

MINUTES OF SUSTAINABLE RECREATION ADVISORY GROUP HELD ON MONDAY, 6 MARCH 2023

- Present: Councillor Greg Taylor (Chairperson; Comenarra Ward)
Councillor Alec Taylor (Deputy Chairperson; Roseville Ward)
Councillor Simon Lennon (Gordon Ward)
Jill Green (Environmental representative)
Janet Harwood (Environmental representative)
Andrew Heyden (Recreation representative)
Barbara Hill (Recreation representative)
Simon Kean (Recreation representative)
Michael Leonarder (Recreation representative)
Michael Mathias (Environmental representative)
Rob Salisbury (Environmental representative)
Jennifer Stokes (Environmental representative)
- Staff Present: Jacob Sife (Manager Environment and Sustainability)
Representatives Present: Sybylla Brown (Natural Areas Program Leader)
Craig Johnson (Strategic Recreation Planner)
- Others Present: Andrew Watson (Director Strategy & Environment; Observer)
Matthew Drago (Manager Infrastructure Services; Observer)
Lauren Boyko (Sustainability Programs Support Officer; Secretary)
Martin Cousins (Invitee)
- Apologies: Tim Clarsen
Jill Green
Mitchell Bowen

The Meeting commenced at 6:02pm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Acknowledged by Councillor Alec Taylor.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interest was declared.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Noted that the presentation from Michael Mathias has been moved to the next meeting due to time restrictions.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of Sustainable Recreation Advisory Group

File: S13163

Meeting held 6 September 2022

Minutes numbered GB.1 to GB.3

RECOMMENDATION:

That Minutes numbered GB.1 to GB.3 2022/295142 circulated to Councillors were taken as read and confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of the Meeting.

Moved: Alec Taylor. Seconded: Greg Taylor.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Project Updates

File: S13163

Vide: GB.1

To provide brief updates on projects relevant to the Sustainable Recreation Advisory Group.

Staff provided updates on the following:

- Recreation Needs Study
 - Second draft received February; due for public exhibition April/May – workshop in April with Councillors and SRAG.
 - Decline in organised sports consistent with other studies.
- Track signage
 - Images shared of Warrimoo interpretative signs – installed 2020. More signs due for installation in Stage 2 works.
 - Signs for walking tracks intended, pending funding.
- Walking tracks
 - Two Creeks upgrade continuing; unexpected engineering issues.
 - Maintenance continuing on fire trails, works at Carlyle & Yanilla trail recently completed.
 - Grant received to upgrade tracks/boardwalk in Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden.
 - Data collection – Council staff undertaking audit of track network to improve maintenance schedules, prioritise upgrades and improve track information available to the community. Currently in draft and trial stage; opportunity for volunteers to collect track data in future.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Advisory Group notes the current and ongoing projects and provides a positive contribution to support the Recreation in Natural Areas Strategy.

Moved: Alec Taylor. No objections.

Strategic Mountain Bike Linkages within the Northern Region

File: S13163

Vide: GB.2

To inform the Group on the regional network of mountain bike tracks.

Simon Kean presented on the recreational, economic and environmental benefits of implementing a regional management plan for the mountain bike track network.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Advisory Group notes the information provided.

Moved: Alec Taylor. No objections.

Martin Cousins joined the meeting at 7:06pm.

Update on Warrimoo Downhill Project Completion and Response to Letter from Mr Cousins

File: S13163

Vide: GB.3

To provide an update on the completion of the Warrimoo Downhill mountain bike track and have staff respond to concerns raised by Mr Cousins regarding the Warrimoo Uphill Stage 2 portion of the project.

Council staff addressed the concerns raised as follows:

- Clarified the approval pathway for track construction.
- Noted that community consultation had continued over many years, and that the project had been discussed as a specific agenda item at four meetings of the Sustainable Recreation Advisory Group.
- Communicated the importance of the uphill track in lowering the impact on the identified endangered ecological community, mitigating safety hazards for track users, discouraging the building of unauthorised tracks and contributing to network connectivity.
- Specified the numerous environmental assessments undertaken prior to works, in addition to documenting every threatened plant and associated habitat feature to facilitate their protection.
- Detailed the success of the project in reducing track encroachment on EEC from ~230 linear metres to ~47 linear metres, and improvement to safety through separating downhill and uphill/walking tracks.
- Reconstructed tracks have minimal environmental impact, the tracks are outside of *Melaleuca deanei* and *Tetratheca glandulosa* habitat.
- The pygmy possum monitoring program shows early signs of population recovery.

