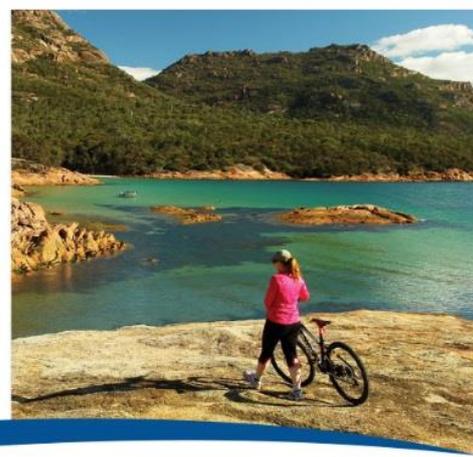


DRAFT
for public comment
September 2016

Tasmania's Cycle Tourism Strategic Action Plan to 2020



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Message from the Premier



Establishing Tasmania as a leader in the cycle tourism market

Tasmania has a reputation as a premium destination with our wild and natural areas, our reserves and trails, our beautiful backroads and our fine food and accommodation.

The government recognises the potential of cycling as a niche tourism drawcard for visitors to our state. That is why we are supporting cycle tourism in all its many forms.

The amazing Blue Derby trails have put north east Tasmania firmly on the world mountain biking map, including hosting a round of the International Enduro World Series at Derby next year.

Road cycling in Tasmania is also growing, and events like the Cradle Mountain Peaks Challenge, will add to our reputation as a cycling destination.

Tasmania's West Coast has already been listed as one of the best touring routes in the world by Lonely Planet and there are more cycling events and projects which together could make Tasmania a centre for cycle tourism.

If Tasmania is to continue to grow our visitor economy, we must recognise and capitalise on new opportunities. That is why my government has committed to developing a cycle tourism action plan, to identify what we need to do together to establish Tasmania as a leader in this market.

There are three priority areas identified in this draft strategic action plan to support the growth and development of cycle tourism in the State out to 2020: consolidating trails and routes; marketing what we have; and providing the supporting infrastructure and services to provide the right experience once cycle tourists arrive.

A concise list of potential actions have been identified to support these priority areas – however further input is required. This draft plan has been released so that those involved in the sector can provide their input into what they believe are the priorities. We can now work together to develop cycle tourism in the State through a finalised strategic action plan. There will be an opportunity for people to provide feedback and input until February 2017.

Together we can transform Tasmania into a leading cycling destination.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Hodgman'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Will Hodgman

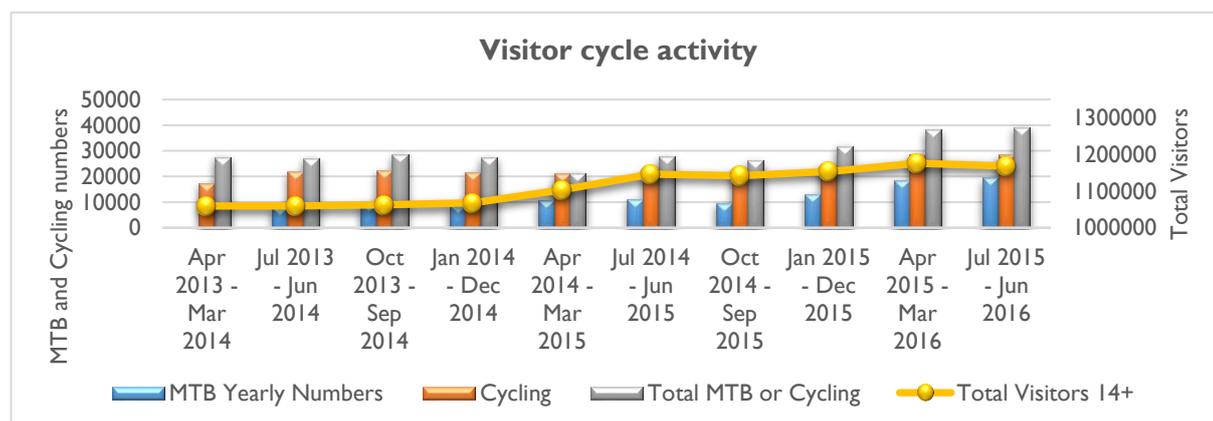
Premier

Minister for Tourism, Hospitality and Events

The visitor economy and cycle tourism

The draft Cycle Tourism Strategic Action Plan has been developed to support both the T2I Visitor Economy Strategy priorities of generating more demand for travel to Tasmania, investing in high quality visitor infrastructure and building capability, capacity and community to support the visitor economy, and the Events Strategy 2015-2020 objective of making Tasmania one of the world's greatest event destinations. The Tasmanian Visitor Survey (TVS) shows that around 39,000 interstate and overseas visitors undertook some form of cycle activity in Tasmania for the year to June 2016, an increase of 41% from the year before.

