

West coast
mountain bike project

Bike Trails



The west coast mountain bike project

The west coast, and Zeehan in particular, is set to become a key part of an emerging world-class Tasmanian mountain bike experience.

In October 2014, the Tasmanian Government allocated \$1.21 million towards the development of a suite of mountain bike trails as part of a package of measures designed to help diversify the west coast economy.

With a legacy of disused tramways and tracks from past mining and forestry activities, Zeehan is well placed to be the focal point for the project. These trails will provide the foundation for an organic 'back-to-the-roots' experience enhanced by sections of purpose-designed and built trail.

The trails will showcase the unique landscapes and natural and heritage values of the region, taking riders through majestic rainforest, past spectacular waterfalls, under towering cliffs and across sweeping heathlands.

The experiences will be well suited to riders of all abilities including those in the easy to intermediate range with a number of trails that are flat or of easy gradient.

The west coast experience will complement and support other high profile mountain bike trails such: as the North-South and Meehan Range in Hobart; Blue Tier, Derby, Hollybank, Kate Reed and Trevallyn in the north east; and Penguin on the north west coast.

These collective experiences have the potential to position Tasmania as a major mountain biking tourism destination.

Strategic support

The west coast mountain bike project is supported by the Trails Tasmania Strategy (2009) and the Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan (2010).

It is also supported by the Tasmanian Industry Council Tasmania's recent Reimagining Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage report (September 2014), which recommends an improved mountain bike trail from Cradle Mountain to Strahan.

Project management and delivery

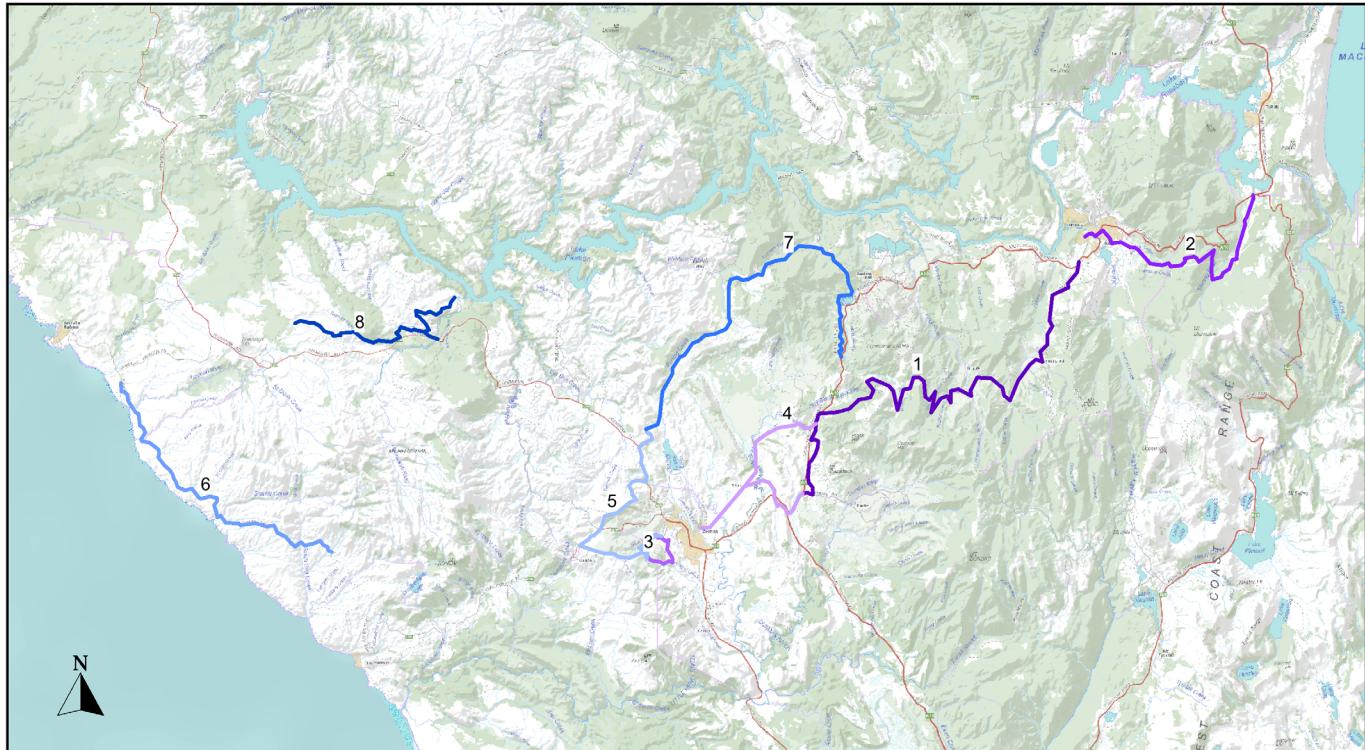
The project will be jointly managed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) and the West Coast Council (WCC). A project group has been established to guide the project, which includes engineering, planning, mountain bike trail design and marketing expertise.

