
DIAL RANGE
RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
&
SUPPLEMENT

RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
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SUPPLEMENT
Office of Sport & Recreation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO PLAN

The Dial Range is located to the south of Penguin township on the central northwest coast of Tasmania.

The Range extends some 14 kms south to the Leven River at Gunns Plains and is about 4-5 kms wide between the hillfaces of Pine Road on the west through to the Leven River forming it's eastern boundary. In total the Dial Range covers about 5200 hectares of State owned land of which:

- 4354 ha are State Forest and Forest Reserve managed by Forestry Tasmania;
- 300 ha are within the Mount Montgomery State Reserve managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service;
- 35 ha are within the Ferndene State Reserve managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service; and
- 507 ha of land that has been recommended as a Nature Recreation Area under the Inquiry into areas to be reserved under the Tasmania-Commonwealth Regional Forests Agreement¹.

Map 1.1 shows the current land tenure arrangement for the Dial Range.

The Dial Range is a prominent landscape feature and is widely recognised as being a multiple use asset providing for wood production, recreation, water catchment, tourism, flora and fauna conservation, habitat conservation and landscape values for the community.

There are a diversity of recreational users that enjoy the Dial Range. The principal recreational activities make use of the walking tracks and trails found within the Study Area and include bushwalking, trail bike riding, horseriding, nature studies, running, mountain bike riding and exercising dogs. Fishing, canoeing and other water based activities occur along the Leven River. Designated areas have been set aside for clubs

¹ This land area was made up of two land parcels, which were contiguous with the Ferndene and Mount Montgomery State Reserves.

involved with motocross riding and field and game shooting. Sightseeing, picnicking and other recreational activities also occur within the Dial Range.

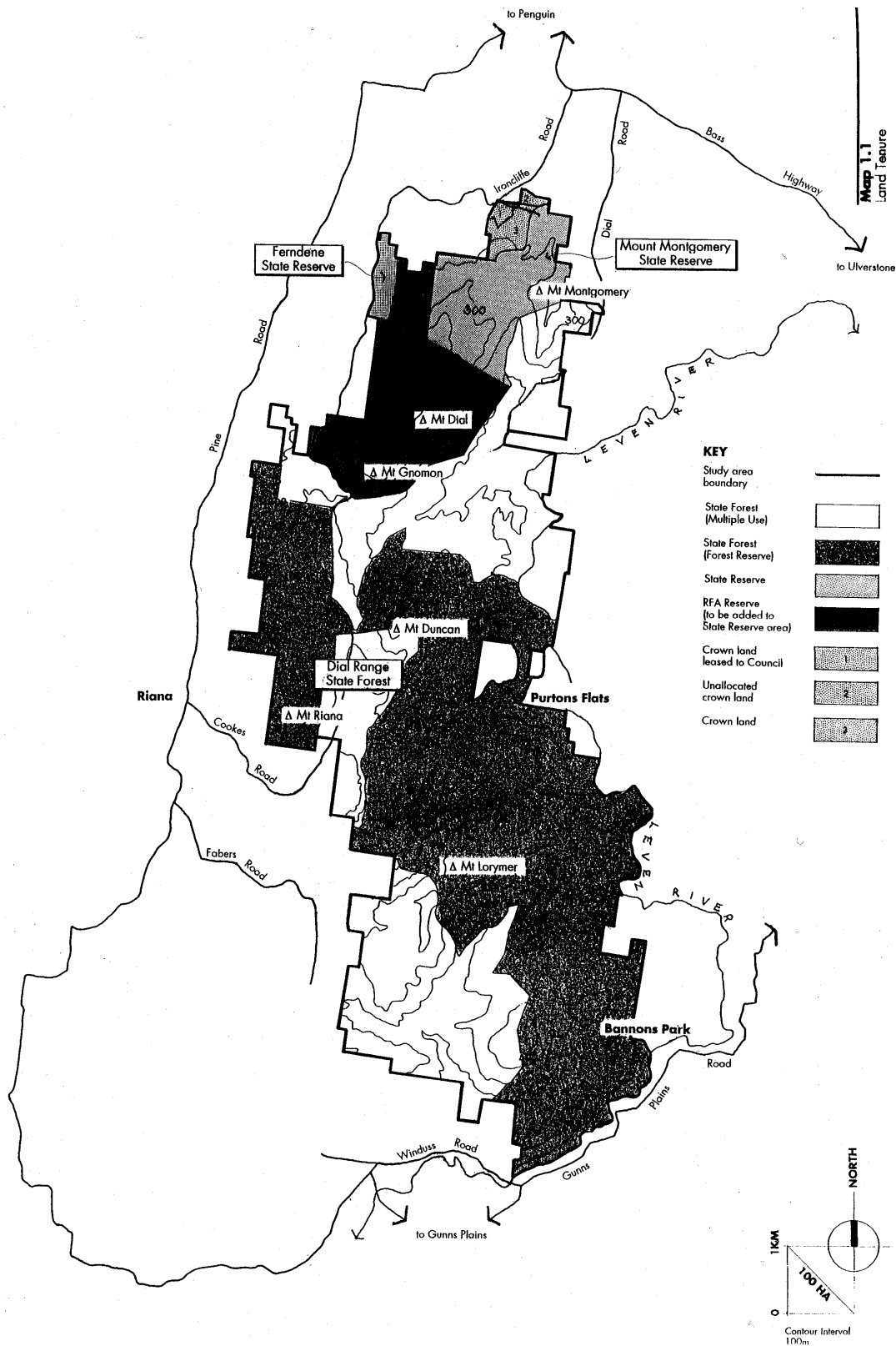
During the 1970's, the Penguin Council and North West Walking Club initiated the development of a network of extensive walking trails through the Range, with the assistance of funds from a Commonwealth's regional employment scheme. These tracks have generally been maintained by the Walking Club and now form part of the Penguin - Cradle Trail, a 6-7 day walking trail from the coast through to Cradle Mountain National Park.

