

# Trail Bike Project

Newsletter

Issue No 2 February 2008

## Statewide Information



Holeshot Images

### Blue Light Ride

Department of Sustainability and Environment staff and the Victoria Police Motor Sports Club worked together to ensure November's 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Blue Light Ride maintained the highest possible environmental protection standards. The non-competitive trail bike ride for licensed riders on registered bikes attracted close to 1000 participants, making it one of the oldest and largest trail bike events in Australia.

DSE Forest Officers from Powelltown and Noojee worked with the VPMS to select suitable routes, and were present on the day to speak with the riders about environmentally responsible riding. Random noise testing was conducted by DSE staff to ensure compliance with Federal legislation. Of 73 bikes tested, 67 were within the legal limit, and 6 were slightly over.



Noise Testing

Holeshot Images

### Compliance Campaigns

Multi-Agency compliance operations were conducted across the State during January. Police, Parks Victoria and DSE staff mounted a co-ordinated enforcement campaign targeting unlicensed riders, unregistered bikes, and riding off the designated tracks. Popular bush camping spots and forests near beachside holiday locations or close to residential areas were included in the operations. Common offences detected included unlicensed and unregistered riding, and off-road riding. Some riders who had committed more than one offence headed home with fines of close to \$1,000, making it an expensive day out. Noise emission testing revealed that the great majority of the registered bikes complied with legislation.



Dale Antonyson (Parks Victoria), Stephanie Ryan (DSE) and Nigel Morrison (Victoria Police) on patrol in the Otways.

### Media Interest in Trail Bike Project

More than 30 newspapers across Victoria have carried articles related to the trail bike project during January. Three radio stations broadcast live interviews, and a number of others included pre-recorded segments in their news bulletins. The aim has been to raise awareness of safety and legal issues regarding children riding trail bikes. Key points included the need for licence and registration to ride in State forests, and the requirement for all riders to stay on the designated roads.

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## Gippsland Regional Information

### Trail Bike Unloading Area

The Limberlost Road pilot trail bike unloading area is now almost completed. It is expected that the official opening will be held in April. If you would like an invitation to this event, please contact Joy Harte, the Gippsland Region Trail Bike Project Officer (details below).

Additional trail bike unloading areas for Gippsland are being planned and their construction will now move forward over the next two years.

### Community Engagement

Ongoing communication with the Community Reference Groups has captured their feedback on how we progress with plans for education, rehabilitation and compliance operations.

The Wesburn Community Reference Group was invited to join DSE on Sunday March 2<sup>nd</sup> for a 'Clean Up Day' at the Wesburn Log Dump. Volunteers have also been enlisted from the 4WD group. This is the starting point for our plans to rehabilitate this area and work with the local community to encourage trail bike riders to ride in areas of our State Forest further away from residential properties.

### Compliance Operations

Operations were held in Paul Range, Wesburn, Rawson, Erica, Noojee, and Heyfield, resulting in a number of prosecutions for unlicensed riding, unregistered bikes and other forest offences.

DSE compliance staff and police are now preparing for further compliance operations in a number of Gippsland locations.

Noise testing has also taken place and will continue to be a part of all compliance operations.

### Regional Trail Bike Working Group

DSE compliance staff attended a regional meeting in early March to co-ordinate all future targeted trail bike compliance operations throughout Gippsland. This approach ensures we are reaching the 'hot spots' throughout the region.

### Working with Motorcycle Groups

AMTRA (Australian Motorcycle Trail Riders Association) has agreed to 'adopt-a-site' to help promote, preserve and protect the new Limberlost Trail Bike Visitor Area. AMTRA will be a visible presence to liaise with bike riders, provide information and advice and help maintain our recreational sites for the benefit of all riders and other forest users.

### Under-Age Riders

Unfortunately we are finding many young riders on the public forest road network. Over the past two months, many received infringement notices with fines of close to \$1000. Unlicensed riders cannot legally ride in State Forest, and are restricted to riding on private property.

Parents who permit their children to ride motorcycles in State forests and parks may be unaware of the safety risks their children face, and the fact that serious accidents can occur when children on motorbikes encounter cars, trucks and other vehicles on forest roads.

### 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)

#### Contact – Statewide

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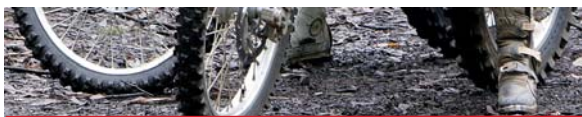
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For more information contact the DSE Customer Service Centre 136 186

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