A key driver of this growth is the fast growing mountain biking market, driven by the new Blue Derby trails in Tasmania and the work being done by Tourism Northern Tasmania in developing cycle tourism. Visitors undertaking some form of mountain biking activity grew from around 11 000 to 19 500 in the same period.



Cycle tourists are, generally higher yield visitors that are attracted to spend longer in the State and who travel out of our major cities to event locations in our regional areas. There have been a number of research reports on cycle tourism spending elsewhere in Australia, these reports find that cycle tourists tend to spend more per day than other tourist groups. Surveys have come up with numbers between \$124 and \$244 per day on food and accommodation.

An economic impact assessment of current and potentially increased cycling in Northern Tasmania indicates that:

Cycling markets currently contribute to regional income and jobs in the region, mainly in tourist-related services (accommodation and food services) and recreation services.

An expansion in cycle visitor numbers would increase the level of spending in the region and generate growth in ongoing jobs and higher regional income.

Under conservative assumptions for growth (over a 10 year period to 2024-25) regional employment in sectors linked to cycling visitor markets would increase.

(TNT Nov 2015).

Cycling trails, routes and events

– where are we?

Mountain biking trails

Tasmania had virtually no legal mountain bike trails when the Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan was released in 2009, but since then there has been a boom in mountain bike trail construction by a combination of mountain biking enthusiasts, land managers and local councils. Several of these projects have only proceeded due to significant financial support from the Tasmanian and Australian Governments.

There is also a pipeline of mountain bike projects being progressed, including The West Coast Mountain Bike Project, The Maydena Adventure Hub, The Wild Mersey Mountain Bike Development, the Dial Range network, the Bay of Fires descent and St Helens Trail Network, the South East Mountain Bike Park Proposal and the Mt Wellington Epic Trail.

Cycle touring

Multi-day touring has always been one of the smaller segments of the cycle tourism market, but it is a segment which aligns well with Tasmania's brand and the objectives of T21.

Tasmania has a small, but healthy, commercial road touring market with around a dozen businesses offering supported trips down the east and west coast (rated by Lonely Planet as one of the best cycling routes in the world).

The North East Rail Trail, running from Launceston to past Scottsdale will be around 100kms in length when completed - offering a potentially amazing overnight experience for cyclists of all fitness levels.

Short recreational rides and scenic trails

Recreational riding has the potential to increase the overall profile and recognition of Tasmania as a cycling destination. It is also an aspect of cycling that can easily leverage off existing local council and state trail developments being pursued for local recreational and commuter riders.

Event cycling

Professional events bring high profile cyclists, their support teams, media and spectators to Tasmania, which deliver not only direct economic benefits but also raise the State's profile amongst the travelling cycling community.

Cycle tourism market segments

Mountain biking

Mountain biking is the largest segment in the adventure cycle tourism market.

Mountain biking attracts both location based visitation, where individuals and groups come to ride a specific area, and event based visitation, where riders come to participate in specific events.

Road cycling

Road-based cycle tourism generally revolves around multi-day commercial and independent touring and event participation.

Of note is a trend in cycling for 'off road' or quiet tracks and trails. Anecdotal evidence from bike sales (referred to as "gravel grinders" or "endurance" bikes) shows that cyclists are interested in exploring networks of quieter back roads. Tasmania is well placed to capitalise on such a trend with our range of quiet back roads, challenging climbs and plans for rail trail development.

Recreational riding

The majority of people that are counted in surveys like the Tasmanian Visitor Survey as 'undertaking cycling activities' are in fact undertaking low intensity recreational cycling activities¹, usually near urban centres.

This market of visitors is worth exploring, although their participation in cycling is often incidental to the main reason for their visit, they still participate in tourist activities and contribute to the visitor economy via a cycling activity.

Emerging market sectors

eBikes (battery-assisted bicycles) are only just starting to grow in popularity in Australia, but overseas some mountain bike parks are opening eBike accessible trails. Some touring routes in Europe offer eBike hire along the route opening up what was once the domain of the young and fit to a much wider market, including Tasmania's key 'life-long learners' market.

