



ForestrySA

ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy

November 2020

Adelaide Mountain Bike Club

Gravity Enduro South Australia

Human Projectiles Mountain Bike Club

Inside Line Downhill Mountain Bike Club



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This report was prepared by TRC Tourism for ForestrySA in relation to the development of the Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR) offer over 200 kilometres of purpose-built graded single track or shared-use trail suitable for mountain bikes in plantation forests, nature reserves and national parks.

The Cudlee Creek trails are one of the most popular and well used mountain bike facilities within Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges where some 50,000 locals and visitors undertake approximately 950,000 visits each year.¹

The trails and related infrastructure were destroyed during the devastating bushfires that started at Cudlee Creek on 20 December 2019 when more than 60% of the forest was burnt.

The primary purpose of the ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy is to provide the strategic directions to guide the post fire recreation and trail visitor future for the Cudlee Creek Forest, rebrand a section of the forest as the Fox Creek Bike Park and provide real benefit to the Adelaide Hills community.

The project team engaged with project partners and stakeholders including ForestrySA, Bicycle SA and mountain bike clubs in the development of the strategy.

The broader community was invited to contribute ideas for the strategic future of the Cudlee Creek trails through the SA Governments *YourSay* survey where some 720 individuals contributed.

The Current Situation

It is estimated that prior to the bushfires and Covid19 there were up to 15,000 mountain bike visitors to Cudlee Creek with the majority being mountain bikers.

There are approximately 950,000 mountain bike visits to the AMLR each year comprised of 26,200 from local population (within 40km of AMLR) who make 930,000 trips and 13,300 domestic day, overnight and international visitors who make 18,000 trips.

Cudlee Creek contains the largest number of trails when compared to the other trail hubs in the AMLR. When combined, the Cudlee Creek Forest area hosts the largest number and kilometre distance of trails.

The Potential

Covid19 has made predicting visitor growth and the economy challenging however during April - June 2020 there has been unprecedented growth in cycling business activity both through repairs and bike sales.

Prior to Covid19 there was increased growth in mountain biking across Australia and mountain biking continues to grow as one of the fastest family friendly lifestyle activities in Australia. Mountain Bike Australia's financial membership has grown by 59%, with nine new clubs established in the five years to 2018.

It is anticipated interest in Cudlee Creek will prevail with visitors predicted to increase based on growing interest in mountain biking and off-road riding.

There is potential to link Cudlee Creek with the AMLR to strengthen the proposal for Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges to become an international mountain bike destination.

¹ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

Cudlee Creek/Fox Creek Trail Network

ForestrySA are the forest managers for the Mount Lofty Ranges Forest (MLRF) which include Cudlee Creek Forest. The MLRF provides an extensive network of trails for forest visitors including walkers, trail runners, mountain bike riders and horse riders.

The excellent soil and elevation have enabled the professional design and construction of some 48,405 metres of mountain bike trails consisting of 11,081 easy (green), 24,851 intermediate (blue) and 12,473 difficult (black diamond) trails.

Cudlee Creek has the greatest number of trails within the AMLR and surpasses Eagle Mountain Bike Park which has 29 kilometres of trail.

Cudlee Creek Forest has attracted many events in the past including the Bike SA 24 hour race known as the Dirty Weekend and Inside Line Down Hill Mountain Bike Club successfully host a round of the National Gravity Enduro Series.

There is strong mountain bike club involvement in Cudlee Creek contributing to advocacy and on ground works. The focus and commitment of the groups have delivered the popular mountain bike experiences enjoyed today.

Businesses associated with Cudlee Creek include a small number of trail builders and developers, bike retailers, shuttle operators, tour operators, trail skill schools (all levels), cafes, wineries, outdoor adventure groups and camping and caravan parks.

The tragic fires of December 2019 and the destruction of Cudlee Creek Forest infrastructure has provided the opportunity and impetus to deliver a shared vision and future strategy for Cudlee Creek Forest trails.

Assessment of Cudlee Creek as a Mountain Bike Destination

A successful mountain bike destination is more than its physical trails. A combination of factors creates a destination that continues to attract visitors through its reputation for quality and a special experience.

At the core of attracting trail visitors are the environment and setting, the quality and quantity of trails, their accessibility and the interest and challenge offered. The provision of an adequate supply of services is also critical.

In June 2020 the views of community, government and mountain bike club representatives were sought during a workshop at Anderson Hill Winery. The Workshop was undertaken during the easing of Covid 19 restrictions however attendance was still limited.

Other key stakeholders were contacted directly for their views and during June and July 2020 the broader community was invited to contribute through the South Australian Government YourSay site.

Some 720 responses were received with the majority (580) being received on the mountain bike rider survey.

A detailed assessment of Cudlee Creek as a potential IMBA Ride Centre and mountain bike destination is included in Appendix E. The assessment also includes recommendations and improvements required for Cudlee Creek to become a mountain bike destination of choice. Based on the assessment suggested improvements were provided, a draft vision was developed together with a series of priority strategies.

Cost Benefit Analysis

An economic impact report was prepared for ForestrySA in relation to the development of the Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy. Modelling was based on estimates of annual user/uses of the trails and other assumptions utilised in quantifying spending in the region.

The analysis indicated that redeveloped trails would generate substantial positive economic benefits for the region during the construction phase and in the operations phase.

Construction Phase Jobs

A total of 31.1 FTE jobs (25.9 direct jobs and 5.2 indirect/induced jobs) would be generated during the construction period. The direct jobs comprise 18.9 jobs in on-site construction and 7.0 jobs in materials/equipment supply.

Operations Phase Jobs

The operations phase economic impacts of the trail are driven by the expenditure of visitors/users in towns adjacent to the trail and in the broader region. The ongoing growth in user numbers will support an increasing number of jobs in the region.

It is estimated that the operation of the trails would generate a total of 15.0 direct full-time equivalent jobs in year 1, increasing to 38.0 direct FTE jobs in Year 10. Total jobs (direct and indirect/induced) are 18.0 FTE in year 1 increasing to 45.0 in year 10.

Of the direct jobs in year 10, day visitors would account for 9.8 FTE jobs, overnight visitors for 20.9 FTE jobs and local/regionals for 14.3 FTE jobs.

The development of the trails will see the development of the local MTB service industry. The industry analysis highlights that total full time equivalent (FTE) jobs generated by trail users will be in: recreation services/other services (MTB hire, guides, equipment etc.) – 16.4 jobs in year 10 ; transport (including shuttles) 3.7 jobs in year 10 ; accommodation 5.5 jobs in year 10; food and

beverage 11.5 jobs in year 10; and other retail 5.9 jobs in year 10.

Benefit/Cost Analysis

Benefit Cost Ratios (BCR) were identified for 3 discount rates. For a trail project a 7% discount rate is appropriate, and the project yields a positive BCR of 5.9. The present value of total benefits (\$42.470 million) generated by the investment are 5.9 times the total costs of the project (\$7.200 million) over a 10-year period.

A full analysis of the economic impact assessment is available in the ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy - Economic Impact Assessment Report November 2020²

² ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy Economic Impact Assessment Report, TRC Tourism and Michael Connell & Assocs. November 2020.

ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy | November 2020



Draft Vision

Cudlee Creek Forest will be the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges nationally recognised mountain biking destination providing exceptional experiences, skill progression and events in harmony with the forest environment and within a culture that welcomes other forest visitors, families and a diversity of abilities.

A series of principles was developed to guide the vision, the objectives and 7 strategic priorities for the ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy. The Strategy will be implemented through the strategic priorities and strategies. Each strategy has a suite of actions identified that support the vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES		ACTIONS
1	Establish Cudlee Creek as the primary Mountain Bike Centre of the AMLR.	1. Establish links from Cudlee Creek to other AMLR mountain bike hubs via existing tracks and trails and new hero trails following recommendations within the Establishing the AMLR as an International Mountain Bike Destination.
2	Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences, and services to meet market needs.	2. Provide infrastructure, direction and technical expertise for Cudlee Creek that strongly reflects user and mountain bike market needs and provides the facilities required for sustainable growth of trails and ensuring enjoyment for the user and real benefit to the community.
3	Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity.	3. Through collaboration, communication and commitment to sustainability and biodiversity protection ensure experiences across the forest are enjoyed by many and new trails sit perfectly within the Cudlee Creek Forest landscape.
4	Develop Cudlee Creek's status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status.	4. Develop the trail infrastructure and experiences that encourage growth and progression through the sport of mountain biking from beginner to highly skilled competitive performers.
5	Develop governance and management arrangements that encourage, leadership, direction and long-term maintenance and resourcing	5. Develop strong governance arrangements that focus on expertise and collaboration and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Cudlee Creek Forest and strengthen its links to the greater AMLR experience.
6	Integrate the Cudlee Creek experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation.	6. Develop a Cudlee Creek experience that encourages integration and visitor growth within the community and provides through thoughts and actions a positive trail and cycling supportive community.
7	Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the AMLR through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee experience.	7. Grow the community benefits from the Cudlee Creek experience through marketing and promotion and presenting the restored and refreshed forest trails, the new mountain biking experience and the links across the AMLR.



1. Introduction

Trails are a rapidly growing leisure and tourism activity across Australia and the world.

1.1 Background

The Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR), which extends from the Barossa Valley to the tip of Fleurieu Peninsula, is a significant natural, cultural, recreational, and economic resource for the people of the region and its domestic and international visitors. The South Australian Government recognises the region's current importance and future potential to contribute to the development of Adelaide and the region as a thriving nationally and internationally competitive place to live, invest and visit.

Outdoor active recreation including trail running, walking, mountain biking and gravel riding have become increasingly popular ways for people to enjoy and appreciate natural areas. In many parts of the world trail networks have become significant visitor destinations which attract international visitors and contribute to economic sustainability and recreational opportunities for local and regional communities.

Mountain biking popular within the AMLR involves riding a purpose-built mountain bike on specially constructed mountain bike trails (often in bike parks or trail networks). It combines with gravel riding on other off-road trails such as fire-trails and shared use paths or a combination of each.

Mountain biking appeals to a range of users from beginners and family groups, to more adventurous cross-country and downhill riders.

Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges offers over 200 kilometres of purpose-built graded single track or shared-use trail suitable for mountain bikes in plantation forests, nature reserves and national parks.

Cudlee Creek Forest forms the southern section of the Mount Crawford Forest Reserve. The forest is popular with locals and visitors from the hills and suburbs who walk, run and mountain bike.

Mountain biking is the most popular trail activity in the area previously referred to as the Mawson Network Trails which is now generally referred to as the Fox Creek trails or just Fox Creek. The mountain bike trails are mostly within the General Forestry (plantation) zone with a small number of trails in the Native Forest Reserve. Cudlee Creek Forest has been a destination for South Australian mountain bike riders since the early 1990s.

The State Mountain Bike Plan of 2001 recognised the forest as a key project for testing sustainable trail design principles in local soils and landscapes, as well as a project for bringing key stakeholders together to work on common goals.

The Cudlee Creek trails are one of the most popular and well used mountain bike facilities within Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges where

some 50,000 locals and visitors undertake approximately 950,000 visits each year.³

ForestrySA's Cudlee Creek Forest and Coralinga Native Forest Reserves are recognised for biodiversity, recreation, and cultural heritage values. The ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Trails Fire Recovery Strategy (the Strategy) recognises these values and will focus on protection and enrichment of these values and sustainability.

There are walking, trail running and cycling trails within Cudlee Creek Forest. The long distance Heysen Trail runs through the reserves and the Mawson Trail runs on roads adjacent to and in the reserves.

The trails and related infrastructure were destroyed during the devastating bushfires that started at Cudlee Creek on 20 December 2019 when more than 60% of the forest was burnt.

The fires had a devastating impact on the Mount Lofty Ranges landscape, communities, and the towns adjacent to Cudlee Creek Forest, Lobethal and Woodside.

The primary purpose of the ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy is to provide the strategic directions to guide the post fire recreation and trail visitor future for the Cudlee Creek Forest, rebrand a section of the forest as the Fox Creek Mountain Bike Park and provide real benefit to the Adelaide Hills community.

The Strategy will:

- Deliver the future direction for recreational enhancements, opportunities, experiences, and facilities for the mountain bike trail network, including identifying/setting its context as a nationally recognized mounting biking destination.
- Provide a development and funding framework aimed at generating significant community, recreational and economic benefit in the wake of the 2019 Cudlee Creek fire.
- Re brand the trail network to raise its status as a significant mountain biking destination.
- Identify sections of forest that are not currently included in the existing trail network and would be appropriate for expansion of trails.
- Identify how other trail experiences and activities can effectively and cooperatively share the forest experience.

³ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

Figure 2. Forestry SA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy



1.2 Methodology

The development of the ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy involves four stages.

1.2.1 Interviews and Site Visits

The project team engaged with the project partners and stakeholders including ForestrySA, Bicycle SA and community and mountain bike partners.

ForestrySA recognised the risk caused by the 2019 fires and the resulting forest harvesting operations and closed the Forest until restoration and safety works could be completed. The project teams were able to undertake initial assessment of the trail experiences.

Due to the COVID19 self-isolation constraints these discussions were limited to individuals or small groups, online discussion, and survey.

Consultation was undertaken with a range of stakeholders including the Adelaide Hills Council, BikeSA, Office of Recreation Sport and Racing and the Department for Environment and Water. Discussions also took place with representatives from mountain bike clubs, experts in trail management, local businesses, community organisations and groups.

Previous planning, conversations with existing users and the YourSay survey were analysed in the development of the picture and vision for the Forest.

1.2.2 Project Steering Group

A Project Steering Group was established at the commencement of the project to advise ForestrySA and the consultants on the project. The Project Steering Group consisted of:

- Forestry SA
- Adelaide Hills Council
- Department for Environment and Water
- BikeSA
- South Australian Tourism Commission
- The Office of Recreation Sport and Racing SA

A Project Reference Group was established and included representatives from the four mountain bike clubs and associated groups including:

- Adelaide Mountain Bike Club
- Gravity Enduro South Australia and Gravity Girls
- Human Projectiles Mountain Bike Club and Foxy Creekers
- Inside Line Downhill Mountain Bike Club

A combined workshop for the members of the Project Steering Group and the Project Reference Group was held at Anderson Hill to develop a collective vision, undertake a SWOT analysis, and identify what needs to change for the strategic future.

1.2.3 Have Your Say Community and MTB Rider Survey

The broader community was invited to contribute ideas for the strategic future of the Cudlee Creek trails through the SA Governments *YourSay* survey.

The survey questions focussed on existing use, what would encourage future use, what ideas are there for improvement and what barriers to use are experienced. The survey also gathered information on interested community and user profiles.



1.2.4 Building a Trails Destination

The consultation and survey sought views on how Cudlee Creek Forest can become a site for great trail experiences whilst recognising how popular sections of the forest are for mountain biking. The current and future trail experiences were assessed and considered in relation to trends, community expectations, desires, and community benefit.

A major consideration was the relationship between different uses and users and if trail activities could be compatible.

1.2.5 Building a Mountain Bike Destination - Delivering the Vision

The consultants undertook assessment of how Cudlee Creek performs and how it can improve based on the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), Ride Centre destination assessments.

Comparisons between Cudlee Creek and similar mountain bike destinations were undertaken and Cudlee Creek's point of difference was determined.

This guided the assessment of ForestrySA's Cudlee Creek Forest mountain bike trail network and supporting infrastructure.

A vision for Cudlee Creek Forest Reserve trails was developed to guide the future trail experience.

Infrastructure requirements required to deliver the vision where identified together with recommendations, economic Impact analysis and development of actions including funding, monitoring, governance, and maintenance.

1.2.6 Economic Impact Analysis

A regional impact assessment was undertaken to detail the economic impact covering the two phases of a future project – the construction and operation phases (10 year analysis).

Impacts were measured in terms of:

- direct jobs and indirect/induced jobs generated in the region and the state
- the jobs generated are estimated by industry sector and location
- the increase in regional income (direct and indirect/induced).



2 Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as a Trail and Cycle Tourism Destination

This section provides an overview of the strategic context for the development of trail and mountain bike tourism in Cudlee Creek Forest and the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges.

2.1 Adelaide Hills Visitor Economy

Prior to COVID19 the number of visitors to the Adelaide Hills had grown for both domestic and international visitors.

The future is unclear however tourism, visitor and activity trends indicate a surge in popularity for outdoor active sports, cycling and in particular off-road cycling.⁴

From December 2016 to December 2018 the Adelaide Hills received around 181,000 visitors contributing \$172 million in visitor spending and generating 1,200 jobs for people employed directly by the tourism industry, 400 indirect jobs and a total employment impact of 1,600 people.⁵ A snapshot of tourism to the in the Adelaide Hills and the surveyed visitor activity is presented in Figure 3.

Regional Tourism Vision

The Adelaide Hills tourism industry will be collaborative, innovative, sustainable, and highly profitable - generating vibrancy and growing tourism demand. By 2020 the Adelaide Hills will have high appeal to domestic, international and day trip visitors - providing an integrated 'best in class' experience that encourages longer stays and return visits.⁶

2.1.1 Regional Goals

The Adelaide Hills Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-2020 identifies three regional goals reflecting its close proximity to Adelaide, seasonal climate, diverse experiences, strong epicurean offering, and natural beauty. The industry goals for the next five years capitalise on these assets:

1. Working Together: We are an integrated and coordinated tourism region that presents a compelling reason to visit for Adelaide and Adelaide Hills residents, their friends and relatives, and interstate and overseas tourists.

2. Effective Marketing: We are all proactively promoting the region via digital platforms and traditional media, and industry and consumer events to raise awareness and grow the tourism market.

3. Building Capacity and Capability: We support the sustainable development of and investment in, existing and new tourism ventures (including events) that bring more people to the region and get them staying longer and spending more.⁷

⁴ Latz Report 2020

⁵ Adelaide Hills Regional Profile, prepared by the South Australian Tourism Commission, December 2018

⁶ Adelaide Hills Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-2020

⁷ Adelaide Hills Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-2020

A clear competitive advantage for the Adelaide Hills Region is the ability to connect its broader experience offer with cycling opportunities. This is strongly linked to see and experience the Adelaide Hills by bike and is associated with mountain biking on Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges trails and at Cudlee Creek. This advantage is recognised in *Establishing the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Region as an International Mountain Bike Destination*.⁸

The SA Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2020 seeks to continue this strong momentum and unprecedented growth for the next decade and sets a bold ambition of growing the Visitor Economy and generating additional jobs in South Australia. This will result in significant, long term impacts upon the South Australian economy, driving wealth creation, investment, and a well-deserved sense of pride in our State.

The longer-term effects from COVID19 are yet to be determined however the pandemic is having some interesting effects on the cycling and outdoor active industry.

The pandemic has affected differing industries and businesses in very different ways. The hospitality industry has been hit hard however the cycling industry across Australia and New Zealand in seeing unprecedented growth.

Sale of commuting bikes has increased significantly and so have sales of Ebikes (electric assisted bikes), mountain bikes and gravel bikes. This is reflected in a surge in demand for off road bike trails and mountain bike trails.⁹

The SA Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2020 identifies great opportunity to develop our assets into outstanding tourism experiences. "Hero Experiences" that offer unique, world-class, highly appealing visitor experiences have a transformative effect on the surrounding area, pulling in high value visitors who are more engaged

with the destination, extending length of stay and increasing overall yield.

The plan supports:

- the development of unique and appealing experiences that are focussed on South Australia's strengths
- leverage opportunities provided by the State's natural assets on both public and private land and encourage tourism engagement through the development of compelling experiences.
- develop linkages between experiences to create clusters.

The strategic development of mountain bike, cycling and other trail experiences within the Adelaide Hills at Cudlee Creek can benefit from the current surge in interest and provides opportunity to develop new appealing hero visitor experiences.

⁸ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination TRC Tourism 2015

⁹ Latz Report 2020

Figure 3. Snapshot of tourism to the Adelaide Hills

TOURISM IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS

December 2016 -
December 2018



2.2 Establishing the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination

The Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Mountain Bike Plan set priorities for projects that provide the greatest potential to grow the visitor economy and raise the profile of the area as a mountain bike destination.

The plan identified the region as having excellent opportunity for the development of a world class network of mountain bike trails building on the existing well developed and popular trails. The popularity of the trails with the local community is expected to grow and interstate visitor numbers to the mountain bike trails is expected to increase with the development of “hero rides”, promotion amongst mountain bike networks and the development of new events including a range of technical and mass participation events suited to different riders.

The greatest short-term growth in visitors is likely to be the non-core riders that are attracted to SA for other reasons such as the upgrading of the Sport Park facilities at Gepps Cross and the Adelaide Super-Drome, the home of the Australian Cycling Team, the South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) track cycling program and CyclingSA¹⁰, the Tour Down Under, other cycling events and food and wine.

With appropriate facilities, services and promotion visitors may be interested in one or two days of riding as part of their holiday. Promotion of riding to experience parts of the AMLR and nearby areas will be important to leverage the broader tourism market with opportunity to connect the AMLR to and from the city.

The Cudlee Creek Forest is ideally placed to provide this experience. The Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR) plan identified approach and priority actions including:

- **consolidation** of trail hubs that offer the greatest potential to achieve the vision and creating the longest rides through appropriate linkages
- **lead trails** – a small number of outstanding trail experiences that have the pulling power to persuade a visitor to come to the AMLR and generate the greatest economic benefit
- **supporting trails** – a less prominent visitor offering but provide a quality visitor experience to support leading trails and hubs and important recreational opportunities for local communities
- **local trails** – important to the local community and often have developed through local action.

The AMLR plan identified priority projects including:

Governance and funding

- Establish and resource a governance model that provides for coordinated implementation of the plan by multiple stakeholders and identification of sustainable funding mechanisms for long term development, promotion, and maintenance of the network.

Community and partnerships

- Develop a communications plan and engage with the community in a way to encourage support and participation in the trail network.
- Implement a range of partnerships with recreational user groups, the private sector and tourism industry progress the plans recommendations.

Trails and trailhead infrastructure

- Refine and improve the lead trails networks and hubs to create a strong world class network including prioritising infrastructure that will enable the IMBA ride centre and or Epic Ride to be created.
- Undertake feasibility assessment to determine the best hero descending trail as an experience that will be attractive to a range of markets – implement high quality trailhead facilities befitting a world class network.
- Develop a world class example of urban bike park.

¹⁰ <https://www.orsr.sa.gov.au/>

Tourism and marketing

- Work with the private sector to ensure appropriate consumer focused support services and new businesses as the visitor numbers grow.
- Develop a strategy to attract world class events to the region.
- Work with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) and regional tourism to embed mountain biking into the brand essence of the region.
- Establish a brand identity for the mountain bike network and use this as the basis for a new online and other appropriate collateral.

In summary the plan measures success by:

- a vibrant tourism economy with new and expanded bike friendly businesses servicing the visitors
- being known elsewhere in Australia and internationally for our excellent network of sustainable trails and we have grown our visitor numbers
- we are hosting events that attract mountain bike riders from interstate and overseas.¹¹

Cudlee Creek and the surrounding trail community can be a major contributor to the establishment of the AMLR as an important local, national, and international destination. It cannot provide all the event locations but would in collaboration with other hubs provide an excellent site to establish national and international events.

The AMLR plan estimates that the combined visits by local and visitor markets contribute upwards of \$11M in direct expenditure each year.

Under a low growth scenario based on participation and population growth forecasts, visitors annual rates set by Tourism Forecast Committee and two national or international events, the AMLR plan predicted an increase in annual visitor expenditure to \$16.3M in five years.¹²

The strategy recognises the need for the ongoing development of mountain biking to attract more visitors, increase the average length of stay and provide more opportunities for higher-yield markets.



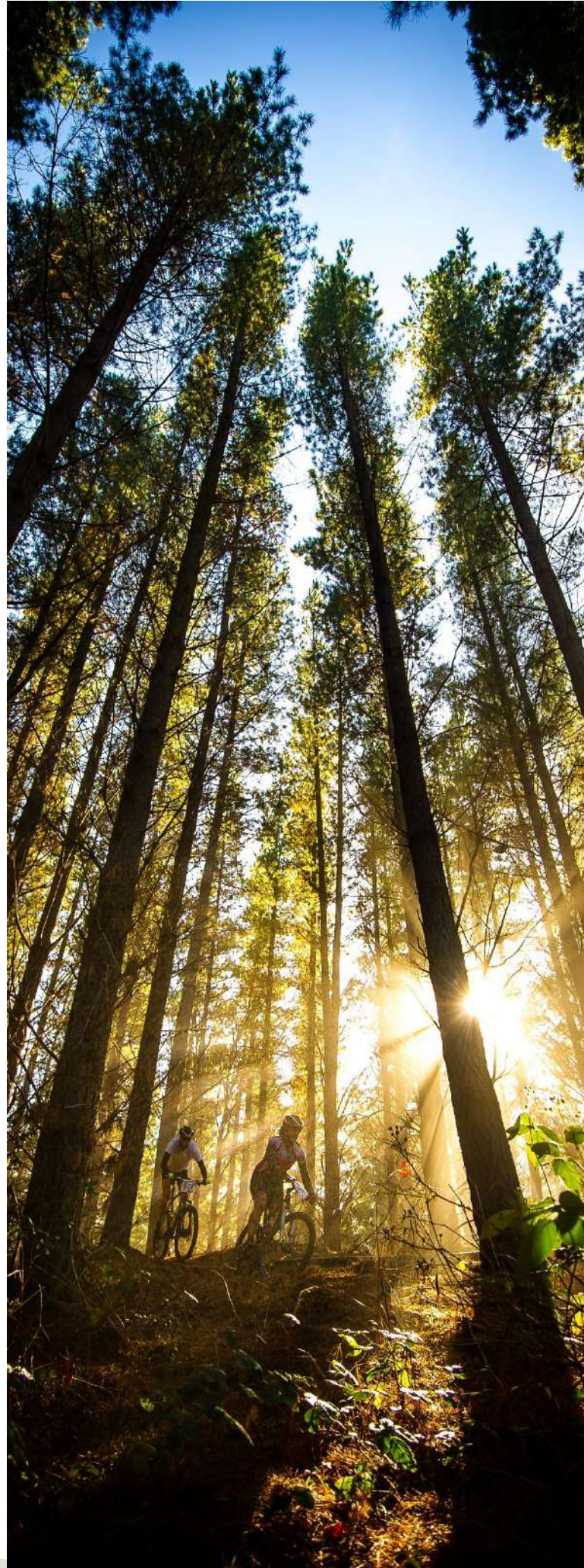
¹¹ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

¹² Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

Links to Cudlee Creek Forest

The AMLR plan identified Cudlee Creek Forest area as a mountain bike facility that can provide a suite of lead trail experiences and provided recommendations including:

- continue to refine and improve trail network, trailheads and event infrastructure and consider accommodation and other commercial opportunities
- examine the possibility of developing Cudlee Creek with the aim of achieving IMBA Ride Centre certification. This may require creating trail links to nearby townships of Lobethal and Cudlee Creek, in order to satisfy some of the essential criteria for 'non-trail services' (i.e. shops, accommodation, medical services)
- investigate and implement the best options for management of traffic
- develop a hero descending cross country style trail from Cudlee Creek to Adelaide linking to River Torrens Linear Park 8-12km length
- mountain bike/gravel trail touring route connecting all AMLR mountain bike hubs including dedicated single track including IMBA Epic status (80% single track and greater than 32km)
- being part of a northern trail hub providing opportunities and a spread of economic benefits through linking parks, forest and now reservoirs.



2.3 Mountain Biking and Tourism

Research indicates that cycling tourism is on the rise across the world, with an increasing number of adventure tourists embarking on both road and mountain biking tours.¹³ The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) identified cycle tourism as a key growth adventure tourism activity worldwide in their Global Report on Adventure Tourism 2013.¹⁴

Bicycle Industries Australia indicates that approximately 1.3 million bicycles were imported into Australia in 2018, with 26 per cent being identified as mountain bikes (approximately 338,000). Approximately 70% of the bikes sold in Australia are mountain bikes.¹⁵

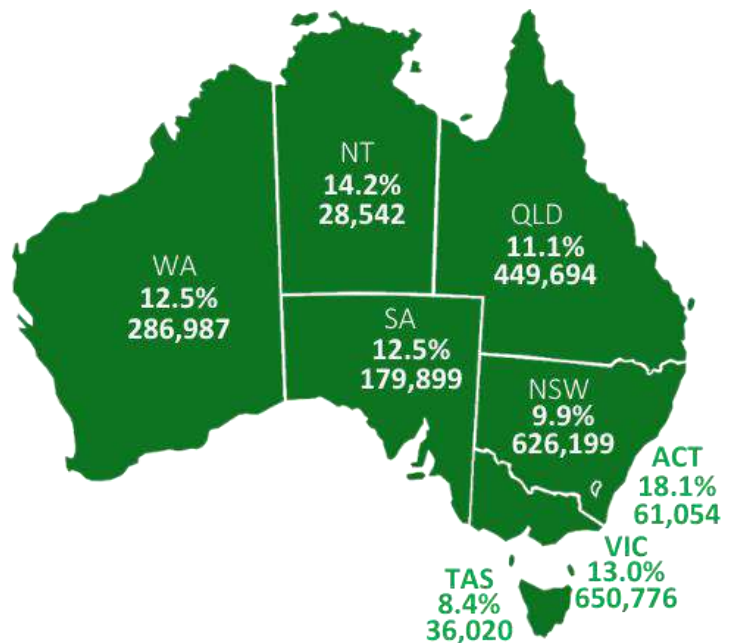
2.3.1 Participation

Mountain biking continues to grow as one of the fastest and most popular family friendly lifestyle activities in Australia. Nationally it is estimated that 2.3 million adults participate in cycling. SA ranks equal fourth with WA for participation rates per capita when compared to other States and Territories¹⁶ (see Figure 3).

Data on the actual participation in mountain biking in Australia is largely collated from two sources – MTBA’s database and statistics and the Ausplay National Sports Participation Survey 2018. A summary of this data is presented in Figure 4.

Mountain Bike Australia’s (MTBA) database exceeds 70,000 individual members and over the last four years, MTBA’s financial membership has grown by 59%, with nine new clubs established in 2018, taking total club representation across Australia to 168. Around one third of clubs are based in NSW (refer Figure 4).

