

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Great Southern Regional Trail Master Plan (RTMP) provides a coherent and clearly outlined program of trail infrastructure development across the Great Southern region over a ten-year period (2020-2029). It has been developed to guide decisions about the management of, and investment in, trails and provides a vision of what the trail network across the Great Southern will look like in the future.

This plan has been developed in partnership with all eleven local governments in the Great Southern region – Albany, Broomehill-Tambellup, Cranbrook, Denmark, Gnowangerup, Jerramungup, Katanning, Kent, Kojonup, Plantagenet, and Woodanilling and has involved consultation with the adjoining Shire of Manjimup. The plan has the support of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC), and the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC).

The RTMP is identified as a priority project in both the Great Southern Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2019-2021, and the Great Southern Regional Sport and Recreation Plan (2018). It supports the key objectives of the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint to develop a state-wide network of sustainable trails, facilities and associated infrastructure; to raise the recreational and tourism profile of Western Australian trails; and to develop a diverse revenue stream to ensure economic sustainability.

This plan aims to establish the Great Southern as a World-Class Trails Destination.

To achieve this vision, trail development needs to focus on creating remarkable and accessible trail experiences, improving existing trails, building associated infrastructure, and developing a comprehensive marketing strategy.

To address the gaps in current trail supply, this plan identifies three trail development opportunities:

- (i) create new trail experiences;
- (ii) develop trail linkages; and
- (iii) enhance or upgrade existing trail networks.

## VISION STATEMENT

By 2030, the Great Southern Region will provide a diverse range of quality trail experiences that showcase the region's unique landscapes, biodiversity, geology, Aboriginal culture and settler heritage.

The trail network will be built to a high standard and managed on a sustainable basis to enhance environmental and educational outcomes.

Trail experiences will be highly valued by local communities who regularly use them for recreation.

They will also attract intrastate, interstate and international visitors, leading to improved health, wellbeing and economic outcomes for the region's people and places.

Some of the trail proposals described in this plan are flagged as "Priority Trails". These trails or trail networks are integral to achieving the region's vision of becoming a world-class trails destination. They should be incorporated into local and state government planning documents as projects of regional importance that require prioritised funding. Other trail proposals included in this plan – including trail linkages and other trail enhancements – are important but are of lower priority. They provide 'value-added' trail experiences for residents and visitors and should be incorporated into local trail plans and implemented as and when funding is available.

The proposed priority trails were identified through a rigorous assessment process that involved extensive consultation with communities and stakeholder groups across the Great Southern. A multi-criteria assessment tool was used to identify which trail proposals should be prioritised for development (see Section 3). This plan recommends the construction of twelve new regional priority trails or trail networks; and enhancements to two existing nationally significant trails that require urgent maintenance. In combination with the proposed trail linkages and improvements, these new trails will provide a diverse range of iconic trail experiences for hiking, cycling and paddling.



The Priority Trail proposals are listed below according to the anticipated timeframe for construction and are sorted by activity type (hiking, cycling, and paddling). They are not ranked by order of priority. The timeframe for the delivery of these projects is based on a combination of factors, including the need to undertake detailed environmental and heritage assessments as well as additional community consultation, the need for complex land tenure negotiations with land owners and managers, and the need to secure funding for construction.

## ! PROPOSED PRIORITY TRAILS

TIMEFRAME	PROPOSED PRIORITY TRAIL OR TRAIL NETWORK	TRAIL TYPE
 <b>SHORT</b> 1-2 Years	Tower Hill MTB Trails Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park Paddle Experience Great Southern Treasures Recreation Circuit Bald Head Walk Trail Albany Heritage Park Mounts Trail Corridor Link	

TIMEFRAME	PROPOSED PRIORITY TRAIL OR TRAIL NETWORK	TRAIL TYPE
 <b>MEDIUM</b> 3-5 Years	Greens Pool to Lights Beach Coastal Hiking Trail Albany's Historic Whaling Station to The Gap Coastal Hiking Trail Albany Heritage Park Stage 2 Poikeclerup MTB Trails Mt Hallowell MTB Trails Porongurup MTB Trails Munda Bididi Trail Realignments	

TIMEFRAME	PROPOSED PRIORITY TRAIL OR TRAIL NETWORK	TRAIL TYPE
 <b>LONG</b> 6-10 Years	Albany to Whaling Station Dual-use Trail Grain Train Rail Trails Stirling Range Valleys Cycle Touring Trail	

TRAIL TYPE
 Hiking  Cycling/Mountain biking  Paddling

To achieve the vision outlined in this master plan, it is essential that an effective implementation strategy is adopted. Given the range of stakeholders involved in delivering the priority trail proposals, it is important that these roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and projects are delivered to a high standard. The following recommendations provide an implementation strategy to achieve the vision outlined in this master plan. The strategies are aligned with each of the agreed objectives (see Section 2) and have been prioritised over a five-year timeframe. Specific actions and agency responsibilities aligned with these strategies are included as Appendix 4.

- **1 Integrated Planning & Management**  
Adopt a strategic and coordinated approach to trail planning, management and maintenance through key stakeholder collaboration and prioritised and targeted investment.
- **2 Sustainable & Accessible Trail Network**  
Develop, upgrade and maintain a network of high-quality trails and facilities that deliver outstanding experiences to a wide range of trail users and activity types.
- **3 Promote the Visitor Experience**  
Encourage strong local community and visitor participation in recreational trail activities through effective promotion and marketing of the region's trails.
- **4 Community and Economic Development Opportunities**  
Capitalise on the opportunities presented by a well-designed trails network for health, environmental, cultural, economic and liveability benefits.

The Great Southern Regional Trails Master Plan is the product of a strong partnership between local and state government, and reflects the aspirations of diverse trail user groups, community organisations and businesses. Progressively implementing these projects over the next decade will ensure that the Great Southern achieves its potential as a nationally recognised trail destination.