Both users and managers of the Dial Range recognise that there are a number of fundamental issues which need to be addressed in the future planning, development and management of recreational activities. These issues include the need for an effective management structure for recreation management of the Dial Range, resolution of conflicts between different uses of the Study Area, improved access arrangements and the upgrading and maintenance of the existing tracks and trails.

A multiple -use management plan was prepared for the Dial Range in 1975 and provided some broad direction to guide management decisions. Some 15 years later, a draft *1990 Dial Range Management Plan* was prepared by Forestry Tasmania as an interim document. The Plan provided a basic inventory of resources and set out management prescriptions for wood production, landscape management, wildlife corridors and recreational uses.

Since the interim plan was prepared, there have been a number of developments with implications for the recreation management of the Dial Range. These include:

- the Regional Forest Agreement which led to commitments to conserve a comprehensive and representative system of conservation values within the State;
- changes to Forestry Tasmania's wood production and management priorities for the region and specifically for the Dial Range;
- increased recreational use and pressures within the Dial Range, including the emergence of some conflicts between different users and some degradation of the recreational resource;
- the limited resources available to arrest the decline in the condition of many tracks and trails within the Dial Range; and
- the limited capacity of the existing management arrangements to achieve effective management outcomes for recreation in the whole of the Dial Range.



Map 1.1 : Land Tenure of Dial Range

The need to prepare a Recreation Management Plan for the Dial Range was identified by the responsible management agencies, the Central Coast Council and user groups. A Steering Committee with representatives from the Central Coast Council, Forestry Tasmania, Parks and Wildlife Service, the Office of Sport and Recreation and user groups was established to assist with the preparation of this study. Consultants, Inspiring Place Pty Ltd, were commissioned to prepare the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan.

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to achieve effective and appropriate recreation management and development within public Dial Range lands.

The specific objectives are to:

- to prepare a plan to guide future decisions, that are compatible with other forest values and uses and management plans for the region;
- to develop a marketing and communication strategy (aimed at outsiders and visitors); and
- to establish an ongoing co-ordinating structure involving stakeholders.

1.3 APPROACH

The project reviews and builds upon the draft management plan prepared by the Forestry Commission in 1990 and utilises other information generated through the Regional Forest Agreement process. In achieving the above aim and objectives, it has been necessary to:

- *establish* the context of recreation in relation to other uses and values of the area;
- *assess* trends in recreation and management of open space;
- *examine* existing recreation participation, potential opportunities and their compatibility within Dial Range;
- *review* current policy and management guidelines (including the *Tasmanian Walking Tracks Strategy 1997*);

- *consider* the relationship between managers, users, Local Government and private landowners; and
- *ensure* the protection of the natural and cultural values from recreational activities.

Consultation with the range of stakeholders was seen as an essential component for achieving successful outcomes and formed an important part of the overall process as shown in Table 1.1.

Stages of Project	Key Tasks Undertaken
1 Pre planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial briefing and site visits with Steering Committee • Identification of information sources • Organisation of consultation program
2 Policy review and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of past reports and policy documents • Review of population and recreation trends • Identification of natural, cultural and current use values • Publicity and promotion of consultation program - letters sent to over 300 landowners and 30 user groups, advertising in <i>Advocate</i> newspaper and posters in shop windows
3 Consultation and site planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum with sporting clubs and recreation groups • Forum with landowners • Forum with the general community • Site investigations
4 Preparation of draft Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of information from Stages 1-3 • Preparation of management vision • Preparation of draft management plan • Review and comment by Steering Committee
5 Final Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft Plan with Steering Committee and finalisation of draft ready for public review • Exhibition of draft plan • Invitation of written comments • Steering Committee to review community feedback and revise Plan

Table 1.1 : Study Approach

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

The report is divided into five Chapters.

This Chapter introduces the project and the approach taken. Chapter 2 outlines the existing values of the Dial Range, so as to identify its significance for a range of natural, cultural and multiple use activities.

Chapter 3 identifies the key recreation management issues for the Dial Range based on available information, preliminary site visits and consultation with users, surrounding landowners and key management agencies.

Chapter 4 provides a vision statement and policy principles to guide the future planning, use and recreation management within the Dial Range.

Chapter 5, then sets out a strategic plan for responding to the identified recreation management issues and details:

- required actions;
- who should take responsibility for the action;
- the priority of the recommended action; and
- the proposed time frame.

A bibliography is also provided listing the information sources used in the preparation of the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan.

1.5 LIMITATIONS

There are a number of limitations with the preparation of the Recreation Management Plan.

Firstly there is very limited information about some of the natural, cultural and community use values of the Dial Range, and in particular, information about recreational values and use. For instance there is no one plan that identifies the resource values of the Range or provides guidance on the use and management of those resources. There is no open space strategy which assesses the role and significance of the Dial Range as a recreational asset at the regional or local level. There is also no

reliable information about the levels of recreational use within the Range, what experiences the users are seeking, the times of their use etc.