Bike-packing (a form of off road mountain bike touring), Fatbiking (specialised bikes for riding on sand and snow) and adventure riding are other niche sectors on the fringe of mountain biking where Tasmania, with its wild beaches and off road touring opportunities could become a must visit destination.

¹ A recent research report indicates greater than 70 per cent of recent cycling experiences reported by cycling tourists fell into this category of relaxation cycling.

The strategy

There are three priority areas identified in this draft strategic action plan to support the growth and development of cycle tourism in the State out to 2020; consolidating trails and routes; marketing what we have; and providing the supporting infrastructure and services to provide the right experience once cycle tourists arrive.

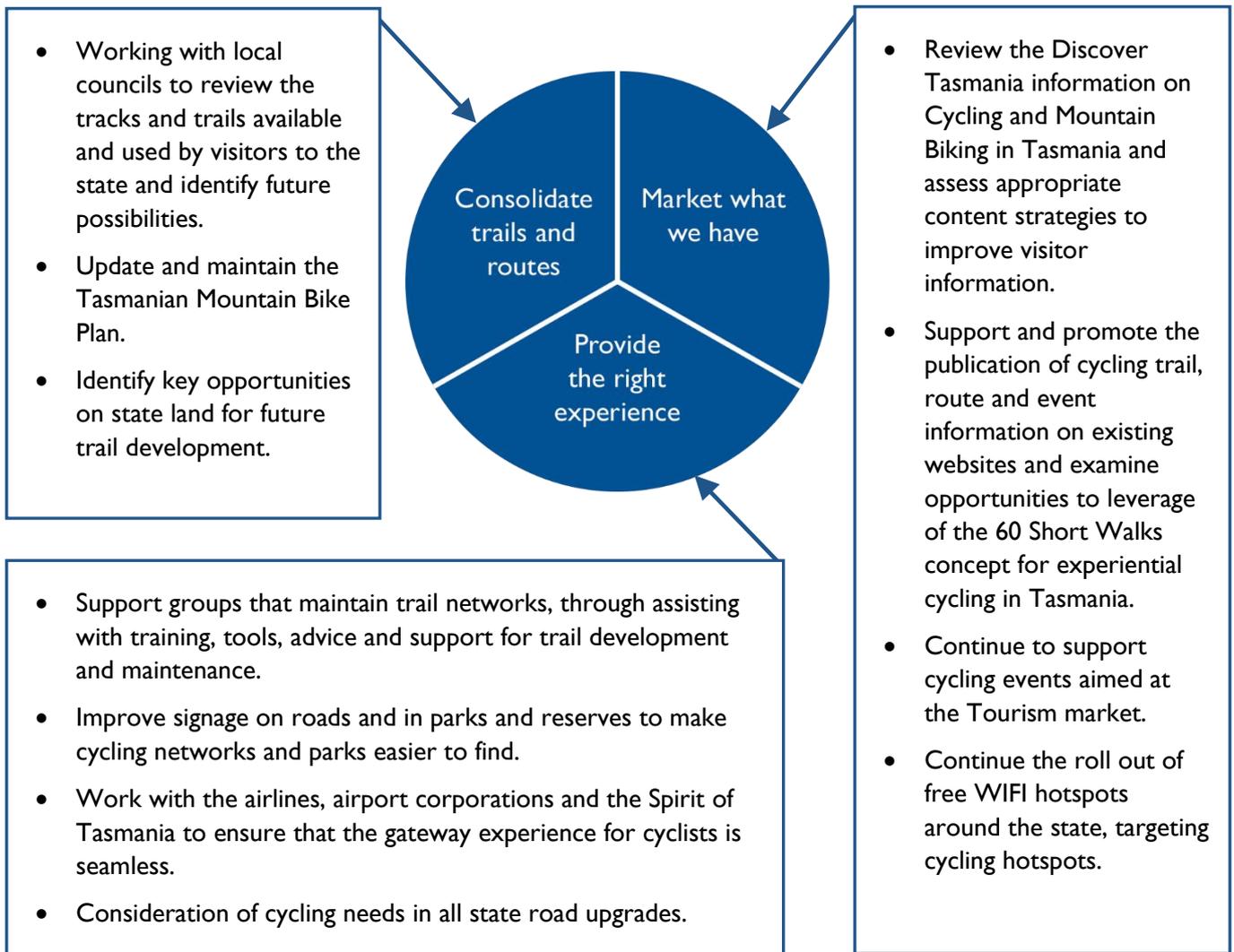
Each of these areas in turn has specific actions that should be investigated. As this is a draft strategic action plan these actions may be discarded or added to as we consult with all stakeholders to work together to establish Tasmania as a leader in the cycle tourism market.