Councillor Alec Taylor supported the project.

Simon Kean supported the project.

Martin Cousins agreed to be contacted by Councillors, staff and group members at a later date to discuss further.

Martin Cousins left the meeting at 7:41pm.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Advisory Group notes the information provided.

Moved: Alec Taylor. No objections.

OTHER BUSINESS

Nil.

Michael Mathias will present on accessible recreation at the next meeting, date TBA.

The Meeting closed at 7:45pm.

APPENDIX A - STRATEGIC MOUNTAIN BIKE LINKAGES WITHIN THE NORTHERN REGION PRESENTATION SLIDES



SRAG

Regional
Mtb Plan
-Scoping

OVERVIEW

- *Key objectives*
 1. *Sustainability*
 2. *Environmental Risk Management*
- *Context of Ku-ring-gai LGA*
- *Surrounding land and how bush is accessed*
 - *Who by – mtb discussion only*
 - *How – how mtb riders access only*

Objective 1 - Sustainability



Objective 2 – Env. Risk Management



To what extent is this currently implemented in managing Northern Sydney mtb trails in bushland?

Need a plan to implement this.

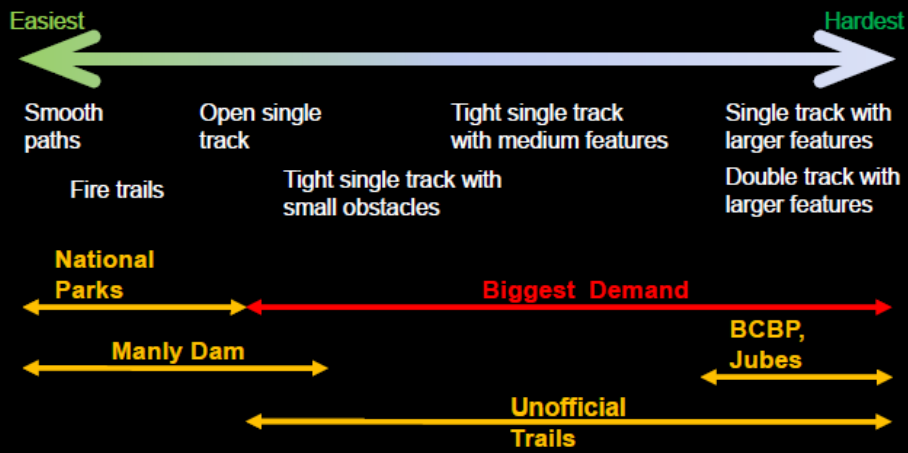
Context of Ku-ring-gai LGA – Detail required

- *Local environment*
- *Community interests*
- *Local businesses*
- *Network linkages*
- *Current facilities*
- *Visitation*
- *Resourcing*

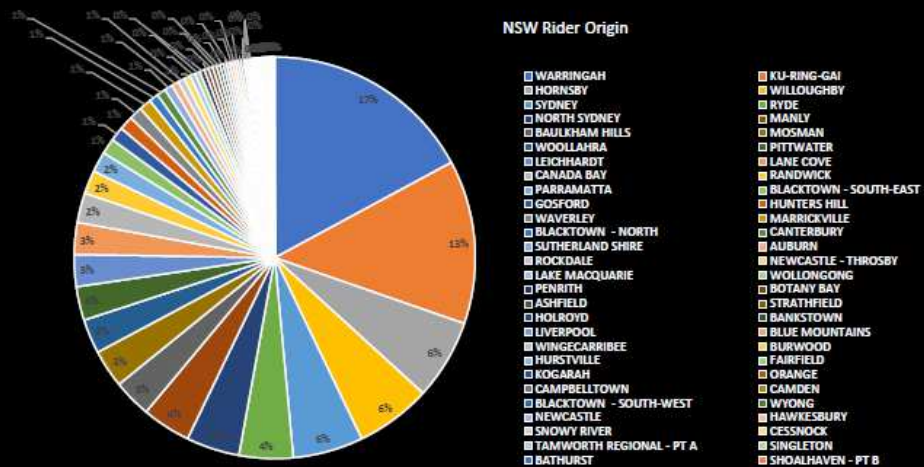
Community interests - Riders

“relaxation and awe from being in the bush”
“the mountain bike community is our community”
“physical and mental fitness”
“fits into a busy lifestyle”
“seeking challenge”
“sport” (minority)

