RAIL TRAILS FOR NSW
ABN 43 863 190 337 - A Not for Profit Charity

Chairman John Moore OAM RFD ED M. 0403 160 750 rtfornsw@gmail.com
Deputy Chairman Tim Coen B.Com. M. 0408 691 541 Tim.railtrailsnsw@gmail.com
Website: railtrailsnsw.com.au *facebook: Facebook.com/railtrailsnsw*

NSW will generate up to $74 million every year
create up to 290 jobs
revitalise 90+ regional communities
by building these tourism assets

Submission for the 2020 NSW Budget

Rail Trails for NSW

August 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This submission champions 11 high quality tourist trail projects for regional NSW totalling 884 kilometres of safe, scenic, vehicle-free pathway on publicly owned, decades out of service, regional rail corridors. There are no prospects for re-activated train services along any of the nominated routes. **Rail Trails for NSW urges the State Government to seek co-contributions from the Australian Government for the projects.**

The building of these tourist trails will provide:

- Fiscal stimulus of up to $3.3 million for feasibility and other pre-construction studies and planning
- Fiscal stimulus during the trail construction phase of up to $271,250,000
- Upon completion;
    - All 14 regional trails will generate additional local visitor spending estimated conservatively at $27 million p.a. building to $74 million p.a.
    - Steadily create up to 111 jobs building to 297 or more local jobs as visitor numbers grow
    - facilitate new business and employment opportunities in their host regions
    - provide community, health and exercise resources for locals
    - enable social benefits by generating community resilience, hope and optimism
    - stimulus of up to $2.75 million via marketing and promotion activities

These 11 additional rail trails warranting immediate attention (Table 1). FYI This table includes 3 already funded pilot rural rail trails.

	Rail Trail	KLM	Location
1	Molonglo rt	39	Bungendore, Captains Flat
2	Holbrook to Corowa rt	102	Holbrook Culcairn, Corowa
3	Goulburn to Crookwell rt	58	Goulburn, Crookwell
4	Monaro rt	213	Queanbeyan, Cooma, Nimmitabel, Bombala
5	New England rt	214	Armidale, Guyra, Glen Innes, Tenterfield
6	Richmond Vale RT	33	Hexham to Kurri Kurri
7	Cootamundra to Tumblong rt	69	Cootamundra, Coolac, Gundagai, Tumblong
8	Wagga rt	19	Wagga Wagga to Ladysmith
(12)	*Tumbarumba to Rosewood rt (PILOT)*	*(22)*	*opened April 2020*
9	Batlow to Tumut rt	30	Batlow, Tumut
	Northern Rivers rt (NRRT) (PILOT)		*Casino, Lismore, Byron Bay, Mullumbimby, Murwillumbah*
(13)	*Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek*	*(26)*	*north part of NRRT to be built soon*
(14)	*Casino to Bentley*	*(13.5)*	*south part of NRRT to be built soon*
10	Bentley to Lismore *(Part of NRRT)*	37	Extension from Bentley to Lismore & Eltham
11	Blue Mountains rail trail	70	Emu Plains to Mt Victoria
	Total KLMS recommended to be built	*884*	

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **2**
THE SUBMISSION **4**
POTENTIAL VALUE **4**
VALUE CREATED - VISITOR SPENDING 4
LAND VALUES 4
VERSATILITY and COMMUNITY BENEFITS 5
HEALTH BENEFITS 5
FEASIBILITY and VISITOR NUMBERS **6**
TRANSPORT to the TRAILS **7**
ACCESSIBILITY **8**
CLUSTERS and SYNERGIES **9**
INVESTMENT **9**
FEASIBILITY and OTHER STUDIES 9
CONSTRUCTION and MAINTENANCE 10
MARKETING and PROMOTION 10
3 YEAR ALLOCATION of FUNDS 11
APPENDICES **12**
Appendix 1 – Map of recommended trails **12**
Appendix 2 – Recommended trails data **13**
Molonglo Rail Trail (Bungendore to Captains Flat) 13
Holbrook to Corowa Rail Trail 15
Goulburn to Crookwell Rail Trail 17
Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala via Cooma) 18
New England Rail Trail 20
Richmond Vale Rail Trail (Shortland to Kurri Kurri) 22
Eastern Riverina Rail Trail Alliance 24
Northern Rivers Rail Trail 26
Blue Mountains Rail Trail 28
Appendix 3 - Other potential rail trails in NSW **30**
Appendix 4 - Recent Interstate Rail Trail developments **30**
Appendix 5 – Land Values **31**

THE SUBMISSION

Rail Trails for NSW's submission includes only the most realistic options for immediate consideration. We urge they be expedited for funding and development subject to analysis by Infrastructure NSW. (See Appendix 3 for other proposals).

The proposals put forward (see Table 1), meet the following 4 criteria:

- Access to existing NSW TrainLink or intercity train services as well as highways and airports
- Proximity to and prospects for linkage to other rail trails or capacity for extensions in the future
- The proposals are known of in their local communities
- They demonstrate prima facie viability including proximity to population centres, outstanding scenic landscapes, historical features, tourism facilities and other attractions

Courtesy of Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail facebook page, 2020

POTENTIAL VALUE

VALUE CREATED - VISITOR SPENDING

When all 884 kilometres of the 11 proposed new rail trails are constructed, plus the State Govt pilot trails (3 stages), spending generated across the network of 14 trails will climb steadily in the first 12 to 18 months to be

- $27.8 million per year & 111 jobs**
- growing within 3-5 years to $55.6 million per year & 223 jobs*^*
- with potential to reach $74.2 million per year & 297 jobs*^^ or more.

** 15,000 visitors per rt per year - 67% day visitors (spending $50 each), 33% overnight ($300 each)

^ 30,000 visitors per rt per year - 67% day visitors (spending $50 each), 33% overnight ($300 each)

*^^ 40,000 visitors per rt per year - 67% day visitors (spending $50 each), 33% overnight ($300 each)

LAND VALUES

Interstate and international experience is values of properties adjoining or near rail trails are mostly unaffected or rise (see Appendix 5). Many realtors highlight rail trails when advertising properties. Increased land values feed into rateable values over time. Privacy is a primary factor, thus vital that trail designs preserve or improve the privacy and security of nearby dwellings and businesses. This is best achieved via thorough understanding of the circumstances of each trail and designing specific solutions into the trail development plan.

VERSATILITY and COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Rail trails generate pride and a sense of ownership in the local community and they are also are excellent venues for

- low cost activities for holidaying and local families
- wildlife and bird-watching, regular outings for the aged and less agile, safe and quiet places for wheelchair users, safe and convenient places for the very young and the very old, for school activities, for picnics and to sharpen appetites for a hearty meal at the end of the trail
- community activities such as geocaching, orienteering, walking clubs, photography
- urban dwellers with no rural connections whether in a wheelchair, on foot or on a bicycle can experience immersion in the countryside and farmlands away from noisy, smelly roads while safely separated from livestock and farm machinery able to experience bucolic sounds, sights and smells as well as peaceful, majestic vistas without road debris and the danger of close, fast vehicles
- annual community events such duathlons, half or full marathons, and charity walks and runs, wheelchair events, etc.
- contributions by community organizations such as LandCare, Men's Sheds, Service and community clubs, youth groups, etc.

"… by riding a bicycle … you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. … you remember them as they actually are" *Ernest Hemingway*

HEALTH BENEFITS

The safe, serene and scenic character of a rail trail entices many people of all ages to walk, run or ride bicycles either intermittently or regularly. 'Park run' groups utilise them for regular weekend running meetings, as do other recreational walking and cycling groups.

Studies repeatedly demonstrate that exercise reduces the risk of numerous chronic conditions. In a 2008 study, 'the benefit of increased cycling was $2.14 per km' (Wallan to Heathcote Rail Trail Feasibility Report - Volume 1. Mitchell Shire Council, Oct 2017)

Walking, running and cycling, whether for pleasure, exercise or to commute from home to workplace or town to town, are the 3 primary activities on a rail trail.