Figure 4. National cycling participation rates per state/territory¹⁷



¹³ WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION 2014. Global Report on Adventure Tourism. Madrid: UNWTO.

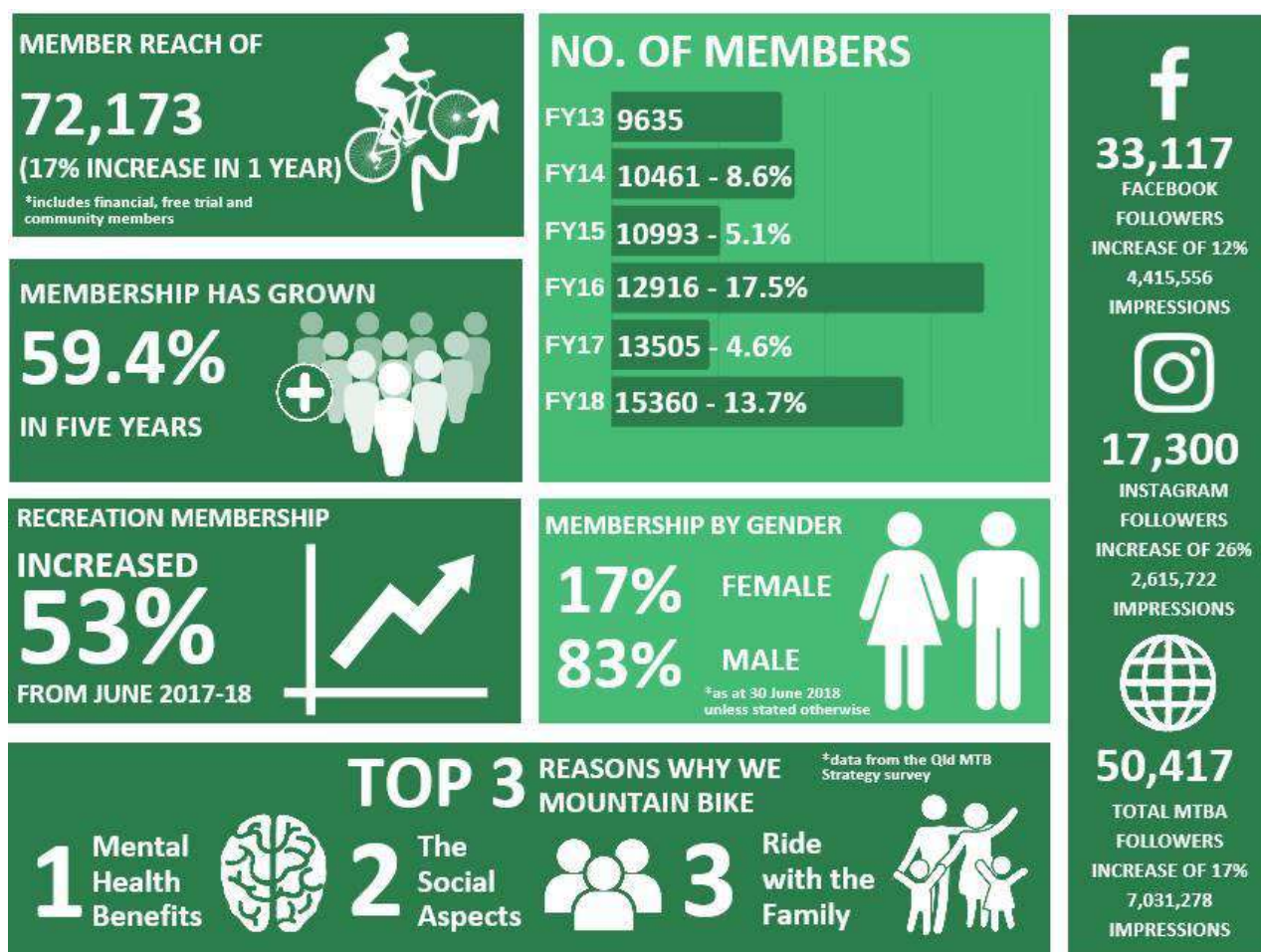
¹⁴ United National World Tourism Organization (2013), Global Report on Adventure Tourism, AM Reports: Volume nine, UNWTO, Madrid

¹⁵ <https://www.bikeoz.org/>

¹⁶ Ausplay National Sports Participation Survey 2018 for the period January-December 2018,

¹⁷ Ausplay Cycling - State of Play Report 2018

Figure 5. Mountain Bike Australia Membership Snapshot 2018¹⁸



2.3.2 Mountain Bike Tourism in the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges

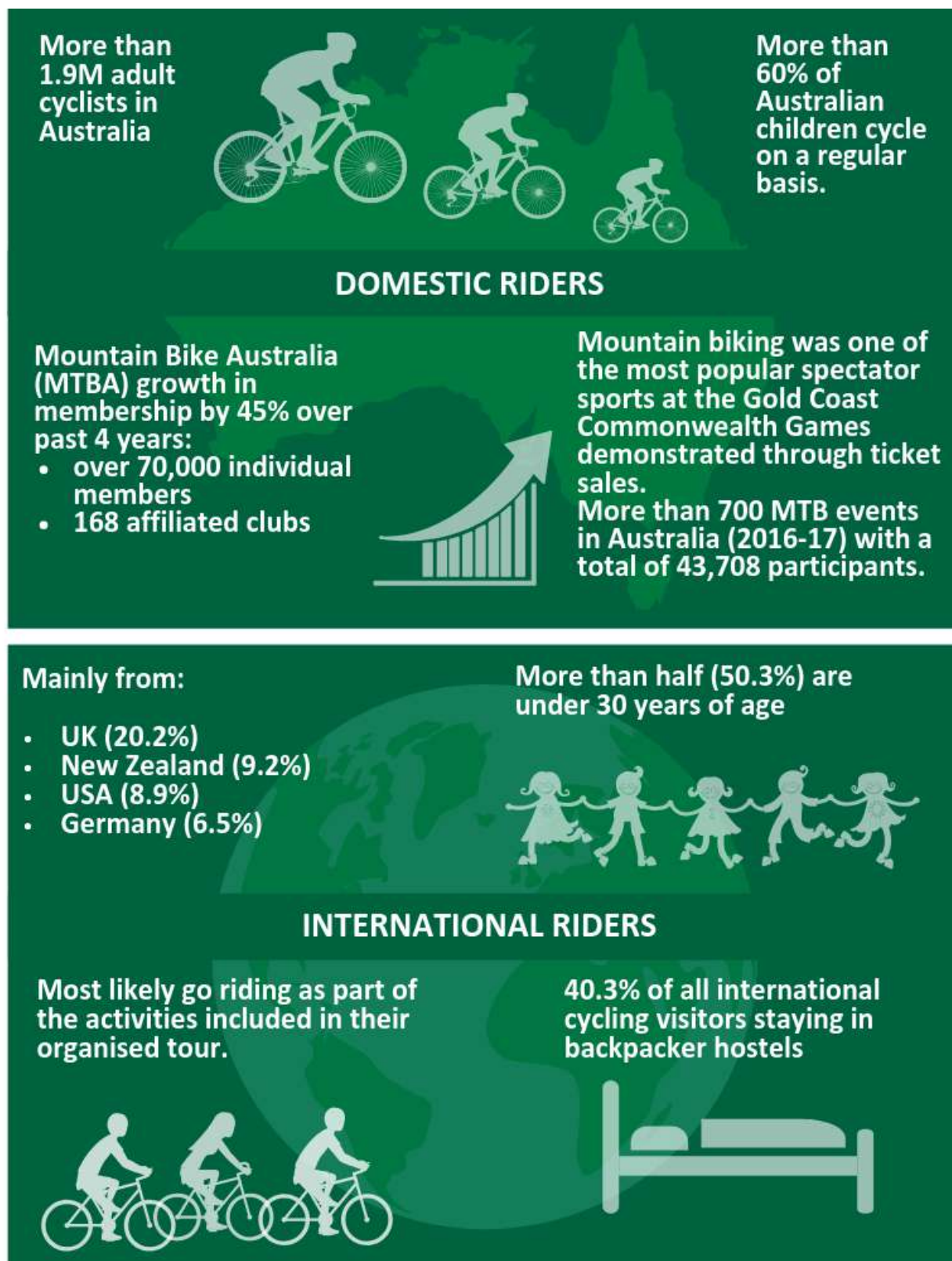
Approximately 3.5 million visitors travelling in Australia participate in cycling activities/events (either as a participant or as a spectator) generating just under 19 million nights across Australia.¹⁹ Around 25% of visitors these participate in mountain biking (871,000).

The Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR) plan using information from the local population and the estimated visitor markets estimated around 950,000 AMLR mountain bike visits each year comprised of 26,200 from local population (within 40km of AMLR) who make 930,000 trips and 13,300 domestic day, overnight and international visitors who make 18,000 trips.

¹⁸ MTBA Annual Report 2018

¹⁹ National Visitor Survey March 2019

Figure 6. Snapshot of Australian and International Riders ²⁰



²⁰ Ausplay Cycling – State of Play Report 2018 — www.austroads.com.au/road-operations/bicycles/national-cycling-strategy, Mountain Bike Australia Annual Report 2017/18, Mountain Bike Australia Participation/Performance Snapshot Nov 2017, Tourism Research Australia International Visitor Survey

2.4 Forecast Growth in Mountain Biking in the AMLR Region

The increase in demand for mountain biking will be generated by residents as well as visitors to the AMLR.

Covid19 has made predicting visitor growth and the economy challenging however during April - June 2020 there has been unprecedented growth in cycling business both through repairs and bike sales.

“Families are buying bikes and hitting the cycle paths in hordes. Gravel bikes, touring bikes and adventure bikes are in great demand”.²¹

There is rapid interest in cycling of all types including investment in off road cycling experiences. Consumers who have taken up cycling amidst social distancing may not continue particularly with increasing traffic as the world returns to “normal”.

Importantly however it is evident that there will be added interest in local and intrastate travel as international travel restrictions will continue.

It is anticipated interest in Fox Creek will prevail with existing visitors predicted to increase based on increasing interest in mountain biking and off-road riding.

2.5 Investment by other States and Territories

Over the last ten years mountain bike trail networks and bike parks have been developing across Australia and attracting local, domestic, and international visitors. For example, Tasmania, Northern Territory, and all other States are currently investing in mountain bike tourism. Investment is also occurring across regional NSW, including the Snowy Mountains region. These

destinations have been investing in trail infrastructure, support facilities and management as well as developing the wider tourism/visitor experience both on and off trail.

Victoria’s High Country has experienced a 40 per cent rise in cyclists touring the region in just 12 months. This has identified the North East as one of the world’s top trail cycling destinations.

An extra 40,000 cyclists have visited the region since the Victorian state government invested \$12 million into the North East Cycling Optimisation Project. The project builds upon the almost 250 kilometres of scenic sealed rail trails, dozens of mountain bike tracks and spectacular road rides that are found across Victoria’s High Country.

The North East Cycling Optimisation Project is expected to create up to 183 jobs and attract up to 393,000 visitors each year once the new extension and enhancements are completed.²²

The first year of the project shows that the region is on track to double cycling visitors – to 200,000 a year – by 2022, driven by a \$4 million marketing campaign to highlight the region’s renowned cycling routes and scenery.

In total, cycling tourism contributed \$81 million to the region’s visitor economy last year – an increase of \$31 million in the 12 months.²³

International destinations such as Sentosa Singapore, Rotorua and Queenstown in New Zealand continue to develop their trail infrastructure through a combination of private and public sector investment. Infrastructure has included gondola rides to the summit and gravity-based adventure rides. A notable example is provided as a Case Study in Appendix B.

This national and international groundswell of effort being put into developing trails reflects the growing popularity of mountain biking.

²¹ Latz Report May 2020

²² <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/north-east-victoria-a-cycle-destination-of-choice/> July 2017

²³ Latz Report November 2019

Stakeholders have suggested that investment in the South Australia's trail network has not been keeping up with trail demand and competition from other states and territories in recent years.

Mountain biking linked to gravel and other forms of off-road cycling has the potential to support significant tourism growth to the AMLR. To remain competitive as a mountain bike destination investment in the trail network and off trail experience is required to meet the needs and preferences of this high yield market.





3 The Mountain Bike Market

This section presents an overview of the characteristics of different mountain bike markets and types of mountain bikes.

3.1 Different Markets

The size, activity patterns and needs of the Australian market can be broadly divided into:

- core riders (technical, endurance and all-rounders)
- non-core riders (leisure riders).

Mountain bikers are generally categorised in either the riding genre (all-mountain, cross country, downhill) and/or by their ability (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced).

A number of mountain bike riding styles have evolved since the sport began in the 1980's. Cross-country riding is the most popular style of riding due to its relative ease of participation, however there has been significant growth in recent years in the gravity riding styles such as Gravity Enduro and also the jump and stunt focussed styles such as Freeride and Dirt Jumping.

Mountain bike riders can be broadly divided into core and non-core riders:



Non-core Mountain Bikers:

- complete novices
- road bikers that occasionally ride
- families seeking safe enjoyable places to ride away from cars
- school groups (often guided by tour operators)
- off-road bike tourers
- with increased skill, may eventuate into Core Mountain Bikers.



Core Mountain Bikers:

- high levels of expenditure on gear and equipment
- high amount of time spent mountain bike riding
- high willingness to travel to go mountain biking
- high likelihood of participating in competitive events.

The following table summarises the styles of mountain biking. The descriptions provide an indication of skill levels, riding frequency, preferred trail types and the approximate market size of each rider type.

Table 1. Specific MTB trail markets

Market	Characteristics	Size of Market
Leisure (non-core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active families are attracted to a destination that offers happy, healthy, sustainable and safe family adventure. There is a strong trend in tourism driven by the motivation of many city-living families to escape the urban environment. They seek opportunities for their children to experience the outdoors and self-select a break from screen time by providing a fun and exciting alternative. This increasingly includes short breaks. Depending on skill levels they may be drawn to easier but varied terrain, and safe rides of up to 8-35 km per day (depending on child age and ability). They like points of interest, views, places to rest and break up the journey, and keep children interested in their surroundings. Support services (equipment, shuttle) and complementary visitor experiences may be of interest to this group. 	Large
Endurance trail rider (core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the age group of 22–55 years, predominantly male with growth in female and higher income groups. They have a strong interest in challenging terrain, steep climbs and descents. They will ride long distances, up to 75km/day, and are compatible with multi-day experiences. They may complete more than one segment of a multi-day ride per day, depending on conditions. This group will travel to destinations that offer quality experiences and epic rated rides and they will spend on riding experiences and equipment. 	Moderate
Downhill specialists (core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination Mountain Bikers. Younger, mainly male. High socio-economic group, interest in travel to 'iconic' experiences which may be combined with other mountain biking experiences in the region. Can walk, bike or fly into start points. Strong desire for excitement, challenge, skill development, speed and sense of adventure. Mix of competitive and non-competitive elements. Downhill tracks of varying difficulty. Sweeping corners. Mix of straight runs, switchbacks and jumps. 	Moderate
Technical skills and trick riders (core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination Mountain Bikers. Young (22 – 40 years), predominantly male, and high expenditure on equipment and experiences. Challenge and skill development are strongest motivators. Prefer natural and built obstacles, downhill sections. Usually seek 'Bike Park' facilities where obstacles designed for trick riding Extensive built structures with mix of difficulty. Trail networks at a single destination preferred. Depends on suitability of trail and challenge available. 	Small

Market	Characteristics	Size of Market
Event participants (core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination Mountain bikers. • Young (22 – 50 years). • Regular participants/travellers for mountain biking experiences. • Higher socio-economic group, high expenditure as part of travel. • Organised event context, offering either competitive (traditional market) or non-competitive gatherings, set -around a style of riding, a set distance, or a theme (such as a night ride). • Social element (shared across competitive and non-competitive events). • High quality of ride experience – groomed trails, numerous trail features, rewarding landscape features (such as viewpoints). • Trails to be the ‘best of the best’. • Courses designed for maximum user experience/wow factor (no ‘dead wood’ distances if possible). • Ideally event offering ‘al group’ services according to varying levels of skill within a social or club group or a family unit. • Peripheral entertainment/visitor offerings (food, other attractions, entertainment, accommodation). • High level of on-course catering (feed stations, first aid, marshals). • High level of communication/information before and during event. • Will respond to event offering in the region. Likely to be return competitors if events are successful. • May remain in-region to experience other ride opportunities available. • Emerging competitive events including Gravel and Cyclocross which is similar to gravel riding but with purpose-built bikes. 	Small
Adventure Cycle Touring/Gravel (non core)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedition touring involves cyclists attempting extended travel in remote regions often off the beaten track. • Often self-sufficient, equipped with racks, panniers, and heavy-duty tires and purpose-built bicycles built to cope with long-haul touring on tracks and unsealed roads. Often part of an extended journey. • Focusing on freedom of travel and efficiency over varied surfaces, cyclists often adopt an ultralight camping approach and carry their own minimal gear may remain in the area for extended time often (bikepacking). • Compatible with multi-day experience depending on trail design/construction and maintenance. 	Small

3.2 Different Needs

These markets can be further separated into the categories of local, domestic visitors and international visitors to gain an understanding of the needs and expectations of each.

The cycle tourist is much more likely to undertake a range of other activities compared to non-cycle tourists, explaining why the cycle tourist's average spend is much higher than non-cycle tourists. Of interest is their tendency to eat at restaurants, go to licensed venues and go shopping; all activities which would benefit an Adelaide Hills economy.

Table 2. Needs of local, domestic and international visitors

Who	Needs
AMLR Residents	
<p>Children and families seeking a safe entry level or skills development/progression experience.</p> <p>Riders in the young adult to middle age groups.</p> <p>Experienced local riders who have ridden for many years in the region and who continue to contribute to the trail network through building, maintenance and other activities.</p> <p>Schools, outdoor education and youth groups from within and near the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails and bike parks accessible from population centres and together offering a range of trail types. • Inter-connected trail networks offering a range of difficulty levels and technical challenges. Ideally offering at least a day's riding. • Skills parks, and skills coaching. • Participative and competitive events. • Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport. • A range of trails accessible for shorter 1 to 4-hour rides near places of work and living. Trails generally for the local user market although will travel more broadly to key trails regionally and will travel nationally for longer weekend breaks and short holidays. • Some feature rides that might include long descents, well designed and constructed features, outstanding scenery and other features. • Diversity of offerings including technical trails.
Domestic Visitors	
<p>Riders in the young adult to older age groups who may visit the region specifically to ride a trail network or bike park.</p> <p>Club members on trips.</p> <p>Schools, outdoor education and youth groups from nearby and outside of the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail networks and bike parks that offer 2 to 3 days riding and a range of trail type and difficulty levels. • Iconic and challenging rides. • Multi day epic trail with support services to make experience more accessible. • Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport. • Bike hire and repair services. • Good pre-trip information and booking. • Engaging immersive interpretation. • Nearby accommodation, facilities and transport that is bike friendly, allowing for washing, storage and access to bikes. • School or special interest group, guided experiences that offer environmental or cultural learning, outdoor skills development, challenge and team building opportunities.

International Visitors	
Mainly visitors from UK, USA, Germany, Canada, Netherlands aged from young adult to over 55s, travelling alone or with a partner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iconic and challenging rides and trail journeys. • Outstanding trail networks and bike parks that offer 2 to 3 days riding and a range of trail type and difficulty levels. • Multi day epic trail with support services to make experience more accessible. • Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport • Bike hire and repair services. • Accommodation and food and beverage appropriate for people travelling long distances for an outstanding experience. • Good pre-trip information and booking. • Signature events.



A snapshot of mountain bike cycle tourists

- Predominately male, with an age of 22-55 years and a high disposable income. They are generally professional with above average earning capacity.
- Travelling with their spouse or partner (53%) or children (46%). Overall, 64% of participants/spectators engaged in the cycling experience with at least two others (i.e. three or more people), highlighting the social aspect of the activity.
- The family and the wider visitor market continue to demand a range of activities, not just mountain biking.
- Use their own bike (68%) or hire a bike (30%).
- Stay overnight and travel more than four hours or 50 km away from home (72%).
- Most visitors undertake other activities during their stay.

3.3 The changing nature of mountain biking

In the last few years there have been significant advances in mountain bike technology, which is redefining the type of experience desired by riders. Australian, New Zealand and international bike industry reports indicate that many of these trends have continued and have in fact increased.²⁴

Electric and power assisted bikes represent one of the fastest growing segments of the bike industry as they allow riders to extend their cycling distances. Electric bikes help in overcoming hilly terrain or a lack of fitness, can assist in rehabilitation after injury or illness and are a cost effective and green transport solution.

In 2015, just over 40 million e-bikes were sold worldwide, of which more than 90% were sold in China, 5% in Europe, and 0.7% in USA.²⁵ This exponential growth, has been reiterated by global research company Mordor Intelligence who have estimated that by 2028, one in two bicycles purchased will be an e-bike.

'Specialized' are a global bicycle company, shipping bikes across the world. They are experiencing a 150% year on year growth in e-bike sales, with 80% of these being mountain bikes.

From a sales perspective, Specialized note that the Australian market has been initially conservative about the uptake of e-bikes compared with New Zealand. This could be due to the lack of existing infrastructure for e-bikes in Australia and some negativity about the use of e-bikes and the slower limited speed of 25km/hr (New Zealand permits 32km/hr). Despite this, the Australian market is growing in e-bike use and interest, with Specialized forecasting that Australian e-bike sales will overtake New Zealand sales in 2020.²⁶

²⁴ Latz Report 2020

²⁵ Monzano E. et al., The Electric Bicycle – Worldwide Research Trends 2018

²⁶ Sustainable Trails Conference 2019, E-bike Data, Specialized



4 Mount Lofty Ranges Mountain Bike Network

This section provides an overview of AMLR trail network, its supporting infrastructure and management arrangements.

4.1 Hubs and trails

AMLR mountain bike trails are located in the following formalised riding areas:

- Belair NP
- Brownhill Creek RP
- Cleland CP
- Cobbler Creek RP
- Craighorn Farm/Sturt Gorge RP
- Eagle Mountain Bike Park
- Mt Crawford Forest - Cudlee Creek/Fox Creek
- Kuitpo Forest
- Mitcham Trails – City of Mitcham
- Onkaparinga RP
- Shepherds Hill RP
- O’Halloran Hill RP
- Anstey Hill RP - On designated trails and compatible with other recreational activities.²⁷
- Black Hill CP/Morialta CP.

There are also a number of informal MTB trails across the AMLR.

The 14 formalised riding areas operate with the permission and oversight of ForestrySA, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Office for Recreation Sport and Racing (ORSR) and other land managers and owners.

Many of the AMLR National Parks and Conservation and Recreation Parks have

enabled cycling in the parks through recent amendments to management plans.

Cudlee Creek/Fox Creek has been a destination for South Australian mountain bike riders since the early 1990s.

The State Mountain Bike Plan of 2001 recognised the forest as a key project for testing sustainable trail design principles in local soils and landscapes, as well as a project for bringing key stakeholders together to work on common goals.²⁸

Eagle Mountain Bike Park was established by the Office for Recreation Sport and Racing ORSR to recognise the growing need for recreation and racing events. The mountain bike park hosted the Australian Mountain Bike Championships from 2010 - 2012.

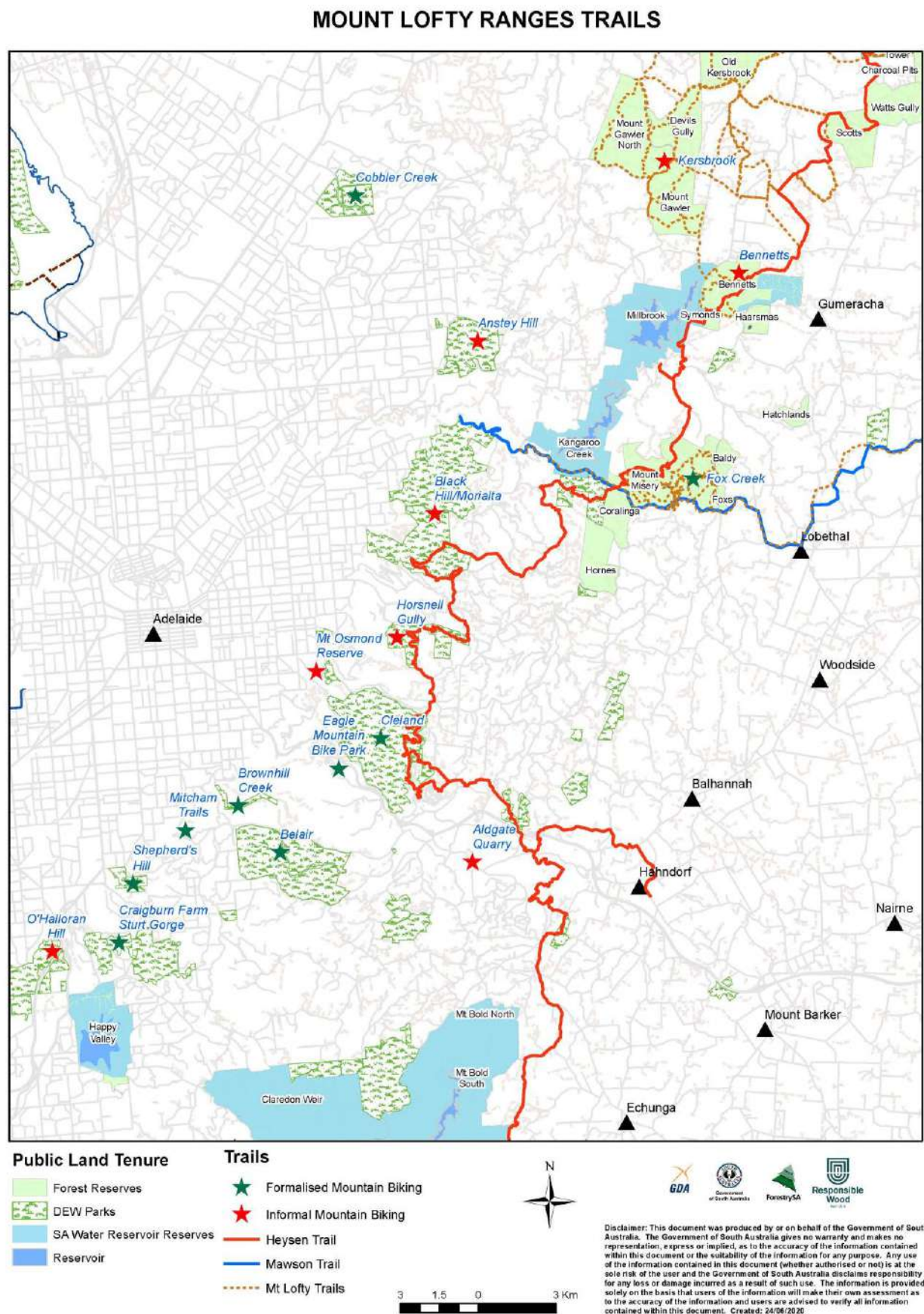
AMLR mountain bike trail network is made up of 14 hubs with the majority operating independently. They play a significant part in the local mountain bike market and contribute to a future domestic and international visitor offer.

²⁷ Anstey Hill Recreation Park Management Plan Amendment 2017

²⁸ The State Mountain Bike Plan for South Australia 2001-2005 (Office for Recreation and Sport, and Bicycle SA, 2001)



Figure 7. Location Map



5 Cudlee Creek/Fox Creek Trail Network

ForestrySA as forest managers for the Mount Lofty Ranges Forest (MLRF) maintain certification to the Australian Forestry System AFS (AS 4708) via the Forest Management System, which provides a framework of sustainable forest management practices and processes.

The Mount Lofty Ranges Forest Management Plan 2014 facilitates strategies identified in the ForestrySA Strategic Plan, including to:

- maintain Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) certification
- leverage community engagement opportunities; and
- maintain and enhance the reputation of the business.

In 1992 the Native Vegetation Council and ForestrySA agreed to a process for the vegetation zoning of Forest Reserves. This resulted in three vegetation management zones across the MLRF:

- *General Forestry Zone*: includes commercial plantations and other plantings and land uses related to commercial timber production. These areas are exempt from the requirements of the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.
- *Conservation Zone*: contains areas of remnant and regenerating native vegetation managed for conservation purposes. These areas are included within gazetted Native Forest Reserves and as small areas of native vegetation scattered throughout the forest reserves. Conservation zones areas are protected under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* and remain protected for conservation purposes in perpetuity.
- *Transition Zone*: contains commercial and non-commercial plantings, sometimes in significant numbers, as well as native vegetation. These zones are managed to increase their conservation values through the removal of the remaining

pinus, weed control and sometimes plantings with native species.

The MLRF contains approximately 6,200 ha of native vegetation in Conservation and Transition Zones. The native vegetation in the MLRF contributes significantly to biodiversity conservation.

Larger and more significant areas of native vegetation within forest reserves are generally gazetted as Native Forest Reserves (NFRs) under the *Forestry Act 1950* and managed under the *Forestry Regulations 2005*. The MLRF contains 14 gazetted NFRs covering about 4,200 ha.

Plant associations of conservation significance found within Cudlee Creek Forest include *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* Candle Bark Gum Forest which has a very limited distribution and is confined to the wettest high valleys of the MLR.

Cudlee Creek Native Forest Reserve contains significant specimens of *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* (Candlebark gum) rated rare for South Australia and vulnerable for the region.

5.1 Recreation Trails

The MLRF provides an extensive network of trails for forest visitors. State and ForestrySA trails cater for walkers, trail runners, mountain bike riders and horse riders.

Cudlee Creek Forest will be the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges nationally recognised mountain biking destination providing exceptional experiences, skill progression and events in harmony with the forest environment and within a culture that welcomes other forest visitors, families and a diversity of abilities.

State-based trails traversing Cudlee Creek Forest include the Heysen Trail, Mawson Trail and the Fox Creek mountain bike trails. These State based trails and a network of ForestrySA trails link with other visitor facilities and provide a range of recreational opportunities for forest visitors.²⁹ Horse riding is provided within other MLRF areas including the Mount Crawford Forest Reserves including the Kidman Trail. Horse riding is not permitted in Cudlee Creek Forest due to the large areas of Native Forest Reserve and extensive established single track mountain bike trails.