However each of the agencies do have various management documents or systems to guide decision making. For instance Forestry Tasmania have prepared the Management Decision Classification mapping system and the Parks and Wildlife Service have a management plan for Mt. Montgomery State Reserve.

Secondly the limited resources initially available for the project meant that no fieldwork could be undertaken in the Dial Range other than a preliminary familiarisation with the whole of the area. As a consequence, the Plan had to rely on available information from past documents, the consultation program and field observation. The Plan has used this available information and attempted to address the wider management issues involved with recreation planning, development and management. Specific assessments of carrying capacity or sustainable levels of use could not be considered at this stage.

Limited resources also affected the community consultation undertaken, which also had to be structured and limited within the available budget. Whilst efforts were made by the Steering Committee to contact all key stakeholders directly by letter to invite them to participate in forums, many landowners and groups did not become actively involved in the process. Whilst the draft plan will be available for public review, it may not necessarily cover all the issues of concern to user groups, landowners, managers or the wider community. Subsequent to the initial consultation and fieldwork, the Office of Sport and Recreation engaged a field officer to work specifically on a track audit and access issues with the private land owners and this has addressed some of the limitations identified within the report.

Despite the limitations, the recreation management vision does provides a framework within which to consider other information issues in the future. In addition, the recommended regular review of the plan should allow for changes to the plan to occur, if deemed necessary.

Given the scope of this Plan is recreation, it will be necessary for the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan to be integrated with other management plans that may be prepared in the future.

1.6 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A Steering Committee was formed to oversee the preparation of the Recreation Management Plan. Members of the Steering Committee were:

Nic Deka	Office of Sport and Recreation
Geoff Coles	Parks and Wildlife Service
Robert Hamilton	Forestry Tasmania
Cr Jan Edwards	Central Coast Council, Councillor
John Lee	Central Coast Council, Officer
Dick Burns	Community member (North West Walking Club)

CHAPTER 2

VALUES AND USE OF THE DIAL RANGE

This Chapter provides a brief overview of the natural and cultural values of the Dial Range (Section 2.1 and Section 2.2). These values are derived from a review of existing information sources - where additional information is required, these documents should be consulted.

An assessment of recreational uses and other uses of the Dial Range is also provided, based on existing information and the results of consultation with user groups, landowners and managing agencies (Section 2.3). A summary of the significance of these values is provided in Section 2.4.

2.1 NATURAL VALUES

The Dial Range, like much of the north west coast, has a temperate marine climate characterised by mild winters and cool summers. The mean maximum temperature is about 16.5 °C with the mean minimum temperature about 8.4 °C and temperatures varying with altitude. The average rainfall is around 1000-1100 mm per annum, but meteorology records for Penguin suggest that this can range from the extremes of 700 mm - 1600 mm in any one year. Rainfall is highest during the winter months and lowest in the summer period extending from January to March. The predominant winds are from the west - southwest to northwest - but the on-ground conditions vary according to the strong influence of the local topography. These climatic conditions are conducive to people wishing to undertake year-round outdoor recreation without the safety risks associated with high altitude environments.

The eastern part of the Dial Range drains into the Leven River either directly or through a number of small tributaries including Dial Creek, Hardstaff Creek, Keddies Creek, Rogers Creek, Audit Creek and Walloa Creek. The northwestern slopes of Mount Riana, Mount Duncan, Mount Gnomon and Mount Montgomery drain either into Penguin Creek or Myrtle Creek.

The geology of the Dial Range is complex with rock types having been formed during the Pre Cambrian, Cambrian and Ordovician geological periods. The rugged landscape reflects the series of folding and fault movements across the region. The higher peaks in the northern part of the Range (eg. Mount Duncan, Mount Gnomon, Mount Dial) are derived from Ordovician rocks (mainly Duncan conglomerate) with sandstone outcropping at the lower levels. Large belts of conglomerate and chert talus

can be found below the above rock types. Cambrian mudstones and volcanics are found on both sides of the Leven River and within the southern part of the Range, often underlying Tertiary basalt and alluvium deposits. The iron ore bodies within the Range were prospected and worked during the 1880-1310 with numerous tunnels being constructed near Ferndene, yet yielding uneconomic returns (McFie 1991, Vandenberg 1984).

The soils strongly reflect the geology of the Range. Shallow soils of a gravel nature are associated with the Ordovician parent material - these soils generally have poor fertility. Where the soils are deeper on the Cambrian volcanics and mudstones, the fertility is higher. Most of the soils on the steeper slopes within the Range are prone to sheet erosion and gully erosion. Some of the soils formed on sediments and particularly siliceous sediments are known to be very prone to erosion and the incised nature of the Dial Range makes it prone to erosion (M. Pemberton PWS *pers. comm.*).

The vegetation types of the Range are summarised in Table 2.1.