The T21 – Visitor Economy Strategy Governance structure contains representatives from industry and the government departments that can provide input into progress of specific actions to support development of the cycle tourism market.

This body will consider and monitor the progress of Tasmania's cycle tourism market and the future development of this Strategy.

An action plan to support the growth and development of cycle tourism in the State out to 2020 - establishing Tasmania as a leading cycling destination.

Priority areas and actions



1. Consolidate trails and routes



The Government will work with the cycling community to ensure that the tracks and trails that are now existing or are in progress, as well as any new tracks that may have been identified, are considered as part of an overall Tasmanian network of cycling routes. These tracks and trails should be identified to touch on the needs for all market segments. This will be achieved through actions such as:

- Working with local councils to review the tracks and trails available and used by visitors to the state and identify future possibilities.
- Update and maintain the Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan.
- Identify key opportunities on state land for future trail development.

2. Provide the right experience

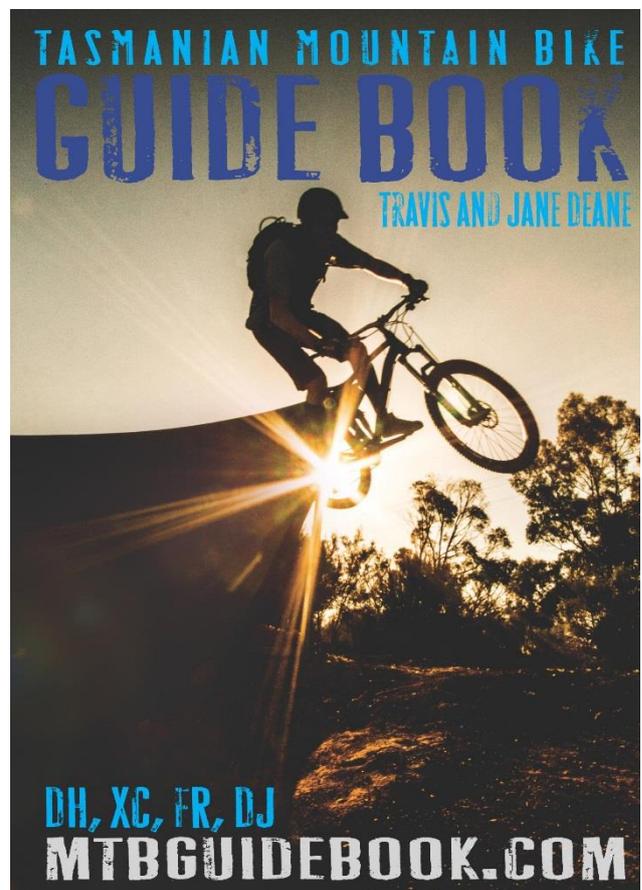
There are many small things that can be done to improve the experience for cyclists visiting Tasmania. From arrival considerations at all our gateways to roadside signage to help cyclists locate mountain bike parks and trails, providing good trailhead signage and parking, maintaining trails and signage, and having toilets and wash down stations nearby. The experience of cyclists can be enhanced by considering the following actions, as well as others that will be identified through the public comment process:

- Support groups that maintain trail networks, through assisting with training, tools, advice and support for trail development and maintenance.
- Improve signage on roads and in parks and reserves to make cycling networks and parks easier to find.
- Work with the airlines, airport corporations and the Spirit of Tasmania to ensure that the gateway experience for cyclists is seamless.
- Consideration of cycling needs in all state road upgrades.

3. Market what we have

The Tasmanian Government has a role in the high level promotion of cycle tourism opportunities in the State, and in the core provision of trail and track information. There is also an important role for regional tourism organisations, local government and the private sector in providing the specific information needed for riders to plan trips to events and trails including simple things like how to get there and the location of bike shops, accommodation and services. Actions identified to date include:

- Review the Discover Tasmania information on Cycling and Mountain Biking in Tasmania and assess appropriate content strategies to improve visitor information.
- Support and promote the publication of cycling trail, route and event information on existing websites and examine opportunities to leverage off the 60 Short Walks concept for experiential cycling in Tasmania.
- Continue to support cycling events aimed at the Tourism market.
- Continue the roll out of free WIFI hotspots around the state, targeting cycling hotspots.