5.2 Mountain Bike Trails

The excellent soil and elevation have enabled the professional design and construction of some 48,405 metres of trails consisting of 11,081 easy (green), 24,851 intermediate (blue) and 12,473 difficult (black diamond) trails.

The mountain bike trails within the area were funded by a range of providers including Office for Recreation Sport and Racing, Volunteers, IMBA Australia, Bike SA, ForestrySA and Mountain Bike Clubs

Cudlee Creek has the greatest number of trails within the AMLR and surpasses Eagle Mountain Bike Park which has 29 kilometres of trail.

5.3 Fox Creek Mountain Bike Network

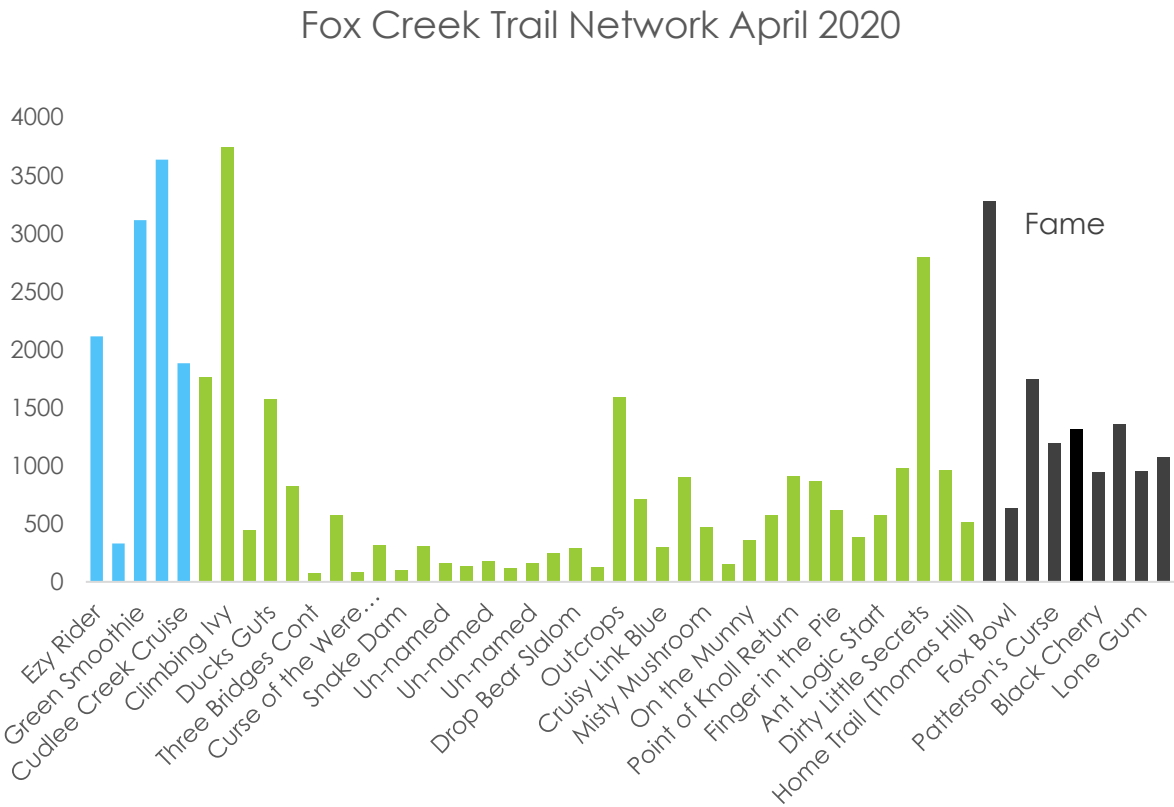
Fox Creek situated within Cudlee Creek Forest contains the largest number of trails when compared to the other trail hubs in the AMLR (refer Figure 7). When combined, the Cudlee Creek Forest area hosts the largest number and kilometre of trails.

Different trail types suit different styles of riding and typically each trail type will have specific design attributes. Using the IMBA rating system (refer to Appendix C), the greatest length of mountain bike trails in Fox Creek are blue trails with 24, 851 metres this is almost double the 11,081 metres of green and 12,473 black trails.³⁰

²⁹ The Mount Lofty Ranges Forest Management Plan 2014

³⁰ Trails Audit Destination Trails 2020

Figure 8. Fox Creek Trail Types and Meterage



Trails by Difficulty	Total Distance	% of Trails by Type
Green Circle Trails	11, 081	23%
Blue Square Trails	24,851	51%
Black Diamond Trails	12,473	26%
Total MTB Trails	48,405	

Figure 9. Cudlee Creek Forest Trails pre 2019 Fires

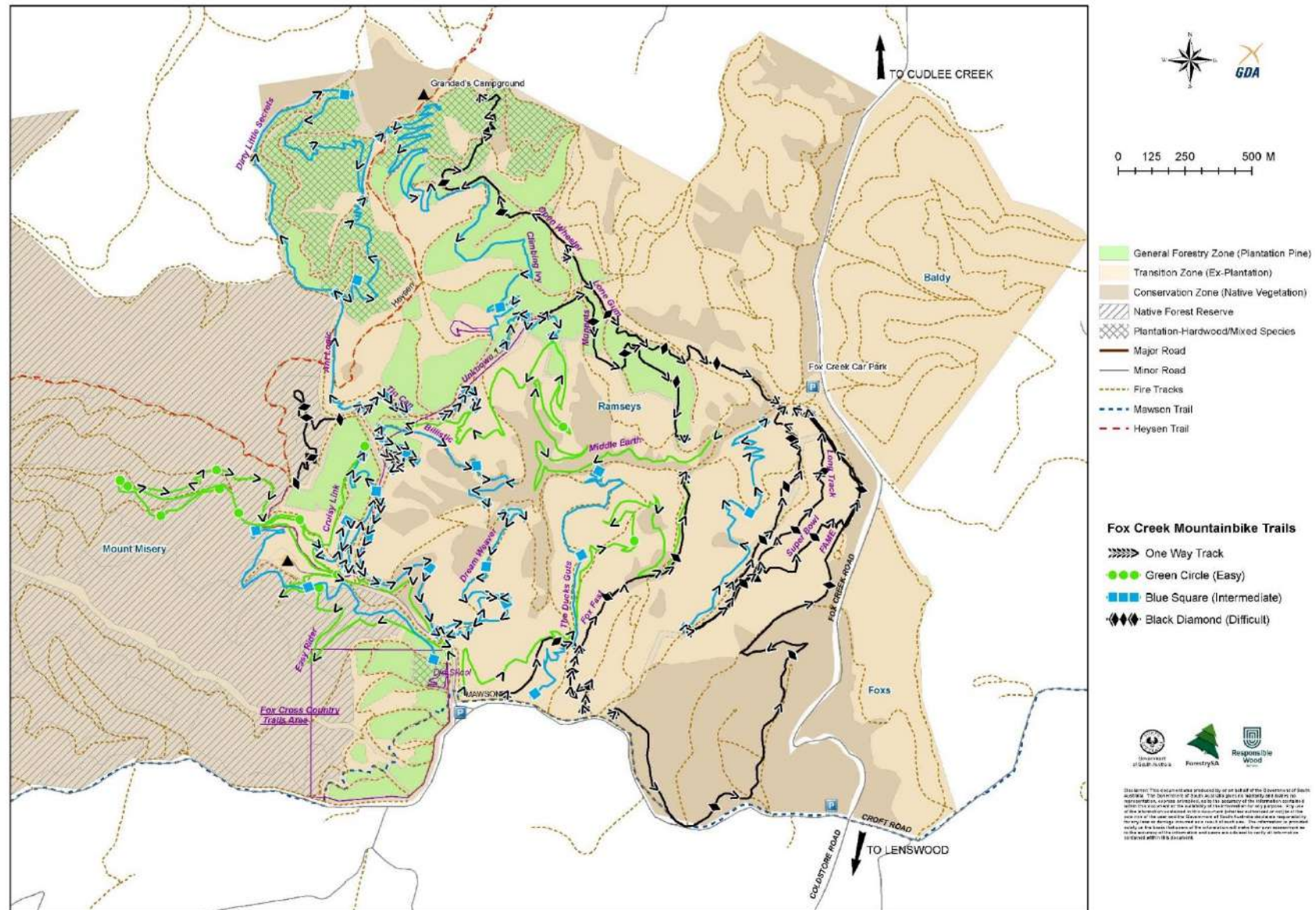




Table 3. Fox Creek Trail Descriptions

Green Circle Trails 	Distance	Trail Description/Style
Ezy Rider	2115	<p>Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail</p> <p>Introductory cross country (XC) style trail that follows the contours from the main Croft Rd entrance, around Thomas Hill and back again. There are a number of allocated rest stops along the way for novice riders that include bench seats and a sculpture. This allows riders to take their time and enjoy the views.</p> <p><i>Great example of a “rolling contour trail” built exactly to the IMBA recommendations.</i></p>
Dirt Skool Green	330	<p>Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail</p> <p>This trail loop of 330m works as a “skills development” area, with introductory trail features and obstacles that can be practiced in a safe area with effectively managed “fall zones”. A Blue Square option has also been provided.</p>
Green Smoothie	3116	<p>Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail, with elements of “Lifted and Tilted” (New School) trail design and construction (i.e. bike specific features)</p> <p>Premium level, inclusive, predictable, flow trail for all types of riders. It is wide (up to 1.5m in many places), with good sight lines at an average trail gradient of 5%. It is fast and flowing. Novice riders can travel slowly as they are comfortable and experienced riders can ride it at speed (when they have a clear run) and then use the large rollers like jumps.</p>
Middle Earth	3636	<p>Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail. A mini Epic!</p> <p>An epic climbing trail that connects the Fox Creek Rd Car park to the top of the trail network. This allows riders and visitors to park their car at the bottom, start with the big (30 mins +) climbing, but to finish their ride with a long and rewarding descent of their choice.</p> <p>This trail also takes riders into large Stringy Bark forest with plenty of shade and thus it is quite unique as a south Australian trail offering for bikes.</p>

Blue Square Trails		Distance	Trail Description/Style
Blue Groove		1,760	Premium Level Flow Trail (to World Class Standard) 3 to 4 minutes of intense pace flow! Using modern “Lifted and Tilted” trail design with bike specific design and construction. This includes aggressive drainage structures and inclusive features and jumps.
Climbing Ivy		3,747	Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail, with hand crafted sections near rocky outcrops This is another adventure trail, making it fun to get back to the top of the “Grandpa’s Valley”. Averaging 3 to 4% gradient is very easy for a variety of riders to ascend and shows of the best of the forest.
Duck n Weave		445	Machine Built Flow Trail with sections of re-engineered old logging road. A favourite amongst many
Ducks Guts		1,573	Re-engineered logging road to produce “Flow Trail” experience. Most of the trail is above recommended trail gradients, so large-scale aggressive drainage and trail features have been added to ensure ecological sustainability. Due to steep gradients this trail is faster than most IMBA style trails of the area. The entry (first section) is purpose built to IMBA guidelines.
Three Bridges		823	Old school hand crafted single track (generally sits outside the IMBA trail development guidelines)
Three Bridges Cont.		74	As above
Curse of the Were Rabbit		576	As above
Curse of the Were Rabbit Cont.		80	As above
Curse of the Were Rabbit Cont.		317	As above
Scardy Cat Plank		96	As above
Snake Dam		305	As above
Sticks and Stones		80	As above
Spectator Maze		246	As above
Drop Bear Slalom		292	As above
Dirt Skool Blue		126	Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail – with features!

Blue Square Trails		Distance	Trail Description/Style
Outcrops		1,588	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Green Corp		709	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Cruisy Link Blue		300	Old Road Connection?
Dynamic Tension		904	Machine Built Rolling Contour Trail
Misty Mushroom		472	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Side Effect		154	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
On the Munny		359	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Immaculate Compaction		569	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Point of Knoll Return		911	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Dream Weaver		870	Re-engineered logging road to create climbing trail experience and a quick route from the Fox creek Road Car Park to the Croft Road Car Park
Finger in the Pie		619	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail (IMBA Demonstration Project – local standards!)
Tin Can		384	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail
Ant Logic Start		570	Premium Level Flow Trail (to World Class Standard)
Ant Logic		979	Premium Level Flow Trail (to World Class Standard)
Dirty Little Secrets		2,791	Premium Level Flow Trail (to World Class Standard)
Billistic		958	Re-engineered logging road to produce “Flow Trail” experience. Most of the trail is above recommended trail gradients, so large scale aggressive drainage and trail features have been added to ensure ecological sustainability. Due to steep gradients this trail is faster than most IMBA style trails of the area.
Home Trail (Thomas Hill)		511	Hand Crafted Rolling Contour Trail With extra features!

Black Diamond 	Distance	Trail Description/Style
Fame	3,279	<p>Old school, all mountain trail experience (Enduro). Hand Built trail with some sections of road. Many parts of the old “Steep DH Race Track” have been “armoured” to make the steep trail gradients more sustainable and closer to the IMBA guidelines.</p> <p>Re-routes have been implemented to avoid landslides and difficult to maintain trail sections.</p> <p>The link to the Fox Creek Road Carp Park was created to filter riders to the new pick area and help to discourage use of the old finish area of this old race track.</p>
Fox Bowl	631	Hand built DH track – mostly IMBA compliant
Fox Long	1,746	As above
Patterson's Curse	1,189	Machine Built DH Track – outside IMBA guidelines – steep and high maintenance but is essentially what is needed for modern DH racing
Fox Fast	1,310	<p>Machine Built Flow Trail using some sections of old road</p> <p>The old logging road sections are steep and eroded and need and upgrade to maintain safety and sustainability</p>
Black Cherry	943	Hand built Enduro style trail (non IMBA compliant)
Open Wheeler	1,355	As above
Lone Gum	949	New School machine built DH track (high maintenance)

5.4 Visitor Services and Amenities

Trail services and amenities typically include clear, accessible information on orientation and wayfinding, trail standards, difficulty ratings, appropriate user behaviour and journey length. Visitor amenities should also include water, toilets, shelter and picnic facilities close to trails as possible. Table 4 provides a summary of existing infrastructure within Cudlee Creek Forest.

Table 4. Summary of Visitor Services – Pre-Fire Cudlee Creek Forest

	Toilets	Shuttle bus	Food & beverage on site	Trail signage/ map	Web / social	Supporting bike services at site	Accommodation	Proximity to public transport	Car parking	Event infrastructure
Fox Creek Road	N	Y - External	N	N	Y	Within 10 Kms	N	N	Y – purpose built	N
Thomas Hill	N	Y - External	N	N	Y	Within 10 Kms	Existing bunk style	N	Y - roadside	Y - limited

5.5 Events

Events are an important part of mountain biking and attract visitors. Social and competitive events contribute to the creation of the social fabric of mountain bike communities. Events typically do not appeal to the leisure market (non-core markets), but they are a major motivator for the sport cohort, and to an extent a motivator for enthusiasts (core markets).

Cudlee Creek Forest has attracted many events in the past including the Bike SA 24 hour racing known as the Dirty Weekend and Inside Line Downhill Mountain Bike Club successfully host a round of the National Gravity Enduro Series.

Future opportunities with improved trails and infrastructure could include Gravity Enduro (new format) and endurance racing, now known as “MTB Marathon” or XCM (e.g. Foxy 1000).

Potential opportunities could include pump track racing, Dual Slalom or Dirt Jump Competitions, MTB Festivals or even Quad Compressors.

New events provide opportunities and with better infrastructure provide better viewing experiences. Also given that much of the forest will be harvested due to the recent bushfires post replanting there will a long lead time to future disturbance to riding and events from thinning and harvesting schedules.

Improvements to the Fox Creek Rd Car Park and better connectivity of the trail network between the top and bottom areas and car parks will ensure that Cudlee Creek Forest can host national rounds for cross country and downhill (e.g. MTBA), as well as improved functionality for 24 hr MTB Racing (e.g. BSA Dirty Weekend).

Improvements to event staging areas and overflow parking areas would further improve the capacity of host trail events.

Infrastructure such as toilets and fresh water supply together with a range of other facilities that contribute to events and the mountain bike experience will be discussed later in the strategy.

Future governance arrangements within Cudlee Creek will influence future holding of events which will utilise the depth of event management knowledge within the volunteer community.

5.6 Cycling Clubs and Interest Groups

There is strong mountain bike club involvement in Cudlee Creek contributing to advocacy and on groundwork. The focus and commitment of the groups has delivered the popular mountain bike experiences enjoyed today.

There are four main mountain bike clubs and associated group active within Cudlee Creek including:

- Adelaide Mountain Bike Club
- Gravity Enduro South Australia and Gravity Girls
- Human Projectiles Mountain Bike Club and Foxy Creekers
- Inside Line Downhill Mountain Bike Club.

5.6.1 Business Support

Businesses associated with Cudlee Creek include a small number of trail builders and developers, bike retailers, shuttle operators, tour operators, trail skill schools (all levels), cafes, wineries, outdoor adventure groups and camping and caravan parks.

5.6.2 Bike Shops

Woodside near Cudlee Creek has one bike shop involved in bike sales, hire and repairs.

5.6.3 Event organisers

Event organisers range from local clubs and Bike SA. Most event organisers rely heavily on volunteers for operational requirements.

5.6.4 Trail developers

It is necessary to distinguish between professional trail builders and volunteers who develop informal facilities, often without expert input. Trail builders possess specialist knowledge necessary to ensure that facilities are safe, sustainable, and provide the experience sought by riders. In recent years, the level of knowledge and expertise of community volunteers in relation to trail development has increased markedly as a result of support provided by IMBA and has included training for employment schemes such as Green Corps.

5.6.5 Hire operators

Hire operators providing bike hire drop off and pick up are located in the Adelaide Hills and provide shuttle services at Cudlee Creek.

5.6.6 Educators and information providers

Several commercial cycle training operators provide skills coaching with progression from basic to competition level. A range of clubs, organisations and schools hold skill courses and market mountain biking in Adelaide and the Adelaide Hills.

5.6.7 Hospitality and Accommodation

Several businesses contribute to the Cudlee Creek Forest experience and are bike friendly. Anderson Hill Winery is well situated to cater for mountain bike riders, trail users and forest visitors providing food, coffee and a range of local wines and beers. Woodside, Lobethal and Cudlee Creek provide cafes, pubs and restaurants within easy ride or drive from Cudlee Creek Forest.

5.7 Marketing and promotion

Several organisations promote Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR) trail networks through websites and social media including mountain bike clubs and Bike SA.

ForestrySA provides up to date information on access and other important information whilst Adelaide Hills Council and SATC provide pre visit information for visitors.

Specific mountain bike trail information is available for Cudlee Creek and AMLR trails through the interactive websites including Trailforks.

5.8 Coordination and management

Cudlee Creek Forest including Fox Creek mountain bike area is managed within the Mount Crawford Forest Reserve by ForestrySA.

The mountain bike clubs have worked cooperatively with ForestrySA. These groups build and maintain high quality trails that are the backbone of the Cudlee Creek mountain bike offering.

Several plans and strategies have been developed over time to direct trail investment. Information from these plans has contributed to this Strategy and will be a valuable resource for implementation of the trail actions.

Initially formalisation of the trail network was by the South Australian Government in 2001 as a Foundation Trail Project (demonstration case study) to test international best practice trail design and construction standards in an Australian ecosystem and following the IMBA

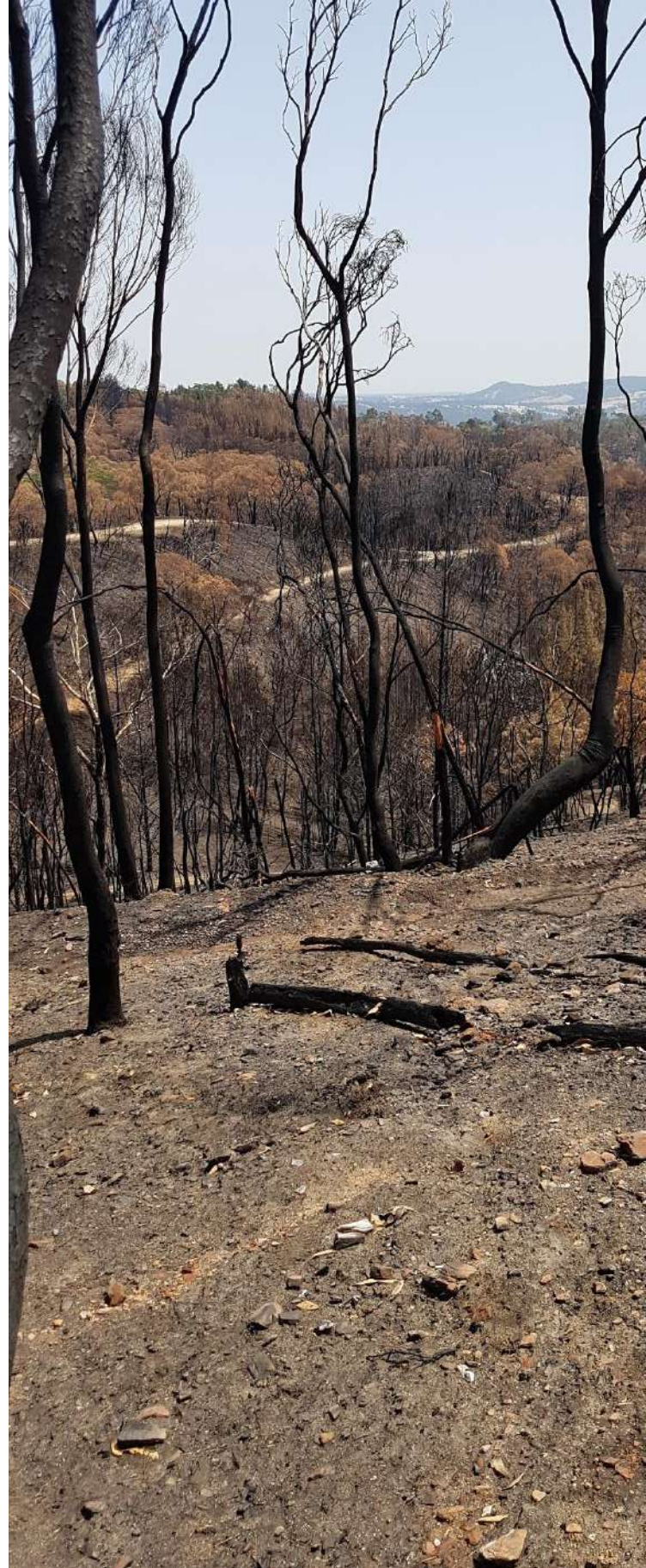
model. This was a priority of the State MTB Plan of 2001.³¹

The SA State Government and community investment in the Fox Creek Trail Network includes project management, signage and supporting infrastructure.

Funding sources have included grants from the Office for Recreation Sport and Racing, Adelaide Hills Council, Crowd Funding and project management services by Bike SA.

In excess of \$600,000 has been allocated to Cudlee Creek Forest trails backed up by significant in kind and management contributions from ForestrySA³² and volunteer support from the mountain bike clubs.

The tragic fires of December 2019 and the destruction of Cudlee Creek Forest, infrastructure and Fox Creek trails has provided the opportunity and impetus to deliver a new shared vision and future strategy for Cudlee Creek Forest.



³¹ State Mountain Bike Plan for South Australia, Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing and Bicycle SA, October 2001. <http://bikesa.asn.au>

³² Fox Creek Bike Park (FCBP) Destination Trails



6 Assessment of Cudlee Creek as a Mountain Bike Destination of Choice

This section provides an assessment of ForestrySA's Cudlee Creek Forest mountain bike trail network and supporting infrastructure.

6.1 Characteristics of a successful mountain bike destinations

As identified in the case studies in Appendix B, a successful mountain bike destination is more than its physical trails. A combination of factors creates a destination that continues to attract visitors and riders through its reputation for quality and a special experience.

At the core of attracting trail visitors is the environment and setting, the quality and quantity of trails, their accessibility and the interest and challenge offered.

Trail users today have higher expectations about their trail experience and are anticipating ease of planning and fact finding, access, high quality regularly maintained infrastructure, facilities and services and options for a range of accommodation, food and beverage and other value-add activities.

The following characteristics tend to define successful mountain bike destinations:

Trail Infrastructure, Design, Support Facilities and Management

- diversity of trail types, styles and destinations
- concentration of trail opportunities
- high quality, sustainable trail infrastructure
- leading and supporting trails
- accessibility
- effective governance, coordination and management
- community and industry engagement and support
- trail maintenance and day-to-day management.

Visitor Experiences and Services

- distinctive experiences
- quality pre-trip information
- a range of quality support services and facilities
- trail, food, beverage and retail products and businesses
- strong trail destination positioning and marketing.

6.2 What the community is thinking

In June 2020 the views of community, government and mountain bike club representatives were sought during a workshop at Anderson Hill Winery. The Workshop was undertaken during the easing of Covid 19 restrictions, attendance was however still limited.

Other key stakeholders were contacted directly for their views and during June and July 2020 and the broader community were invited to contribute through the South Australian Government YourSay site.

Some 720 responses were received with the majority (580) being received on the mountain bike rider survey. The community survey received 140 responses and it is apparent that a high percentage of these comments were received from mountain bike riders.

The views of the stakeholders the community and mountain bike riders contributed to the development of the Analysis and Suggested Improvements (Appendix E), the draft vision and strategies and actions.

A summary of the survey information has been provided in Appendix D.



Figure 10. Cudlee Creek Forest Have Your Say Survey

6.3 The potential opportunity

Mountain bike trails and networks can be categorised into three types – local/community trail network, regional or state trail network and national /international networks. Each type has a different set of characteristics (Figure 11).³³

Important trail locations are often identified as lead trail hubs where they provide a strong focus with exceptional experiences within a regional network.

A detailed assessment of Cudlee Creek as a potential IMBA Ride Centre and mountain bike destination is included in Appendix E.

The assessment also includes recommendations and improvements required for Cudlee Creek to become a mountain bike destination of choice.

The report *Establishing the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as an International MTB Destination* in 2015 described Cudlee Creek’s Fox Creek as a potential IMBA Ride Centre.³⁴



³³ Adapted from Wellington Regional TRAILS FOR THE FUTURE September 2017 A strategic framework for trails in the Wellington Region

³⁴ Establishing the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as an International MTB Destination 2015

Figure 11. Trail Hub Location Significance

Trail Hub Location Significance

MTB trail hubs are categorised by location significance – Local, Regional or National



Description	A trail commonly designed by local Governments to encourage healthy community lifestyles and also support alternative commuting around townships such as bike and walking trails.	These may be a network of trails for local people and visitors alike in regional areas. Some may also be lesser known multi-day experiences. Mostly used by intrastate or domestic visitors, these trails traverse through natural locations often in national parks or state forest reserve.	This type of trail experience is internationally renowned. Visitors undertake these experiences as a 'must do' signature experience when visiting a destination. The experience may be themed (e.g. gourmet trail, rail trail) or be included in an international event such as trail running or mountain biking.
Length of trails	Up to 20 km	20 - 80 km	>80 km
Number of loops	2+	2+	4+
% of singletrack	>80%	>50%	>50%
Minimum area of site	>250 ha	>500 ha	>1,500 ha
Location	Selected areas	<40 km from 15,000 population	<180 km from airport / major transport links
Road access	Must have clear public road access	<10 km from highways and primary roads. Must be within 1 km of a national or state road	<20 km from major highways. Must be within 1 km of a national or state road
Exclusion zones		>45 km from another national or regional scale centre	>90 km from another national scale centre
Minimum Infrastructure required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Car park ✓ Toilets ✓ Trail head signage ✓ Trail markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Car park ✓ Toilets ✓ Trail head signage ✓ Trail markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Car park ✓ Toilets ✓ Trail head signage ✓ Trail markers ✓ Accommodation ✓ Bike hire ✓ Cafe



7 Effective Governance and Management

This section provides a discussion on governance, why it is important, what is required.

7.1 The importance of effective governance

In reviewing successful mountain bike destinations, clear, effective governance is one of the central pillars that helps the destination operate effectively and become internationally recognised.

An effective governance model will be required for the Cudlee Creek experience and for the AMLR if they are to become successful mountain bike destinations of choice. The most successful management models for trail networks across Australia and New Zealand have the following characteristics:

- Governance and accountability is clear and simple to initiate and administer over the longer term.
- The strengths and expertise offered by each partner in the model are recognised and the preferred model allocates responsibilities and authority accordingly.
- The visitor experience and presentation of the trail network are substantially improved or continually improving, and the new model facilitates commercial tourism positioning, product development and marketing.
- The trails are supported by a range of funding sources with a revenue raising mechanism to enhance cash flow to enable self-generated investment into facilities, assets and services.
- An effective control environment is in place to reduce key risks (to staff, volunteers and visitors) and each agency's operations are not adversely affected (i.e. there is no dilution of effectiveness).
- The benefits of the new model are visible to the community and it is inclusive of user and community groups.

7.2 Features of effective trail governance

7.2.1 A clear, committed and skilled governance entity

Trails that realise their potential and operate sustainably over time tend to have governance entities with:

- a clear mandate for trail development and provision of leadership and vision
- a clear statement of roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the governance structure and in management tasks
- the skills and experience relevant to leadership and effective decision-making related to the trail and governance tasks
- arrangements/agreements at an organisational level with any agencies tasked with trail management and maintenance.

7.2.2 Effective trail planning

Strategic planning by the trail governance entity for development and operation of the trail over time is important to provide a consistent direction, identify objectives, provide strategies to address issues and achieve objectives, identify investment needs and define roles and responsibilities. Where trails are developed in stages dependent on the availability of funds, a strategic plan, master plan or business plan will provide clarity on future funding needs.

7.2.3 Clear coordination function

Where trail governance and management involve multiple partners, there needs to be clear allocation of coordination responsibility. There needs to be an organisation, group or person that can drive an integrated and consistent approach to trail management, follow up on tasks and planning priorities, and report to the governance entity on progress.