"Walking is man's best medicine." *Hippocrates*

"A good laugh and a long run are the two best cures for anything." *Unknown*

FEASIBILITY and VISITOR NUMBERS

Sustained visitation will be easily achieved as the nominated trails are within easy reach of significant proportions of the Australian population. The conspicuous success of the recently opened Tumbarumba to Rosewood rail trail, even during partial travel restrictions due to Covid-19 is proof there is demand for such trails in NSW.

Contrast this to famous Otago Central Rail Trail in the remote South Island of New Zealand which sustains well over 14,000 rail trail users per year. In 2018/2019 the trail logged 15,029 users who journeyed from end to end, plus '… at least 80,000 (other) users on the trail either commuting or using the trail for short ride recreation.' (http://www.otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz/about-our-trail/nzs-original-great-ride/#rail-trail-numbers). It achieves these visitor rates with an island population of only 1.55 million in a nation with just on 5 million people in total and with comparable numbers of overseas tourists as NSW. Note that NSW, Victoria and Queensland have a combined population of approximately 18 million.

The nominated rail trails are all in scenic areas with many historic railway and other artefacts, other tourism attractions and established visitor infrastructure. Additional tourist accommodation can be developed organically as the visitor rates to the trails grow steadily over the years after opening.

Distances between towns appeal to experienced bicycle riders. The growing popularity and reducing costs of electric bicycles and wheelchairs means more people of varying ages, fitness and abilities can cover surprisingly long distance with relative ease.

	Rail Trail	Population within 1 hour by car or train	Population 1-4 hours by car or train
1	Molonglo (Bungendore, Captains Flat)	488,160	6.0 million
2	Holbrook to Corowa	255,275	5.6 million
3	Goulburn to Crookwell	89,306	6.6 million
4	Monaro (Queanbeyan, Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel, Bombala)	478,041	6.9 million
5	New England (Armidale, Black Mtn, Guyra, Glen Innes, Tenterfield)	72,291	4.2 million
6	Richmond Vale (Hexham to Kurri Kurri)	649,460	5.6 million
7	Cootamundra to Tumblong (Muttama, Coolac, Gundagai)	67,801	6.5 million
8	Wagga to Ladysmith (Airport, Forest Hill)	137,601	5.5 million
9	Batlow to Tumut	79,352	4.9 million
10	Bentley to Eltham extension (Lismore, Woodlawn, Bexhill, Eltham)	814,649	4.4 million
11	Blue Mountains (Emu Plains to Mt Victoria)	5,324,127	2.2 million

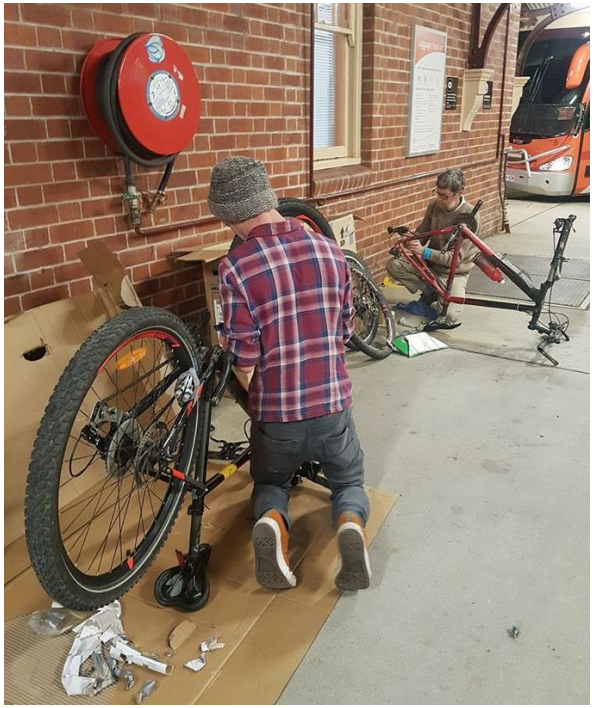
TRANSPORT to the TRAILS

The nominated rail trails are all accessible via NSW TrainLink services (with two, the Blue Mtns and Richmond Vale trails accessed via Intercity services), as well as being serviced by major highways and in some cases by the ACT or nearby regional airports.

Rail transport via XPT and Xplorer services to most of the trails will be greatly enhanced and better patronised when expanded capacity to carry more bicycles and wheelchairs more easily is provided. Roll on/roll off freight rather than the current cumbersome and time-consuming need for bicycles to be partially disassembly and boxed and for only 2 or 3 wheelchairs able to be carried on any one trip. Wheelchairs in excess of that means the extra wheelchairs are carried in the goods car. Many cyclists and wheelchair users often like to journey in small and sometimes larger groups such as clubs, when attending events.

Local transport services e.g. 'bike bus' are often established to service trail users. For example, the Tumbarumba Touring Company now offers a bike-bus option serving surrounding districts to both Tumbarumba and Rosewood.

Courtesy of Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail facebook page, 2020



"Marvellously 20th century modern tho' it is to be able to actually book your bike onto the train with a phone call, for anyone not super comfortable with a spanner this would be a serious turnoff to travelling on a train with your bike."

Photo and quote courtesy of Snowy River Cycling, 2020

ACCESSIBILITY

Rail trails are easily designed and built to be inclusive of people with widely differing mobility needs.

Walkers, runners, pram pushers, wheelchair and electric mobility scooter users as well as people who ride trikes or bikes can be accommodated on a suitably designed rail trail.

Surface conditions, widths, apron widths inside fencing, fencing materials, facilities, carparks and access points and avoiding creating steps along the route are key design considerations when planning an accessible trail for people with various mobility requirements.

Horse riding and pack animals (donkeys, llamas, etc) can be accommodated too provided the trail is designed accordingly and there is demand for such access.

Along the Bath to Bristol greenway (aka rail trail), UK. Photo courtesy of Tim Coen, 2019

Sandy Creek to Old Tallangatta - High Country Rail Trail (Vic)

Photos courtesy of Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail facebook page, 2020.

"We travel not to escape life, but for life not to escape us." Anonymous

CLUSTERS and SYNERGIES

Clusters of similar products and services are an effective and proven marketing technique.

Multiple trail offerings in NSW will create a state-based cluster generating synergies that will;

- attract commercial tour operators who will include them in tour itineraries
- entice long distance and international visitors confident of a great variety of trails, landscapes and towns to experience
- provide an alternative for the many NSW rail trail users who currently journey south to the established rail trails of north-east Victoria, north to the popular Brisbane Valley rail trail, west to South Australia and W.A or who travel to New Zealand, North America and Europe to use their extensive and popular trails networks
- complement other cycling offerings such as
    - summer downhill cycling at Thredbo in the Snowy Mountains
    - Cyclocross, Audax and road cycling around the state
    - MTB cycling and pump tracks at numerous locations within NSW

  A nearby rail trail will attract the family and supporters of competitors of other cycling and sporting activities to enjoy a relaxed time and for those visitors to stay longer in a region. Competitors too will enjoy a relaxing journey along a safe route before or after their competitions.

INVESTMENT

FEASIBILITY and OTHER STUDIES

A significant hurdle for Local Government and volunteer community Rail Trail committees is the funding of feasibility, engineering and other relevant studies required for a sound proposal. We urge the NSW Government to establish a fund similar to the Queensland Government's Rail Trail Local Government Grants program.

> *"The Queensland Government is investing up to $14 million over 4 years between 2017-18 to 2020-21 to support local governments to plan, design and construct rail trails."* See https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Travel-and-transport/Rail-trails/Rail-Trail-Local-Government-Grants-program

Our recommendation is for a once only allocation of $3.3 million for the 11 recommended new trail proposals, yielding an average allocation of $300,000 each to cover required studies and planning costs.

