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Media Release

Group hopes to see trail bikes and the environment hand in hand

The East Otways trail bike community reference group 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.

Department of Sustainability and Environment Trail Bike Project Officer, Simon White said the group has provided excellent advice to the trail bike project over the past two years.

"Prior to the trail bike project, local communities worked hard to bring about change in particular trail bike riding hotspot areas in the Otways," he said.

"By gathering together a reference group of bike riders, residents, forest users, environmental groups and local and State government, DSE is building on what communities achieved in the past."

Mr White said members of the trail bike community reference group brought diverse views to the reference group meetings.

"It is commendable that the group can agree on various aspects of the project, particularly considering the range of mixed feelings towards trail bikes," he said. "What seems to start out as a challenge can often end up with a creative solution," Mr White said.

Otway Trail Riders President, Dan Barwise is pleased to be actively involved in the reference group.

"The group has provided an opportunity for riders to understand the issues of residents and other user groups and for us to talk about workable solutions," he said. "We are examining current proposals and on the whole we are supportive."

"The reference group has been great for the future of trail bike riding in the Otways. It gives us a voice, and we can address many trail bike rider issues," Mr Barwise said.

An example of this group consensus is the recent identification of areas within the Otways that require rehabilitation because of the illegal off-road use of trail bikes.

DSE is currently advertising these areas and depending on feedback from the community, the sites will be rehabilitated in the coming year.

Further information can be obtained by calling the DSE Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or on the DSE website www.dse.vic.gov.au/trailbikes