7.2.4 People resources dedicated to management

Trail management requires people resources to provide executive support to, and implement the decisions of, the governance body (whatever its structure); oversee implementation of actions in trail plans; and coordinate activities by other agencies and stakeholders.

7.2.5 Adequate resources for trail operations

Operating a trail entails a host of tasks that impinge on land management and may include:

- Infrastructure maintenance and repair (trail surfaces, signage, parking areas, amenities, waste management)
- Environmental management – erosion and runoff control, vegetation management, weed and pest control, significant species protection and fire management which will have associated legislative requirements
- Emergency management – emergency access provision, issue of emergency notices (such as for fire, flood) and trail closures

- Visitor management – overseeing compliance with any use requirements, management of trail events.

7.2.6 Ongoing funding

The lack of funding and a high reliance on government grants has characterised the development of many trails in Australia. Trail development often occurs in a 'stop-start' sequence dependent on successful grant applications and in some cases, there has been limited provision of funds for future management and maintenance, leading to heavy reliance on volunteers. This is the current situation for the Cudlee Creek.

7.2.7 Stakeholder and community partnerships

The mechanisms used for involving the community, business and tourism stakeholders in trail development and visitor experiences vary widely and include:

- Representation on governance boards, steering or advisory groups
- Friends groups, which serve as a focus for community stewardship, volunteering and donations
- Liaison with local user and health groups and organisations to develop opportunities for local people, health and exercise initiatives and events
- Schemes to encourage tourism operators to provide trail-related products and services – such as the Bibbulmun Track Foundation's Walker Friendly Business Program and the Queenstown Trails Trust's Official Partners Program.

7.2.8 Supportive government environment

Government policies, plans and programs that encourage and support trails and identify trail investment priorities have been important for the funding of trail development and management. Ideally, trail governance entities need to have the skills and resources to leverage such potential opportunities offered by a supportive Government environment in applying for grant funding.

7.2.9 Marketing, promotion and experience development

Understanding a trail's current and potential local and visitor markets is an important part of trail business – it assists promoting a trail to, and developing the right products and services for, the people most likely to be attracted to the trail. Most trails will involve a combination of local and visitor markets.

7.2.10 Monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Monitoring and evaluation are essential elements of good governance and good management, but ones often overlooked. Elements that may need to be monitored include:

- Visitor numbers and expenditure patterns to determine the cost effectiveness and profitability of the trail hub/destination
- Types of visitor – are the markets targeted responding to the information and types of experiences offered?
- Visitor satisfaction including areas for improvement of the products, services and experiences had in the destination (these can be periodic)
- Environmental performance – is the trail development supporting strong environmental stewardship or is it having some consequence to strong environmental performance on site?
- How is the trail supporting good economic outcomes in the business and broader community surrounding the hub or destination?

7.2.11 Different models of management

There is no one governance model that suits every destination and each model has its advantages and disadvantages. The models fall into three broad categories:

Option 1: Sole Agency Management

This model essentially provides for the one authority to utilise the land they are individually responsible for or licenced to use for trail development and use. There is no sharing of accountability and user groups are allowed or

supported to volunteer their services. This model applies to the mountain bike trails generally built on one land tenure, and not involving community or business directly (and in some cases indirectly).

In this example, marketing is generally undertaken by the agency although some external marketing through mountain bike clubs or third-party websites such as Trail Forks may occur.

Visitor servicing is also generally directly undertaken by the management agency although in some cases, this may fall to the local clubs who are permitted to use the land for mountain biking purposes.

Option 2: A Public/Private Partnership Structure

This model would see a greater role for user groups in a partnership with the land manager ForestrySA. This model provides for the land manager to focus on core business (parks and reserves and forestry operations) and remain a partner in the development of the trail network. Several variations to this model can occur including the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the expanded roles of Trust models and reducing the number of authorities involved through contracts or other models.

If a partnership is the appropriate model – there are several mechanisms in which this can occur. These are broadly described below:

An MOU

- Generally applied to less formal arrangements where coordination and sharing tend to be the higher order functions for the partnership. This model can best be applied when one dominant land manager occurs. An MOU may be developed to allow one partner to manage with support and input from other partners.

An Incorporated Association

- Incorporated Associations are created and administered under legislation. They must have a minimum membership, become a legal identity that can enter into contracts and can sue or be sued.

- This form of partnership has advantages and disadvantages. Incorporated Associations are usually only used in complex situations where land managers, trail users, governments and businesses seek to develop a formal partnership. It can also bind members to a set of rules commonly known as a constitution

Delegation and Volunteerism

- This model applies to land managers who are comfortable delegating the running, operations, maintenance or other elements of the trail destination to a voluntary group. In some instances, these are established through formal agreements. The trails must be free to the community and the club must be affiliated with Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA).

Option 3: Private Arrangements

This model would potentially see one entity take management control of the trails (or perhaps one aspect of the operation), raises the necessary funding to operate, market and maintain the trails and puts management control and authority in one entity. This usually occurs on private land.

7.3 Criteria for determining the right model for the Cudlee Creek

Trail managers and developers have a range of options to consider when developing the most appropriate governance arrangements for their trails. The following questions may help ForestrySA and its key stakeholders consider the best model for their circumstance, noting that most mountain bike developments have their own nuances to be considered. The questions to be answered are:

- Does the model provide the simplest and clearest governance for the land tenure and purpose of the trail destination?
- Are the accountabilities clear for the land manager and entity governing the users?
- Is the proposal legal and allowed for under SA Legislation, regulation and policy?
- Does the proposed model maximise the partnership opportunities with other organisations where it adds value?

- Will the new model provide the optimal visitor servicing for the markets chosen?
- Does the model maximise the commercial viability of the proposed mountain bike hub, noting the need for ongoing maintenance and income for growth?
- Does the model allow for community input and engagement and does it allow for community volunteerism?
- Does the model reduce duplication and uncertainty?
- Does the model provide a suitable mechanism for managing risk including safety?

Answering the questions will enable managers and stakeholders to work logically through the process of determination of the best model for their circumstances.

7.4 A preferred model of management

The recommended model for governance of the Cudlee Creek Trail network recognises ForestrySA as a multi-use forestry land manager, partnering with key stakeholders, recognising their significant knowledge and expertise in trail development and event management.

It is recommended that a skills-based group be brought together under an MOU or an incorporated body. This group would ensure collaborative leadership in the development of the new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management and development of the leading and supporting trails. It will also be instrumental in seeking commercial investment, resources from grant opportunities and through ForestrySA budget allocations.

This model would see a greater role for user groups in a partnership with ForestrySA and the SA Government. It provides for the land manager to focus on core business (parks and reserves and forestry operations) and remain a partner in the development of the trail network. An example of where this model is applied is in Appendix A.



8 The Cudlee Creek Mountain Biking Strategy

This chapter describes the strategy and provides the Vision underlying principles, strategy and concepts that will guide implementation within the next 5 years (2020 – 2025).

8.1 Vision

Cudlee Creek Forest will be the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges nationally recognised mountain biking destination providing exceptional experiences, skill progression and events in harmony with the forest environment and within a culture that welcomes other forest visitors, families and a diversity of abilities.

8.2 Guiding Principles

The following principles provide guidance for achieving this vision and are consistent with the other strategies.

8.2.1 High quality and diversity

Cuddlee Creek will offer nationally recognised quality trails, infrastructure and experiences. This will include high quality trails, trailheads and signage as well as consistency in trail design, construction and maintenance.

8.2.2 Inclusive

Cuddlee Creek will be a mountain bike destination that has broad appeal and a diverse range of cycling options for people of different capacities and interests. It will be recognised as a welcoming place for new riders and families and as a place for skill progression from entry level to development.

8.2.3 Sustainable

Mountain bike trails and infrastructure will be financially, socially and environmentally sustainable.

8.2.4 Collaborative

The success of the strategy relies on ForestrySA, clubs, volunteers, other forest users and the private sector.

8.2.5 Connected

Mountain biking experiences are integrated with the broader trail, forest and AMLR experience offer.

8.2.6 Benefits

Mountain biking and Forest trails will deliver social, economic and health benefits to the local and AMLR community.

8.3 Objectives

The objectives of Strategy

The objectives of The ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy are:

1. Establish Cudlee Creek as the primary mountain bike and trails event centre for the AMLR
2. Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences and services to meet the vision and market needs
3. Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity
4. Develop Cudlee Creek's status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status
5. Develop governance and management arrangements that encourage direction, leadership and long-term maintenance and resourcing
6. Integrate the Cudlee Creek experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation
7. Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the AMLR through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee experience.

8.4 Strategies and Actions

The Strategy will be implemented through 7 strategies. Each strategy has a suite of actions identified that support the ambition

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES		ACTIONS
1	Establish Cudlee Creek as the primary Mountain Bike Centre of the AMLR	<p>Provide the Cudlee Creek direction and experience that contributes to the AMLR becoming an International mountain bike and trails destination and promote Fox Creek as the lead AMLR mountain bike ride centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Establish links from Cudlee Creek to other AMLR mountain bike hubs via existing tracks and trails and new hero trails following recommendations within the Establishing the AMLR as an International Mountain Bike Destination.³⁵➤ Provide support infrastructure that encourages mountain bike and trail events and reflects Fox Creek status as a mountain bike park that will attract a wide range of trail users➤ Progressively establish Fox Creek Bike Park as the key Ride Centre within the AMLR and contribute to the AMLR becoming a recognised international mountain bike destination through improvements to trail experiences,

³⁵ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
	services, community involvement, tourism, promotion, marketing and evaluation and monitoring.
2 Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences, and services to meet market needs	<p>Provide infrastructure, direction and technical expertise for Cudlee Creek that strongly reflects user and mountain bike market needs and provides the facilities required for sustainable growth of trails ensuring enjoyment for the user and real benefit to the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reinstate the existing fire damaged trail network based on Fox Creek Bike Park Trail Audit April 2020 with a focus on sustainability and ensuring the trails conform with the recognised trail difficulty rating. ➤ Ensure that trails are designed and maintained to remain as planned e.g. green trails do not morph into blue trails and similarly blue trails should not morph into black trails. ➤ Establish a skilled Trails Advisory Group under appropriate governance arrangements and based on the directions from this strategy to plan and design future trails and guide construction. The bringing together of trail industry, club and other experts and users to plan and coordinate future works would improve trail experiences and sustainability and harmonise relationships across differing groups. ➤ Progressively develop up to 50 kilometres of additional introductory to advanced Fox Creek trails including expansion into Plantation Forestry (Plantation Pine), Transition (Ex Plantation) and some Conservation (Native Vegetation). ➤ Provide careful and skilled planning to ensure the very best sustainable trail experiences are achieved and there is no adverse impact on important vegetation within the important Conservation Zones with trail expansion. ➤ Develop priority introductory Green Circle trails including a trail link between Anderson Winery and Thomas Hill and further green trails from the Fox Creek Road Car Park area. ➤ Undertake planning, assessment and consultation to minimise impact on native vegetation and maximise the experience for a long cross country loop trail and to linkages for an improved Mawson Trail ascent/descent trail to Adelaide through parts of the Mount Misery Native Vegetation Forest Reserve. ➤ Connect with a future AMLR Epic or hero ride across the Yurrebilla alignment and links to future Epic Adelaide Hills Descent. ➤ Consult with Adelaide Hills Council to upgrade Croft Road and parking arrangements to provide for future events and increasing visitor experiences and improving access, safety, and reducing impacts on forest neighbours. ➤ Provide a main trail head, a sense of arrival and purpose built event infrastructure including a club house type shelter and pop up facilities at the Thomas Hill site and a secondary trail head at the Fox Creek Car Park area and through partnership arrangements encourage businesses to provide a range of trail related services including skills training, bike shuttles services and hospitality. ➤ As a priority provide a minimum of two toilets at the top and bottom trail head sites.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
3 Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity	<p>Through collaboration, communication and commitment to sustainability and biodiversity protection ensure experiences across the forest are enjoyed by many and new trails sit perfectly within the Cudlee Creek Forest landscape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure safety, comfort and enjoyment within the mountain bike area by limiting shared use walking, trail running and mountain biking to vehicle tracks and trails specifically established for shared use. ➤ Ensure mountain biking in the Native Forest Reserve occurs only on designated single use mountain bike trails or shared on vehicle management tracks or on trails that allow mountain biking on specifically established shared use trails. ➤ Provide trail head and waymarking signs that indicate clear trail designation and expectations including shared or single use. ➤ Contribute to AMLR biodiversity by developing Cudlee Creek trail infrastructure that has a minimal environmental footprint and contribute to landscape conservation through restoration, revegetation and weed control. ➤ Establish consistent and coordinated visitor surveys together with sustainability, satisfaction and visitor experience monitoring.
4 Develop Cudlee Creek's status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status	<p>Develop the trail infrastructure and experiences that encourage growth and progression through the sport of mountain biking from beginner to highly skilled competitive performers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide the facilities, environment and training to make mountain biking appealing, accessible and easy for new entrants and beginners to get involved in the sport. This requires development and maintenance of good introductory mountain bike trails, skills parks and access to professional bike training and skill development. ➤ Provide the support and infrastructure required, including well designed and maintained trails through a mix of difficulty ratings to encourage skill progression including through to competitive riding. ➤ Encourage opportunities for commercial and voluntary cycling products (guided tours, skill schools) to assisting and encourage mountain bikers to improve skills and undertake new experiences.
5 Develop governance and management arrangements that encourage, leadership, direction and long-term maintenance and resourcing	<p>Develop strong governance arrangements that focus on expertise and collaboration and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Cudlee Creek and strengthen its links to the greater AMLR experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bring together a skills-based group to assist ForestrySA as the land manager in the management of Cudlee Creek and contribute to collaborative leadership and development of new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management, maintenance, resourcing and development. ➤ It is recommended that future arrangements would be instrumental in exploring appropriate revenue streams including commercial investment, resources from grant opportunities and through ForestrySA budget allocations. ➤ The sustainable management of trail building and maintenance is vital work and it is recommended that the significant role for volunteers be recognised and they continue to work hand in hand within a new governance arrangement.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
6 Integrate the Cudlee Creek experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation	<p>Develop the Cudlee Creek experience that encourages integration and visitor growth within the community and provides through thoughts and actions a positive trail and cycling supportive community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage the development of various trail alliances, businesses and volunteer groups to contribute to the development and support of an AMLR mountain bike and cycling culture. Engagement with the local community and their involvement in decision making is key to great working relationships ➤ Encourage and develop activities for families and non-riding partners including walking and running trails, lookouts, playgrounds and connections with nearby towns linked to good coffee, craft beer, wine and food to contribute to the overall visitor experience. ➤ As the reopening of the trails occurs encourage Industry development workshops and information sessions to assist local companies to become bike friendly businesses. ➤ Encourage and publicise bicycle-friendly services that are easily accessible for visitors and develop a bike friendly appearance in nearby towns and include infrastructure including bike racks and directional signs to the forest. ➤ Encourage and support service providers such as shuttle operators on site and between hubs to ensure consistent supply. ➤ The Thomas Hill house site and surrounding area provides an opportunity for commercial development that could contribute a return to the forest trail experiences. An expression of interest for a future commercial lease arrangement should be explored.
7 Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the AMLR through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee Creek experience.	<p>Grow the community benefits from the Cudlee Creek experience through marketing and promotion and presenting the restored and refreshed forest trails, the new mountain biking experience and the links across the AMLR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Seek opportunities to position the AMLR as a multi trail and multi-site experience and leveraged with other cycling experiences being developed. Fox Creek as the most important mountain bike hub in the AMLR needs to be a lead site within the mix. ➤ On completion of fire restoration works there is great opportunity to promote and market Fox Creek Bike Park and the hills area as the place to be for exciting trail experiences. ➤ Mountain biking needs to be defined in its own right in tourism statistics and linked to cycling and gravel riding. ➤ Incorporate art into Fox Creek visitor entry and information to reflect and develop a clear Fox Creek recognition.

Strategic Priority 1

Establish Fox Creek as the Primary Mountain Bike Centre of the AMLR

ACTION 1 Provide the Cudlee Creek direction and experience that contributes to the AMLR becoming an International mountain bike and trails destination and promote Fox Creek as the lead AMLR mountain bike ride centre

The 2015 report identified the potential for the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges to become an international mountain bike destination.³⁶ The International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) provides recognition of a mountain biking area through its global network with IMBA Ride Centres recognised under a three-tier scheme (Gold, Silver and Bronze) for the outstanding range, variety and quality of the riding experience. The designation and rating of a Ride Centre is based on clear criteria that includes Trail Experiences, Services, Community Involvement, Tourism, Promotion, Marketing, Evaluation and Measurement. Cudlee Creek Forest would play a major part in future recognition of the AMLR. Further improvement to Cudlee Creek mountain biking should focus on improving the trail experience and services on site whilst contributing to the overall AMLR opportunity to become an internationally recognised mountain bike destination. This strategy provides the direction following the devastating fires of December 2019 and combines through all these strategic priorities for development.

The balance of trail types is good however there is a need over time for additional trails across the trail difficulty ratings and a desire for more advanced long black and double black trails. Cudlee Creek does not have all the attributes for the ultimate long descent black trails and there are opportunities to develop long distance descent trail IMBA Epic trails at sites across the AMLR. Epic Trails have specific requirements and other locations within the AMLR may provide better opportunity for the long distance technically challenging downhill routes subject to access. Fox Creek is well positioned as a future IMBA Ride Centre and should be linked to other AMLR hubs and potential Epic or hero ride across the Yurrebilla Trail alignment and connection with future IMBA Epic Adelaide Hills Descent.

Links to other trail hubs, to towns, Adelaide and the provision of “hero trail” experiences should be provided to compliment the Fox Creek and AMLR experience and also to provide off road and gravel riding access to and from the forest. These trail to the south west, north will need to be surveyed and designed to create the best possible experiences as ascent and descent single track where possible and will be planned for sustainability and the least impact on the vegetation and biodiversity of the Adelaide Hills.

ACTIONS 1.

- 1.1 Establish links from Cudlee Creek to other AMLR mountain bike hubs via existing tracks and trails and new hero trails following recommendations within the Establishing the AMLR as an International Mountain Bike Destination.**
- 1.2 Provide support infrastructure that encourages mountain bike and trail events and reflects Fox Creek status as a mountain bike park that will attract a wide range of trail users**
- 1.3 Progressively establish Fox Creek Bike Park as the key Ride Centre within the AMLR and contribute to the AMLR becoming a recognised international mountain bike destination through improvements to trail experiences, services, community involvement, tourism, promotion, marketing and evaluation and monitoring.**

³⁶ Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination 2015

Strategic Priority 2

Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences, and services to meet market needs

ACTION 2 Provide infrastructure, direction and technical expertise for Cudlee Creek that strongly reflects user and mountain bike market needs and provides the facilities required for sustainable growth of trails ensuring enjoyment for the user and real benefit to the community.

The balance of Cudlee Creek mountain bike trail difficulty levels is good and reflects a typical split across a network of 20% beginner, 50% intermediate and 30 % advanced level trails. The current mix of trails includes 23% green trails, 51% blue trails and 26% black trails. Actions that would contribute to Cudlee Creek Forest include increasing the number, length and quality of trails across the range.

There is a need as reflected in the YourSay Survey for genuine beginner green trails that will encourage new users and as introductory trails. The design and maintenance of these trails is important to ensure user safety, comfort and enjoyment. Green trails are often ridden fast by more experience riders often compromising and impacting on the beginner experience through presence and effect on the trail surface. The important introductory trails should be marked accordingly. It is important that trails are designed and maintained to remain as planned e.g. green trails do not morph into blue trails similarly blue trails should not morph into black trails.

This strategy provides the direction regarding trails and trail mix however for the detailed design it is recommended that an advisory group be developed including industry, club and others that will work with ForestrySA through consensus and under appropriate governance arrangements to plan and design future trails, guide construction and plan for maintenance.

It is recommended that over the life of this strategy additional trails will be required to develop and recognise Fox Creek Bike Park as a lead AMLR ride centre and catering for projected increase in new riders encouraged by post fire opening and development of new trails, facilities and services.

It is proposed that over the next five year up to 50 kilometres of additional of trail should be developed across the range of difficulties levels and including linking and hero trails to a total of 100 kilometres of trail. To reduce overcrowding and to ensure the special Fox Creek experience is maintained expansion into Baldy, North Ramseys and Foxs forest areas will be required. Land use zoning in these areas includes Plantation Forestry (Plantation Pine), Transition (Ex Plantation) and some Conservation (Native Vegetation).

The expansion into these areas will require careful and skilled planning to ensure the very best sustainable trail experiences are achieved and there is no adverse impact on important vegetation within the Conservation Zones located within these areas. Much of the understory within these areas is modified with weeds predominating however care will need to be taken to protect native vegetation particularly orchids, the rare *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* (Mountain Gum) and *E. viminalis* spp. *viminalis* (Manna Gum) habitats and regenerating species following the fires. Where required approval of the Native Vegetation Council will be sought if trail access is required across Conservation Zones.

Expansion into the Mount Misery Native Forest Reserve would be limited to existing trails, management tracks, a longer distance cross country loop trail and to linkages for an improved Mawson Trail ascent/descent trail to Adelaide.

Any future trails in the Native Vegetation Forest Reserve would include careful assessment of the proposed routes to minimise impact on native vegetation and maximise the experience. Trail route planning would require consultation with stakeholders, approvals if required by the Native Vegetation Council and revegetation along the trail corridor within the Mount Misery area.

Respondents to the YourSay survey indicated the lack of effective pre visit and on-site information is a barrier to progressing and developing skills and what is there often doesn't accurately represent the trail difficulty ratings. High-quality pre visit, trailhead and easy to read waymarking and difficulty ratings signage is required.

Fox Creek has the potential to be better connected by off road trails to Adelaide and the north eastern suburbs. The largest number of respondents to the YourSay Survey come from Adelaide's north eastern suburbs and many of these respondents seek an improved and safe off-road cycling route to Fox Creek.

The two most popular responses to the YourSay survey were supply of toilets and coffee. The lack of toilets are a concern and a barrier to entering the sport and progressing particularly for women and girls. A minimum of two toilets are required for general use at the top and bottom of Fox Creek Bike Park. Toilets suitable for placement within water catchment areas are available and currently being placed in SA Water land and in Forestry areas.

Coffee and other hospitality services are integral to popular recreation areas and pop up style or more permanent arrangements should be encouraged. The Anderson Hill Winery provides great hospitality through wines, coffee, other beverages and food and is an enthusiastic supporter of trail activity in Cudlee Creek Forest.

Club, State and National Mountain bike events have been successfully staged at Cudlee Creek. It is important to continue to evolve existing and new events and explore opportunities to attract different events. Fox Creek Bike Park is suited to Cross Country and Gravity Enduro events to a national level and in the future a Cross Country Marathon event could be developed which would encourage mass participation. Downhill events are somewhat limited due to the shortness of time on Fox Creek descents. The AMLR has several opportunities that could be future locations for staging including the slopes running towards Adelaide at Horsnell Gully and within the adjacent quarry land.

The lower area adjacent to the Fox Creek Road car park provides opportunity for great viewing for future spectator events such as bike park flow, dual slalom or jump events and as the finish area for downhill. Recreational and promotional events could also benefit from new and upgraded facilities. Bike specific festivals and the growing interest in trail running and trail running events could be attracted to the Cudlee Creek facilities.

For Cudlee Creek to reach its full potential supporting infrastructure for general trail use and events is required. The Fox Creek Road car park is well designed however it often reaches capacity and requires alteration to build on capacity and improve access and egress. Toilets are required and power connection is important for event management and security.

Croft Road and Thomas Hill carparking is inadequate for a busy day or an event. Concerns from neighbours were received through the YourSay Survey regarding vehicle traffic, dust, traffic and parking management. Thomas Hill has the benefit of the existing space and it is at the hilltop which is useful for cross country events. Formalising car parking and upgrading and sealing of Croft Road would contribute to effective event and visitor management whilst, contribute to better neighbour relations.

Comments to the YourSay Survey identified a range of services that riders seek at Fox Creek. Toilets, water, bike wash and servicing, skills training, accurate trail signs and cost-effective bike shuttles services were sought.

The Thomas Hill forestry house is used for accommodation by bike clubs and maintenance teams. It occupies a significant ridge with great views of the Adelaide Hills and plains. The site is underutilised as it has prime position.

There are opportunities to develop this site as a purpose-built event facility to accommodate a wider range of activities than just mountain biking. A partnership arrangement where the building can be managed by an organisation skilled in facility and event management which can generate the greatest benefit from the site should be explored.

A revenue stream is important for the sustainability of Fox Creek is important and linked to future governance arrangements. The Thomas Hill site has the potential to provide a revenue stream to the management of Fox Creek and arrangements for the leasing of the building and adjoining land should be considered.

ACTIONS

- 2.1 Reinststate the existing fire damaged trail network based on Fox Creek Bike Park Trail Audit April 2020 with a focus on sustainability and ensuring the trails conform with the recognised trail difficulty rating.³⁷**
- 2.2 Ensure that trails are designed and maintained to remain as planned e.g. green trails do not morph into blue trails similarly blue trails should not morph into black trails.**
- 2.3 Establish a skilled trail advisory group to work with ForestrySA and under appropriate governance arrangements and based on the directions from this strategy to plan and design future trails and guide construction. The bringing together of trail advisory group and users to plan and coordinate future works would improve trail experiences and sustainability and harmonise relationships across differing groups.**
- 2.4 Progressively develop up to 50 kilometres of additional introductory to advanced Fox Creek trails including expansion into Plantation Forestry (Plantation Pine), Transition (Ex Plantation) and some Conservation (Native Vegetation).**
- 2.5 Provide careful planning to ensure the very best sustainable trail experiences are achieved and there is no adverse impact on important vegetation within the important Conservation Zones with trail expansion.**
- 2.6 Develop priority introductory Green Circle trails including a trail link between Anderson Winery and Thomas Hill and further green trails from the Fox Creek Road Car Park area.**
- 2.7 Undertake planning, assessment and consultation to minimise impact on native vegetation and maximise the experience for a long cross country loop trail and to linkages for an improved Mawson Trail ascent/descent trail to Adelaide through parts of the Mount Misery Native Vegetation Forest Reserve.**
- 2.8 Connect with a future AMLR Epic or hero ride across the Yurrebilla alignment and links to future Epic Adelaide Hills Descent.**
- 2.9 Consult with Adelaide Hills Council to upgrade Croft Road and parking arrangements to provide for future events and increasing visitor experiences and improving access, safety, and reducing impacts on forest neighbours.**
- 2.10 Provide a main trail head, a sense of arrival and purpose built event infrastructure including a club house type shelter and pop up facilities at the Thomas Hill site and a secondary trail head at the Fox Creek Car Park area and through partnership arrangements encourage businesses to provide a range of trail related services including skills training, bike shuttles services and hospitality.**
- 2.11 As a priority provide a minimum of two toilets at the top and bottom trail head sites.**

³⁷ Fox Creek Bike Park Audit 2020

Strategic Priority 3

Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity

Action 3 Through collaboration, communication and commitment to sustainability and biodiversity protection ensure experiences across the forest are enjoyed by many and new trails sit perfectly within the Cudlee Creek Forest landscape.

Cudlee Creek is a popular trail destination and clearly mountain biking is the most popular activity within the forest with up to 15,000 mountain bike visitors each year. The YourSay Survey indicated the forest is strongly valued by other trail users and visitors who commented on its popularity for trail running, walking and passive activities such as dog walking and enjoying nature.

Cudlee Creek will be a destination where visitors experience a range of activities collaboratively and where management, participants and the community engage together in planning, communication and appropriate sharing of infrastructure. There will be some shared use trails focussed on existing forest tracks and some purpose-built trails for trail runners and upgrading of existing trails within the Native Forest Reserve to provide a more wholistic trail experience.

Trail Running SA run events within the forest and the Friends of Heysen Trail undertake the Heysen Trail End to End program through the forest. These activities may well benefit from shared event and visitor infrastructure where the use of these facilities can happen in a coordinated and shared manner.

Trail use generally includes single and shared use, single use trails or facilities are designed, sanctioned, managed and used solely by one user group whilst shared trails are used by more than one group e.g. mountain biking, bushwalking, trail running and horse riding.

Single use trails are designed and constructed for the specific purpose of maximising the enjoyment of the trail by the single user group while shared trails may require some compromise on design. Trails such as forest management tracks provide for relatively problem free shared trail use whilst shared use of single track trails may lead to injury or conflict.

Whatever the trail use, communication of the intended use is vital through pre-visit, and on-site including on trail head and waymarking signs. A culture of sharing and collaboration should be encouraged across the range of trail and forest users and integrated within future governance arrangements.

Within Cudlee Creek it is anticipated that there will be further growth in mountain bike trails, this is likely to include areas outside of the established mountain bike area. In addition to sustainability and environmental assessments consultation will need to take place with other trail user regarding single or shared use and sharing of facilities.

Existing and future trails need to align with users needs, provide social and economic benefit, minimise environmental impact and be developed in a manner that minimised future maintenance requirements. The Cudlee Creek trail infrastructure will be developed with a minimal environmental footprint linked strongly linked to values and actions that will contribute to AMLR biodiversity and provide active contribution to landscape conservation through restoration, revegetation and weed control.

ACTIONS

- 3.1 Ensure safety, comfort and enjoyment within the mountain bike area by limiting shared use walking, trail running and mountain biking to vehicle tracks and trails specifically established for shared use.**
- 3.2 Ensure mountain biking in the Native Forest Reserve occurs only on designated single use mountain bike trails or shared on vehicle management tracks or on trails that allow mountain biking on specifically established shared use trails.**
- 3.3 Provide trail head and waymarking signs that indicate clear trail designation and expectations including shared or single use.**
- 3.4 Contribute to AMLR biodiversity by developing Cudlee Creek trail infrastructure that has a minimal environmental footprint and contribute to landscape conservation through restoration, revegetation and weed control.**
- 3.5 Establish consistent and coordinated visitor surveys together with sustainability, satisfaction and visitor experience monitoring.**

Strategic Priority 4

Develop Cudlee Creek's status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status

ACTION 4 Develop the trail infrastructure and experiences that encourage growth and progression through the sport of mountain biking from beginner to highly skilled competitive performers.