Vegetation Type	Location	Typical Understorey
Heath Community <i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i> (black peppermint)	drier north and north west slopes and ridges where thin gravelly soils are found eg. Mount Montgomery	heath understorey dominated by <i>Epacridaceae</i> (common heath) and <i>Myrtaceae</i> species, herbs and sedges
Dry Forest <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> (stringybark) and <i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i>	lower sections of north and north west slopes where soils are deeper and retain more water	dominated by bracken, <i>Pultenaea juniperinna</i> (prickly beauty) and <i>Oellipticum</i> with <i>Acacia mucronata</i> in the gullies
Open Forest <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	fertile and well drained soils	<i>Acacia mucronata</i> (narrow-leafed wattle) , <i>Pultenaea juniperinna</i> , <i>Phebalium squaneum</i> , <i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i> and several fern species
Wet Sclerophyll Forest <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> and <i>Oleria argophylla</i> (musk)	on moist sites with Ordovician parent material	<i>Oleria argophylla</i> , <i>Dicksonia antarctica</i> (tree fern) , <i>Monotoca glauca</i> , <i>Phebalium squaneum</i> (lancewood), <i>Tasmannia lanceolata</i> , <i>Acacia mucronata</i> and several fern species
Tall forest <i>Eucalyptus regnans</i> (swamp gum)	restricted to the Cambrian mudstones and volcanics	<i>Acacia melanoxyton</i> (blackwood) , <i>Oleria argophylla</i> , <i>Pomademis apetala</i> , <i>Dicksonia antarctica</i> , <i>Cyathea australis</i> , <i>Zieria arborescens</i> and various fern species. In some situations can be growing in association with <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> , <i>Nothofagus cunninghamii</i> and <i>Athrosperma moschatum</i>
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> / <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> association (white gum /stringbark)	along the Leven River	varies in composition
<i>Eucalyptus nitida</i> forest (Smithton peppermint)	summits of Mount Duncan, Mount Dial and Mount Montgomery	sparses and heathy and in some situations growing in association with <i>Nothofagus cunninghamii</i> (myrtle) and <i>Athrosperma moschatum</i> (sassafras)

Table 2.1 General Vegetation Types in Dial Range (Source : Forestry Tasmania, 1990)

A botanical survey undertaken by Parks and Wildlife Service identified 59 different flora species in the Mount Montgomery State Reserve. The following species have been identified within the Dial Range area as being rare or vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* :

Species Name	Common Name	Conservation Status
<i>Acacia mucronata dependens</i>	variable sallow wattle	rare
<i>Corybas diemenicus</i>	stately helmet orchid	rare
<i>Blechnum cartilagineum</i>	gristle fern	vulnerable
<i>Doodia caudata</i>	small rasp-fern	vulnerable
<i>Persicaria decipiens</i>	slender knotweed	vulnerable

Forestry Tasmania undertake forest planning within the framework of the *Forest Practices Act 1985* and the *Forest Practices Code*. The *Murchison District Forest Management Plan*¹ guides forestry in the State Forests which occur in the Study Area.

In preparing the *Murchison District Forest Management Plan*, Forestry Tasmania have undertaken a number of analyses covering such issues as geology, flora and fauna and landscape values. Together these surveys and forestry production objectives provide the basis of the Management Decision Classification (MDC) system which gives guidance as to values which must be managed for as part of forestry operations in an area. MDC's include provision for Special Management Zones and the establishment of Protection Zones where wood production is excluded to protect special values.

The MDC mapping for the Study Area shows that the whole of the southern portion of the State Forest area included in a Protection Zone. Botanical, geological and landscape values are amongst the values to be protected in this area. The Protection Zone is part of the Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system identified by the *Regional Forest Agreement* and as such has been designated as a Forest Reserve.

The remaining areas of State Forest in the Study Area have been designated as Production Zones. Within these, portions (particularly the eastern facing slopes) have been noted as having Special Management Zoning status related to landscape and botanical values. These values will be managed by the inclusion of prescriptions in Forest Practices Plans as they are prepared in advance of scheduled harvesting.

The Murchison Forest District Forest Management Plan (1999) identifies a range of CAR values within the Forest Reserve in the Dial Range under the MDC system used for uniform statewide zoning of all land managed by Forestry Tasmania. The

¹ Forestry Commission 1999 *Derwent District Forest Management Plan*.

following forest communities were identified as CAR values in oldgrowth forest within the Forest Reserve:

- Coastal *E. amygdalina* dry sclerophyll forest
- Tall *E. obliqua* forest
- Wet *E. viminalis* forest on basalt
- Leptospermum sp. *Melaleuca squarrosa* swamp forest
- Thamnic rainforest on less fertile sites
- Dry *E. obliqua* forest
- *E. regnans* forest

In other forests within the Dial Range Forest Reserve the following forest communities were identified as CAR values:

- *E. viminalis*/*E. Ovata*/*E. amygdalina*/*E. Obliqua* damp sclerophyll forest
- Dry *E. obliqua* forest
- Tall *E. obliqua* forest
- Silver wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) forest
- Wet *E. viminalis* forest on basalt
- Coastal *E. amygdalina*
- dry sclerophyll forest
- *E. regnans* forest

It is expected that many, if not most, of the 31 mammal species identified by Rounsevell *et al* (1991)¹ could be present within the Range. The diversity of habitat found within the Range is likely to encourage a high diversity of bird species. The bushland is also likely to support a variety of native invertebrates and introduced invertebrates with the possibility that many invertebrate species, especially those associated with a restricted range, have yet to be identified. The *Ooperipatellus cryptus* (velvet worm) has been

¹ These consisted of monotremes (2 species), marsupials (19 species) and eutherians (13 species).

found at a number of sites at Mt Gnomon, Dial Creek and Velvet Creek and is considered to be of rare status. Three invertebrate fauna species have been identified in the Mount Montgomery State Reserve, one of which, the *Beddomeia phasianella* (freshwater snail) is of rare status. The *Astacopsis gouldi* (Giant Freshwater Lobster) has been found in the Leven River and is of vulnerable conservation status. Bryant and Jackson (1999) provide a detailed description of the species, distribution, habitat management for the threatened fauna including the above species. Detailed recommendations are provided to Forest Practice Officers under the Forest Practices Code.