Key stakeholders

Stakeholder groups	Groups and categories
Commercial operators	Tour operators
	Event organisers
	Bike shops
	Accommodation providers
	Car hire and transport
Cycling groups	Mountain biking clubs and cycling groups
	Recreation groups
	Cycle Tasmania
	Bicycle Network Tasmania
Industry associations	Tourism Council (cycling accreditation)
Local Government	Local Councils
	Regional Tourism Organisations
State Government	Community Sport and Recreation
	Department of State Growth
	Tourism Tasmania
	Events Tasmania
	Parks and Wildlife Service

Next steps

This draft strategic action plan will be available on the Department of State Growth's website at http://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/home/sectors/cultural_and_tourism_industry until February 2017.

Cycle tourism industry stakeholders are invited to provide submissions to further inform the strategy and identify additional priority actions that will support the development of the cycle tourism market.

Areas that stakeholders may wish to provide comment on include:

- Prioritisation of the specific actions outlined in this draft strategy
- A framework for collaboration between new and existing operators
- The role T2I has to play in growing the cycle tourism industry
- Specific market data collection to better inform cycle tourism industry growth and priorities
- Market expansion
- Establishment of an industry-specific cycle tourism reference group
- Identification of milestones that indicate success.

Following the consultation period this strategy will be finalised and published, and will lead future planning for growing and developing this important sector.

Related documents and sources

Tasmanian Government Strategies

- *Events Strategy 2015-2020*
- *T21 Visitor Economy Strategy*
- *Trails Tasmania Strategy (2007)*
- *Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan (2009)*

Other cycle tourism focussed strategies

- *Cycling Strategy for Northern Tasmania, Tourism Northern Tasmania (2016)*

Other cycling related strategies and plans

- *Building for the future Strategy 2016-2019, Cycling Tasmania*
- *Central Coast Cycle Strategy 2014-2019, Central Coast Council*
- *Cradle Coast Tracks Strategy 2003, Clarence City Council*
- *Devonport City Council, Bike Riding Strategy 2015-2020, Devonport City Council*
- *Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Plan Masterplan 2011, Hobart City Council*
- *Launceston Bike Strategy 2012, Launceston City Council*
- *Tracks and Trails Action Plan 2015-2020 (Draft), Clarence City Council*
- *Tracks and Trails Strategy 2012, Clarence City Council*
- *Wellington Park Bike Strategy 2005, Wellington Park Trust*

Project background and proposals

- *Blue Derby Mountain Bike Trails Stage 2, Break O'Day Council (2016)*
- *Dial Range Strategic Plan 2015, Cradle Coast Mountain Bike Club (2015)*
- *Hollybank Mountain Bike Facility – Trail Master Plan, Dirt Art (2013)*
- *North East Rail Trail - Preliminary demand and economic benefit assessment, Northern Tasmania Development (2014)*
- *North West Tasmania – Coastal Pathway Plan, Cradle Coast Authority (2010)*
- *North Eastern Mountain Bike Development Case*

- *Northern Midlands Trails and Bikeways Strategy – Final Report (2010)*
- *Strategic Trail Plan - West Coast Mountain Bike Project (unpublished)*
- *South East Tasmania Trail Programme and state wide Adventure Trail (2016)*
- *Trevallyn and Kate Reed – Draft Track Strategy – Background Report, Parks and Wildlife Service (2009)*
- *Warrawee Reserve Mountain Bike Trails Master Plan, TRC Tourism (2016)*
- *Wild Mersey – Mountain Bike Development, Kentish & Latrobe Councils*

Market information

- *A longitudinal study of the Murray to the mountains, Rail trail, Victoria, Australia, Professor Sue Beeton*
- *Cycle Tourism in Australia – an investigation into its scope and size, Sustainable Tourism CRC (2007)*
- *Mountain Bike Tourism Market Profile for Tasmania - December 2008. Prepared for Tourism Tasmania*
- *Mountain Bike Tourism Potential in Northern Tasmania (2011), Tourism Northern Tasmania*
- *2014 Australian Mountain Bike Market Profile - Survey Data, Dirt Art (2014)*

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