Cudlee Creek's proximity to population centres, its diversity of trails and its attractive forest setting has led to its popularity. The future success of Fox Creek relies on encouraging and inviting new participants to become involved and in particular greater involvement of local people will ensure Fox Creek becomes more integrated with the hills community.

Barriers to new mountain bikers getting involved and progressing with the sport were identified in the YourSay surveys and ranged from infrastructure needs such as toilets, the range and maintenance of trails, access for those without cars, time, training and the lack of facilities such as skills parks.

There is a strong desire for riding skill development with many potential Fox Creek visitors seeking introductory entry level training. For some this will suffice allowing them to get on the trails and develop their own skills and level of ability and comfort, some however seek further progression training to advance as recreational mountain bikers or as confidence grows to progress through to competitive riding.

Accredited trainers have long sought a venue to provide both recreation and mountain bike sport skill development training. Mountain bike skill progression training opportunities are limited within South Australia and require the mix of trails, accredited trainers and a fit for purpose-built skills park.

Prior to the destructive fires the Dirt Skool Green provided a valuable but limited skill development resource. Fox Creek provides a great venue and with a good skills park and available technical skills coaching will encourage riders to progress safely from beginner to advanced levels.

Cudlee Creek, the AMLR and South Australia are well positioned to progress the sport of mountain biking and linked with the upgrading of the State Sports Park at Gepps Cross with its focus on Track cycling, BMX, Criterium Circuit, Cyclocross there is a clear future for competitive and recreational cycling including mountain biking.

A strategic approach is required to make mountain biking appealing, accessible and easy to for new entrants and beginners. The approach also needs to ensure South Australians have the opportunity to progress their skills through access to facilities and skill development training.

ACTIONS

- 4.1 Provide the facilities, environment and training to make mountain biking appealing, accessible and easy for new entrants and beginners to get involved in the sport. This requires development and maintenance of good introductory mountain bike trails, skills parks and access to professional bike training and skill development.**
- 4.2 Provide the support and infrastructure required, including well designed and maintained trails through a mix of difficulty ratings to encourage skill progression including through to competitive riding.**
- 4.3 Encourage opportunities for commercial and voluntary cycling products (guided tours, skill schools) to assisting and encourage mountain bikers to improve skills and undertake new experiences.**

Strategic Priority 5

Develop governance and management arrangements that encourage, leadership, direction and long-term maintenance and resourcing.

Action 5 Develop strong governance arrangements that focus on expertise and collaboration and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Cudlee Creek and strengthen its links to the greater AMLR experience.

The management of a contemporary, popular and busy mountain bike park is complex and beyond trail design, development and management it involves marketing, tourism and engaging with the knowledge and expertise of multiple stakeholder groups. The complexity of tasks requires collaboration, strong expertise, and a lot of time.

Optimising governance, management and cooperation across land manager and stakeholder groups requires the development of partnerships that would support the development of Cudlee Creek as a lead AMLR mountain bike destination.

There are opportunities for integration of the many trail hubs across the AMLR including Eagle Mountain Bike Park. Currently there appears to be limited cross site collaboration limiting opportunities to progress the establishment of the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as an International Mountain Bike Destination.

To achieve the vision for Cudlee Creek requires a management body to oversee the development the trail network and ensure quality experiences whilst gaining the opportunity to better leverage the economic advantages associated with mountain bike tourism, investment funding and revenue opportunities.

The future requires the bringing together of a skills-based group to assist ForestrySA in the management of Cudlee Creek and contribute to collaborative leadership and development of new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management, resourcing and development. This group would ensure collaborative leadership in the development of the new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management and development of the leading and supporting hubs.

For Cudlee Creek to reach its full potential requires cultural change and new governance. The sustainable design and management of future trail build, maintenance and standards amongst other responsibilities is vital work which works in hand with volunteer co-ordination. The recommended model for governance for the Cudlee Creek trail network is one which recognises the existing stakeholder groups and their significant knowledge and expertise on trail development.

This model would see a greater role for user groups in a partnership with the land manager and the SA Government. It provides for the land manager to focus on core business (multi-use forestry land management) and remain a partner in the development of the trail network. An example of where this model is in place is Rotorua presented in detail in Appendix A.

How a mountain bike park is resourced is an ongoing challenge. The YourSay survey indicated 38% of 582 respondents would consider paying fees as a contribution to the management of the site with 50% willing to donate and 70% keen to provide volunteering assistance. A high proportion of the respondents also considered time as a barrier to being involved in mountain biking the high interest in volunteering may be optimistic and time may be a barrier to volunteering.

A revenue stream will be a critical factor in the future management of Cudlee Creek and a cost-effective payment for service system should be explored.

ACTIONS

- 5.1 Bring together a skills-based group to assist ForestrySA, through an MOU or an incorporated body to ensure collaborative leadership in the development of the new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management, maintenance, resourcing and development.**
- 5.2 It is recommended that the MOU or incorporated body be instrumental in exploring appropriate revenue streams including commercial investment, resources from grant opportunities and through ForestrySA budget allocations.**
- 5.3 The sustainable management of trail building, maintenance is vital work and it is recommended that the significant role for volunteers be recognised and they continue to work hand in hand within a new governance arrangement.**

Strategic Priority 6

Integrate the Cudlee Creek experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation

Action 6 Develop the Cudlee Creek experience that encourages integration and visitor growth within the community and provides through thoughts and actions a positive trail and cycling supportive community.

Good beer, coffee, wine and bike servicing are essential for good mountain bike destinations. The YourSA Survey indicated good coffee was the most sought-after experiences second only to toilets. The Thomas Hill area is the perfect hub for services and selling local produce and Anderson Hill Winery provides a range of refreshments and is popular with the trail community.

Activities for families and non-riding partners are important consideration for successful mountain bike parks and can include walking/running trails, lookouts, playgrounds and connections to nearby town activities such as restaurants, cafes, breweries and wineries.

As Cudlee Creek grows, the development and strengthening of bike related support services will be required and will organically develop. Cooperative efforts by industry, government and other stakeholders can make significant contributions to this growth. With growth the nearby towns of Lobethal, Cudlee Creek and Woodside would take on the appearance and spirit of bike friendly towns. Linking of long distance cycle and gravel trails to towns and communities will contribute to the spirit of Cudlee Creek and provide for a wider range and number of visitors.

Cost effective shuttle services from Fox Creek to Thomas Hill are popular and have been operating for some time. The promotion of the shuttle service has the added benefit of reducing vehicle traffic on Croft and other roads where private vehicle use will be reduced thus reducing impacts on adjacent businesses and residents.

Business providing services to mountain bike and other trail users can diversify and provide anything from shuttles to bike repair to pop up coffee operations. These service businesses should be encouraged to extend their operations beyond the busy times and develop a level of permanency on site.

Cycle tourism industry development workshops and information packages are an approach that has been successful in north eastern Victoria. Tourism North East (Vic) staged a series of these workshops for its tourism operators and are now seeing quantifiable results in the growth of their cycle tourism market and overall visitor numbers to the region.

A range of accommodation is provided within the nearby towns via homestays and Air B&B and a camping and caravan park is located in Cudlee Creek. Camping sites such as at Bennetts forest provides bike camping opportunities and with access to and from Cudlee Creek mostly off road provides unique camping mountain biking experiences.

Reaction to COVID 19 has seen some remarkable increases in outdoor active recreation particularly in cycling and trail based activity. The opening of Cudlee Creek post fire will be extremely popular and will see a large number of mountain biking visitors flowing back to the forest and the regional towns.

ACTIONS

- 6.1 Encourage the development of various trail alliances, businesses and volunteer groups to contribute to the development and support of an AMLR mountain bike and cycling culture. Engagement with the local community and their involvement in decision making is key to great working relationships.**
- 6.2 Encourage and develop activities for families and non-riding partners including walking and running trails, lookouts, playgrounds and connections with nearby towns linked to good coffee, craft beer, wine and food to contribute to the overall visitor experience.**
- 6.3 As the reopening of the trails occurs encourage Industry development workshops and information sessions to assist local companies to become bike friendly business.**
- 6.4 Encourage and publicise bicycle-friendly services that are easily accessible for visitors and develop a bike friendly appearance in nearby towns and include infrastructure including bike racks and directional signs to the forest.**
- 6.5 Encourage and support service providers such as shuttle operators on site and between hubs to ensure consistent supply.**
- 6.6 The Thomas Hill house site provides an opportunity for commercial development that could contribute a return to the forest trail experiences. An expression of interest for a future commercial lease arrangement should be explored.**

Strategic Priority 7

Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the AMLR through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee Creek experience.

Action 7 Grow the community benefits from the Cudlee Creek experience through marketing and promotion and presenting the restored and refreshed forest trails, the new mountain biking experience and the links across the AMLR.

World class branding including a bright and appropriate name that reflects the vision and site needs to be established. Fox Creek Mountain Bike Park is a suitable name reflecting the location, the focus on mountain biking and encouraging growth and trends.

Cudlee Creek is a multi-trail experience with mountain biking clearly being the predominate recreational activity within the Forest. The AMLR is emerging as a mountain bike and a multi trail experience destination with some high-profile mountain bike networks with Cudlee Creek currently being one of the most popular and important.

The vision and look and feel of the site need to be reflected in the trails and trail head infrastructure and entrance, trail heads and facilities should present a world class bike park reflecting pride and sense of activity, enthusiasm and a sense of arrival . The art included in sign design should be encouraged and further developed.

Working with the private sector will ensure support services and new businesses develop as the visitor numbers grow and new events are attracted to the Park.

The South Australian Tourism Commission and Adelaide Hills Regional Tourism recognise the growth and importance of mountain biking and cycling and, reflecting this, mountain biking should be incorporated into the AMLR brand essence of the region. Collaborative marketing will reinforce and promote the exceptional riding opportunities and provide great benefit to the Adelaide Hills community.

Greater understanding of the benefits generated from mountain biking and cycling in the AMLR would be achieved if cycling and mountain biking were included in visitor surveys. Currently bushwalking is the only trail-based activity included in Adelaide Hills Tourism analysis.

Cudlee Creek will be developed as a destination that will match market needs and be linked to the broader AMLR. Mountain biking and cycling needs to become part of the market positioning and promotion to interstate and international markets.

Bicycle-friendly services that are easily accessible for visitors. Information and promotion of these services should be available online as well as at trail hubs.

ACTIONS

- 7.1 Seek opportunities to position the AMLR as a multi trail and multi-site experience and leveraged with other cycling experiences being developed. Fox Creek as the most important mountain bike hub in the AMLR needs to be a lead site within the mix.**
- 7.2 On completion of fire restoration works there is great opportunity to promote and market Fox Creek and the hills area as the place to be for exciting trail experiences.**
- 7.3 Mountain biking needs to be defined in its own right in tourism statistics and linked to cycling and gravel riding.**
- 7.4 Incorporate art into Fox Creek visitor entry and information to reflect and develop a clear Fox Creek recognition.**

8.5 Strategies and Actions

Table 5. Detailed strategies and actions

Strategy	Action	Outcome	Implementation	Responsibility	Indicative cost
Short = 1 year; Medium = 2 - 4 years; Long = 3 years					
1. Establish Cudlee Creek as the primary Mountain Bike Centre of the AMLR	Establish links from Cudlee Creek to other AMLR mountain bike hubs via existing tracks and trails and new hero trails. Provide support infrastructure including safety that encourages mountain bike and trail events. Provide links to improved forest and other camping experiences. Progressively establish Fox Creek Bike Park as the key Ride Centre through improvements to trail experiences, services, community involvement, tourism, promotion, marketing and evaluation and monitoring.	Fox Creek Bike Park within Cudlee Creek Forest is recognised by visitors and the community as the primary mountain bike centre in the AMLR	Medium - Long	ForestrySA	1,500,000
2. Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences, and services to meet market needs	Reinstate the fire damaged trail network based on Fox Creek Bike Park Trail Audit of April 2020. Establish a skilled Trails Advisory Group and coordinate future works and progressively develop up to 50 kilometres of additional introductory to advanced Fox Creek Bike Park trails. Minimise impact on native vegetation and maximise the experience for a long cross-country loop trail and linkages for an improved Mawson Trail ascent/descent trail to Adelaide through parts of the Mount Misery Native Vegetation Forest Reserve. Connect with a future AMLR Epic or hero rides. Consult with Adelaide Hills Council to upgrade Croft Road and parking arrangements to provide for future events and increasing visitor experiences. Provide a sense of arrival and purpose-built event infrastructure including a club house type shelter and pop up facilities at the Thomas Hill site and encourage businesses to provide a range of services.	Fox Creek Bike Park will be fully functional and will progressively grow to become the market leader in AMLR trail experiences.	Short - Medium	ForestrySA Adelaide Hills Council	2,500,000

Strategy	Action	Outcome	Implementation	Responsibility	Indicative cost
Short = 1 year; Medium = 2 - 4 years; Long = 3 years					
3. Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity	Provide experiences across the forest that are enjoyed by many and new trails sit perfectly within the Cudlee Creek Forest landscape and ensure safety, comfort and enjoyment. Ensure single use and shared use trails are managed effectively and waymarking clearly indicates trail designation and use. Contribute to AMLR biodiversity through a minimal environmental footprint and contribution to restoration, revegetation and weed control. Establish visitor surveys and sustainability, satisfaction and visitor experience monitoring.	Cudlee Creek Forest will be recognised for collaboration across the range of trail users and sustainability and biodiversity restoration.	Medium - Long	ForestrySA	300,000
4. Develop Cudlee Creek's status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status	Provide the facilities, environment and training to make mountain biking appealing, accessible and easy for new entrants and beginners to get involved in the sport. Develop and maintain good introductory mountain bike trails, skills parks. Provide support and infrastructure including a mix of difficulty ratings to encourage skill progression including through to competitive riding. Encourage opportunities for commercial and voluntary cycling products to assist and encourage mountain bikers skills.	Fox Creek Bike Park is recognised as the place to develop and progress skills from beginner to advanced.	Medium - Long	ForestrySA	500,000
5. Develop governance and management arrangements that encourage, leadership, direction and long-term maintenance and resourcing	Establish a skills-based group to assist ForestrySA as the land manager in the management of trails in Cudlee Creek Forest. Explore revenue streams including commercial investment, resources and grant opportunities. Recognise the contribution of volunteers establish roles within the new governance arrangement.	Cudlee Creek Forest trail leadership and management is well supported and has ongoing access to funding and on ground support.	Short - Long	ForestrySA	50,000

Strategy	Action	Outcome	Implementation	Responsibility	Indicative cost
Short = 1 year; Medium = 2 - 4 years; Long = 3 years					
6. Integrate the Cudlee Creek experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation	Encourage integration and cycling visitor growth within the community and encourage trail alliances, businesses and volunteer groups to an AMLR mountain bike and cycling culture. Encourage and develop activities for families and non-riding partners with links and connections to nearby towns linked to good coffee, craft beer, wine and food. Encourage bike friendly businesses, services and a bike friendly look and culture in nearby towns. Support service providers such as shuttle operators on site and between hubs to ensure consistent supply. Investigate commercial development of the Thomas Hill house and site through an expression of interest process.	The Adelaide Hills towns adjacent to Cudlee Creek Forest reflect a strong trail focus recognised and promoted by visitors and residents.	Medium - Long	ForestrySA	800,000
7. Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the AMLR through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee Creek experience.	Seek opportunities to position the AMLR as a multi trail and multi-site experience and present Fox Creek Bike Park as the lead AMLR MTB Hub. On completion of the fire restoration works promote and market Fox Creek Bike Park and the hills area as the place to be for exciting trail experiences. Encourage recognition of mountain biking in its own right in tourism statistics and linked to cycling and gravel riding. Incorporate art into Fox Creek visitor entry and information to reflect and develop a clear Fox Creek recognition.	Cudlee Creek Forest together with Fox Creek Bike Park will be recognised as a lead trail destination reflected in accurate AMLR visitor statistics	Medium - Long	ForestrySA	50,000
Project Management	Project management and contingencies				400,000
Project Costs	Total Project Costs ex GST				\$6,100,000
Planned Maintenance	Maintenance costs based on 2% per year which will be offset through volunteer and in-kind support				\$120,000



9 Benefits of the Strategy

Modelling Cost Benefit Analysis based on strategy recommendations

The main benefits can be summarised as follows:

Community and Social Benefits

providing opportunities for families and friends to enjoy time together and enhancing quality of life.



Educational Benefits

providing an outdoor classroom for physical activity, sport, nature, culture and history.



Health and Fitness Benefits

improved health and physical well-being for both individuals and communities, reduced health care costs and enhanced productivity.



Economic Benefits

increased tourism revenues, greater business investment and enhanced property values.



Environment Benefits

enhanced environmental awareness, improved understanding of our natural heritage and stewardship of the environment.



Heritage and Cultural Benefits

recognition and respect for Aboriginal culture and historical values.



9.1 Investment Attraction and Regional Stimulus

Increased visitation and expenditure in the region as a result of investment in the Cudlee Creek trail network are likely to attract further investment. The trail network presents an opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop products and services to meet the needs of visiting riders. This could include transport, merchandise, accommodation, food and beverages, and other ancillary services.

There are existing operators in the region that will also stand to benefit considerably from the increase in visitation. They are likely to capitalise on this opportunity and provide additional services, products and experiences for the trail users.

The increased expenditure with construction will also provide significant stimulus to the AMLR. An increased length of stay for existing markets will improve the occupancy rate of accommodation facilities and may also result in investment in new accommodation infrastructure to meet market needs.

9.2 Cost Benefit Analysis

An economic impact report was prepared for ForestrySA in relation to the development of the Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy. Modelling was based on estimates of annual user/uses of the trails and other assumptions utilised in quantifying spending in the region.

Other benefits included in the analysis were health benefits and a notional valuation of the trail experience.

The analysis indicated that redeveloped trails would generate substantial positive economic benefits for the region during the construction phase and in the operations phase.

Construction Phase Jobs

A total of 31.1 FTE jobs (25.9 direct jobs and 5.2 indirect/induced jobs) would be generated during the construction period. The direct jobs comprise 18.9 jobs in on-site construction and 7.0 jobs in materials/equipment supply.

Operation Phase Jobs

The operations phase economic impacts of the trail are driven by the expenditure of visitors/users in towns adjacent to the trail and in the broader region. The ongoing growth in user numbers will support an increasing number of jobs in the region.

It is estimated that the operation of the trails would generate a total of 15.0 direct full-time equivalent jobs in year 1, increasing to 38.0 direct FTE jobs in Year 10. Total jobs (direct and indirect/induced) are 18.0 FTE in year 1 increasing to 45.0 in year 10.

Of the direct jobs in year 10, day visitors would account for 9.8 FTE jobs, overnight visitors for 20.9 FTE jobs and local/regionals for 14.3 FTE jobs.

The development of the trails will see the development of the local MTB service industry. The industry analysis highlights that total full time equivalent (FTE) jobs generated by trail users will be in: recreation services/other services (MTB hire, guides, equipment etc.) – 16.4 jobs in year 10 ; transport (including shuttles) 3.7 jobs in year 10 ; accommodation 5.5 jobs in year 10; food and beverage 11.5 jobs in year 10; and other retail 5.9 jobs in year 10.

Benefit/Cost Analysis

Benefit Cost Ratios (BCR) were identified for 3 discount rates. For a trail project a 7%

discount rate is appropriate, and the project yields a positive BCR of 5.9. The present value of total benefits (\$42.470 million) generated by the investment are 5.9 times the total costs of the project (\$7.200 million) over a 10-year period.

A full analysis of the economic impact assessment is available in the *ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy - Economic Impact Assessment Report November 2020*³⁸

³⁸ ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy Economic Impact Assessment Report, TRC Tourism and Michael Connell & Assocs. November 2020.

Commercial Opportunities

In addition to tourism related economic benefits there are also direct flow-on effects of mountain biking for bicycle retail and wholesalers, bicycle mechanics, clothing and equipment manufacturers, trail designers and builders, coaches and instructors, event management groups and support services, shuttle and tour services, and mountain biking media companies. Commercial opportunities that have proved successful elsewhere include:

Table 6. Commercial Opportunities

Opportunity	Delivery
Bike shops and repairs	Especially near trailheads. They may not sell many bikes, but accessories, consumables, repairs etc. are critical for visiting mountain bikers.
Shuttle services	In areas with good vertical elevation and gravity trails, riders will happily pay for comfortable and reliable transport back to the top of the hill.
Coffee	Bike riders of all disciplines love a good coffee shop. The closer to the trailhead, the better.
Bike hire	Most core mountain bikers are inclined to bring their own bikes, but there is still a good market segment of non-core riders looking to hire good quality mountain bikes.
Guided tours and mountain bike tuition	This opportunity doesn't have huge appeal for core mountain bikers, but it can be an excellent way for non-core mountain bikers to try the sport. Also a great way for supporting solo traveller, small and large group activities, including school groups.
Bike Friendly services	Accommodation, cafes/coffee shops, places for bike service and repair.
Accommodation	Mountain bikers cover a wide spectrum of incomes and have wide ranging expectations for accommodation. Anyone that can cater towards cycling somewhere in their accommodation offering will have a competitive advantage. This can be as simple as providing secure bike lock up facilities
Food and Beverages	There appears to be a growing overlap with boutique food and beverage tourism segments. Breweries and wineries are popular with mountain bikers, with the increasing establishment of gourmet trails in picturesque and rural settings.
Groceries and other travel needs	During travel, visitors require basic grocery and sundries. There are opportunities to provide on trail or close to trail and trail hub conveniences.
Medial, physio and massage services	Provision to ensure ongoing health and wellbeing benefits for riders, particularly those on holidays who wish to incorporate adventure and relaxation into their travels.
First aid and on-trail support assistance	Similar to on-trail first aid and operational support provided at ski fields, there are opportunities during peak seasons and events to offer this level of support on mountain bike trails.
Other entertainment services and or experiences	For many riders, the trail is only one component of the overall experience. Riders are also looking for complementary activities and experiences that become a part of the overall journey. In addition, during events or when family and friends are travelling to support core riders, providing additional activities and experiences for non-riders will keep them engaged and, in the region, longer.



APPENDIX A – GOVERNANCE

Rotorua Mountain Biking - Management & Governance

There are four main areas for Mountain Biking:

There are four main areas for Mountain Biking:

1. Moerangi Mountain Biking Trail, cross country, 1hr 40mins from Rotorua – 35kms of trail
2. Rainbow Mountain MTB Trail, cross country / technical downhill, 30mins from Rotorua - 10kms of trail
3. Skyline Gravity Mountain Biking Park, gondola / downhill, 10mins from Rotorua – 10.5kms of trail
4. Mountain Biking in The Redwoods (Whakarewarewa Forest), cross country / downhill, 5 mins from Rotorua – 160+kms of trail

Cost to Ride

There is no charge to ride in the Redwood Forest, Moerangi or Rainbow Mountain. All these areas are administered by the Department of Conservation (D.O.C.) and are open to ride at no charge.

Skyline MTB Gravity Park is a privately owned commercial venture - 12 trails within a 12km trail network operating a gondola. Passes are:

	Adult	Youth
1 Uplift	\$32	
15 Uplift	\$61	\$46
40 Uplift	\$115	
65 Uplift	\$165	
100 Uplift	\$225	
MTB Season Pass	\$799	\$549

The Redwoods (Whakarewarewa Forest) Maintenance

The Rotorua Trails Trust continues the achievements of the Rotorua Mountain Bike Club who has, over several years, developed and maintained the network of quality mountain bike trails within the Whakarewarewa forest. The Trust has now taken on this role and the challenge of extending the trails and further improving the network.

The Rotorua Trails Trust builds, rebuild, maintain and advocate for MTB, walking and equestrian trail network in the Whakarewarewa Forest as well as the Rainbow Mountain trails, Te Ara Ahi network and Western Okataina trail. It is also involved with the Urban cycleway project. The Whaka network alone runs into over 200km of trail to maintain and the forest being a working forest there is always rebuild work to undertake after logging.

The Rotorua Trails Trust funded through a combination of contracted work for the council and fundraising activity such as grant applications and membership donations. They rely heavily on volunteers - from the Trustees to the 'on trail' volunteers as well as sponsors. All trail building requests go through the Forest Recreation Management Group made up of Iwi landowner representation, Rotorua Lakes Council and Timberlands. The Rotorua Trails Trust presents new trail ideas to this group for approval. Decisions are made about how the trail will be funded and whether they will build the trails or contract the work out. Any trail being destroyed by logging can be rebuilt automatically.

Mountain Bike Trail Investment

Proposed forest developments, which are included in Council's 2018-28 Long-term Plan, would see improvements to Long Mile Road, the Redwoods i-site and carparking, and the creation of a new recreation hub at another entry to Whakarewarewa Forest along Tarawera Road (between Okareka Loop Road and Lake Tikitapu).

Council is preparing detailed business cases for both the forest enhancements and development of Rotorua's lakefront as part of applications for funding from the Government's Provincial Growth Fund (PGF). Council has received \$811,000 from the fund to prepare the business cases.

Forest Management / Governance

The Tokorangi and adjoining Whakarewarewa Forest combine to provide a vast recreational area with a vast network of trails for mountain biking, walking, running and horse riding. The Redwoods area, which is part of the Tokorangi Forest, is largely used for walking and running. Tokorangi Forest and Whakarewarewa Forest are managed under Crown Forest Licence by Rotorua Lakes Council and Kaingaroa Timberlands Limited for the CNI iwi collective who are the land owners – their interests are looked after by CNI Iwi Holdings Limited. The Crown Forest Licence and the Deed of Settlement provides for general public access to the forests by foot, bike or horse. All other recreational access, both commercial and non-commercial, is subject to the discretion and joint agreement of Rotorua Lakes Council, Kaingaroa Timberlands and CNI and is managed under the Recreational Use of the Tokorangi and Whakarewarewa Forests Interim Policy. Council is the recreational manager under this Policy and has an obligation to manage the environment of the Tokorangi Forest under the Conservation covenants within the Tokorangi Crown Forest Licence.

Council is entering into a co-governance model with CNI Iwi Holdings, Ngati Whakaue and Tuhourangi. An overall recreational use plan being prepared for the forests will ensure ongoing public access for all user groups and may open up opportunities for recreational tourism developments.

Last year the council won the judges' choice award at the Local Government New Zealand Excellence Awards, for the district's mountain bike strategy. The project was about establishing Rotorua as a globally recognised mountain bike destination through its trails, infrastructure and events.

Council Event Assistance

Crankworx Rotorua is run in conjunction with its Canadian owners Crankworx Events Incorporated, the local festival organiser and not-for-profit company Mountain Bike Events Ltd. This event is conducted mainly at Skyline. Council agreed to provide an underwrite for Crankworx of up to \$500,000 between 2015 and 2021, on the basis of the anticipated economic benefits for Rotorua. The underwrite called upon for 2015 was \$94,000 and in 2016 it was \$39,000 with no underwrite required for 2017.

APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY BENEFIT



Case Study: Blue Derby, Derby, Tasmania

The Blue Derby MTB experience in Tasmania was an initiative devised to support the rural township of Derby, suffering an economic decline at the conclusion of mining and forestry works.

Blue Derby is a network of mountain bike trails shared across the two local Government areas. The trails are centred on the two rural settlements of Derby and Weldborough. Stage one, comprising 23km of trails at Derby was launched in February 2015, followed by Blue Tier in 2016. When completed the area offered a full 85km of trails. Building on this success, there are over 200km of further trails planned (stage 2) to connect mountain bikers to the seaside town of St Helens.

The project made possible by the Australian Government's Community Development Grant Programme, which allocated \$2.45 million. This was matched with \$700,000 in funding by a partnership of local stakeholders, making it the largest mountain bike trails project in Australia.

Derby has a mix of trails catering for all skill levels and riding styles, the pristine natural environment enhances the trail experience and sets a benchmark for other destinations to aspire too, attracting approximately 30,000 visitors per year. The town of Derby has seen new businesses open; accommodation beds increase (from 12 rooms to more than 70 rooms) and a wave of residential and commercial real estate acquisitions. Dorset Council General Manager, Tim

Watson, estimates the economic impact of mountain biking on the region is between \$15 and \$18 million dollars. He also states there have been 49 property sales in 18 months, or about \$5 million worth of turnover.

Strava data for the first quarter of 2016 shows that the Blue Derby trails and the North South track are the most popular riding trails (amongst strava users) in Tasmania. Derby is one of the tourism icons of Tasmania. Stage 2 is expected to attract over 138,000 visitors, create 51 full time jobs and add a further \$6.88 million to the economy.³⁹

The Blue Derby MTB experience is attracting 30,000 visitors annually who spend 4-5 nights in the township of Derby, followed by 5 additional nights elsewhere in Tasmania. The return on investment to date has been estimated at approximately \$30million per year. In 2017, the Blue Derby trails were voted by professional mountain bikers as the best in the Enduro Series Competition. This was the first time a stage of this competition was hosted in Australia.



Photo Credit: Stu Gibson

³⁹ www.ridebluederby.com.au, www.abc.net.au/news
www.rdatasmania.org.au

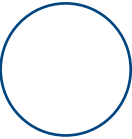
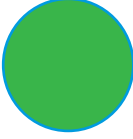


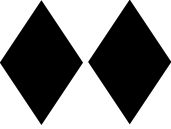
APPENDIX C – TRAIL DIFFICULTY RATINGS

The International Mountain Biking Association has established an international *Trail Difficulty Rating System*. Adapted from an international trail system for ski areas, the Rating System has also been applied to horse riding trails. There are two trail rating systems for mountain biking:

- Trail Managers System - to ensure construction and management adhere to and measure against specified criteria.
- Trail User System – this provides trail ratings to help users make decisions about which trails are suitable and appropriate for their skill level.

The Trail Difficulty Rating System includes five levels of difficulty:

International Mountain Bike Trail Rating System⁴⁰

Very Easy	Easy	Intermediate	Difficult	Extreme
				
White Circle	Green Circle	Blue Square	Single Black Diamond	Double Black Diamond

The ratings are determined by four measurable criteria:

1. Tread width
2. Tread surface
3. Trail Grade
4. Natural obstacles and technical trail features.

With MTB trail development, it is important to include MTB clubs, potential riders and experts in the experience and their suggested ratings from a user perspective.