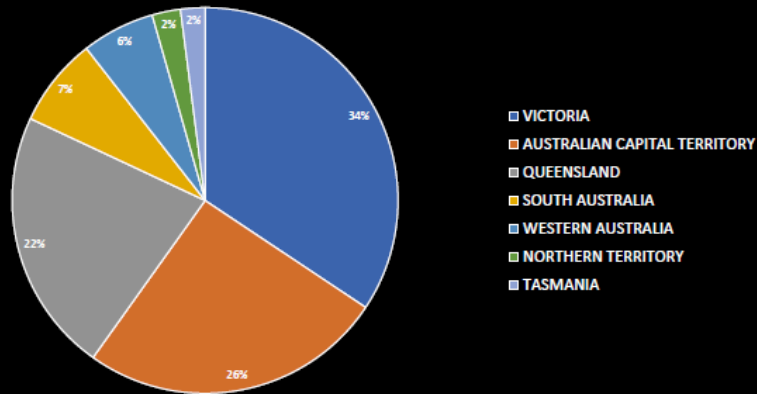
Community Interest – trail/track types



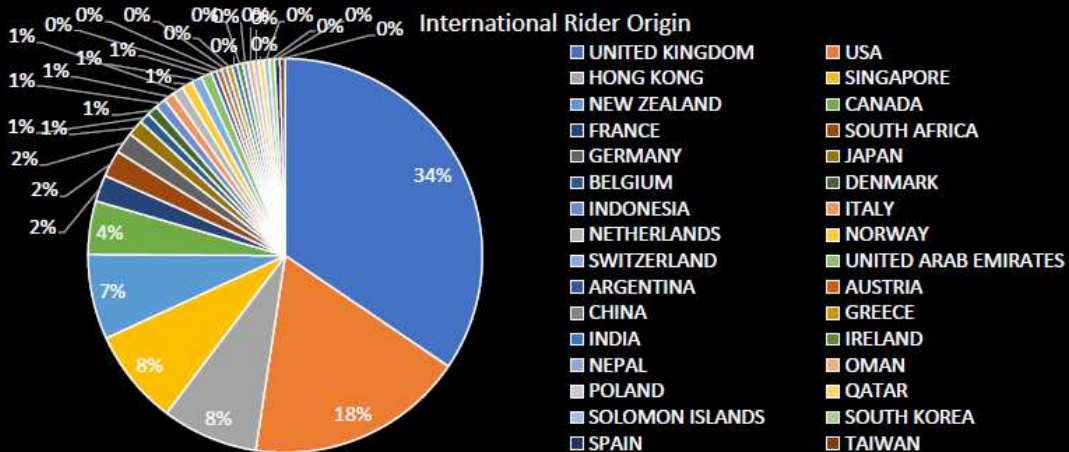
Who is accessing these mtb trails?



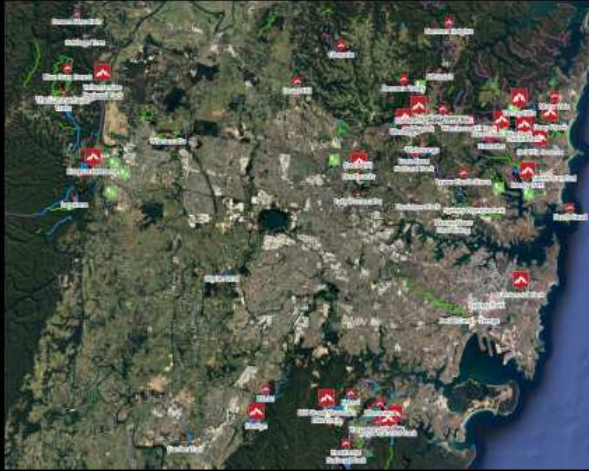
Who is accessing these mtb trails?



Who is accessing these mtb trails?