CONSTRUCTION and MAINTENANCE

Rail Trails for NSW estimate

- **for $265.2 million**
  NSW can construct a network of 11 new high-quality trails (884 klms) complementing the 3 already funded pilot rural tourist trails, serving local residents, domestic and international visitors alike for many years.
  That figure is based on an estimated average of $300,000 per kilometre which includes maintenance ($4,000 per klm p.a.) for the first 5 years after completion of the trail.

- **benefit over 3.1 million people well within 1 hour of the trails**
  initially from the construction phase and when completed for many more years to come. Other villages, towns and cities more than one hour from the trails will also benefit a great deal. The trails will attract many new visitors from the many millions of potential visitors only half a day away by car, train or plane. When international inbound tourism recovers, the trails will attract visitors from around the world, confident they will enjoy many days of activities, adventure, great scenery and hospitality in regional NSW.

- **achieved for a total one-off cost of only $34.12 per person in NSW**. ($271,250,000 / NSW pop. 7.95m)
  Spread over 3 years that is only $17 per person in year 1 and $8.60 per person in years 2 & 3.

MARKETING and PROMOTION

To maximise the return on investment it is advisable to undertake modest marketing and promotional activities for each of the trails as they open.

The NSW Government will have a great opportunity to engage the attention of people throughout NSW and interstate to reinvigorate regional tourism. This can be achieved via a one-off allocation to provide materials, to create special offers in conjunction with TrainLink and/or other services providers or to conduct advertising campaigns.

Marketing and promotion thereafter will be undertaken by Tourism Information Offices, Destination NSW, etc as per usual processes.

Our recommendation is for a once only allocation of $2.75 million in total for the 11 trail proposals, yielding an allocation of $250,000 each for marketing and promotions.

3 YEAR ALLOCATION of FUNDS

Lead times for multiple studies, assessments, planning, construction and marketing are best accommodated over staggered implementations, therefore Rail Trails for NSW recommends the program for these 11 proposals span a 3 year period as follows.

There is a strong case for the State Government to obtain co-contributions from the Australian Government from various drought, Covid-19 recovery and regional development funds for these projects.

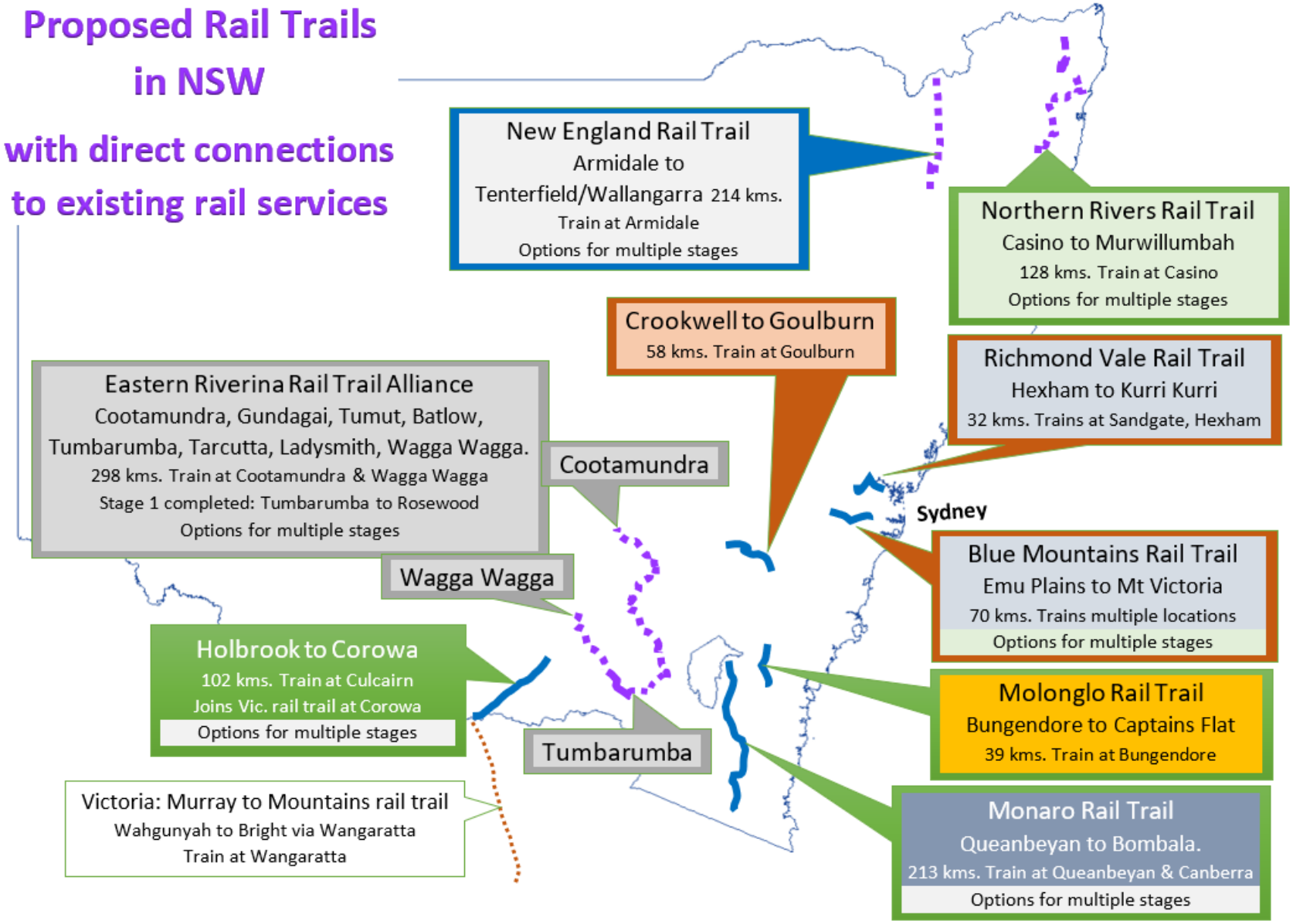
INVESTMENTS		
	FEASIBILITY and OTHER STUDIES	$ 3,300,000
	CONSTRUCTION and MAINTENANCE (884 klms)	$ 265,200,000
	MARKETING and PROMOTION	$ 2,750,000
	TOTAL	$ 271,250,000
ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS		
	2020/2021	$ 135,000,000
	2021/2022	$ 68,125,000
	2022/2023	$ 68,125,000

Photo courtesy of Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail facebook page, 2020.

"Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far." Thomas Jefferson

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Map of recommended trails



Appendix 2 – Recommended trails data

Molonglo Rail Trail (Bungendore to Captains Flat)

A 39 kilometre vehicle free, shared pathway from Bungendore (700m alt.) to Captains Flat (848m alt.) via Hoskinstown, with a very gentle average gradient of 0.4% enabling very easy, pleasant cycling for people of all ages. The district has mostly dry summers and cool winters with strong autumn colours, historic mining artefacts at Captains Flat and vibrant shopping and food options in Bungendore, all easily accessed from Queanbeyan as well as Canberra, a city renowned for its cycling. Easy access too from greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong as well as north eastern Victoria. This route will be become a very popular adventure for visitors to Canberra as well as being a prelude to the longer Monaro rail trail just a bit further south.