⁴⁰ Adapted from www.imba.com

APPENDIX D – SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

MTB Survey comments	
Barriers to getting involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Time ➤ Many young families and commitments ➤ Needs to be social environment less racing ➤ Access including those without cars ➤ Cost of bikes and suitability for unmaintained trails ➤ Skills and lack of progressive trails ➤ Fewer well designed and maintained trails ➤ Toilets particularly for girls and women ➤ Fear of injury ➤ Lack of beginner trails ➤ Kids friendly ➤ Limited shuttle and expense ➤ Overcrowding ➤ Quality and maintenance ➤ Business, family, training for international racing ➤ The stupid amount of red tape preventing people of building amazing trails in Adelaide ➤ Having too many beginner trails available and not enough advanced. ➤ Dunnies of course. But mainly just maintaining things like keeping the blackberries at bay. Other than that, new trails, a coffee stand perhaps? ➤ More linking trails. Some of the best trails are hidden at the back of the park and require riding fire roads to get to them. ➤ Providing a more enjoyable way of linking the trails would be amazing. ➤ Travel time to quality trails
Facilities services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cafes popular ➤ Pop up style preferred ➤ Anderson Hill was supported as a great resource ➤ Bike parts and servicing through container arrangement popular ➤ Bike wash facilities popular ➤ Some interest in camping ➤ Skills coaching across the range of skills and progression ➤ Car park top and bottom aggregate bitumen and suitable for all vehicles. Separate car park from shuttles ➤ Safe road access Fox Creek Road ➤ Campsite ➤ Some OK don't change and wants no commercialisation the way it is ➤ Effective shuttle ➤ Massage ➤ Sealed access road ➤ Signs need improvement, more clarity consider other users with signs and trail head ➤ Entry and exit at the bottom clarity ➤ Access road management - neighbours

MTB Survey comments	
Getting involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limited time with young families ➤ Many heavily involved already ➤ More family facilities playgrounds and things for non riders and kids to do ➤ More great trails across the range
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Desire for community events ➤ Big ride days and events ➤ Races group rides shuttle days ➤ Supportive communities to events State and National ➤ Better trails leading to bigger events ➤ Events and festivals ➤ Maintenance days ➤ Social MTB Days women specific
Kids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child care ➤ Kids joining families or riders with kid friendly spaces ➤ Kids event ➤ Family riding days ➤ Kids behaviour on trails
More trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trail progression ➤ More technical - too may flow trails ➤ A bigger MTB Park ➤ More promotion ➤ More sleep less children ➤ More green blue and links to Adelaide ➤ More difficult trails and jumps ➤ Longer networks ➤ Trails to cover families and partners e.g. difficult and easy ➤ Charlift ➤ Social opportunities – meeting place ➤ More support from Govt for signs maintenance – targeted funds Planned not reaction ➤ More trail forest access ➤ More easy and intermediate can't afford expensive bikes ➤ Skill development ➤ Council and Govt Shared thinking ➤ More Trails ➤ Links to Adelaide ➤ Bike shop café ➤ No1 Quality trails ➤ More trails across the range of types ➤ Natural trails

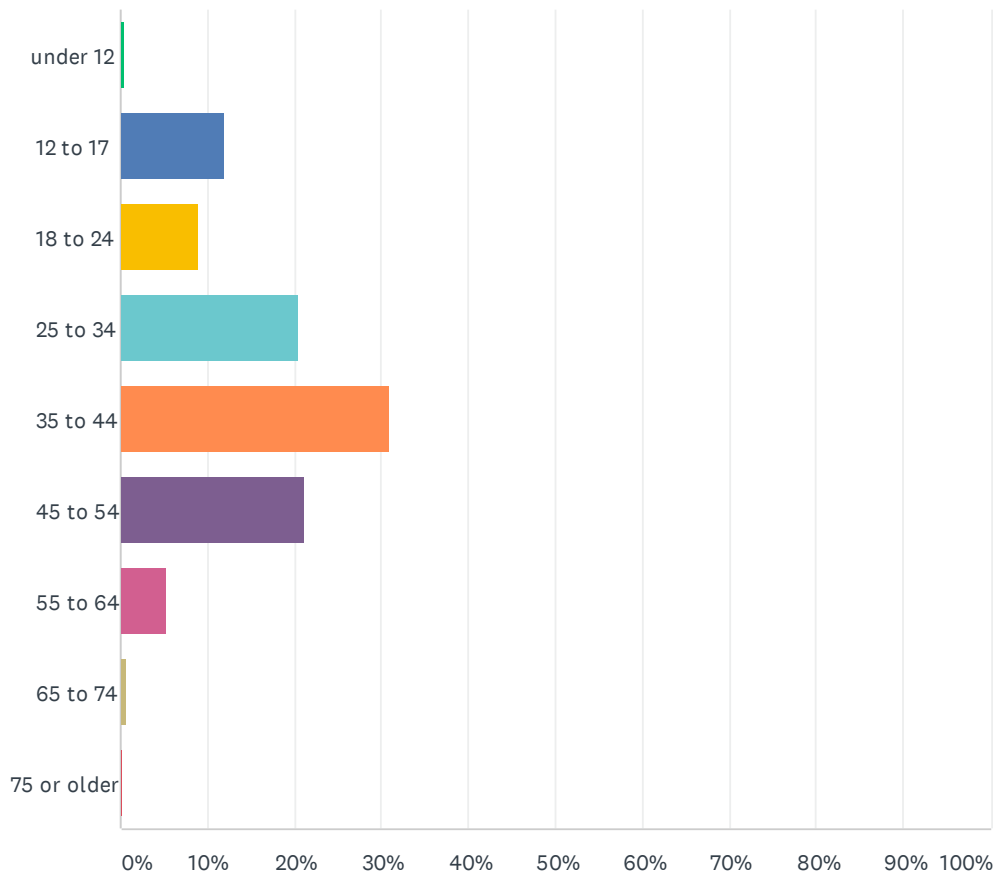
Community Survey Comments	
Encouraging visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To be open ➤ Fire management ➤ Beginner and kids MTB ➤ Separation of use ➤ Toilets ➤ Exciting MTB trail and features ➤ More running trails ➤ Nice trails ➤ Weed and feral animal control ➤ Car parks toilets ➤ Neighbour issues inconsiderate users
Facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nice walking trails ➤ Mtb trails ➤ Safety ➤ Mix of trails walking and riding ➤ Walking only trails ➤ Running trails only ➤ Trail marking ➤ Toilets ➤ Features lookouts family friendly picnic area ➤ Single track for trail running multi use and single use
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Horse riding ➤ Nature ➤ MTB trails all levels ➤ Family and kids facilities ➤ Water ➤ Heysen Trail ➤ Runners friendly

Q1 What is your postcode or locality?

Answered: 576 Skipped: 4

Q2 What is your age?

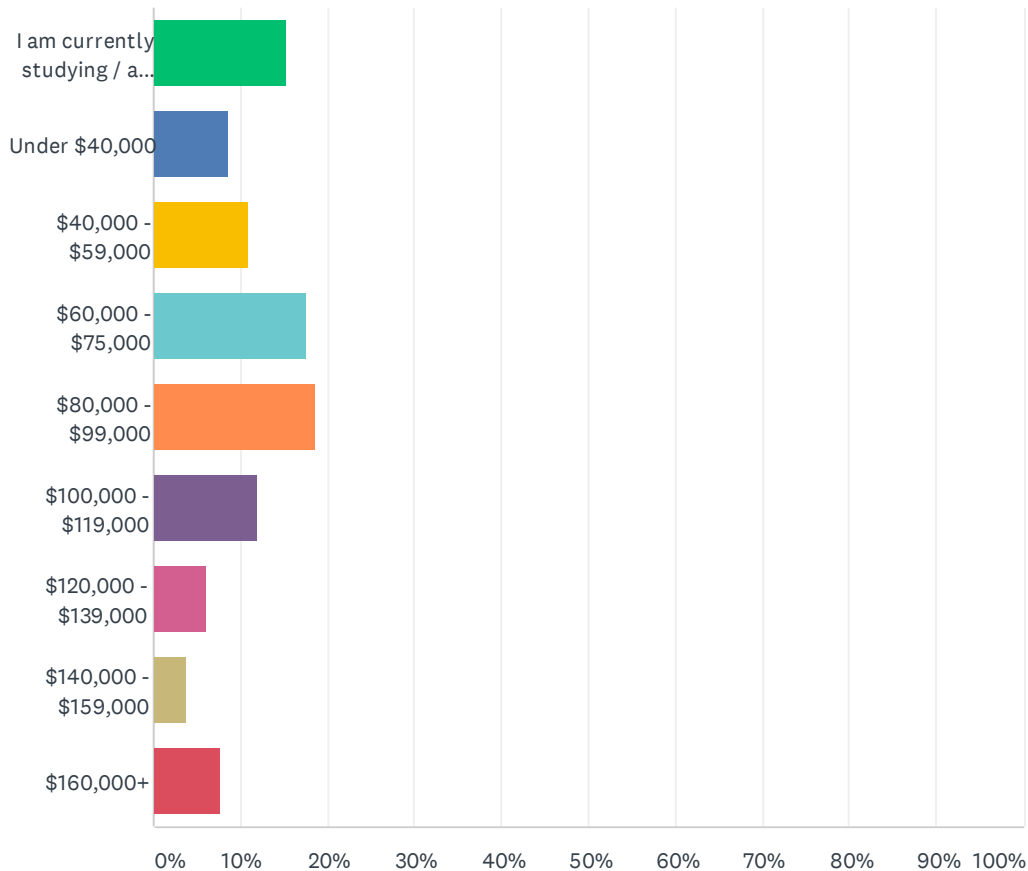
Answered: 575 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
under 12	0.52%	3
12 to 17	11.83%	68
18 to 24	9.04%	52
25 to 34	20.52%	118
35 to 44	30.96%	178
45 to 54	21.04%	121
55 to 64	5.22%	30
65 to 74	0.70%	4
75 or older	0.17%	1
TOTAL		575

Q3 What is your average income?

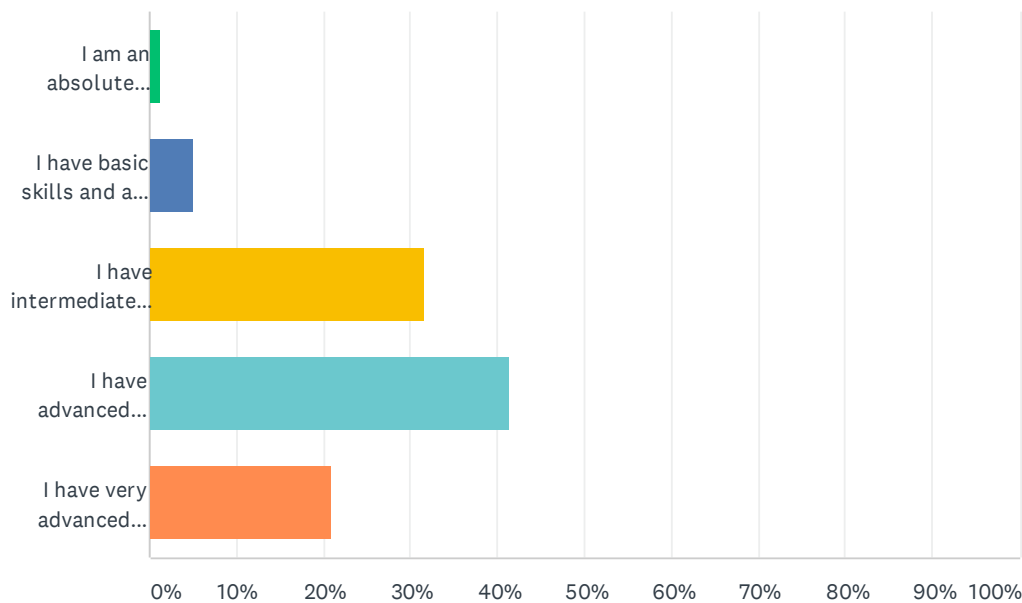
Answered: 566 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am currently studying / at school / unemployed	15.19%	86
Under \$40,000	8.48%	48
\$40,000 - \$59,000	10.95%	62
\$60,000 - \$75,000	17.49%	99
\$80,000 - \$99,000	18.55%	105
\$100,000 - \$119,000	11.84%	67
\$120,000 - \$139,000	6.01%	34
\$140,000 - \$159,000	3.71%	21
\$160,000+	7.77%	44
TOTAL		566

Q4 Current ability on a mountain bike?

Answered: 578 Skipped: 2



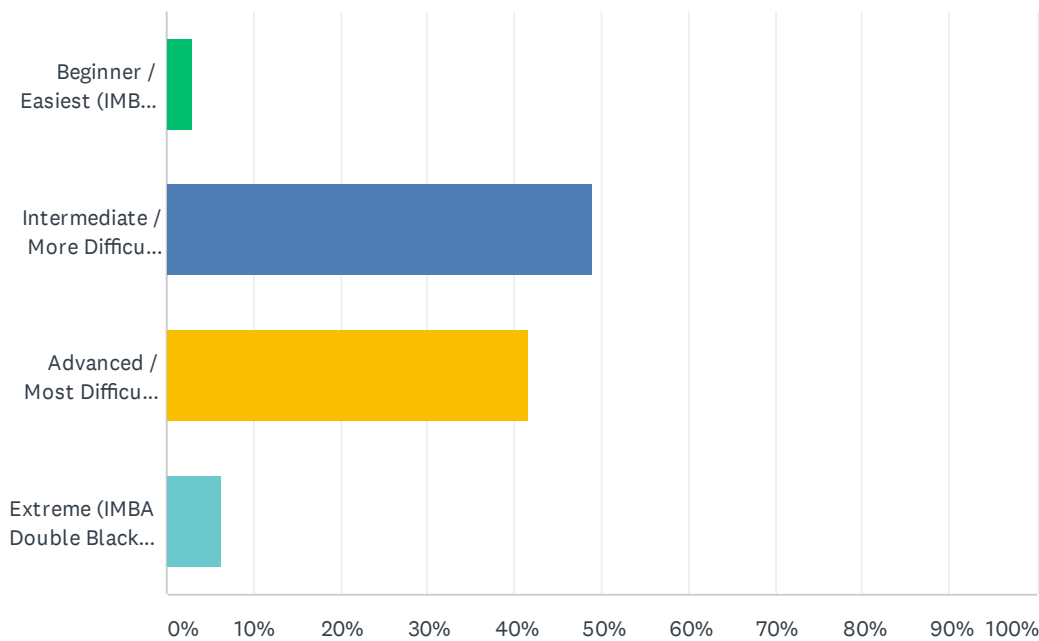
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am an absolute beginner with limited ability	1.21%	7
I have basic skills and am capable of navigating more demanding trails and obstacles	5.02%	29
I have intermediate skills and am capable of navigating more demanding trails and obstacles	31.49%	182
I have advanced ability and am capable of riding steep and challenging trail with obstacles such as jumps and drops	41.35%	239
I have very advanced ability and am capable of riding steep and challenging trail with obstacles such as jumps and drops	20.93%	121
TOTAL		578

Q5 Where do you MTB mostly? (please specify)

Answered: 579 Skipped: 1

Q6 What is the most common trail difficulty you would normally ride?

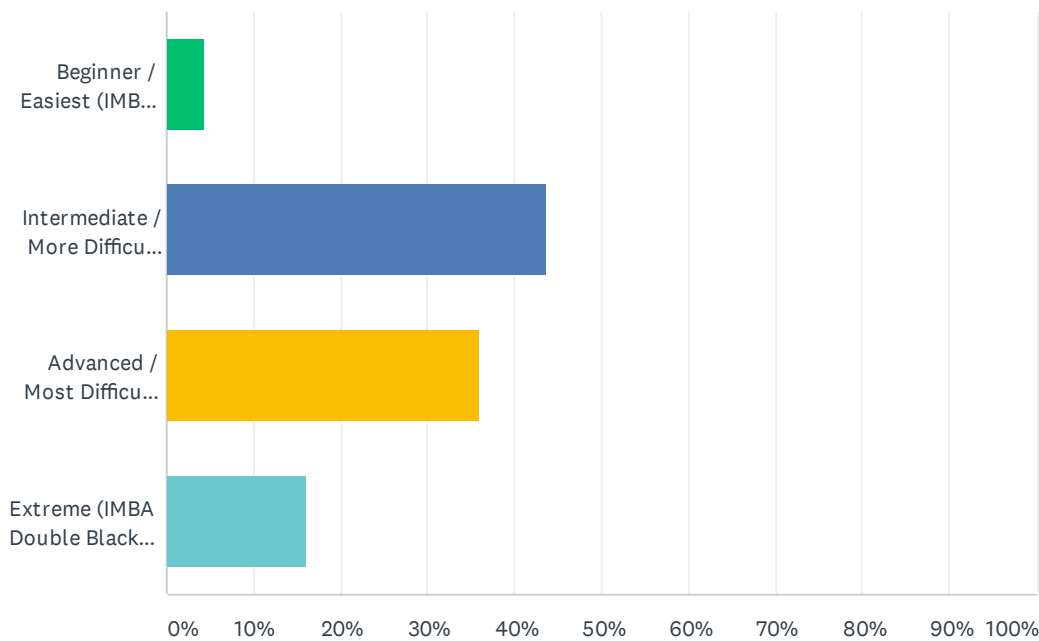
Answered: 580 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Beginner / Easiest (IMBA Green Circle)	2.93%	17
Intermediate / More Difficult (IMBA Blue Square)	48.97%	284
Advanced / Most Difficult (IMBA Black Diamond)	41.72%	242
Extreme (IMBA Double Black Diamond)	6.38%	37
TOTAL		580

Q7 What trail difficulty would you like to see more of?

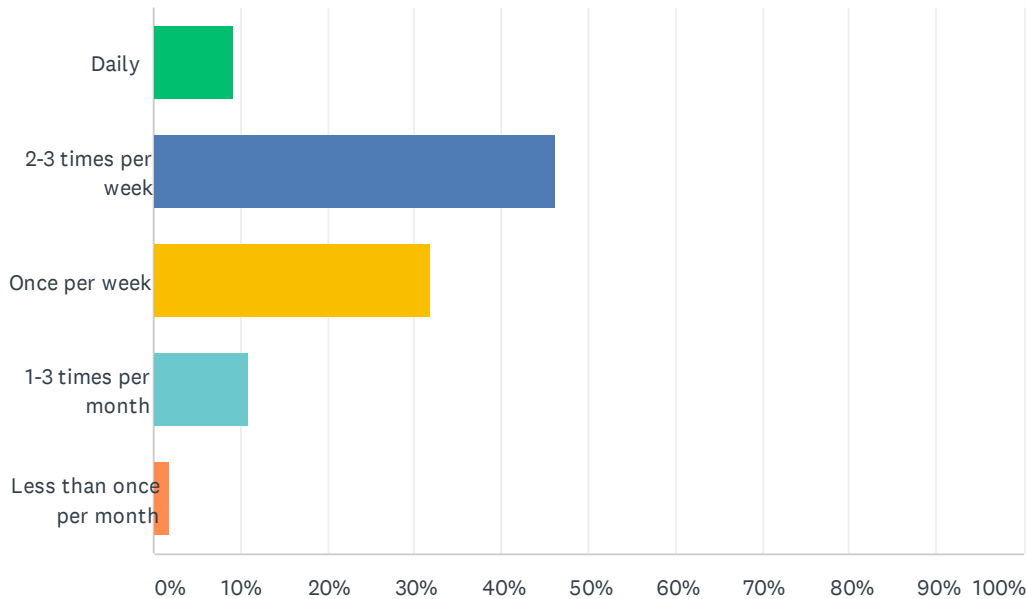
Answered: 579 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Beginner / Easiest (IMBA Green Circle)	4.32%	25
Intermediate / More Difficult (IMBA Blue Square)	43.70%	253
Advanced / Most Difficult (IMBA Black Diamond)	35.92%	208
Extreme (IMBA Double Black Diamond)	16.06%	93
TOTAL		579

Q8 How often do you mountain bike?

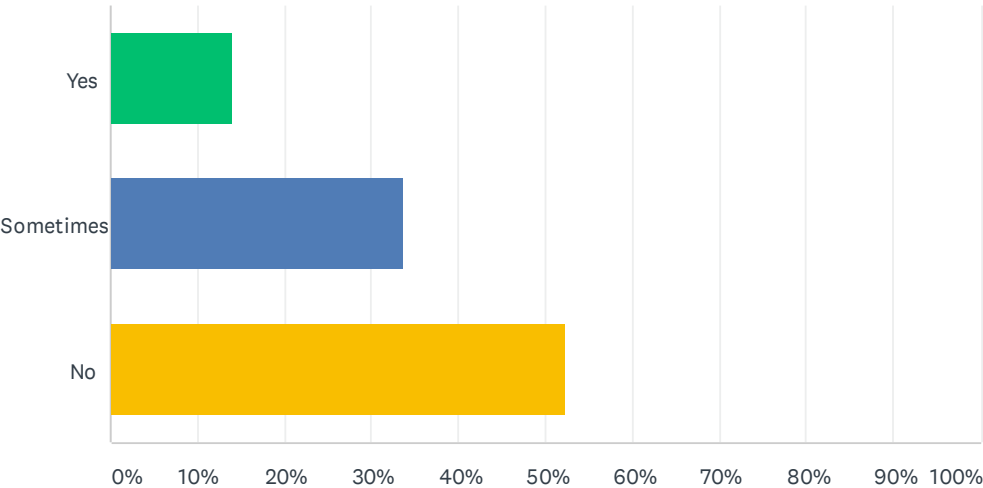
Answered: 580 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	9.14%	53
2-3 times per week	46.21%	268
Once per week	31.90%	185
1-3 times per month	10.86%	63
Less than once per month	1.90%	11
TOTAL		580

Q9 Do you participate in official/sanctioned trail care/construction activities?

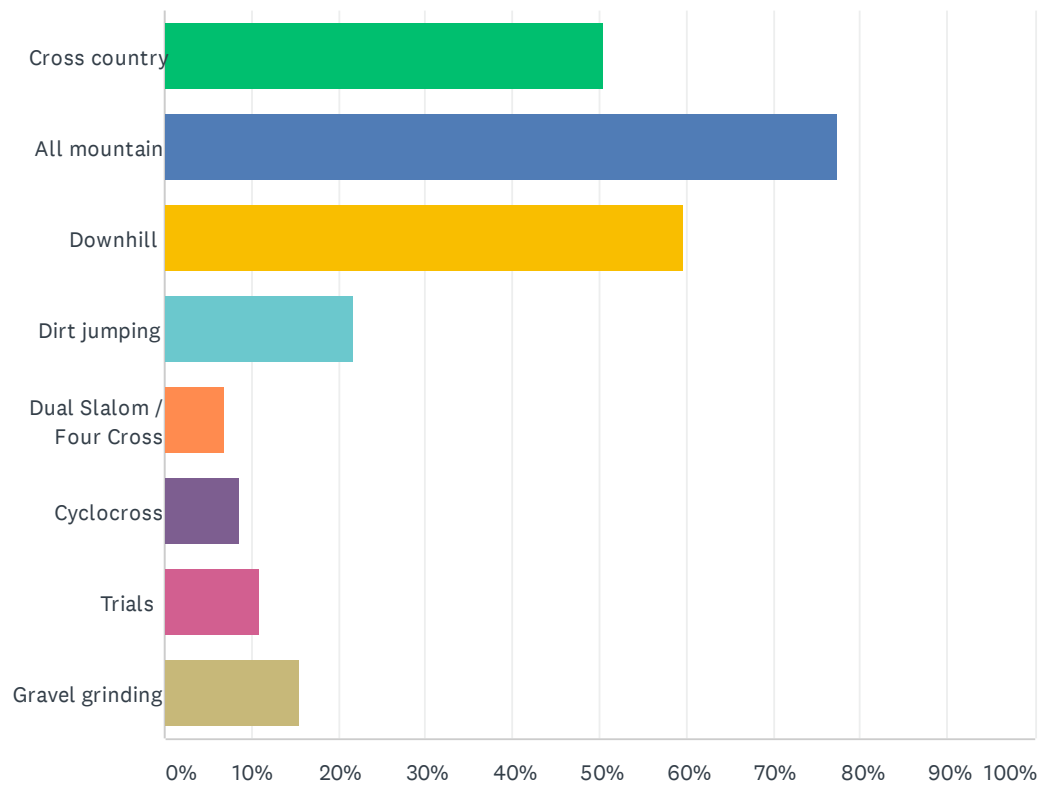
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ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		13.99%	81
Sometimes		33.68%	195
No		52.33%	303
TOTAL			579

Q10 What is your preferred riding styles? (please select all choices that apply to you)

Answered: 578 Skipped: 2



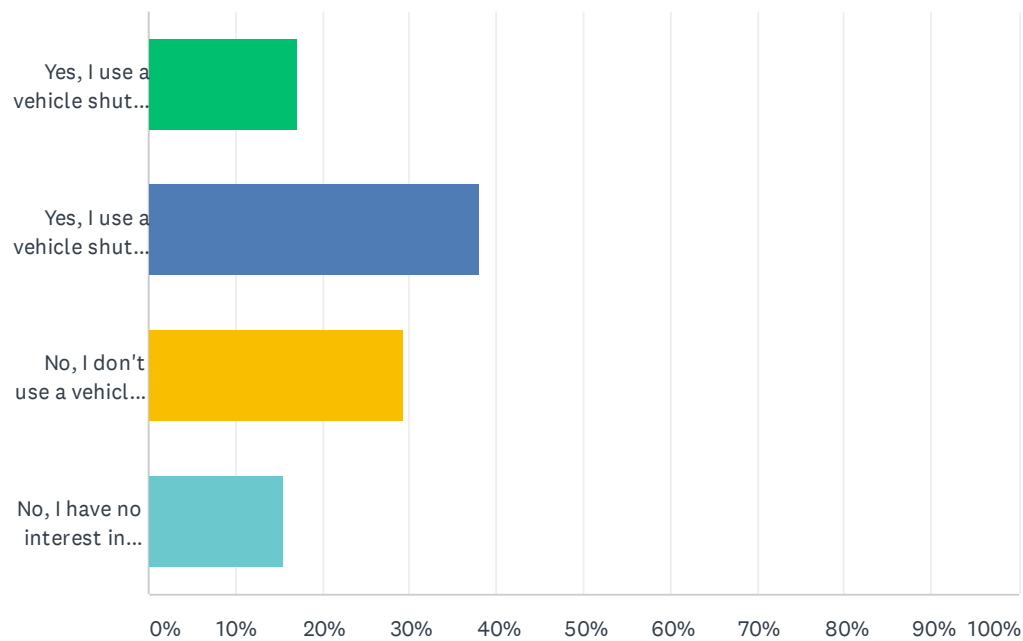
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cross country	50.35%	291
All mountain	77.51%	448
Downhill	59.69%	345
Dirt jumping	21.80%	126
Dual Slalom / Four Cross	6.92%	40
Cyclocross	8.65%	50
Trials	10.90%	63
Gravel grinding	15.57%	90
Total Respondents: 578		

Q11 What improvements to the Cudlee Creek Forest/Fox Creek Mountain Bike Trails System would you like to see?

Answered: 553 Skipped: 27

Q12 Do you use a vehicle shuttle or chair lift service if it is available?

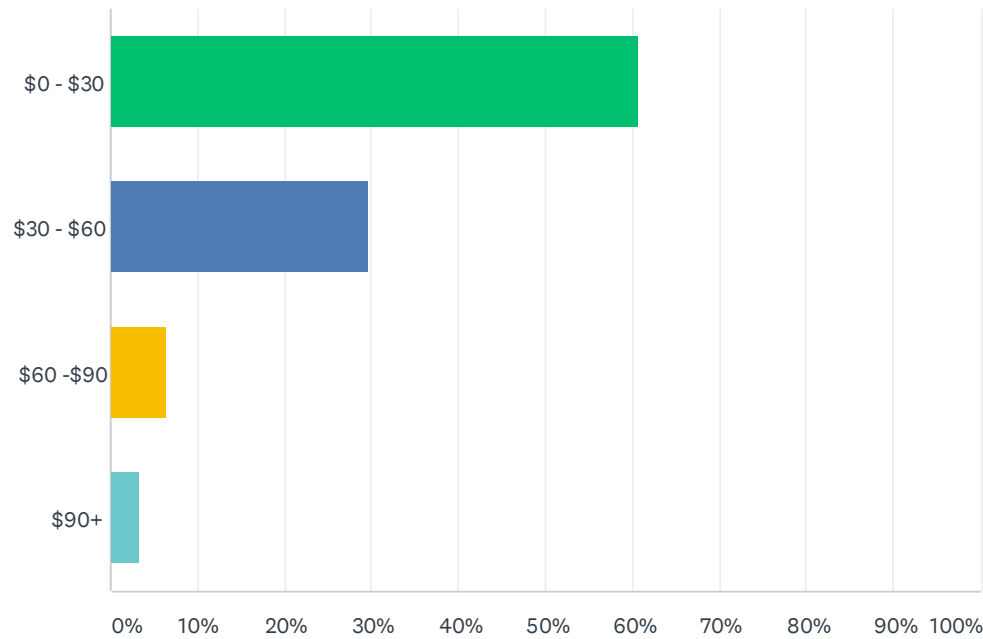
Answered: 579 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I use a vehicle shuttle or chair lift service when I ride.	17.10%	99
Yes, I use a vehicle shuttle or chairlift service occasionally when I ride.	38.00%	220
No, I don't use a vehicle shuttle or chairlift but have an interest in these services.	29.36%	170
No, I have no interest in vehicle shuttle / chairlift services and no interest in utilising these amenities.	15.54%	90
TOTAL		579

Q13 What is your average daily expenditure on food and beverages at riding destinations (excluding accommodation)?

