



# BUTTONGRASS

MARCH 2015

## Focus on maintaining Parks recreation infrastructure

Tasmania is known internationally as a bushwalking destination and that reputation continues to grow. In January, one of the world's biggest travel guide publishers, Lonely Planet, identified the Three Capes Track as one of the 'world's hottest new experiences'.

The Three Capes Track is scheduled to open in November 2015 and work on the final three portions of the track from Denmans Cove to Fortescue Bay began in February. Construction of the huts at the overnight sites is now under way.

The vision for the Three Capes Track is to be 'Australia's premier coastal bushwalking experience' and it will be quite different to existing Parks and Wildlife Service walk experiences. It will provide an achievable walking experience for a wide range of ages and abilities. A higher standard of facilities at the huts, including gas cooking and mattresses, will mean lighter pack weights for walkers, and a high standard, dry-boot track will make it a good entry-level option for inexperienced walkers.

Walkers on the Overland Track have really appreciated the new signs marking the start of the track at Ronny Creek at Cradle Mountain, and the finish at Lake St Clair. The signs provide a great opportunity for walkers to capture the moment of their departure and celebrate their achievement.

The younger walkers on the Overland Track have also appreciated a new *Trek Guide – My Overland Track Journey*. The guide was produced for the hundreds of 8 to 17 year olds that walk the track each year. It includes a daily reflection journal and many activities to do as they walk each day.



*Superb walking tracks along the Three Capes Track*



*New signs provide a stunning backdrop for Overland walkers' memento photos*

In the Southwest National Park, work is under way on a \$2 million upgrade of the South Coast Track.

The 87 km track takes walkers through the heart of more than 600,000 hectares of wild country in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

The upgrade will be staged over four years, with the focus in the early part of the project on basic track maintenance and delivery of improved toilet facilities, an issue which has been the bane of walkers for a number of years.

Brush cutting and windfall clearing on more than nine kilometres of the track from south of Cockle Creek to South Cape Rivulet was completed in December as part of preliminary works. During January the installation of new toilets was completed at a number of campgrounds including Lion Rock, South Cape Rivulet, Deadmans Bay, Granite Beach and Point Eric. The prefabricated mini-orb colourbond structures were flown in and placed on top of underground infrastructure.

New facilities are planned for campgrounds at Louisa River (east and west), Surprise Bay, Osmiridium Beach and Prion Beach. Next season's works will include further track construction and improvement of beach access and water crossings.

On the West Coast, the PWS is managing several projects that form part of the West Coast Economic Stimulus Project, aimed at stimulating tourism on the West Coast in the wake of mining job losses. The projects include construction of a walking track to Horsetail Falls near Queenstown, development of a suite of West Coast mountain bike trails to complement other mountain bike projects around Tasmania, and replacement of the Granite Creek bridge on Climies Track.



**New shelter at Adamsfield:** A new day use shelter providing improved facilities for off-road recreational drivers has been completed at Adamsfield in the Adamsfield Conservation Area, part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The shelter replaces the 'Adamsfield Hilton' which was destroyed in a bushfire in 2007. Complete with picnic tables, the shelter will provide a welcome stopover for tea and lunch breaks.



**PWS Fire Crew at Peter Murrell Reserve**  
A quiet bushfire season has provided for a head start by the PWS Fire Crew on preparations for a big program of planned burns as part of the statewide Fuel Reduction Program. The Tasmanian Government has committed \$28.5 million over four years to reduce the risk of bushfires to the community. Fire Crew staff have been working around the state preparing for burns by clearing fire trails to provide access to the burn block boundaries.



**Risso's dolphin strandings mystery:** Scientists are trying to understand why so many Risso's dolphins have been stranding along Australia's eastern seaboard during the 2014-2015 summer. There have been 12 stranding events, involving 13 animals on Tasmania's shores, since November 2014. This is unprecedented, as prior to this summer only one stranded animal had been reported in Tasmania. DPIPWE Marine Conservation Program staff have been taking a range of biological samples from the stranded animals and are sharing information with their mainland colleagues in an effort to solve the mystery.



**Overland Track:** Overland Track walkers now have a great backdrop for the all-important photos at the start and finish of the track. The striking signs have been installed at the northern end of the track at Ronny Creek, Cradle Mountain, and at the southern end at Lake St Clair.  
*Photo courtesy Frank Wall*

We'd like to thank readers of Buttongrass for their kind comments over the years and advise that this will be the last hard copy edition of the newsletter.

After this edition we will move to a more frequent electronic newsletter delivered via email. This will allow us to keep our valued parks pass holders more up to date with Parks and Wildlife Service happenings.

## Your Buttongrass