2.2 CULTURAL VALUES

Limited research has been undertaken on the Aboriginal heritage values in the Dial Range and future research with the assistance of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community would be required to identify, document and assess the cultural resources of the area. The *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975* protects all Aboriginal relics and makes it illegal to destroy, damage, deface, conceal or interfere with a relic, and to copy, remove or sell a relic. The *Forest Practices Code* provides guidance for the management of Aboriginal relics within multiple use areas.

The European history of the Dial Range is linked principally to the early prospecting that occurred within the area, with much of the nomenclature of public names reflecting this past history. Haygarth's (1995) review of historical records suggests that there were four unrelated sources of iron ore in the Penguin area including the Iron Cliffs (Ferndene Reserve), Penguin Creek and the top of the Dial Range. MacFie (1991) provides a detailed account of the Iron Cliffs mines, where between 1891-1908 the mines were worked by over ten leasees, with other operators working sections until at least 1927. The small scale operations produced limited quantities of iron, copper, silver and gold. The Iron Cliffs mines within Ferndene Reserve are listed by the Australian Heritage Commission for their mining heritage significance.

Early harvesting of sawlogs started before the 1900's and led to the construction of a tramway along the western bank of the Leven River. Forestry uses continue today. (see Section 2.3.2)

2.3 USE VALUES

2.3.1 Recreational Use

The Dial Range caters for a range of recreational activities including bushwalking, horseriding, mountain bike riding, trail-bike riding, sightseeing, picnicking/barbeques, game and field shooting (simulated field range) and a number of other 'minor' recreational activities.

Map 2.1 shows the existing recreational facilities within the Dial Range - including the main walking tracks, trails, parking areas, club sites and designated areas for trail bike use.

To the north of the Dial Range is the Penguin Sports Centre which includes an indoor sports centre, sportsgrounds and outdoor courts. A golf course, archery facility and other club house facilities are also located within this area. The above sporting facilities are managed by the Central Coast Council and Clubs and are outside of the study area for the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan.