Adjacent population	4,977	
Population less than 1 hour by car or train	483,183	
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	134,428	
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	5,858,261	
Population 3 to 4.5 hours by car or train	851,838	
TOTAL POPULATION within 4.5 hrs	***7,332,687***	***= 49.3% of NSW, ACT, Vic***

(NSW 7,988,241 + ACT 420,960 + Vic 6,460,675 = population 14,869,876. ABS 2018)

PLUS other intrastate, other interstate and international visitors

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Bungendore	Hoskinstown	Captains Flat
Elevation	700 m	761 m	848 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	0.3%		
		0.4%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney - Bungendore	Sydney 07:12	Bungendore 10:35	Sydney 12:01	Bungendore 15:24	Sydney 17:42	Bungendore 21:21
Bungendore - Sydney	Bungendore 07:32	Sydney 11:04	Bungendore 12:32	Sydney 16:04	Bungendore 17:45	Sydney 21:16
Canberra – Bungendore via Queanbeyan	Canberra 06:55	Bungendore 07:32	Canberra 11:55	Bungendore 12:32	Canberra 17:08	Bungendore 17:45
Bungendore - Canberra via Queanbeyan	Bungendore 10:35	Canberra 11:20	Bungendore 15:24	Canberra 16:09	Bungendore 21:21	Canberra 22:05

Statistics: Molonglo Rail Trail

	Towns/villages	Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Kilometres from Bungendore	Kilometres between towns	Hrs.Mins from Bungendore. Bicycle at 15 kph
	Canberra (airport, train)	420,960			36.1	8.2	2.24
	Queanbeyan* (train)	36,348	*Monaro rail trail (proposed)		28.0	28.0	1.52
1	Bungendore (train)	4,178	4-Mar-1885	-	0	0	0
2	Hoskinstown	189	Nov-40	31-Aug-68	24.6	24.6	1.39
3	Captains Flat	610	7-Jun-40	27-Aug-69	38.7	14.1	2.35
		4,977			*38.7*		*2.35*

(Population data from ABS 2018 or 2016 Census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Holbrook to Corowa Rail Trail

A 102 kilometre vehicle free, shared pathway from Corowa (143m alt.) to Holbrook (289m alt.) via 7 towns spaced evenly, with a very gentle gradients enabling easy cycling. With mostly warm to hot dry summers and cool winters, spectacular views, strong autumn colours, spectacularly vivid Canola crops each year and a connection to the popular Murray to Mountains rail trail at Wahgunyah/Rutherglen just over the river Murray, will make this a popular route. In 2019 Destination Rutherglen counted 16,600 rail trail users, only 9 kms (25 mins by slow bicycle) from the trail head at Wahgunyah, only 3 kms (10 mins by slow bicycle) from the Corowa Railway station, the start of the trail. Maximum distance between towns is 19.1 kilometres or just over 1 hour at an easy 15 kph, even easier using e-bikes or e-wheelchairs. At around 4 hours per day maximum in the saddle, 2 stages are possible each of approx. 3 hours with a stopover at either Burrumbuttock or Brockelsby, providing a comfortable return journey of 4 days. Drink and rest stops every 60 to 90 minutes correspond to the time to get from village to village. This trail will synergise with the Murray to Mountains rail trail to provide a genuine big plains experience through iconic Australian scenery on a gentle route suitable for people of all abilities.

Adjacent population	10,766
Population less than 1 hour by car or train	244,509
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	115,884
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	441,874
POPULATION within 3 hours	***813,033***
Population 2x state capitals	10,193,679
POPULATION within 3 hours plus 2 state Capitals	***11,006,712 = 44% of Australia***

(Australia population 24,992,860. ABS 2018)

Plus other intrastate, other interstate and international visitors

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Corowa	Balldale	Brocklesby	Burrumbuttock	Walla Walla	Culcairn	Morven	Holbrook
Elevation	143 m	147 m	250 m	246 m	211 m	216 m	230 m	289 m
Avg Gradient	0.02%		0.04%		0.03%		0.3%	
Avg Gradient		0.6%		0.3%		0.2%		

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney - Culcairn	Sydney 20:40	Culcairn 03:37	Sydney 07:40	Culcairn 14:41
Culcairn - Sydney	Culcairn 23:36	Sydney 06:59	Culcairn 12:21	Sydney 19:47
Melbourne - Culcairn	Melbourne 19:50	Culcairn 23:36	Melbourne 08:30	Culcairn 12.21
Culcairn - Melbourne	Culcairn 03:37	Melbourne 07:30	Culcairn 14:41	Melbourne 18:30

Statistics: Holbrook to Corowa Rail Trail

Stages		Towns/villages on the rail trail	Adjacent Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Kilometres from Culcairn	Kilometres between towns	Hrs.Mins from Culcairn. Bicycle at 15 kph
Possible stage 3	1	Holbrook (Hume Hwy)	1,715	18-Sep-1902	04-May-75	26.2	19.1	1.17
	2	Morven	464	18-Sep-1902	04-May-75	7.0	7.0	0.28
Possible stage 2	3	Culcairn (train)	1,473	1-Sep-1880	-	0.0	0.0	0
	4	Walla Walla	836	3-Oct-1892	04-May-75	16.8	16.8	1.07
	5	Burrumbuttock	100	3-Oct-1892	04-May-75	28.8	12.0	1.55
	6	Brocklesby	238	3-Oct-1892	04-May-75	39.3	10.5	2.37
Possible stage 1	7	Balldale	150	3-Oct-1892	04-May-75	54.8	15.5	3.39
	8	Hopefield	308	3-Oct-1892	04-May-75	63.9	9.1	4.16
	9	Corowa (Murray River) (Murray to Mountains RT)	5,482	3-Oct-1892	unknown	76.0	12.1	5.04
			10,766			*102.2*		*6.21*

(Population data from ABS 2018 or 2016 Census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Goulburn to Crookwell Rail Trail

With easy access by train or road from Sydney and Canberra, this 58 kilometre vehicle free, shared pathway with very gentle gradients joining Crookwell (887m alt.) and Goulburn (702m alt.) has an average gradient of only 0.7%. The distance is perfect for an overnight stop after the outward journey with plenty of time for afternoon tea and dinner then a relaxed breakfast before the return journey the next day for the leisure rider with plenty of time to return to Sydney or Canberra. The dryer highlands makes for a distinctly less humid and often cooler climate than coastal NSW. Occasional light snow in winter is an added attraction. With vivid autumn colours, clear and crisp nights, bright days, other attractions and plenty of accommodation, restaurants and cafes will make this rail trail very popular. With very easy access from Sydney and Canberra it will attract many day and weekend visitors as well as holidaying visitors from NSW and interstate.

Adjacent population	26,476
Population less than 1 hour by car or train from the rail trail	62,830
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	1,002,747
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	5,615,583
POPULATION within 3 hours	***6,286,676 = 79% of NSW & 100% of ACT*** (NSW total population 7,988,241. ABS 2018)
Plus other intrastate, interstate and international visitors	

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Goulburn	Crookwell
Elevation	702 m	887 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	0.7%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive
Sydney - Goulburn	Sydney 07:12	Goulburn 09:44	Sydney 07:40	Goulburn 10:13	Sydney 12:01	Goulburn 14:32	Sydney 17:42	Goulburn 20:29	Sydney 20:42	Goulburn 23:14
Goulburn - Sydney	Goulburn 04:13	Sydney 06:59	Goulburn 08:22	Sydney 11:04	Goulburn 13:22	Sydney 16:03	Goulburn 17:14	Sydney 19:47	Goulburn 18:35	Sydney 21:15
Canberra – Goulburn	Canberra 06:55	Goulburn 08:22	Canberra 11:55	Goulburn 13:22			Canberra 17:08	Goulburn 18:35		
Goulburn - Canberra			Goulburn 09:44	Canberra 11:20			Goulburn 14:32	Canberra 16:09	Goulburn 20:29	Canberra 22:05

Statistics: Goulburn to Crookwell Rail Trail

	Towns/villages	Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Klms from Goulburn	Klms Between towns	Hrs.Mins from Goulburn at 15 kph
1	Goulburn (train)	23,835	19-May-1869		0.0	0	0.00
2	Crookwell	2,641	22-April-1902	1985	57.9	57.9	3.50
		26,476			*57.9*		*3.50*

(Population data ABS 2018 census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala via Cooma)

A wonderful 213 kilometre vehicle free, shared pathway from Queanbeyan to Bombala via Cooma, of various gradients providing variety, but mostly gentle slopes enabling easy cycling. The route has the heritage Colinton tunnel and many interesting historic wooden viaducts. The district has dry summers and cool to very cool winters with strong autumn colours, and vast, sweeping views of plains and the Snowy Mountains. There are a number of river and stream crossings and the towns between Queanbeyan and Cooma are well spaced making shorter trips very enjoyable with many options for rest, food and refreshments along the way. Nimmitabel at 1,075 m elevation is the highest town and is second only in altitude to the New England rail trail. Cooma and Bombala have well-preserved station precincts, many accommodation and refreshment options. The trail is easily accessed from Canberra, a city renowned for its cycling, as well as from Bungendore (and the Molonglo rail trail) via Queanbeyan. There is a train connection at Queanbeyan and Canberra, International airport and bicycle connections to Canberra and highway connections along most of the route to Cooma. This trail will rival the world famous Otago Central rail trail in New Zealand.

