

A NORTH-EAST RAIL TRAIL



A TASMANIAN GREENS POLICY INITIATIVE

Launched by Kim Booth MP
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**TASMANIA.
CREATE OUR
OWN FUTURE**

Authorised by Nick McKim MP, Parliament House, Hobart



> YOUR TEAM IN STATE PARLIAMENT



> WANT MORE INFO?

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Introducing the North East Rail Trail

Supporting Tourism in the North East

The Tasmanian Greens will boost sustainable tourism in the North East by investing in cycle tourism along the disused north east rail line.

Rail trails are a growing market within the Australian tourism sector and proven to bring economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits to regional towns. Tasmania's tourism profile is world-renown and the state is well placed to position itself in this market.

Already 1 million tourists visit Tasmania. The Greens have a plan to encourage them to visit the North East and this cycle Rail Trail is one way to make it happen.

> THE ISSUE

- Cycle tourism, and adventure tourism, is a growing market and tourism is increasing in Tasmania.
- The North East Rail Trail can combine the two by taking an unused rail asset and making it into a rail trail that can be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. Rail Trails are for everyone as they are accessible for walkers, cyclists and wheelchairs.
- The north east rail line has been non-operational for around 20 years. The proposed North East Rail Trail encompasses approximately 89kms of disused rail from Launceston to Billycock Hill, which will transform the existing rail corridor into a multi-use trail.
- Rail trails get tourists and locals into regional towns that they might not otherwise visit. This supports local tourism and helps keep our regional towns vibrant. It also means that we get to promote the undiscovered areas of Tasmania that will help keep tourists in Tasmania for longer periods of time.
- Dr Beeton from LaTrobe University in Victoria found that tourists using Rail Trails regularly outspend the average tourist to the region.
- The North East Rail Trail Development opportunity has been identified in a number of State and regional Plans which include the *Trails Tasmania Strategy 2007*, the *Northern Tasmania Regional Recreational Trails Strategy (2004)* and the *Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2009*. It's time to deliver on this opportunity.

> OUR PLAN

The Tasmanian Greens support the detailed work done by the North East Councils, community groups and Northern Tasmanian Development and we will:

- **Work with TasRail to remove their disused assets as a key priority** so that the track is rail trail ready
- **Provide \$500 000 in 2014-2015** to kick-start the project and encourage other players to come onboard. (To be administered through Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources)

> Showcasing the North East

The North East Rail Trail encompasses approximately 89kms of disused rail from Launceston to Billycock Hill. It has the potential to be a major tourism and recreational product, capable of generating new, innovative and complimentary tourism investment along the length of the trail.

The trail will run through the heart of regional towns like Lilydale bringing tourists and locals alike to established small businesses as well as encouraging the development of more.

Already 1 million tourists visit Tasmania. We need to ensure that they visit the North East and this Rail Trail is one way to make it happen.

The Rail Trail will meet the following objectives:

- ✓ Be one of Australia's leading Rail Trail experiences showcasing the natural and cultural heritage values of NE Tasmania;
- ✓ Create tourism infrastructure to attract new local, national and international visitors to the north;
- ✓ Assist in reinvigoration of NE Tasmanian communities, generating economic activity and new jobs; and
- ✓ Offer benefits to well-being and livability of local community members.

> DELIVERING OUR POLICY

The proposed North East rail trail will offer cyclists, mountain bikers, walkers and other non-motorised recreational users with a route linking townships and regions from Launceston, Scottsdale, Lilydale, Karoola, Lalla, Tunnel, Lebrina, Nabowla and Billycock Hill.

It will also value add to the mountain bike trails at Hollybank/Mount Arthur and Derby-Cascade Forest/Welborough-Blue Tier, enhancing the entire region's reputation as a world class cycling destination.

- A Preliminary Demand and Economic Benefit Assessment, prepared for the Northern Tasmania Development in February this year, assesses the proposal against international routes including the Otago Rail Trail and the Hauraki Rail Trail in New Zealand, and interstate trails.
- The report states that recreational cyclists are a high yield, high spending market, providing numerous local business start-up opportunities, and enhanced economic and social opportunities for the regions.
- Cycling tourists are estimated to spend an average of \$2072 per visit while in Tasmania. (*North East Rail Trail: Preliminary Demand and Economic Benefit Assessment*, prepared by TRC Tourism, February 2014; pg 5.)

> Socio Economic Contribution

The Preliminary demand and economic benefit assessment research has provided a range of scenarios estimating the north east rail trail' economic contribution to the state. A summary excerpt of the Report details the following:

At five years post construction it is estimated that rail trail would increase direct tourism expenditure in the region by \$3.5 million per annum. The flow-on impacts of this expenditure are significant and total output is expected to increase across Tasmania by \$6.8 million per annum and will also increase gross state product (GSP) by \$3.3 million per annum. This increase in economic activity is estimated to support 40 jobs (measured as full-time equivalents, FTEs).

The impact of the rail trail is expected to become progressively greater at ten and fifteen years post construction due to greater participation on the Trail

At fifteen years post construction the rail Trail is estimated to increase output in Tasmania by \$11.2 million per annum, increase GSP by \$5.4 million per annum and support 67 jobs (FTEs).

North East Rail Trail: Preliminary Demand and Economic Benefit Assessment, prepared by TRC Tourism Pty Ltd for Northern Tasmania Development, February 2014; pg 16.

North East Tasmanian Rail Trail Experience



Graphic reproduced from the *North East Rail Trail: Preliminary Demand and Economic Benefit Assessment*, prepared by TRC Tourism Pty Ltd for Northern Tasmania Development, February 2014; pg 12.