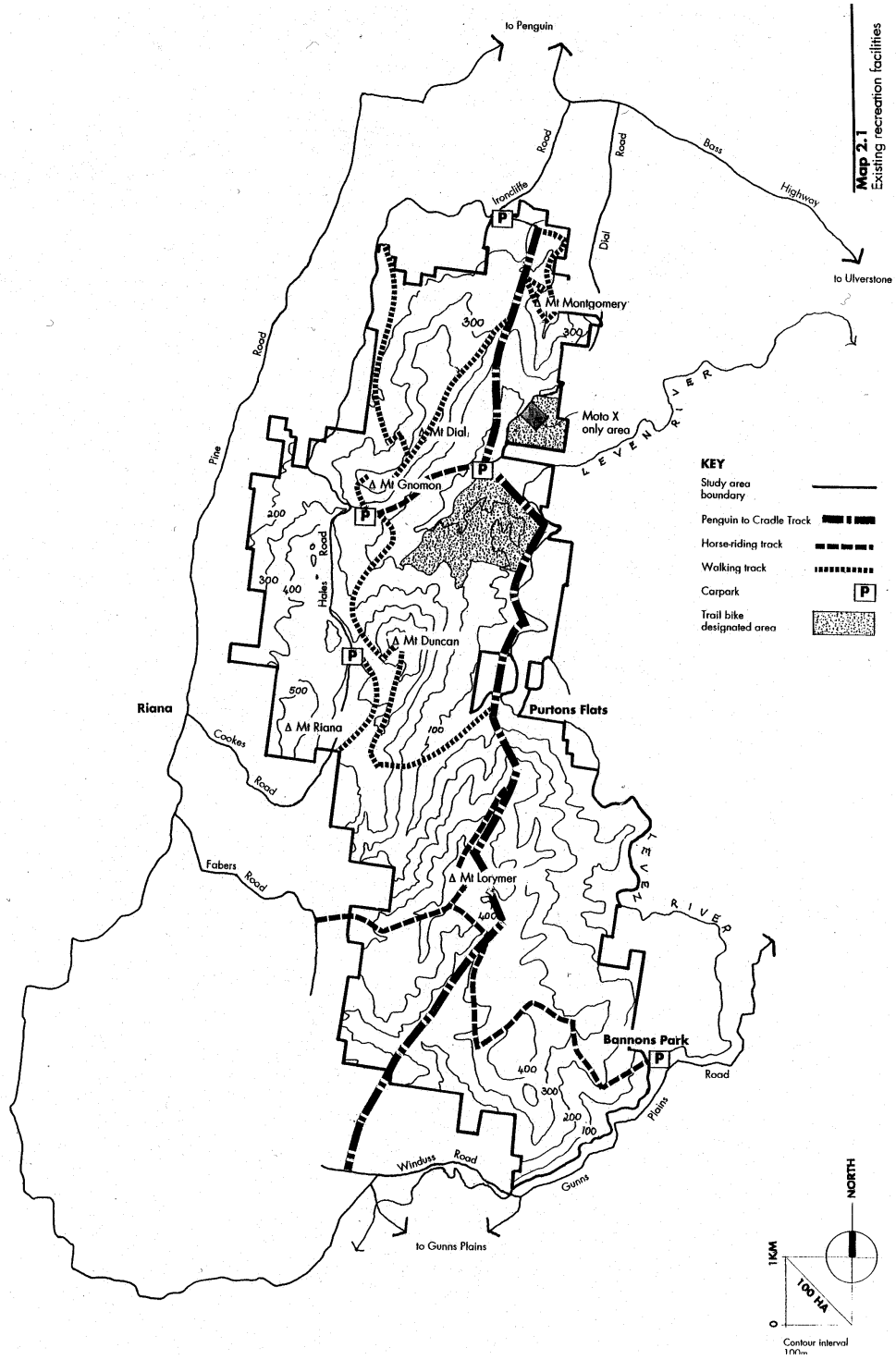
BUSHWALKING

The Dial Range is a well known walking destination on the northwest coast and offers a diversity of walks which cater for differing needs and experiences of walkers.

At a State level, the Dial Range is part of the Penguin - Cradle Trail, identified as being one of the potential Great Bushwalks in the *Tasmanian Walking Tracks Strategy 1997*. The Strategy identified the potential of the Penguin - Cradle Trail to be promoted as a Great Bushwalk when resources allowed upgrading of the track to meet established sustainability criteria. A detailed description and guide to the Penguin - Cradle Trail is provided by Haygarth (1995) and the North West Walking Club Inc. (1994). The 76km walk is described as being varied and challenging - it connects Bass Strait to the Central Highlands and offers a scenic trail which winds and climbs through the changing landscape and vegetation.

In the early 1970's, the North West Walking Club instigated the construction of a track across the Dial Range. The Penguin Council received funds for employment of track-cutters, and work commenced on the old tramway along the Leven River to Purtons Flat. The North West Walking Club continued track construction work through considerable volunteer efforts eventually reaching the Cradle Mountain Lodge by 1984. The Penguin - Cradle Trail route within the Dial Range is shown in Map 2.1. The Trail starts at Myrtle Creek in Mount Montgomery State Reserve, continues along the Leven River to Purtons Flat then southwards to Winduss Rd, just outside of the Dial Range.

Map 2.1



Bushwalkers can also choose to walk to the Purtons Flat by traversing the ridges of Mount Dial, Mount Gnomon and Mount Duncan. The Trail can also be broken into many short walk segments to suit short walks, half day walks and day walks.

Existing walking guides promote the following short walks within the Dial Range :

- a short walk to Thoresby Tunnel in Ferndene Reserve (1 km, 30 min return);
- a short easy climb to Mount Gnomon (2 km , 1 hour return);
- an easy climb to Mount Dial (8km, 4 hours return);
- a gentle climb on four possible tracks to Mount Montgomery (about 5km, 2 hours return);
- a climb to Mount Duncan (4km, 1.5 hrs return);
- Tall Trees Trail from Gnomon carpark (45 mins return);
- Leven River walk on the old tramway to Purtons Flat from the Dial Road carpark (5 hours return); and
- with the option to link some of these together eg. Mount Gnomon - Mount Dial (2 hours return).

Some other possible walk connections are listed in route guides by the North West Walking Club Inc, include:

- Myrtle Creek - Mount Dial - Mount Gnomon - Keddies Creek to Myrtle Creek (4.5 hrs return);
- Dial Creek track to Hales Road and return (2.5 hrs return);
- Leven River - Purtons Flat - Mount Dial - Dial Creek Road (5 hrs return); and
- Myrtle Creek - Mount Dial - Mount Gnomon - Dial Creek Track - Mount Duncan - Hales Spur Track - Purtons Flat - Leven River - Keddies Creek Track - Mount Dial Track - Myrtle Creek (10 hrs return).

H O R S E R I D I N G

The Range is ideally suited to horseriding along forestry tracks and trails. Two tracks that are promoted by Forestry Tasmania for horseriding use are :

- from Dial Road to Hales Road (1.5 hrs); and
- from Bannons Park to Riana (3 hrs) with the option to reach Purtons Flat via Mount Lorymer (this is a shared track with walkers).

Suitable parking areas for horseriders using floats are found on the Dial Road, Hales Road and Bannons Park.

The Dial Range Endurance Club organises a number of competitive endurance rides in the Range each year and the Penguin Pony Club are known to make use of the area at various times during the year.

M O U N T A I N B I K E R I D I N G

Mountain bike riders are currently directed by interpretative signs located within the Dial Range to use the two tracks that are available for horseriding.

Consultation with mountain bike users indicated that they use the majority of tracks and trails within the Range and in particular:

- tracks through Mount Montgomery State Reserve;
- the Penguin - Cradle Trail route along the Leven River and then continuing to Bannons Bridge;
- the existing horseriding trails;
- Lobster Creek Road (private land); and
- Hales Road.

There is a major difficulty with mountain bike riding within a State Reserve as under the Traffic Act, a mountain bike is declared to be a 'vehicle'. This means that the Management Plan for the State Reserve, administered by the Parks and Wildlife Service, would need to accommodate the use of mountain bikes. Alternatively the PWS would be required to issue permits to mountain bike riders, which becomes an administrative problem to manage. The other option is to alter the status of the State Reserve to a

Conservation Area or another reserve status, which allows for mountain bike riding to occur.