Adjacent population	132,259	
Population less than 1 hour by car or train	345,782	
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	190,155	
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	649,827	
Population 3 to 4 hours by car or train	454,560	
Population 4 to 5 hours by car or train	5,689,865	
TOTAL POPULATION within 5 hrs	***7,462,448***	***= 50% of NSW, ACT, Vic***

(NSW 7,988,241 + ACT 420,960 + Vic 6,460,675 = population 14,869,876. ABS 2018)

PLUS other intrastate, other interstate and international visitors

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Queanbeyan	Royalla	Cooma	Nimmitabel	Bombala
Elevation	576 m	800 m	800 m	1,075 m	705 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	0.9%		0.74%		
		0.7%		1.2%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney - Queanbeyan	Sydney 07:12	Queanbeyan 11:05	Sydney 12:01	Queanbeyan 15:53	Sydney 17:42	Queanbeyan 21:50
Queanbeyan - Sydney	Queanbeyan 07:04	Sydney 11:04	Queanbeyan 12:04	Sydney 16:04	Queanbeyan 17:17	Sydney 21:16
Canberra – Queanbeyan	Canberra 06:55	Queanbeyan 07:04	Canberra 11:55	Queanbeyan 12:04	Canberra 17:08	Queanbeyan 17:17
Queanbeyan - Canberra	Queanbeyan 11.05	Canberra 11:20	Queanbeyan 15:53	Canberra 16:09	Queanbeyan 21:50	Canberra 22:05

Statistics: Monaro Rail Trail

Stages		Locality	Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Klm from Queanbeyan	Klm between towns	Hrs.Mins from Queanbeyan at 15 kph
Possible stage 1	1	Queanbeyan (train)	36,348	8-Sep-1887	-	0	0	0
	2	Tuggeranong	85,154	8-Dec-1887	09-Mar-75	14.1	14.1	0.57
	3	Royalla	984	8-Dec-1887	09-Mar-75	25.4	11.3	1.42
	4	Williamsdale	84	29-Aug-1891	09-Mar-75	32.1	6.7	2.08
	5	Michelago	562	8-Dec-1887	unknown	48.6	16.5	3.15
	6	Colinton	127	31-May-1889	03-Sep-75	67.1	18.4	4.28
		Colinton Tunnel	0	31-May-1889		71.5		
	7	Bredbo	352	13-Jun-1891	unknown	78.3	11.2	5.13
	8	Chakola	47	31-May-1889	-	95.7	17.4	6.23
	9	Bunyan	152	31-May-1889	-	104.4	8.8	6.58
	10	Cooma (airport)	6,742	21-May-1889	-	113.2	8.7	7.33
Possible stage 2	11	Nimmitabel	320	20-Apr-12	26-Mar-86	152.0	38.8	10.08
Possible stage 3	12	Bombala	1,387	21-Nov-21	26-Mar-86	213.1	61.2	14.12
			132,259			*213.1*		*14.12*

(Population data from 2016 Census via Wikipedia. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

New England Rail Trail

With the train and an airport at Armidale and the New England Highway along much of the route, it is well connected to major centres in New South Wales and southern Queensland. It's not far from the popular Brisbane Valley rail trail and the proposed Norther Rivers rail trail at Casino and Lismore. Boasting the 1884 heritage-listed station at Ben Lomond, the highest in Australia at 1,363 metres, the route enjoys a highlands climate with cool winters, occasional snow, vivid autumns, bright springs and warm summers that ensure year round variety and great attractions for people living on the coastal lowlands and those on the sprawling plains of western NSW and Queensland. It's 214 kilometres offer safe, spectacular, vehicle free adventures for walkers, people on bikes and in wheelchairs. Gradients remain largely gentle between the 12 towns and villages, which are evenly distributed, suitable for both very short or longer journeys. A one way journey will take 3 days cycling for less than 5 hours per day at a moderate 15 kph or longer if all the attractions along the way are savoured. Return journeys of more than 6 days are likely. The towns offer accommodation, cafes, pubs, restaurants, museums, historic buildings and many opportunities to relax. The vistas of plateaus, mountains and rich farmlands make this a spectacular route for all visitors.

Adjacent population	38,402
Population less than 1 hour by car or train from the rail trail	33,889
Population 1 to 2 hours by car	136,947
Population 2 to 3 hours by car	777,693
Population 3 to 4 hours by car	3,329,568
Population 4 to 5 hours by car	791,520
Population 5 to 6 hours by car	5,601,508
POPULATION within 6 hours by car	***10,709,527 = 82% of NSW & Qld***

(NSW 7,988,241 + QLD 5,011,216 = population 12,999,457. ABS 2018)

Plus other intrastate, interstate and international visitors

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Armidale	Black Mtn	Guyra	Ben Lomond	Glen Innes	Tenterfield	Wallangarra
Elevation	980 m	1312 m	1330 m	1364 m	1062 m	850 m	878 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	1.0%		0.15%		0.22%		
		0.1%		2.1%		0.15%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney - Armidale	Sydney 09:33	Armidale 17:37
Armidale - Sydney	Armidale 08:40	Sydney 16:45

Statistics: New England Rail Trail

Stages		Towns/villages	Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Klms from Armidale	Klms between towns	Hrs.Mins from Armidale at 15 kph
Possible stage 1	1	Armidale (train, airport)	24,500	3-Feb-1883		0.0		
	2	Dumaresq	77	19-Aug-1884	16-Dec-74	9.8	9.8	0.39
	3	Black Mountain	310	19-Aug-1884	unknown	33.1	23.2	2.12
	4	Guyra	1,983	19-Aug-1884	unknown	42.9	9.9	2.52
Possible stage 2	5	Ben Lomond	152	19-Aug-1884	10-Dec-85	67.0	24.1	4.28
	6	Glencoe	192	19-Aug-1884	29-Mar-75	81.2	14.2	5.25
	7	Glen Innes	6,155	19-Aug-1884	unknown	102.5	21.2	6.50
Possible stage 3	8	Deepwater	307	1-Sep-1886	unknown	139.6	37.1	9.18
	9	Bolivia	66	1-Sep-1886	10-Sep-74	162.8	23.3	10.51
	10	Sandy Flat	209	1-Sep-1886	20-Feb-75	172.3	9.5	11.29
	11	Tenterfield	4,066	1-Sep-1886		195.0	22.7	13.00
Final stage	12	Wallangarra (Qld)	385	16-Jan-1888	unknown	213.9	18.9	14.16
			38,402			*213.9*		*14.16*

(Population data from 2016 Census via Wikipedia. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Richmond Vale Rail Trail (Shortland to Kurri Kurri)

You can explore many heritage sites along this 30 kilometre trail starting at Sandgate station very near to Shortland. The train connection from Newcastle and Sydney to Sandgate or Hexham stations makes it easy to get to this end of the trail. Heading around the Hunter Wetlands National Park towards Tarro you head south west onto a pathway to Fletcher and along the way can later take a side trail to really discover the Wetlands, a great place for birdwatching. From Fletcher you head towards Stockrington, then Richmond Vale where you can discover wonderful historic infrastructure such three beautiful brick lined tunnels and also stop at the Richmond Vale Railway Museum to view the old underground mining equipment. There are numerous bridges, deep cuttings and huge embankments along the way too. The journey finishes soon after at the beautiful old mining town of Kurri Kurri.