Sydney



Adelaide



Perth



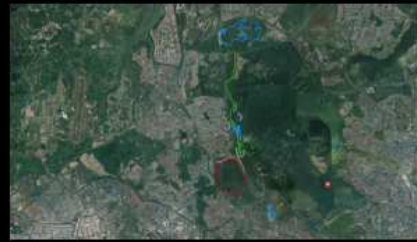
Brisbane



Kuala Lumpur



Singapore



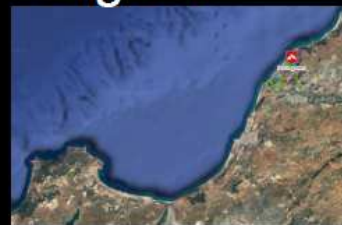
Christchurch



Vancouver



Algiers

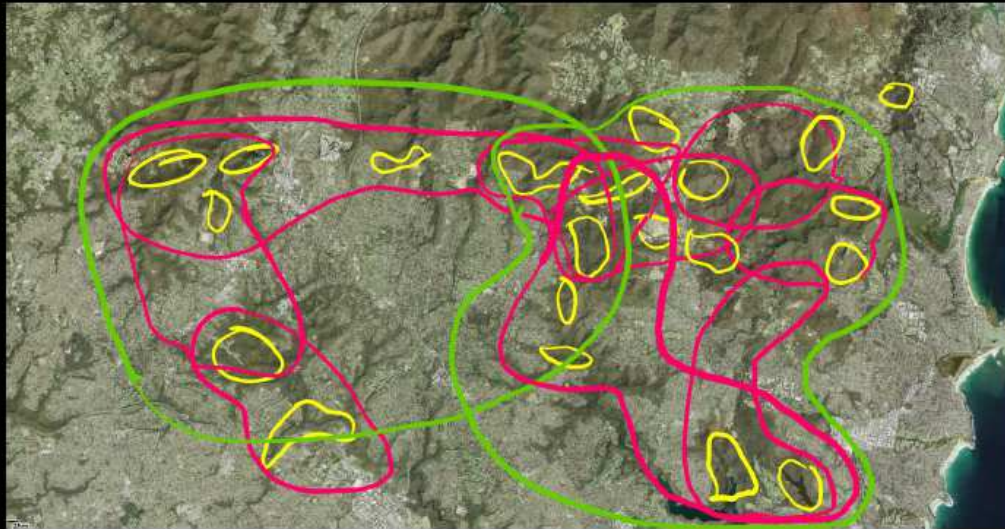








How is the bush being accessed? 30,000 riders in 2014



Trail hubs

Ride Length

0.5-1hr

2-4hr

4hr+

4 decades
of use

Recreation, WC,
EWS, Olympics,
School sport

SRAG

- Leadership, local LGA and beyond
- Sustainable recreation
- 30,000 riders in 2014 with interstate and international visitation
- St Ives FC (one of many)
 - 949 players
 - 75 teams
 - 'Play' twice per week (training and games)
 - 75/2 football fields per match

Key barriers

- Solutions have been opposed for 30 years.
 - Perception, can't reward people undertaking destructive illegal activity.
 - Opposition only experiencing the issues, not the solutions.
- Planning and greenspace zoning rarely considers tracks.
- Lack of understanding between multiple stakeholders.
- Lack of cross tenure master plan (other than informal by riders)
- Current local culture
 - product of the contextual environment.
 - legitimate in policy for 20 years, without scale on the ground..

A transition plan is required

- Cultural change management plan to get belief from riders that working with government is worthwhile and will lead to positive outcomes (Urgently required).
 - Otherwise opportunity is disappearing.
- Rider briefing to land managers about what is currently going on in each locality.
- Resolution of immediate environmental and cultural heritage issues:
 - Time scale to action of days or a few weeks as they occur.
 - Not letting things get any worse
 - Reduce impacts quickly.
 - Signage.
 - Needs to stop being illegal to prevent further damage. Eg maintenance.

A transition plan is required, opportunity is disappearing

- Maintenance plan for what is already there to prevent further degradation.
 - Implementation time frame, weekly as needed.
- Master plan of network to identify an environmental, social and economically sustainable solution.
 - Time frame, within 1 year.
- 1, 5 to 10 year staged transition plan to shift to the sustainable network in the master plan while maintaining operational viability of the network for the 10,000s of current users.
 - Implementation timing, as funding becomes available, volunteer time is available and incorporating aspects into ongoing maintenance and rehab.

Questions?