TRAIL - BIKE RIDING

Surveys of Dial Range trail bike riders by Vandenberg (1984) revealed:

- that riders enjoyed the freedom, challenging tracks, fun and ability to ride with friends and family members in the Range;
- long association with riding and the belief that bike riders were probably the major users of the Dial Range;
- the Dial Range provided a great range of riding conditions that were not available in one location elsewhere;
- there were good tracks for riding and these were convenient to access;
- the natural setting of the Dial Range was seen as being suited to trail bike riding; and
- strong interest in maintaining the ability of trail bike riders to use and enjoy the area.

Two areas within the Dial Range have been set aside for trail bike riding. One area is located off Dial Road and has been developed by the North West Coast Junior Moto-X Club for its members to use. The site has been developed for motor-cross riding events with a large events course, judges stand and basic amenities for spectators and car parking. The Club typically hold an event on the last Sunday of each month from April to November, but Club members use the course for training purposes throughout the week.

The second area, also located off Dial Road has been provided for general trail bike use. The area of about 15 ha contains a network of old forestry tracks and provides some opportunity for beginners to develop their riding skills.

Trail bike riding is not permitted within the balance of State Forest land or State Reserves. Consultation with trail bike riders, indicated extensive use is made of many Dial Range tracks and trails outside of the designated trail bike riding areas.

SIGHTSEEING

The Dial Range is a significant landscape feature viewed by travellers and the local community from many different locations from around the perimeter of the Range. The major roads around the Dial Range area - the Bass Highway, Gunns Plains Road and Pine Road - all provide prominent views of the Dial Range. The dominant views are typically of a forested 'spine' of mountains which provide a natural contrast to the backdrop of intensively used agricultural land in the surrounding districts.

Sightseeing within the Range is essentially achieved through short walks to scenic lookout locations, as the existing road network provides only limited access to such scenic points without the use of four wheel drive vehicles. Hales Road allows vehicle access to parking spots for visitors to then take walks to Mount Gnomon and Mount Duncan, with Ironcliffe Road being the vehicle access to Mount Montgomery State Reserve.

PICNICKING / BARBEQUES

Picnic facilities are located at the perimeter of the Dial Range. Ferndene State Reserve is a popular picnic and barbeque destination and provides picnic tables, barbeques, a picnic shelter, public toilets, on-site interpretation and a short walk. The other popular picnic areas are at the southern end of the Range at Lee Memorial Park off Riana Road, at Victoria Park and at Bannons Bridge off Gunns Plains Road. All of these locations are beside the Leven River and have basic picnic facilities without toilets.

SIMULATED FIELD RANGE

This area is located to the northwest of the Mount Montgomery State Reserve and accessed from Hardys Road. The site is leased from the Crown by the North West Field and Game Association Inc.

Club members indicated that an event is usually held 1-2 days a month with practice at the site generally being about 2 days a month. National and State championships have been held at the site in the past.

During the consultation, the possibility of developing the site as a regional clay target complex (possibly incorporating the Burnie and Devonport Clay Target Clubs) was mentioned.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other known recreational activities that occur within the Range include fishing, camping, field naturalist trips, canoeing, orienteering, dog exercising, jogging, rock climbing and abseiling.

Trout fishing occurs along many of the accessible spots of the Leven River.

Whilst there are no designated campsites developed and promoted within the Dial Range, informal camping does take place, often association with other recreational activities or school/scout/guide outdoor trips occurs. Some of the suitable sites (Hardstaff Creek and Adit Creek) for campsites are mentioned in walking guides (Haygarth, 1995; North West Walking Club 1994).

A number of field naturalist clubs carry out fieldtrips within the Dial Range during the year (Vandenberg, 1984).

The Leven River is used by canoeists, with the section between Lee Memorial Park and Bannons Park being more frequently used. The Gunns Plains to Purtons Flat section of the Leven River is assessed as being Grade 2-3 difficulty, containing small rocky rapids (Tasmanian Canoe Association, 1984). Accordingly, during normal river flow conditions, the Leven River is suited to canoeists with some white water experience rather than beginners. In 1999 the 'Dial Descent' involved a mountain bike ride from Fabers Road to Bannons Bridge, white water canoeing section between Purtons Flat and Lobster Creek, , run along the tramway and a flat water paddle through to Ulverstone.

Exercising of dogs on the various tracks and trails is a popular activity for the local community. Runners and joggers use the tracks and trails for training and general exercise.

Rockclimbing and abseiling has occurred on some of the rockfaces within the Dial Range but this is not advocated due to the dangerous climbing conditions associated with loose rock at the Gnomon and other locations.

2.3.2 Forestry and Mining Use

Selective harvesting of old growth forests for sawlogs occurred prior to 1900 with a tramway constructed along the western side of the Leven River to transport the logs through to Ulverstone. The formation of the tramway remains today and provides an attractive walking track within the Dial Range. Exclusive rights to remove the sawlog timbers were granted to Tasma Hardwoods early in the 1900's and this arrangement

was later replaced with a sawlog quota for the whole of the Dial Range under concession rights. (Forestry Tasmania, 1990).

The 1990 Interim Dial Range Management Plan focussed on the multiple use management of the State Forest which included wood production, visual management, recreation, wildlife conservation, water values and fire management. The Dial Range was divided into zones for wood production, scenery preservation and recreation and wildlife conservation.