Adjacent population	16,088
Population less than 1 hour by car or train from the rail trail	633,372
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	345,447
Population 2 to 3 hours by car	5,256,381
POPULATION within 3 hours	***6,251,288 = 78% of NSW*** (NSW total population 7,988,241. ABS 2018)
Plus other intrastate, interstate and international visitors	

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Sandgate Station	Tarro	Fletcher	Richmond Vale	Pelaw Main	Kurri Kurri
Elevation	1.5 m	16 m	8 m	38 m	57 m	50 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	0.7%		0.3		0.5%	
Approx. Avg Gradient		0.2%		0.6%		

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Newcastle - Sandgate	Newcastle 03:18	Sandgate 03.31	Newcastle approx hourly	Sandgate 12 mins later
Sydney - Sandgate	Sydney 05:45	Sandgate 09:00	Sydney hourly	Sandgate 2h 46m or 3h 15m later
Sandgate - Newcastle	Sandgate 04.05	Newcastle 04:18	Sandgate at least hourly	Newcastle 12 mins later
Sandgate - Sydney	Sandgate 06:05	Sydney 08:57	Sandgate hourly	Sydney 3h later

Statistics: Richmond Vale Rail Trail

	Towns/villages	Population	Station Opened	Station Closed	Klm from Shortland/ Hexham	Klm between towns	Hrs.Mins from Shortland/Hexham at 15 kph
1	Shortland (near Sandgate station)	4,035	1881		0.0	0.0	0.00
2	Near Hexham station	130	1855	30-Oct-73	6.0	6.0	0.24
3	Tarro (extension)				(9)	(3)	0.36
4	Fletcher (extension)	5,136			(11.5)	(2.5)	0.46
5	Minmi (extension)	743	1860	1934	(14.5)	(3)	1.00
6	Stockrington (Dog Hole Rd)				18.5	4.0	1.14
7	Richmond Vale Railway Museum (extension)				(29)	8.5 + (3)	1.56
	Richmond Vale No 1 Tunnel		1857	1962			
	Sugarloaf Tunnel		1857	1962			
	Richmond Vale No 3 Tunnel		1857	1962			
8	Pelaw Main		unknown	unknown	30.7	16.3	2.03
9	Kurri Kurri	6,044	(short path from Pelaw Main)		32.4	1.7	2.10
		16,088			*32.4*		*2.10*

(Population data ABS 2018 census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Eastern Riverina Rail Trail Alliance

Includes Tumbarumba to Rosewood, Cootamundra to Tumblong via Gundagai, Wagga Wagga and Batkow to Tumut.
A 298 kilometre route of which only 32 kilometres are not on a former rail route. Gradients vary providing variety, fabulous views with 20 towns and villages along the way. Distances between towns enable both very short or longer journeys The complete route one way will take 5 days cycling for 4 hours per day at a moderate 15 kph but stretching to more days for a very relaxed holiday journey. With train connections to Sydney and Melbourne at Cootamundra and Wagga, an airport at Wagga and Hume highway connections at 3 towns, the route has many access points. There are very many accommodation and eating options along the way. The inland plains and highlands ensure a less humid climate more comfortable for vigorous exercise than coastal NSW. Autumn colours are vivid, with a chance of occasional light snow in winter on the higher ground. Vistas of plains, mountains, broad and deep valleys, lakes, rivers and rich farmlands make this a spectacular and varied route.

Adjacent population	78,782
Population less than 1 hour by car or train from the rail trail	78,819
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	677,053
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	313,175
Population 3 to 4 hours by car or train	5,584,642
Population 4 to 5+ hours by car or train	6,020,459
POPULATION within 5+ hours by car or train	***12,752,930 = 85.8% of NSW, ACT, Vic***

(NSW 7,988,241 + ACT 420,960 + Vic 6,460,675 = population 14,869,876. ABS 2018)

Plus other intrastate, interstate and international visitors

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Cootamundra	Gundagai	Tumut	Batlow	Tumbarumba	Rosewood	Humula	Ladysmith	Forest Hill	Wagga
Elevation	318 m	232 m	305 m	775 m	645 m	435 m	301 m	233 m	221 m	147 m
Avg Gradient	0.2%		2.23%		1%		0.1%		0.8%	
Avg Gradient		0.15%		0.4%		1%		0.04%		

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	Depart	Arrive	Depart	Arrive
Sydney - Cootamundra	Sydney 07:40	Cootamundra 12:46	Sydney 20:42	Cootamundra 01:47
Sydney – Wagga Wagga		Wagga 13:54		Wagga 02:52
Cootamundra - Sydney	Cootamundra 01:35	Sydney 06:59	Cootamundra 14:38	Sydney 19:47
Wagga Wagga - Sydney	Wagga 00:22		Wagga 13:07	
Melbourne – Wagga Wagga	Melbourne 07:00	Wagga 13:07	Melbourne 18:30	Wagga 00:22
Melbourne - Cootamundra		Cootamundra 14:38		Cootamundra 01:35
Wagga Wagga - Melbourne	Wagga 02:52	Melbourne 07:30	Wagga 13:54	Melbourne 18:30
Cootamundra - Melbourne	Cootamundra 01:47		Cootamundra 12:46	

Statistics: Eastern Riverina Rail Trail Alliance including Tumbarumba to Rosewood a State Govt pilot rail trail

Stages		Towns/villages	Population	Station Closed	Klm to towns	Klm from Cootamundra	Hrs.Mins from Cootamundra. Bicycle at 15 kph	Klm from Wagga	Hrs.Mins from Wagga Wagga Bicycle at 15 kph
Cootamundra to Coolac	1	Cootamundra (train)	6,782	-	0.0	0.0	0.00	298.4	19.54
	2	Brawlin	10	04-May-75	11.2	11.2	0.45	287.2	19.09
	3	Muttama	16	04-May-75	10.0	21.2	1.25	277.2	18.29
	4	Coolac (Hume Hwy)	216	unknown	16.0	37.2	2.29	261.2	17.25
Coolac to Gundagai to Tumblong	5	Mingay	18	06-Jul-71	5.4	42.6	2.50	255.8	17.03
	6	Gundagai	1,625	unknown	11.7	54.2	3.37	244.2	16.17
	7	South Gundagai (Hume hy)	300	20-Jan-75	1.8	56.0	3.44	242.4	16.10
	8	Tumblong	338	04-May-75	12.9	68.9	4.36	229.5	15.18
Tumblong to Gilmore	9	Gadara (Visy Mill)	100	04-May-75	24.2	93.1	6.13	205.2	13.41
	10	Gilmore	20	04-May-75	6.2	99.4	6.38	199.0	13.16
Tumut to Batlow	11	Tumut	6,230	04-May-75	5.1	104.5	6.58	193.9	12.56
	12	Batlow	1,313	04-May-75	21.1	125.5	8.22	172.9	11.32
Batlow-Tumba Link		via forest roads. (32 klms approx.)							
Tumba' to Rosewood Stage1 completed	13	Tumbarumba	1,862	unknown	43.9	169.4	11.18	129.0	8.36
	14	Glenroy (Hyne Mill)	100	04-May-75	8.3	177.7	11.51	120.7	8.03
	15	Rosewood	214	04-May-75	12.2	189.9	12.34	108.5	7.14
Rosewood to Ladysmith	16	Humula	124	04-May-75	25.3	215.2	14.21	83.2	5.33
	17	Tarcutta (Hume Hwy)	446	unknown	27.4	242.6	16.11	55.8	3.43
Wagga	18	Ladysmith	352	04-May-75	37.2	279.8	18.39	18.6	1.14
	19	Forest Hill (Wagga Airport)	2,274	04-May-75	9.3	289.1	19.16	9.3	0.62
	20	Wagga Wagga (train)	56,442	-	0	298.4	19.54	0.0	0.00
			78,782			*298.4*	*19.54*	*298.4*	*19.54*

(Population data ABS 2018 census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Northern Rivers Rail Trail a State Govt pilot rail trail – ***including Bentley to Eltham via Lismore extension***

With the train from Sydney at Casino, an airport at nearby Ballina and Pacific Highway connections at multiple points, the route is accessible from major population centres including south east Queensland. The sub-tropical climate with mild winters ensures year round activity. This 128 kilometre route is a safe, spectacular, vehicle free, shared pathway. Gradients vary in parts but remain largely gentle. There is great variety along the route with tunnels, bridges, fabulous views, shady cuttings. With 2 very fine regional Art Galleries and many cafes, shops, pubs, restaurants and accommodation options, the route has many attractions. Vistas of mountains, rivers, creeks and rich farmlands make this a spectacular journey for any visitor with the iconic peak of Wollumbin (Mt Warning) emerging as you approach Murwillumbah on the northern part of the trail.