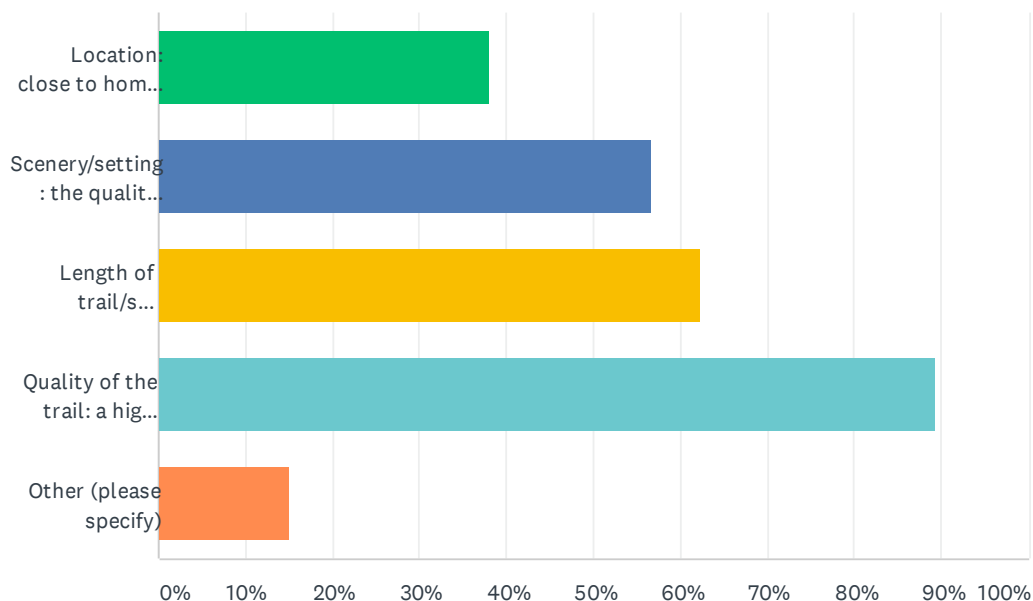
Answered: 579 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
\$0 - \$30	60.62%	351
\$30 - \$60	29.71%	172
\$60 - \$90	6.39%	37
\$90+	3.28%	19
TOTAL		579

Q14 What is the most important factor when judging the attractiveness of a mountain bike trail/facility? (please select all choices that apply to you)

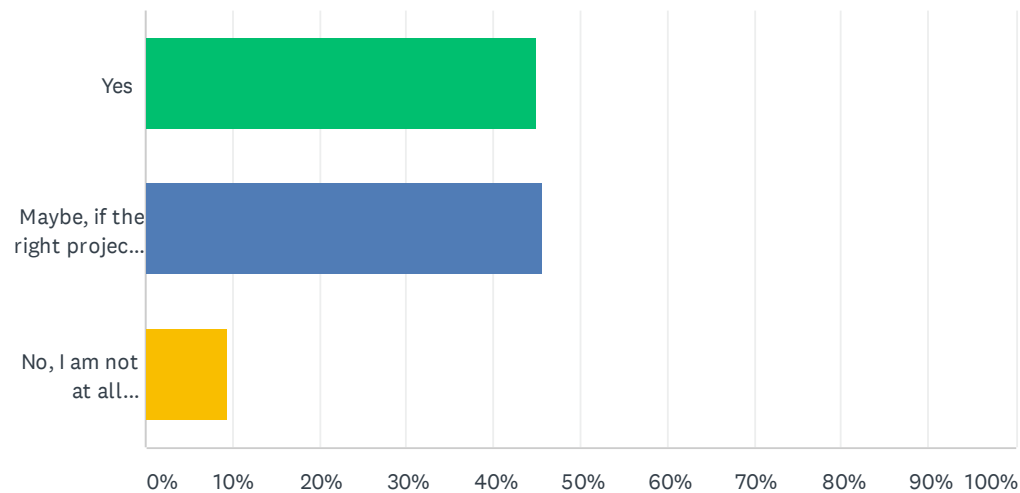
Answered: 580 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Location: close to home and/or population centre	38.10%	221
Scenery/setting: the quality of the trails setting/local environment	56.72%	329
Length of trail/s available	62.24%	361
Quality of the trail: a high quality trail/s	89.31%	518
Other (please specify)	15.00%	87
Total Respondents: 580		

Q15 Are you interested in future involvement in volunteer trail care/construction activities?

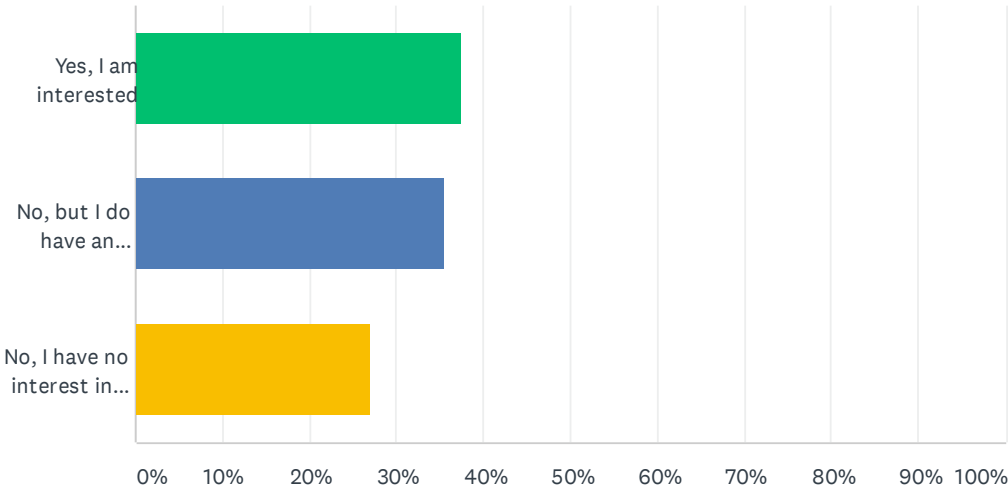
Answered: 580 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		45.00%	261
Maybe, if the right project requested my involvement		45.52%	264
No, I am not at all interested in volunteer trail care / construction		9.48%	55
TOTAL			580

Q16 What is your interest in a Bike skills course/clinic?

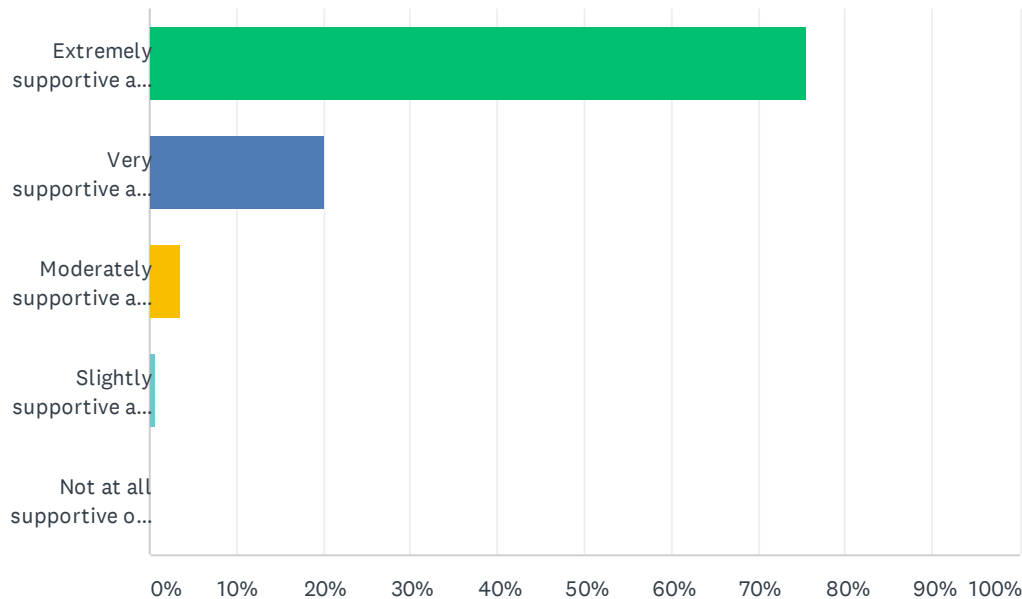
Answered: 579 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I am interested	37.48%	217
No, but I do have an interest in bike skills	35.58%	206
No, I have no interest in bike skills courses/clinics	26.94%	156
TOTAL		579

Q17 What is your interest in Mountain Biking in Cudlee Creek Forest/Fox Creek Trails?

Answered: 580 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely supportive and interested	75.52%	438
Very supportive and interested	20.17%	117
Moderately supportive and interested	3.62%	21
Slightly supportive and interested	0.69%	4
Not at all supportive or interested	0.00%	0
TOTAL		580

Q18 What would make you get more involved in mountain biking?

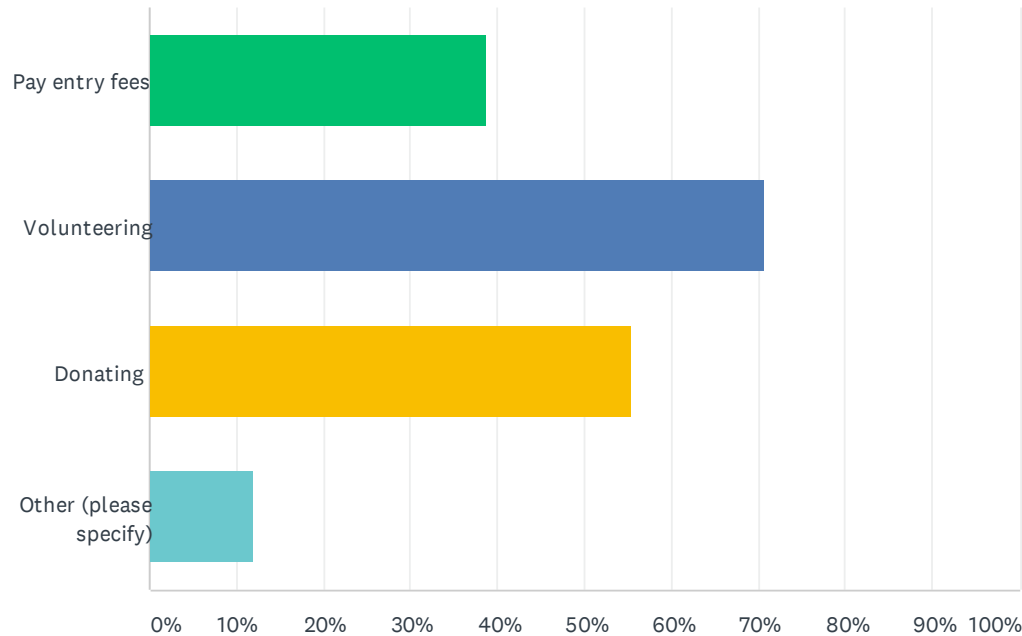
Answered: 536 Skipped: 44

Q19 What are the barriers to you being more involved in mountain biking?

Answered: 536 Skipped: 44

Q20 Trails need to be sustainable and be maintained.Would you be happy to contribute as a user to the maintenance of the park future? (please select all choices that apply to you)

Answered: 576 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Pay entry fees	38.72%	223
Volunteering	70.66%	407
Donating	55.38%	319
Other (please specify)	11.98%	69
Total Respondents: 576		

Q21 What infrastructure and facilities would you want to see at Cudlee Creek Forest/Fox Creek Trails? (e.g. car parks, toilets etc)

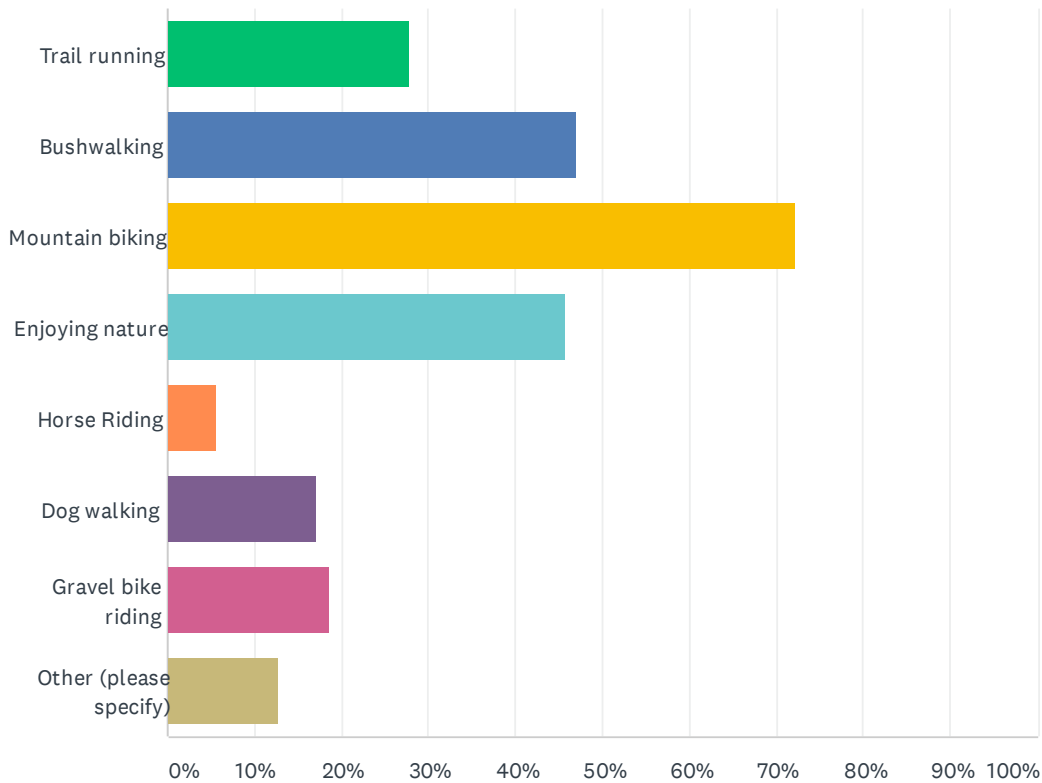
Answered: 569 Skipped: 11

Q22 What services would you want to see at Cudlee Creek Forest/Fox Creek Trails Trail? (e.g. bike servicing, café etc)

Answered: 521 Skipped: 59

Q1 What interests you in Cudlee Creek Forest? (please select all choices that apply to you)

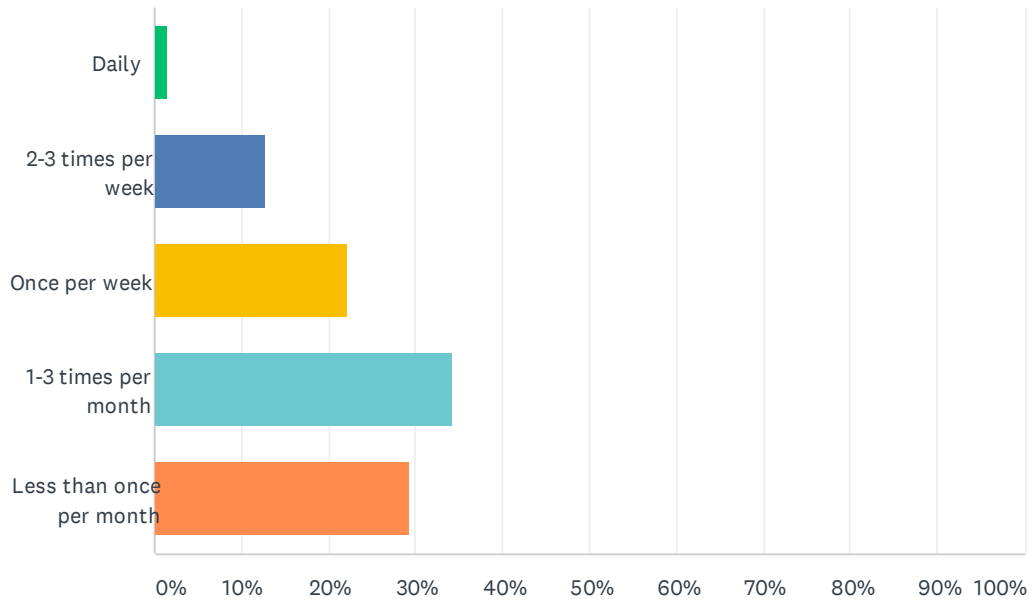
Answered: 140 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Trail running	27.86%	39
Bushwalking	47.14%	66
Mountain biking	72.14%	101
Enjoying nature	45.71%	64
Horse Riding	5.71%	8
Dog walking	17.14%	24
Gravel bike riding	18.57%	26
Other (please specify)	12.86%	18
Total Respondents: 140		

Q2 How often do you visit Cudlee Creek Forest?

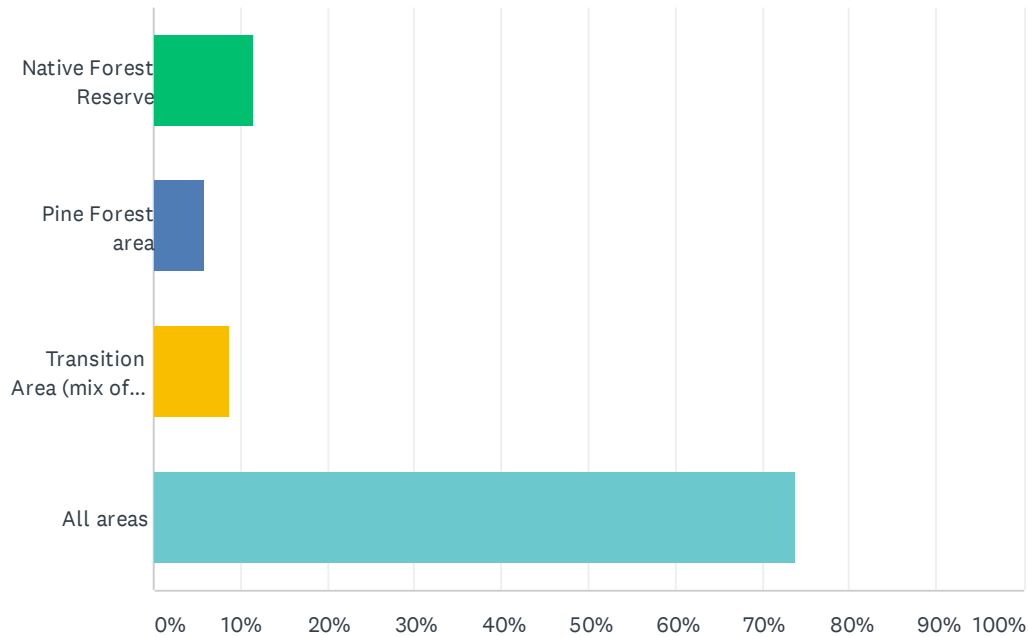
Answered: 140 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	1.43%	2
2-3 times per week	12.86%	18
Once per week	22.14%	31
1-3 times per month	34.29%	48
Less than once per month	29.29%	41
TOTAL		140

Q3 What section of Cudlee Creek Forest do you use?

Answered: 138 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Native Forest Reserve	11.59%	16
Pine Forest area	5.80%	8
Transition Area (mix of pine and native vegetation)	8.70%	12
All areas	73.91%	102
TOTAL		138

Q4 What would encourage you to visit Cudlee Creek Forest in the future? (please specify)

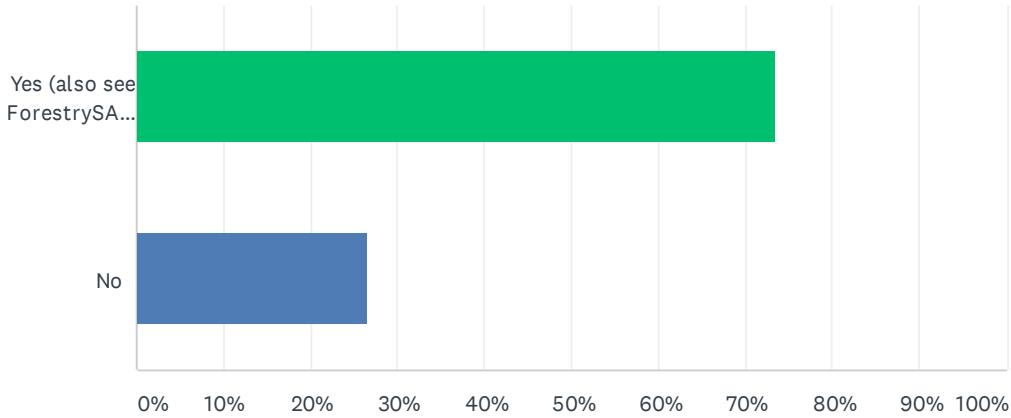
Answered: 132 Skipped: 8

Q5 What experiences, facilities or services would you like to see improved in the Cudlee Creek Forest?

Answered: 132 Skipped: 8

Q6 Do you mountain bike? or would you like to MTB?

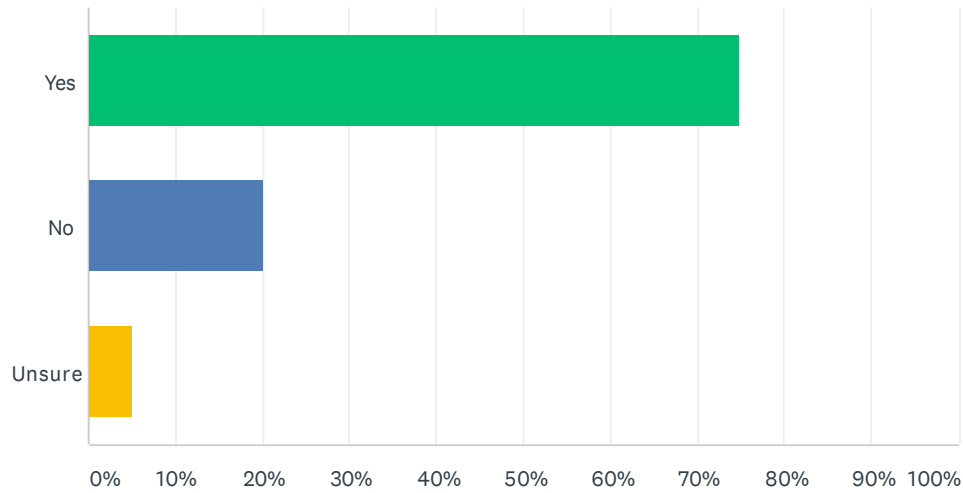
Answered: 139 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (also see ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Mountain Biker Survey)	73.38%	102
No	26.62%	37
TOTAL		139

Q7 Would you be interested in mountain biking in the future?

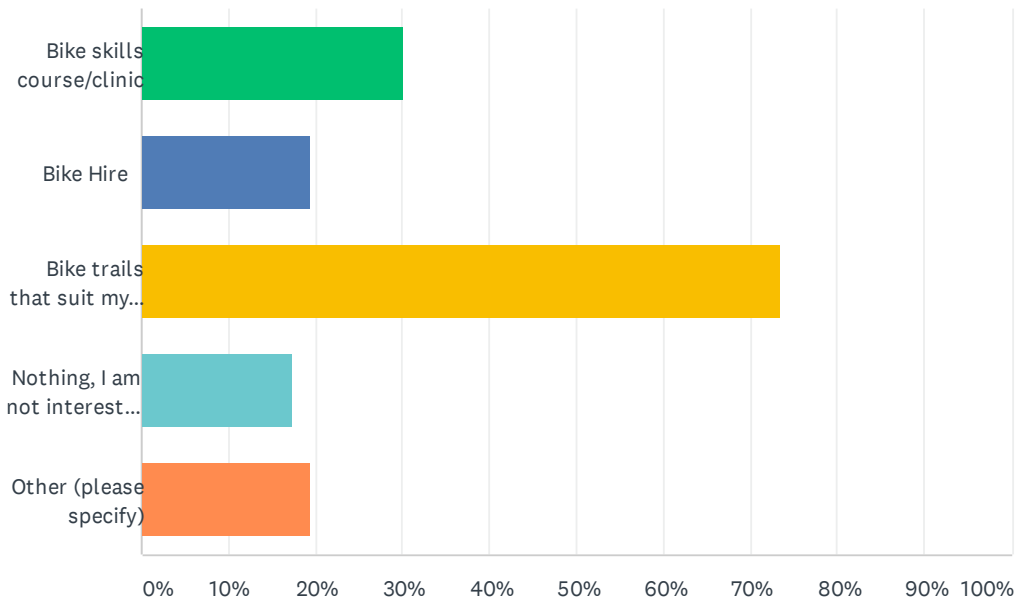
Answered: 140 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	75.00%	105
No	20.00%	28
Unsure	5.00%	7
TOTAL		140

Q8 What would encourage you to mountain bike in the future in Cudlee Creek Forest? (please select all choices that apply to you)

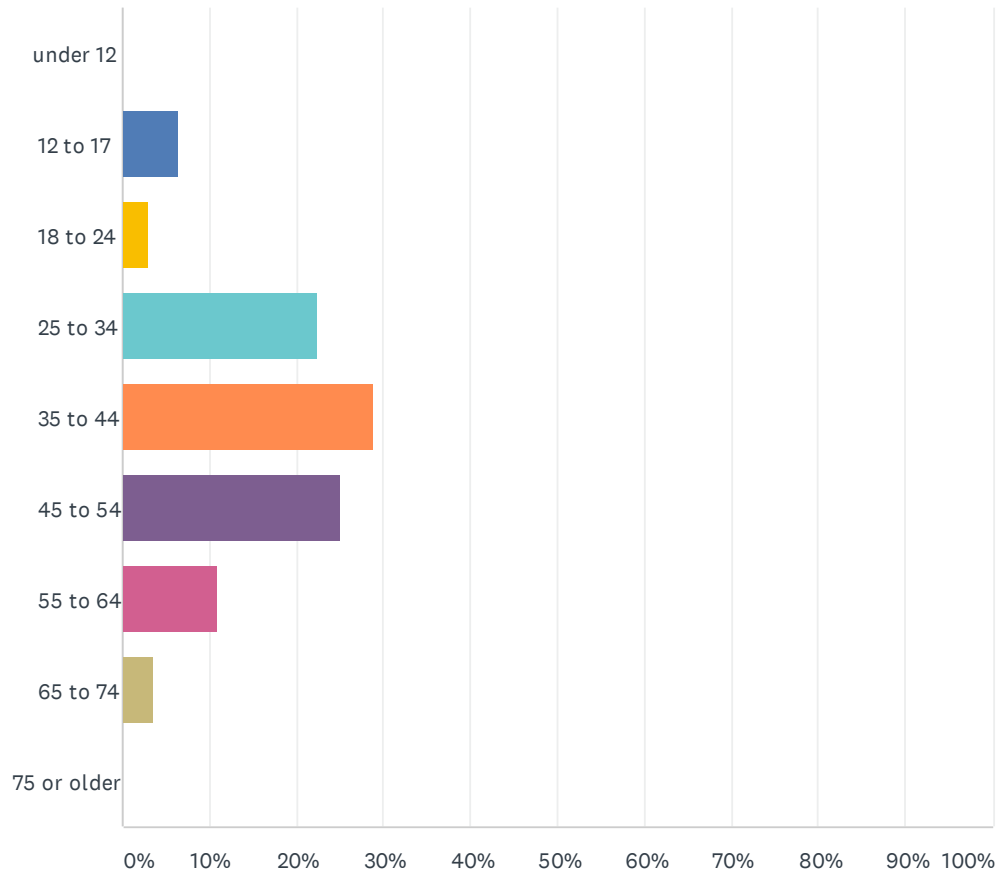
Answered: 139 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bike skills course/clinic	30.22%	42
Bike Hire	19.42%	27
Bike trails that suit my skill level	73.38%	102
Nothing, I am not interested in mountain biking	17.27%	24
Other (please specify)	19.42%	27
Total Respondents: 139		

Q9 What is your age?

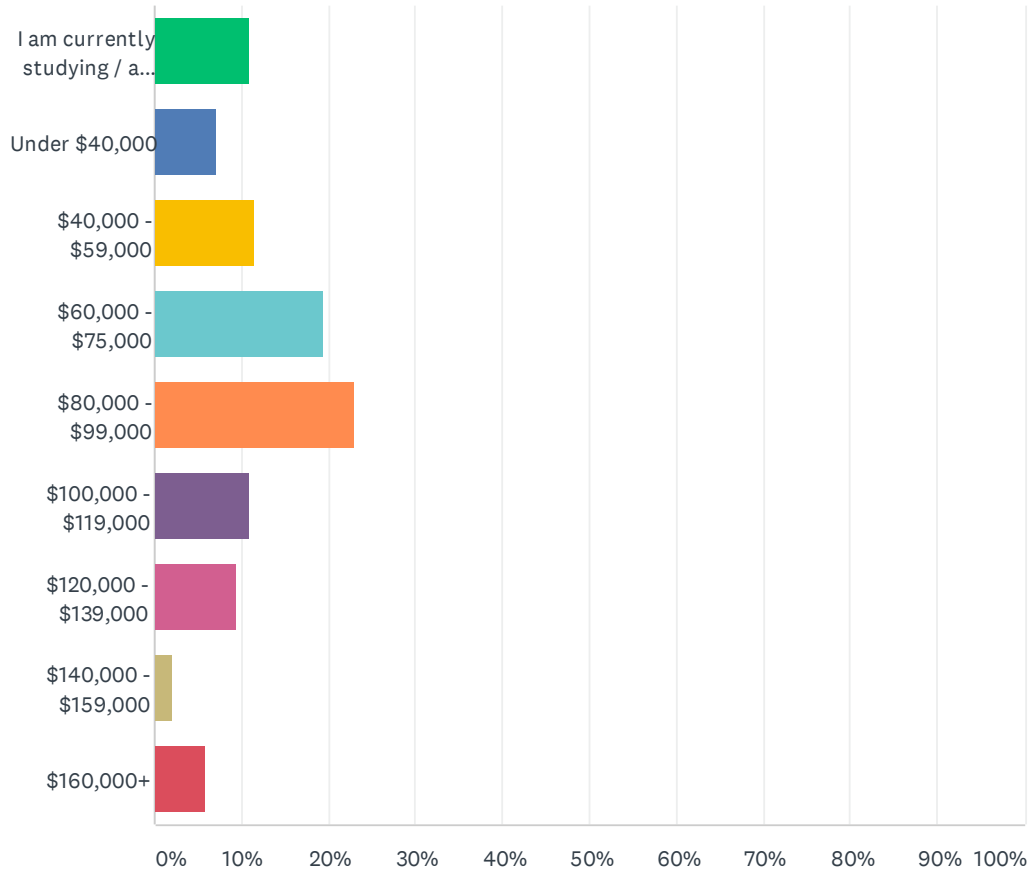
Answered: 139 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
under 12	0.00%	0
12 to 17	6.47%	9
18 to 24	2.88%	4
25 to 34	22.30%	31
35 to 44	28.78%	40
45 to 54	25.18%	35
55 to 64	10.79%	15
65 to 74	3.60%	5
75 or older	0.00%	0
TOTAL		139

Q10 What is your average income?