Where possible, displaced employees from the Mt Lyell mine will be used to deliver the project, with WCC responsible for the organisation and management of the labour workforce. PWS will be responsible for planning and engineering, and a professional mountain bike trail design consultant will be engaged through an EOI process.

Planning work is already underway. It is expected that works will begin during January 2015, with an aim to have Stage 1 complete by October 2015.

The benefits

When completed, the trails will attract an increased number of riders to the west coast, particularly through the summer months. Increased visitation by riders will support hospitality businesses, and could spawn new services and businesses such as bike hire, bike transport and mechanical support. In other parts of the world, hotels near popular cycling areas market themselves as 'bike friendly' and also supply workshops, washing facilities, mechanics, guides, transport services and bike hire.



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|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Montezuma Falls |
| 2 | Sterling Valley |
| 3 | Spray Tunnel |
| 4 | NE Dundas Tramway |
| 5 | Oonah Hill |
| 6 | Climies Track |
| 7 | Dunkleys Tramway |
| 8 | Heemskirk Falls |

West coast mountain bike tracks of interest

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The plan

Stage 1 of the project will focus on improving and enhancing existing high-profile trails, given prominence through the biannual Wildside mountain bike event. These include Montezuma Falls, Sterling Valley, Spray Tunnel, NE Dundas Tramway and Climies Track. The work required to improve these trails is relatively straightforward and can be progressed in the near term.

Stage 2 of the project will require more detailed planning and design, which will be undertaken while Stage 1 is underway. Identified trails for consideration include:

- a loop trail that will take riders to Tunnel Hill and return via Dunkleys Tramway
- a trail in the Heemskirk Falls area, utilising in part the Granville Tramway
- a loop out to Comstock and back over Oonah Hill.

These trails are yet to be 'ground truthed', to determine their potential or feasibility.

Professional advice and community input will be sought on other potential opportunities for Stage 2, which may include the development of one or more purpose-built single track loops in the region, if it is accepted that these would drive significantly more appeal and visitation.

The project recognises other recreational users on some trails such as Montezuma Falls (walkers and 4WDs) and Climies Track (4WDs) and shared use will be retained.

Currently both stages should be regarded as being in the design and planning stage, though Stage 1 is more advanced due to prior knowledge.

How can I contribute?

The West Coast Economic Working Group wishes to take advantage of the abundant mountain bike expertise and experience that is resident in Tasmania, and the local knowledge of the west coast community. Ideas, opinions and advice are welcomed by the Group. Contributions will be confidential, fairly assessed and considered. However, the Group retains the right to use or reject any advice or idea submitted.

For submissions to be considered, they must be received by **5:00 pm on Friday, 19 December**. Submissions can be emailed to the Department of State Growth's Zeehan MTB Steering Group representative John Dawson, at john.dawson@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Proposed work

Stage 1		
Montezuma Falls (40 km) Williamsford to Zeehan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drainage and gravel capping from the start to the Falls. Purpose-built trail on downhill section of Falls bypass. Drainage works to Melba Flats. Purpose-built trail to Dundas Road. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-opening tramway easement from Dundas to NE Dundas tramway and then to Zeehan. Signage. Trail marking.
Sterling Valley (19 km) Tullah to Rosebery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve drainage on uphill to Sterling saddle. Investigate purpose-built bypass of transmission access track. Purpose-built trail to bypass difficult sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge upgrades and boarding over bog area on downhill into Rosebery. Signage. Trail marking.
NE Dundas Tramway (7 km) Melba Flats to Zeehan This creates a loop ride by then using the last section of the Montezuma Falls trail to return to Zeehan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve drainage. Purpose-built section near Melba Flats to bypass degraded area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge over Little Henty River. Surface improvement. Signage.
Spray Tunnel (4 km) Zeehan to Zeehan via Spray Tunnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination of existing trails and short, purpose-built links to enhance the experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage. Trail marking.
Climies Track (19 km) Trial Harbour to Granville Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge over Granite Creek to 4WD standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage.

Stage 2 (feasibility yet to be proven)	
Oonah Hill (12 km) Zeehan to Zeehan	A loop through the Spray Tunnel to Comstock, Oonah Hill and back to Zeehan, with possible purpose-built trail from Comstock to Oonah Hill and back to Zeehan.
Dunkley's Tramway (25 km) Zeehan to Zeehan	An ambitious loop, that takes the NE Dundas tramway to Melba Flats, then to the top of the Tunnel Hill old scenic drive and 4WD track, to pick up trail to the Dunkley's Tramway route, taking riders back to Zeehan.
Heemskirk Falls (6 km) Heemskirk River return	A loop to access some of the scenic waterfalls between the bridge and Heemskirk Falls. Opening of a section of the old Granville Tramway would enable riders to go north and return on the Heemskirk Road.
Alternative opportunities	As noted above, during the delivery of stage 1 professional advice will be sought on other potential opportunities for stage 2, which may include the development of one or more single track loops in the region. If it is accepted, these would drive increased appeal and visitation.

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