Adjacent population	73,821
Population less than 1 hour by car or train from the rail trail	783,995
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	2,029,589
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	1,000,201
Population 3 to 4 hours by car or train	434,959
Population 4 to 4.5 hours by car or train	107,831
POPULATION within 4.5+ hours by car or train	***4,430,396 = 34% of NSW & Qld***
	(NSW 7,988,241 + QLD 5,011,216 = population 12,999,457. ABS 2018)
Plus 4 major centres by train to Casino	***6,362,025***
	(Central Coast 342,047 + Newcastle 369,018 + Sydney 5,230,000 + Canberra 420,960 = 6,362,025. ABS 2018)
Plus other intrastate, interstate and international visitors	

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Casino	Lismore	Eltham	Bangalow	Byron Bay	Mullumbimby	Murwillumbah
Elevation	26 m	12 m	15 m	30 m	4 m	28 m	5 m
Approx. Avg Gradient	0.3%		0.9%		0.4%		
		0.5%		0.9%		1.1%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney - Casino	Sydney 07:08	Casino 18:40	Sydney 14:40	Casino 02:19
Casino - Sydney	Casino 08:20	Sydney 20:13	Casino 19:30	Sydney 06:50

Statistics: Northern Rivers Rail Trail a State Govt pilot rail trail

Stages		Towns/villages	Population	Station Closed	Klm town/town	Klms from Casino	Hrs.Mins from Casino at 15 kph	Klms from Murwillumbah	Hrs.Mins from Mur'bah at 15 kph
Funded Stage 1A	1	Casino (train)	9,982	09-Apr-86		0.0		128.2	8.33
		Naughtons Gap & Tunnel	0			9.0		119.2	
	2	Bentley	0	30-Jun-74	12.2	12.2	0.49	116.0	7.44
Stage 2		**Bentley**							
	3	**Lismore (airport)**	**28,720**	**16-May-04**	**17.1**	**29.3**	**1.57**	**98.9**	**6.36**
	4	**Woodlawn College**	**880**	**28-Jun-78**	**5.3**	**34.6**	**2.18**	**93.6**	**6.14**
	5	**Bexhill**	**495**	**20-Jun-74**	**5.3**	**39.9**	**2.40**	**88.2**	**5.53**
	6	**Eltham**	**559**	**30-Jun-74**	**4.8**	**44.8**	**2.59**	**83.4**	**5.34**
Possible stage 3		Booyong Tunnel	0			48.6		79.6	
	7	Nashua	243	03-Jun-72	9.9	54.7	3.39	73.5	4.54
	8	Binna Burra	10	13-Mar-72	4.5	59.2	3.57	69.0	4.36
	9	Bangalow	2,021	04-Mar-86	3.8	63.0	4.12	65.2	4.21
	10	Byron Bay	9,246	16-May-04	12.9	75.9	5.04	52.3	3.29
	11	Tyagarah	152	19-Feb-72	7.8	83.7	5.35	44.4	2.58
	12	Myocum	985	30-Jun-74	4.6	88.4	5.54	39.8	2.39
	13	Mullumbimby	3,596	16-May-04	3.1	91.5	6.06	36.6	2.27
		Fords Gap Tunnel	0			93.5		34.7	
		Morrisons Hill Tunnel	0			95.5		32.7	
		Haynes Hill Tunnel	0			97.5		30.6	
	14	Billinudgel (Ocean Shores)	5,355	unknown	6.9	98.4	6.34	29.8	1.59
		Marshalls Hill Tunnel	0			98.9		29.3	
	15	Yelgun	100	unknown	3.1	101.4	6.46	26.7	1.47
		Bamberry Hill Tunnel	0			102.5		25.7	
Funded Stage 1B	16	Crabbes Creek	290	30-Jun-74	2.9	104.3	6.57	23.8	1.35
		Hull Hill Tunnel	0			105.3		22.8	
	17	Mooball	100	30-Jun-74	2.8	107.2	7.09	21.0	1.24
	18	Burringbar	858	23-Dec-67	2.4	109.5	7.18	18.7	1.15
		Burringbar Range Tunnel	0			114.3		13.9	
	19	Stokers Siding	655	30-Jun-74	10.2	119.8	7.59	8.4	0.34
	20	Dunbible	329	30-Jun-74	2.0	121.8	8.07	6.4	0.26
	21	Tweed Regional Art Gallery	(approx. 70,000 visitors p.a.)		4.3	126.1		2.1	0.09
	22	Murwillumbah	9,245	16-May-04	6.4	128.2	8.33	0.0	0.00
			73,821			***128.2***	***8.33***		

(Population data from 2016 Census via Wikipedia. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Blue Mountains Rail Trail

A 70 klm route with moderate gradients that commences at 25 metres above sea level near Emu Plains (between Penrith and Glenbrook) and ascending to 1065 metres above sea level between Blackheath and Mt. Victoria. It uses sections of abandoned historic rail routes with recreational trails linking into a total route ending at Mt Victoria. There is the spectacular historic sandstone Knapsack bridge, an historic rail bridge and Zig Zag section at Lapstone, a 634m long rail tunnel (aka 'Mushroom Tunnel', a former mushroom farm) at nearby Glenbrook in the lower Mountains plus rail cuttings in Wentworth Falls in the upper Mountains. At the top of the upper mountains between Blackheath and Mt. Victoria there is an extensive historic rail cutting with panoramic vistas. These are all part of the original 1830's single rail line that is no longer in use and where the rail tracks have already been removed. The trail traverses the entire Blue Mountains and is the critical link of the Manly to Mudgee vision. Crossing the greater Blue Mountains on foot or by bicycle will be a spectacular experience for locals and tourists alike and is very strongly supported by local bike and walking groups. In the future there is the prospect of including a defunct funicular line descending off the Blue Mountains down into Lithgow, which will extend the 70klm trail by some 25klm. The establishment of this trail will also encourage other forms of cycling tourism including national and international cycling events.

Adjacent population	79,260
Population less than 1 hour by car or train	5,324,127
Population 1 to 2 hours by car or train	1,020,692
Population 2 to 3 hours by car or train	709,547
Population 3 to 4 hours by car or train	466,123
POPULATION within 4 hours	***7,599,749 = 90% of NSW & ACT*** (NSW 7,988,241 + ACT 420,960. ABS 2018)
Plus other intrastate, other interstate and international visitors	

Elevations and Gradients (Approx via Google Maps)

Locality	Emu Plains	Glenbrook	Springwood	Katoomba	Medlow Bath	Blackheath	Mt Victoria
Elevation	25 m	163 m	371 m	1017	1050	1065	1043
Avg Gradient	1.8%		2.1%		0.3%		
Avg Gradient		1.4%		0.6%		0.4%	

Rail Trail: Train connections

TRAIN SERVICES	**Depart**	**Arrive**
Sydney – Emu Plains	Hourly	Hourly
Emu Pains - Sydney	Hourly	Hourly
Sydney – Mount Victoria	Hourly	Hourly
Mount Victoria - Sydney	Hourly	Hourly