Answered: 139 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am currently studying / at school / unemployed	10.79%	15
Under \$40,000	7.19%	10
\$40,000 - \$59,000	11.51%	16
\$60,000 - \$75,000	19.42%	27
\$80,000 - \$99,000	23.02%	32
\$100,000 - \$119,000	10.79%	15
\$120,000 - \$139,000	9.35%	13
\$140,000 - \$159,000	2.16%	3
\$160,000+	5.76%	8
TOTAL		139

Q11 What is your postcode or locality?

Answered: 138 Skipped: 2

APPENDIX E – ASSESSMENT OF CUDLEE CREEK AS A MOUNTAIN BIKE DESTINATION

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
Trail Infrastructure, Design, Support Facilities and Management			
Diversity of trail types, styles and destinations	<p>A diversity of trails suited to a range of users and markets is desirable to broaden the destination's appeal – both for people for whom a trail experience is the main reason for the visit and visitors for whom a trail is one of several activities they undertake.</p> <p>This can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as trails in different locations and landscapes, long and short trails or different loops and journey options including a range of challenges.</p> <p>Successful mountain biking destinations typically offer trails for a variety of riding styles, skill levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) and technical challenges.</p> <p>Internationally accepted guidelines for sustainable mountain bike trail design are provided by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA).</p> <p>Design of shared use trails (such as with walkers, trail runners and horse</p>	<p>The existing network is sufficiently diverse to form the basis for a good regional trail network.</p> <p>The current mix of trails includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Circle Trails 11, 081 23% • Blue Square Trails 24,851 51% • Black Diamond Trails 12,473 26% <p>The balance of trail types is good. A typical split across a network is 20% beginner, 50% intermediate and 30 % advanced level trails.</p> <p>The current purpose of existing trails is often lost over time and through lack of maintenance. Green trails often become blue trails due to significant use and blue trails become black. Concerns for users who are often discouraged to continue or progressing through the range of trails.</p> <p>Recent additions of Dirt School Trails and Ezy Rider contributes to skill development trails however the site lacks a skills park that enables progressive skill training.</p> <p>The YourSay survey indicated a range of improvements and desires from the riding community. There was a clear desire for more</p>	<p>Ensure there are genuine beginner green trails to encourage use as introductory trails.</p> <p>Developing Green Circle trail links between Anderson Winery and Thomas Hill, along with some green trails from the bottom car park would ensure introductory trails are totally covered and contribute to a Fox Creek network of national significance or future IMBA ride centre status.</p> <p>Including a Core Loop (Cudlee Off Road Experience) including Middle Earth and Green Smoothie to Thomas Hill would provide for a good Green Circle Trail offering and contributing to a good range of trail experiences.</p> <p>Some competition-specific trails (providing greater technical challenges) are required to meet the needs of mountain bike events. New blue and black trails are required with elevation to provide for gravity and flow trails and the technical challenge more experienced riders are seeking.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	riders) needs to take account of the safety of all users, such as lines of sight and measures to limit bicycle speed on corners and downhill sections.	<p>trails and a strong preference for trails that enabled beginners to get involved and progress through to more technical and difficult trails.</p> <p>Many respondents were looking for more green and blue trails and a focus on families. With trails across a range of abilities and for the trails to be more sociable e.g. couples enjoying riding together on trails that suit their differing abilities.</p> <p>Longer trails were sought across levels and there was a also a strong desire for links between Cudlee Creek and Adelaide and opportunities for young adults that don't drive to have access to the forest through off road trails particularly for the majority of respondents to the survey lived in the north eastern suburbs.</p> <p>The AMLR lacks a 'hero' or aspirational riding experience to draw national and international attention.</p> <p>The consistent quality, design and maintenance of the network are essential if the Fox Creek is to compete with its competitors.</p> <p>The AMLR would benefit from off road links between trail hubs including Eagle Mountain Bike Park together with good information on how get from one to another.</p>	<p>Descents are somewhat limited and longer Black Diamond trails may need to be explored outside of the study area.</p> <p>Integrate trail plans to recognise forestry future planation and harvesting operations and reflect future thinning and harvesting operations.</p> <p>An extended descent (Epic Style Trail) is missing in the AMLR mix. Inclusion of SA Water land (Kangaroo Creek) or Montacute Conservation Park may make this more achievable.</p> <p>Linking with the recommendations for the AMLR, Fox Creek can be part of a greater AMLR Epic or hero ride across the Yurrebilla alignment and connection with a future Epic Adelaide Hills Descent.</p> <p>New trail links facilitating mountain bike and gravel riding from Cudlee Creek to Millbrook Reservoir would create a new destination and provide access to existing and future trails within the SA Water Reservoir system. Links to camping and accommodation for riders would be beneficial including off road link to Bennetts camp site and preferably off road link to Lobethal and the Amy Gillet Rail Trail.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
		<p>Downhill trails are often short due to the terrain requiring modification to make them more challenging. Longer trails do not have to be placed in Fox Creek other sites such as Horsnell Gully or hills face quarry land provides better terrain and better experiences. Fox Creek could be better suited to Green to Black trails with long or double black elsewhere.</p>	<p>Trail links to Castambul (Gorge Rd / Linear Park) local wineries, Lobethal (Brewery) and Cudlee Creek (Café / Distillery / Caravan Park) should be considered at this time.</p> <p>Linking to broader, Regional Gravel Rides or Bike Packing would provide additional community benefit.</p>
Concentration of trail opportunities	<p>Ideally, different visitor markets should have access to trail opportunities that cover at least 2 days of riding activity. Depending on the market, this might include linear</p>	<p>Cudlee Creek offers good riding opportunities but requires greater diversity of riding experiences.</p> <p>These can be provided across the AMLR.</p>	<p>Extra diversity can be achieved with addition of future experiences including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progressive skills park • pump Track • elevated Trail Structures

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	trails that offer multi-day journeys; trail networks or trails accessible from a visitor hub with a variety short trail or day options.	<p>The diversity of trail experiences is good however the current network is not considered sufficiently extensive to offer at least two days of riding.</p> <p>The trail riding community are clearly seeking more trails which will require expansion of the trail footprint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 or 2 large scale bike park trails (3 to 5t excavator) “Bike Park Flow” or specific jump trails • epic Trail • XC marathon loop • more clearly beginner and skill progression trails.
High quality, sustainable trail infrastructure	<p>The trail’s location and design should enhance the user’s overall experience – whether it is a short ride showcasing a special feature, a long journey through different landscapes, a remote nature experience, a challenging mountain bike ride or an event. Trails and associated infrastructure (trailheads, signage, amenities) need to be designed and constructed to be fit for purpose and level of use, to be compatible with surrounding natural and cultural features, and to minimise environmental and social impacts.</p> <p>Trails and infrastructure should be designed and managed to be safe for the proposed uses, including shared use trails. There should be clear, accessible information on orientation and wayfinding, trail standards, difficulty ratings,</p>	<p>The quality of most trails pre fire was considered moderate and consistent with IMBA trail guidelines.</p> <p>Some trails have evolved from the original design due to maintenance considerations and riding style.</p> <p>Cudlee Creek provides the anchor for riding in the northern area of the AMLR with high quality trails and some services. The expanding population in the north and east of Adelaide is increasing the number of riders in the area. The development of Cobbler Creek Recreation Park and Anstey Hill Recreation Park has provided mountain biking facilities, but Cudlee Creek provides the main focus for riding.</p> <p>The quality of the trail network is susceptible to changes in volunteer effort and resources available for maintenance.</p> <p>The sustainability of the network is at risk given its heavy reliance on trails placed within the forest areas and on volunteer resources.</p>	<p>Future single tracks such as a long distance loop would require assessment and Native Vegetation Council approval. The biodiversity values of the forest and the other trail experiences should be maintained.</p> <p>Consistent trail standards will be required including presentation of high-quality trailhead facilities, and information for orientation, difficulty ratings and wayfinding.</p> <p>Formalised car parks on Anderson Hill and improvements to Fox creek car park are required. Toilets are required top and bottom.</p> <p>Two distinct event locations top and bottom are required with separate facilities downhill and Cross Country require different infrastructure.</p> <p>For safety, comfort and enjoyment walking and trail running should only occur on vehicle tracks within the mountain bike</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	<p>appropriate user behaviour and journey length.</p> <p>There should be provision for visitor amenities such as water, toilets, shelter and day visitor facilities close to trails.</p>	<p>The respondents to the YourSay survey identified toilets at the top and bottom as the most important infrastructure need. In particular toilets were identified as a barrier to increased use particularly by women and girls.</p> <p>The disturbance to neighbours by increasing mountain bike related traffic is an increasing concern. The promotion and support of shuttle service would reduce the amount of vehicle traffic particularly by independent shuttlers.</p>	<p>area and cycling should only occur on designated shared use trails and vehicle management tracks across the Forest.</p> <p>A purpose built turn around point would resolve some of the vehicle issues and regular access to a professional shuttle service would reduce the number of private vehicles using Croft and Fox Creek Roads.</p> <p>Upgrading and sealing of Croft Road would reduce dust and contribute to better neighbour relations.</p>
Leading and supporting cycling experiences	<p>Successful mountain biking destinations will have one or more leading trails or rides that characterise the experience offered and attract many riders.</p> <p>The setting in which trails are located is integral to their attraction to visitors. Spectacular or unusual settings and places of interest near trails are significant attractions for visitors and add to the pool of visitors likely to use trails.</p>	<p>The AMLR lacks a 'hero' or aspirational riding experience to draw national and international attention.</p> <p>A full Epic Descent would be better suited to the longer and steeper sections of the AMLR south of Cudlee Creek such as Horsnell Gully and land currently under commercial quarrying.</p> <p>Hero trails including links to Adelaide would be most suited as connections to Cudlee Creek.</p>	<p>Trail expansion should include Blue to Black Diamond trail loops, as well as specific descents and ascents. Aspiration for future 100 km of trail which would require some 50 km of new trail.</p> <p>An AMLR Epic Trail is required from the top of the range to the suburbs. Similar hero trail or trails from Cudlee Creek linking to Athelstone and the River Torrens Linear Park would develop this area as a leading cycling destination.</p>
Accessibility	<p>Trails need to be easily accessible to visitor markets from a destination's population, tourism and transport hubs. Transport arrangements and facilities need to be tailored in ways</p>	<p>There is good road access and the hills towns provide accommodation and other attractions and services.</p> <p>Connection between the north eastern suburbs is poor particularly without access to</p>	<p>There is demand for local businesses to provide ongoing shuttle services to/and from AMLR hubs and to be involved in providing additional services.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	<p>users wish to access trails, their points of origin and their logistical requirements. Examples include:</p> <p>Road access to trailheads with adequate car parking facilities</p> <p>Transport services to trailheads, with facilities for transporting packs and bicycles</p> <p>Bike shuttle services (and lifts) at mountain bike trails</p> <p>All ability accessible facilities to encourage the broadest community use possible.</p>	<p>a vehicle the Gorge Road is a dangerous being narrow and a truck route.</p> <p>Numerous comments were received in the YourSay survey seeking off road connection between population centres and the forest.</p> <p>Cudlee Creek needs to be on a link between destinations for visitors e.g. drop off and pick up. Drop off mornings riding, pick up and taken to second destination then accommodation.</p> <p>An easy gradient ride to Fox Creek and Lobethal would provide a popular full day experience from the city.</p>	<p>A trail or cycle path connection for the large numbers of riders from the North Eastern suburbs to Fox Creek, Lobethal and Woodside and the city would be well received.</p>
Effective governance and sustainable management of trail networks	<p>Mountain biking destinations need effective governance and management of trails and trail networks to ensure quality experiences and trail maintenance.</p> <p>The range of stakeholders needs to be involved including government agencies, event managers, facility managers, the tourism industry, cycle businesses and cycle clubs and organisations</p> <p>Budget and income sources need to be allocated for trail management and maintenance. This may include allocation of a proportion of trail user fees to this purpose. Adequate</p>	<p>Fox Creek appears to lack collaboration and coordination. There is much enthusiasm and drive however limited structure to pull together for an agreed purpose.</p> <p>The YourSay survey indicated much enthusiasm to be involved but due to family and work commitments a large number of respondents admitted they have no time.</p> <p>The AMLR trail sites are currently managed independently from Cudlee Creek and Eagle Mountain Bike Park.</p> <p>Opportunities for integration of different trail hubs across the AMLR including Eagle Mountain Bike Park would be advantageous as there appears to be limited cross site collaboration.</p>	<p>Cudlee Creek requires a management body to oversee the development the new Fox Creek experience and trail network and provide the opportunity to better leverage the economic advantages associated with mountain bike tourism, investment funding and revenue opportunities.</p> <p>Management of contemporary, popular and busy trail parks with the associated marketing, tourism and hospitality requires a strong and expert focus.</p> <p>The future of Cudlee Creek trails would benefit from a skills-based group that is brought together as a Trust or other incorporated body. This group would</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	<p>resourcing at the destination level and the level of individual trails is crucial to delivering the destination experience. A lack of trail maintenance or delivery of promised services and standards can affect a destination's reputation. Trail organisations need to be proactive in raising funds and pursuing investment opportunities.</p>	<p>The full potential of Fox Creek Bike Park will be beyond the limited resources of ForestrySA with the core business and responsibilities to produce forest timber. ForestrySA have however have a long and respected history of providing community recreation opportunities.</p> <p>The existing stakeholder trail knowledge and expertise is recognised and valuable.</p>	<p>ensure collaborative leadership in the development of the new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management and development and introduce cultural and organisational change required if the mountain bike park is to reach its full potential.</p> <p>Such a group would also be instrumental in seeking commercial investment, resources from grant opportunities and through ForestrySA budget allocations.</p> <p>The sustainable management of trail building, maintenance is vital work and there is a significant role for volunteers working hand in hand with a new governance arrangement.</p>
Events to drive visitation and market positioning	<p>Events and competitions at the local, regional and national levels have been important in growing many mountain bike destinations.</p>	<p>Events are a significant activity and have multiple benefits if managed effectively. Cudlee Creek has a reputation for delivering great events.</p> <p>Limited facilities and services however hold back future progress.</p>	<p>It is important to continue to maintain existing and explore new events.</p> <p>Fox Creek Bike Park is well suited to Cross Country, Gravity Enduro Events and in future Cross Country Marathon. Gravity Enduro can be provided at a national level and Cross Country Marathon could aspire to an international scale.</p> <p>Recreational events in addition to mountain biking, such as trail running and bike specific festivals provide opportunity.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
Local community support	<p>In the best trails destinations, local communities and the tourism industry are well informed about the destination's objectives and participate in the delivery of the destination experience either directly (through offering products and services, participation in management) or indirectly by creating a welcoming atmosphere.</p> <p>Community and industry partnerships assist in collaborative delivery of trail experiences. A destination's trails are an important local recreational and lifestyle asset and local people have a vested interest in maintaining and improving their quality. In many cases local groups have been instrumental in trails development and seek ongoing involvement in their management.</p>	<p>There is a strong mountain bike culture with relatively high rates of cycling participation across the community.</p> <p>Support for the ongoing development of the cycling culture can be generated through the community.</p> <p>The importance of the mountain biking attraction somewhat goes under the radar. The benefits and opportunities that mountain biking together with cycling brings to the community could be promoted and presented within the community.</p> <p>Opportunities for growth of mountain biking through schools and the skill development program is something that can be progressed through the community.</p>	<p>The continued support of the local mountain biking community and clubs is an essential component for generating cycle tourism growth in the region.</p> <p>Development of various trail alliances, businesses and volunteer groups would contribute to the development and support of an AMLR mountain bike and cycling culture.</p> <p>Direct and increased engagement with the local community and their involvement in decision making is key to great working relationships.</p>
Trail Maintenance and Day-to-Day Management	<p>A significant determinant of trail sustainability will be how the network is managed and maintained as well as how it is designed and built.</p> <p>An actively managed trail monitoring and maintenance program that combines dedicated professional</p>	<p>Local mountain bikers and clubs are partners in making significant contributions to trail management and maintenance.</p> <p>There is much goodwill and capability within the local mountain biking community for supporting management of the trail network however this could be better coordinated.</p>	<p>Formalisation of governance and trail maintenance and monitoring is required to ensure ongoing sustainability and developing a national and international trail network.</p> <p>The bringing together trail technical experts and users to plan and coordinate future works would improve trail</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	resources with community input is recommended.	<p>Collective user input into the design, building and maintenance of trails needs to be formalised to avoid the perception or reality that one group or individual is directing the trail development.</p> <p>A key challenge will be in how best to formalise the community's role in managing the trail network and the relationship with land management agencies to ensure ongoing sustainability and developing a national and international trail network.</p> <p>Monitoring use of the trail network by visitors is sporadic and data is not collected consistently.</p>	<p>experiences and sustainability and harmonise relationships across differing groups. Works and maintenance programming will also benefit through coordination and will identify which trail projects suit volunteers or professionals.</p> <p>Ongoing formal training in trail construction and maintenance and inductions for volunteers will ensure safe and fun trails.</p> <p>Coordination and gathering of consistent visitor numbers together with satisfaction and experience monitoring would benefit future planning and maintenance coordination.</p>
A strong overall visitor experience	<p>A nature-based experience is important to many mountain bikers as part of the trail adventure. Spectacular natural settings and other destination activities are also important motivations for mountain bike visitors.</p> <p>A strong destination experience is needed to attract general visitors who may then undertake mountain biking as part of their holiday.</p>	<p>The Cudlee Creek landscape and natural attributes provide visitors with good riding opportunities that are not found elsewhere in Australia.</p> <p>The visitor experience for other users of the forest will need to be integrated sustainably and collaboratively with the predominantly mountain biking experiences.</p> <p>The YourSay Survey identified good coffee as one of the most sought-after experiences second only to toilets! The Thomas Hill area is the perfect hub for services and selling local produce. Anderson Hill Winery provides a range of refreshments and is popular with the trails community.</p>	<p>Develop Cudlee Creek as a destination to match market needs and include mountain biking as part of the market positioning and promotion to interstate and international markets.</p> <p>Activities for families and non-riding partners should be encouraged and developed. Walking and running trails, lookouts, playgrounds and connections with nearby towns linked to good coffee, craft beer, wine and food will contribute significantly to the overall visitor experience.</p> <p>Contributing to biodiversity conservation through weed control, restoration and revegetation will enrich the natural appeal, visitor experience and the presentation of the forest.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
		<p>The Adelaide Hills businesses provide good hospitality and however a greater recognition of the cycle and mountain bike culture in the area would make a significant contribution to Cudlee Creek Forest and the area becoming a leading trails destination.</p> <p>The YourSay Survey identified a need for complementary activities for companions and families of mountain bikers which could be improved.</p> <p>The themed trail markers such as <i>Ant Logic</i> provide a unique and significant contribution to the visitor experience.</p>	<p>The overall visitor experience can be improved through art and the coordination of themed trail markers and signs.</p>
High quality pre-trip and on-site information	<p>Quality websites, apps and maps provide prospective visitors with reliable information about trails, the destination and services available.</p> <p>Ideally, a trail destination will have a 'one stop shop' website that provides comprehensive information on all the trails including the range of experiences, facilities and services and links for booking trail experiences, shuttles, tours, transport, services and accommodation.</p> <p>Trailheads should be accessible and provide route and other information.</p>	<p>The level of information is provided across club and land manager web sites. There is <i>no one stop shop</i> for up-to-date or consistent information.</p> <p>Data is spread across user personal collection, Strava, Moves Count, AllTrails, TrailForks websites.</p> <p>A comprehensive website with information on trails and services is not available for pre visit and visitor information.</p> <p>Attractive trail naming signs are placed on the major trails and waymarking information is variable. Good reliable information particularly relating to trail difficulty ratings strongly recommended through the YourSay Survey feedback.</p>	<p>A Fox Creek specific website can be of great benefit and utilised for marketing, promotion, managing events and for the distribution of information regarding the track network, environmental sensitivities and for enhancing relationships between recreational groups.</p> <p>Web sites require professional development and require regular maintenance and updating requiring expertise, commitment and support. This can be achievable within a future governance model.</p> <p>ForestrySA have developed a signage package and this should be incorporated into implementation planning.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
	Trails should be well signed and trail classifications should be clearly identified.		Professional design and placement of trail head, waymarking and trail difficulty rating signs is an important consideration of this strategy.
A range of quality support services and facilities	Successful trail destinations provide trail users with the services they need to access and enjoy trails. Service providers assist in the coordination of trail access by transporting people and equipment whilst recognise the special needs of trail visitors. They contribute to destination bike friendly schemes offering products and packages that cater for needs such as shuttles on site and between hubs, secure bike and equipment storage, clothes and equipment washing, bike hire and servicing often with opening hours convenient to trail users.	<p>The hub has few facilities although they are located close to local towns etc which provide a number of visitor services.</p> <p>The hills have a range of accommodation that would appeal to the variety of visitors who would use tracks and trails.</p> <p>The YourSay Survey identified a range of services that riders seek at Cudlee Creek including water, bike wash down and servicing, skills training, cost effective shuttles services and on site coffee whether pop up or through the nearby Anderson Hill winery.</p> <p>The Ride High Country Preferred (RHCP) program for businesses providing exceptional service to cycle visitors in Victoria's North East is an example of how business can get involved and target their businesses to the needs of bike riders.</p> <p>www.tourismnortheast.com.au/tools-and-support/ride-high-country-preferred-program</p> <p>Currently operators are keen to be involved when the forest reopens.</p>	<p>Development and strengthening of bike related support services is required through cooperative efforts by industry, government and stakeholders.</p> <p>Businesses may require assistance as to how to develop their capacity to provide bike-related support services. Industry development workshops and information sessions would assist local companies to become bike friendly business.</p> <p>Within the towns supporting infrastructure such as carparking, bike racks and directional signs to the forest would encourage a bike friendly town appearance.</p> <p>Service providers such as shuttle operators on site and between hubs should be encouraged to ensure consistent supply.</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
Trail, food, beverage and retail products and businesses	<p>Trail visitors need to have accessible places, open at the right times, in order to purchase food and equipment. Cafes and restaurants are also important as places to relax and enjoy the destination. In many places cafes have evolved as places for walkers and riders to meet and socialise – often forming an intrinsic part of a walking or riding experience. Outdoor and bicycle shops are also important places to make trip-related purchases, obtain local information and arrange hire or repair of equipment and bikes.</p>	<p>There is a good foundation of infrastructure in the local towns to support visitors with cafes, restaurants, shopping, bike shops etc.</p> <p>The challenge is to connect these services with trail users.</p> <p>The Anderson Hill winery is popular and caters well for trail users.</p> <p>Trail users have identified a strong desire for coffee and other services with pop up businesses being popular.</p> <p>Tourism North East (Vic) staged a series of workshops for its tourism operators and are now seeing quantifiable results in the growth of their cycle tourism market and overall visitor numbers to the region.</p>	<p>Additional effort will be required within the tourism industry, business, government agencies and other organisations to develop and publicise bicycle-friendly services that are easily accessible for visitors.</p> <p>Information and promotion of these services should be available online as well as at trail hubs. There will be opportunity for pop up cafes/bars and other services for visitor at Cudlee Creek.</p> <p>Cycle tourism industry development workshops and information packages are recommended for local businesses.</p>
Quality cycling experience products and packages	<p>A range of commercial mountain bike tours and services are important to attract non-expert mountain bikers to visit a mountain biking destination or undertake a riding experience while in a destination.</p> <p>Commercial products (guided tours, skill schools) have a strong role in assisting new and experienced mountain bikers to improve skills and undertake new challenges.</p>	<p>The provision of MTB skills development infrastructure to support existing junior sports development programs has some small but potentially growing opportunity.</p> <p>Fox Creek has the opportunity to be a strong supporter of mountain bike skills progression with the right network of trails.</p> <p>The Thomas Hill house and precinct has views prime location and connections with other trail experiences and businesses including wineries.</p> <p>The Thomas Hill house is used as bunk house accommodation and provides a valuable base</p>	<p>Opportunities for commercial cycling products (guided tours, skill schools) will have an important role in assisting mountain bikers to improve skills and undertake new experiences. Event development is a critical component of this opportunity.</p> <p>A strategic approach to make mountain biking appealing, accessible and easy to new entrants and beginners is critical for the future development of the sport. This requires easy mountain bike trails; skills parks; and mountain bike training and skills sessions.</p> <p>The Thomas Hill house site provides an opportunity for commercial development that</p>

Criterion	Characteristics	Analysis of the Fox Creek trail network	Suggested improvements
		for trail based work programs. It is underutilised and the location and closeness to Adelaide provides future commercial opportunities.	could contribute a return to the forest trail experiences. An expression of interest for a future commercial lease arrangement should be explored.
Strong trail destination positioning and marketing	<p>With an increasing number of trail destinations, strong destination positioning is needed to place Fox Creek in the minds of prospective visitors. The positioning needs to be delivered through information, messages, imagery, quality of product and quality of service.</p> <p>Collaboration between trail managers, operators, the community, tourism industry and government agencies are required to develop, deliver and market this trails destination in an effective manner.</p>	<p>Fox Creek has grown organically over the years developed by passionate mountain bike riders and advocates.</p> <p>The devastating fire are a major point in the history of Fox Creek trails. From now as the trails are restored it is time to position the new Fox Creek into the future.</p> <p>Strong positioning needs to be identified and recognition of the importance of cycling and mountain biking in the AMLR visitor future and in a SA Cycle Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>Cycling is not included within Adelaide Hills Region visitor statistics perhaps reflecting a lack of recognition of the importance of cycling and mountain biking to regional economies.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to position the AMLR as a multi trail and multi-site experience further leveraged with other cycling experiences being developed. Fox Creek as the most important mountain bike hub in the AMLR needs to be a lead site within the mix.</p> <p>On completion of restoration works there is great opportunity to promote and market Fox Creek and the hills area as the place to be for exciting trail experiences.</p> <p>Mountain biking needs to be defined in its own right in tourism statistics and linked to cycling and gravel riding.</p> <p>World Class Branding and a suitable name that reflects the experience needs to be established. Fox Creek Mountain Bike Park is the best and most suitable name.</p> <p>The look and feel of the site should be reflected in the entrance, trail heads and infrastructure to present a world class trail park reflecting pride and sense of activity, enthusiasm and “arrival”</p>

APPENDIX F – TRAIL AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Cudlee Creek Forest has been a destination for South Australian mountain bike riders since the early 1990s. The original trails were established by users and were not constructed to a recognised standard. More active management of trails and infrastructure development commenced in the mid 1990s and included the establishment of the Fox Creek Carpark.

The State Mountain Bike Plan of 2001 recognised the forest as a key project for testing sustainable trail design principles in local soils and landscapes, as well as a project bringing key stakeholders together to work on common goals. This stage of development focused on improving the environmental sustainability of the original trail network and establishment of new trails based on appropriate International Mountain Bike Association standards. It also included the development and installation of a The Mawson Trail which was originally established through the Cudlee Creek Forest in the late 1980s and therefore the new trail network was branded as the Mawson Network Trails and included the first generation of information and directional signage to provide better information and navigation opportunities for trail users. Funding for this stage of development was from the Office for Recreation and Sport with on-ground works coordinated by Bicycle SA in collaboration with ForestrySA. Project work included trail construction workshops for volunteers and to some extent was a training ground for three of the current South Australian trail building companies (Trail Solutions, Trailscapes and Destination Trails). Trail development during this time was linked to a large-scale forest rehabilitation and revegetation project to convert areas of pine regeneration that had established following the 1983 Ash Wednesday Bushfire into higher value conservation areas. This provided a unique opportunity to establish new trails on environmentally sustainable gradients and also included the use of employment training programs such as Greencorps.

From the mid-2000s trail and infrastructure development was linked to a number of ForestrySA management plans and three master plans designed to guide development and assist with securing State and Local Government grants. During this phase the trail network developed significantly with the success of grant applications and other funding opportunities. This was achieved by ForestrySA working in collaboration with Bicycle SA, IMBA Australia, The Human Projectile MTB Club, Destination Trails and members of other MTB clubs and volunteers for the establishment of the majority of Green and Blue category trails. Two black diamond trails were also developed in the mid-2010s, as a result of ForestrySA working in collaboration with the Inside Line MTB Club, particularly the club President Andrew Byrne, with Trailscapes undertaking trail construction. ForestrySA provided financial support to assist with accessing grants and the majority of these projects

were funded from the Office for Recreation and Sport grants, smaller grants from the Adelaide Hills Council and from a crowd funding process.

Since 2013 ForestrySA has worked with Jeff Konopka from sign design company Tekgraphix, trail designers (Nick Bowman and Marty Krieg) and volunteer Brad Slade from the Human Projectiles MTB Club to develop a new sign standard which was installed across the trail network by contractors and volunteers predominantly from the Human Projectiles MTB Club over the last five years. During this time ForestrySA has also upgraded the Thomas Hill house for use as accommodation and has worked with Bicycle SA to develop the Dirty Weekend Event location. The Andersons Hill Winery located on Croft Rd close to the top carpark has provided an opportunity for trail users to access their food and hospitality services and they have been a great supporter of the trail development for many years. The Cudlee Creek Café and Cudlee Creek Tavern and Caravan Park have also benefited from and supported the trails.

Over the last five years ForestrySA has engaged landscape architects to design event and toilet facilities however, limitations of both human and financial resources had not allowed these facilities to be constructed before the 2019 bushfire. Although a significant amount of work has been achieved in the last 15 years the previously mentioned limitation of both human and financial resources has meant the Cudlee Creek Forest trail network has yet to realise its full potential as a mountain bike destination.

Following the Cudlee Creek Fire and the potential to attract significant fire recovery funding to re-instate and upgrade the trail network and appropriate visitor infrastructure, a new phase of development has commenced, with the Fox Creek Bike Park at its core.



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