g water catchment areas.
- Signage will be installed throughout the state forest to inform riders that they are entering a *Reduce Noise* area
- Compliance - on-going compliance activities with DSE and Victoria Police will occur throughout the forest. Off-road riding and noisy bikes will be targeted as well as unregistered and unlicensed riders.
- Minor upgrade of some facilities at the Waterfalls Picnic area.
- Rehabilitation of single-lane track will be undertaken in priority areas primarily around the TBVA.



## Rehabilitation Works

A number of sites have been earmarked for works for the next couple of months. These areas will be targeted for fencing, signage and other minor rehabilitation works.

Sites identified include: Eppalock Recreation area, Bealiba and other Crown land sites around Bendigo.



The Eppalock site (above) will see some fencing, gravelling and planting to complement the existing facilities.

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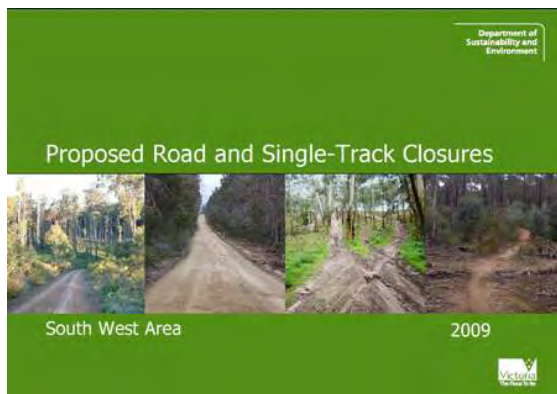
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# South West Regional Information

## Proposed Road and Single-Track Closures



The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) proposes the closure of some roads and tracks located on forested public land in the South West Area of Victoria. The roads and tracks proposed for closure are located in the Midlands and Otway Forest Management Areas.

On ground works include the closure of some roads and areas of single-track on public land, fencing, soil preparation and tree planting.

A plan of the proposed works can be obtained by calling the DSE Customer Service Centre (CSC) on 136 186, or via the DSE website [www.dse.vic.gov.au/forests](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/forests) > (Quick Links) Road and Track Closures. Alternatively, plans may be viewed at the following DSE offices: Ballarat, Colac, Daylesford and Geelong.

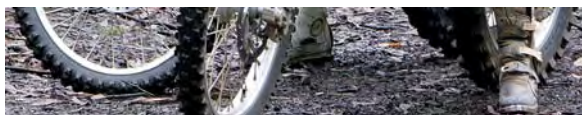
DSE seeks to obtain community feedback on the proposed road and single-track closures. Written submissions close - Monday 2 March 2009

## Otways – Community Reference Group

The East Otways trail bike community reference group (CRG) is committed to bringing trail bike riding on to a sustainable footing in the Otways.

The combined skills and experience of group members is assisting DSE to be creative in its aim of ensuring trail bike riding is undertaken in accordance with good environmental management principles within the Great Otway National Park, Otway Forest Park and Anglesea Heath.

The CRG recently released a media release about the positive work of the reference group. A copy of this media release is available on the DSE website [www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes) > News, media & publications



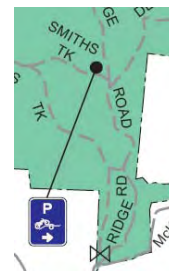
## Ross Creek and Enfield State Forest

DSE has engaged a consultant to design a Trail Bike Visitor Area at the southern end of State Forest Road, Ross Creek. Draft plans of this site will soon be available on the DSE trail bike project website [www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes)

Some areas in Ross Creek and Enfield State Forest are included in the Proposed Road and Single-Track Closure Plan. These road and track closures, and associated rehabilitation work will support the development of a Trail Bike Visitor Area in Ross Creek State Forest.

## Cobaw State Forest

DSE has formalised a Trail Bike Visitor Area (TBVA) in the Cobaw State Forest. The TBVA is located at the intersection of Ridge Rd and Smiths Track. This area will soon have an information board. Work is progressing on finalising a map for this information board and riders.



## Enforcement

DSE, Parks Victoria, local Police and the Victoria Police Special Solo Unit (police on trail bikes) recently conducted a multi-agency trail bike compliance operation in the forest areas around Ballarat. Further compliance operations have been conducted in the Wombat State Forest and Cobaw State Forest.



*DSE, Parks Victoria and the Victoria Police Special Solo Unit prepare for a compliance operation.*

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