Statistics: Blue Mountains Rail Trail

Towns/villages along the trail	Station Opened	Station Closed	Kilometres from Emu Plains	Kilometres between towns	Hrs.Mins from Emu Plains. Bicycle at 10 kph
Emu Plains	18-Aug-1868	-	0	0.0	0
Lucasville	15-Apr-1878	18-Dec-1892	4.9	4.9	29.4
Breakfast Point	1-Sep-1877	1889	5.4	0.5	32.3
Lapstone	24-Feb-64	-	6.2	0.8	37.1
Glenbrook Tunnel	11-May-13	-	7.8	1.6	46.9
Glenbrook	11-May-13	-	9.7	1.8	57.9
Blaxland	11-Jul-1867	-	14.0	4.4	1.24
Karabah Loop	4-Nov-1898	28-Jan-13	16.0	2.0	1.36
Warrimoo	9-Mar-18	-	16.9	0.9	1.41
Valley Heights	May-1875	-	20.0	3.1	2.00
Springwood	11-Jul-1867	-	22.2	2.3	2.13
Faulconbridge	15-Mar-1877	-	25.5	3.3	2.33
Linden	Aug-1874	-	29.4	3.9	2.56
Woodford	11-Jul-1868	-	32.9	3.6	3.18
Hazelbrook	1884	-	36.0	3.1	3.36
Lawson	11-Jul-1867	-	38.6	2.6	3.52
Bullaburra	16-Feb-25	-	40.3	1.6	4.02
Wentworth Falls	22-Jul-1867	-	45.2	4.9	4.31
Leura	6-Dec-1890	-	50.2	5.0	5.01
Katoomba	2-Feb-1874	-	52.5	2.3	5.15
Medlow Bath	21-Jan-1880	-	58.4	5.9	5.50
Blackheath	1-Aug-1862	-	63.3	4.9	6.20
Mount Victoria	6-Sep-1869	-	69.3	6.0	6.56
			69.3		***6.56***

(Population data from ABS 2018 or 2016 Census. Open, Closed, Distance data from https://www.nswrail.net/ or Google Maps)

Appendix 3 - Other potential rail trails in NSW

Name of Trail	Location	Length KLM
THIRLMERE TO BALMORAL RT	Thirlmere, Balmoral	13
BALMORAL VILLAGE – BRAEMAR RT	Balmoral, Braemar (near Mittagong)	13
BROKEN HILL TO SILVERTON RT	Broken Hill, Silverton	25
COWRA TO EUGOWRA RT	Cowra, Canowindra, Eugowra	80
COOLAH TO DUNEDOO RT	Coolah, Craboon, Dunedoo	53
MOLONG TO DUBBO RT	Molong, Dubbo	128
SANDY HOLLOW TO MERRIWA RT	Merriwa, Sandy Hollow, Denman	38
MUDGEE RT	Rylstone to Mudgee, Gulgong	91

Appendix 4 - Recent Interstate Rail Trail developments

Interstate trails improved or developed in 2019 & 2020 (from railtrails.org.au)

July 2020	Great Victorian Rail Trail (Vic) - three councils have engaged Tourism North East to deliver a Strategic Development, …. to help the GVRT reach its full potential.
July 2020	Copper Rail Trail: Wakefield Regional Council (S.A.) has opened the 26km Copper rt (Port Wakefield to Balaklava). … links with existing 11km Shamus Liptrot Rail Trail and an 18km trail to Leasingham on the Riesling Rail Trail.
July 2020	Bellarine Rail Trail (Vic)completion of new Drysdale road bypass.
July 2020	Barossa Rail Trail (S.A.) - opened the Barossa Adventure Station in the old rail yards at the trail end at Nuriootpa. The family friendly adventure facility features a one-kilometre mountain bike trail, zip-line, accessible trampolines, bespoke tower and slide, skate ramps, boulder walling, half-court basketball, sensory sound forest and serene picnic facilities.
June 2020	Capricorn Coast Pineapple Rail Trail (Qld) - a 400m extension was put up for tender to give access to the Station Quarter, linking the trail to the Yeppoon foreshore.
June 2020	Camperdown to Timboon Rail Trail (Vic) - $4.5 million funding for a new 20 klm section joining the Twelve Apostles trail.
May 2020	Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, (Qld) - the Brassall Bikeway, has reopened after improvements by the Ipswich City Council and the Qld Government.
May 2020	Ballarat–Skipton Rail Trail, Kuruc a Ruc Trail and Rainbow Bird Trail (Vic) - $500K to improve and upgrade these 3 multi-use trails.
May 2020	Southern Flinders Ranges Rail Trail (S.A.) - $200K to construct 17 klm of new path to join existing trails to make a 51 klm trail.
March 2020	Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail (Vic) - community members designed and installed photo panels at the former Woori Yallock Railway Station

March 2020	O'Keefe Rail Trail (Vic) a former Vic Railway's wagon installed thanks to Friends of the Bendigo-Kilmore Rail Trail (FoBKRT). Located beside the reconstructed platform at the old Axedale Railway Station, it has taken over 2 years to do.
February 2020	Yarra Valley Trail Stage 1a (Vic) officially opened. 7.5km for $8.5m.
February 2020	Atherton to Herberton shared use trail (Qld) - 50 volunteers planted approx. 350 trees, giving a total of around 500 trees now planted along the first stage of the trail
December 2019	Brisbane Valley Rail Trail The Queensland Government and Ipswich City Council have jointly invested in the construction of the Brassall Bikeway Stage 7.
December 2019	The North East Tasmania Rail Trail North East Tasmanian Rail Trail extension approved by parliament
November 2019	Great Victorian Rail Trail Mitchell Shire Council includes $50K for a feasibility study towards linking Seymour with the GVRT
November 2019	Completion of the Riesling Trail (SA) extension to Auburn which links it up with The Rattler Trail.
October 2019	High Country Rail Trail (Vic) completion of the Dry Forest Creek Bridge and its official opening
October 2019	Hamilton to Coleraine Rail Trail in Western Victoria completed improvements to the Rail Reserve leading Coleraine
September 2019	Great Victorian Rail Trail has been listed by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a non-profit organisation in Washington DC, along with six other iconic trails around the world as bucket-list-worthy international rail trail destinations
August 2019	Opening of The LINK CYCLE PATH connecting the South Burnett/Killkivan to Kingaroy Rail Trail to the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail.
August 2019	Wadandi Track in Western Australia, opens new 2klm section.
July 2019	O'Keefe Rail Trail in Victoria installs new signage that tell the history of Bendigo/Heathcote line.
July 2019	Mary Valley Rail Trail (Qld) opens
June 2019	The Bellarine Rail Trail (Vic) is now fully sealed between South Geelong and Drysdale
June 2019	Brisbane Valley Rail Trail opening of the heritage-listed Lockyer Creek Railway Bridge between Lowood and Coominya.
May 2019	Caboolture Rail Trail (Qld) Opens First Stage. 10.5km Caboolture to Wamuran Rail Trail, north of Brisbane
April 2019	**O'Keefe Rail Trail** in northern Victoria. - Friends of the Bendigo Kilmore Rail Trail, installed two bike repair stations
March 2019	Atherton Rail Trail (Qld) open a new extension between Platypus Park and Hastie Road

Appendix 5 – Land Values

REFS: Crompton, John L. (2000). The impact of parks and open space on property values and the property tax base.

"There is broad consensus that trails have no negative impact on either the saleability of property (easier or more difficult to sell) or its value. There is a belief among some, typically between 20% and 40% of a sample, that there is a positive impact on saleability and value. However, the dominant sentiment is that the presence of a trail has no impact on these issues."

Property Value/Desirability Effects of Bike Paths Adjacent to Residential Areas. University of Delaware. David P. Racca & Amardeep Dhanju (2006)

"The majority of studies indicate that the presence of a bike path/trail either increases property values and ease of sale slightly or has no effect. Studies have shown that neighbors of many bike paths/trails feel that the quality of life of their neighborhood has been improved, that the trails were a good use of open space, and in the case of abandoned railways were an improvement from before the trails went in."