The comprehensive regional assessment undertaken for the Regional Forest Agreement indicates that:

- native forest has higher eucalypt height potential in the southern part of the Dial Range (41-55 m) than the northern part (27-34 m);
- the majority of the State Forest within the Dial Range is not available for commercial wood production;
- the majority of the State Forest within the Dial Range has low to moderate eucalypt sawlog volume with low value for commercial wood production; and
- the Range contains some special timber species (although considerably less than wet eucalypt forests found at higher altitudes).

Forestry Tasmania have recognised the multiple use values of the Dial Range and have:

- managed the State Forest to maximise sawlog value rather than pulpwood,
- used the visual management system to determine the extent of change to the forest vegetation to avoid adverse visual impacts on the landscape values;
- set aside the Gnomon Tall Trees management zone which aims to protect the aesthetic, recreational and scientific values of the eucalypt forest there which is to be retained over 300 years (this has now been subsumed into the Mt Montgomery State Reserve through the Regional Forest Agreement);
- established a network of wildlife corridors for wildlife and genetic conservation within the State Forest area;
- adopted the Forest Practices Code of Management and regulations;
- prohibited logging within 100m of the Leven River; and

- identified extensive areas where no wood production operations will occur.

The Dial Range is no longer considered to be a priority location for forestry operations under the current District Forest Management Plan June 1999.

The comprehensive regional assessment undertaken for the Regional Forest Agreement also indicated that the Dial Range has a high composite mineral potential with mineral occurrences and deposits of base metals, iron and associated commodities, tin and tungsten. The assessment also identified potential tracts for placer gold, silver-bearing polymetallic veins, copper deposits, magnetite, placer chromite, zeolite deposits and construction materials.

The significance of the timber and mineral resources will need to be addressed in the preparation of a land management plan for the Dial Range. Whilst there appears to be no foreseeable plans for extraction of these resources, the potential impact on recreational use and experiences should be considered by such a plan.

2.3.3 Conservation

The Dial Range is the largest remnant area of both dry and wet sclerophyll forest on the central north coast.

Reservation of Mount Montgomery was proposed by the Penguin Tourist and Progress Association in 1967 with the scenic views from Mount Montgomery being considered the major feature. The area was gazetted as a State Reserve in 1970 and is managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service. It is classified by the IUCN² for habitat/species management and is listed on the National Estate for its natural values.

The Ferndene Reserve was a popular picnic area and observation for glow worms in the 1920's before being designated as a reserve in 1935 at the instigation of the Penguin Tourist and Progress Association (MacFie 1991). The Reserve is managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service and is listed on the National Estate for its natural and historic values.

In the early 1990's a RAP (Recommended Area for Protection) was proposed for the southern part of the Dial Range covering a wet sclerophyll forest area 1085 ha. This area is now a Forest Reserve set aside for conservation of special values as identified by Forestry Tasmania's Management Decision Classification system.

The recent Tasmania- Commonwealth Regional Forests Agreement process has led to the recommended inclusion of an additional 507 ha of land between Ferndene Reserve

² International Union for the Conservation of Nature

and Mount Montgomery State Reserve to be designated a Nature Recreation Area. This proposal is currently being progressed and the area will be managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service.

2.3.4 Tourism Use

The Dial Range is recognised in local visitor brochures as a natural attraction on the northwest coast - visitors are encouraged to enjoy the spectacular scenery from the mountain tops, by using well marked, all weather walking tracks. Mount Montgomery is promoted as a scenic walk and lookout and Ferndene Reserve as an attractive place to enjoy a picnic, barbeque, short walks and to view Thorsby's Tunnel.

There are no reliable visitor statistics available for the numbers of visitors to the Dial Range.

Some commercial tourism operators may also be including the Dial Range in their tour itineraries eg. four wheel drive tours, bushwalking, sightseeing and horseriding.

2.3.5 Other Uses

The Wireless Institute of Australia (Tasmania Division) advised that their organisation involves people in the building, owning and operating of amateur radio equipment to communicate with other similar interested people around the world. They indicated that the North West Branch has operated radio repeater equipment on Mount Duncan for many years and has been involved in vehicle safety-tracking and other operations for some major sporting events held within the region. This has included assistance with emergency situations in the protection of life and property.

The Tasmanian Fire Service have a transmitter repeater on Mount Montgomery.

A number of illegal uses are known to occur within the Dial Range - firecutting, removal of vegetation, marijuana growing, shooting of livestock, rubbish dumping, dumping of stolen vehicles and lighting of fires.

2.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DIAL RANGE

The outline of the natural and cultural values indicate that the significance of the Dial Range may be attributed to an array of values, none of which in their own right make the Dial Range significant at a National or State level, but which collectively provide significant value for the region and local area. The national significance comes with

National Estate listing of the two State Reserves. Some of these important State and regional values are it's:

- geodiversity values as a geological landform subject to faulting and folding to create a visually impressive landscape;
- biodiversity values and in particular, it being the largest remnant vegetation land parcel remaining in the central coast area ;
- interesting European history associated with mining and forestry activities;
- capacity to cater for a range of recreational activities, including the Penguin - Cradle Trail;
- potential as a multiple use area to allow for recreation, conservation, forestry, mining, tourism and other uses; and
- recognition of it's economic, social and environmental value by the local community and user groups.

The significance of these values is reflected in how the community appreciates the Dial Range. Consultation with user groups and local community members indicated that the Dial Range was widely recognised as:

- being a multiple use area which caters for a diversity of different activities;
- having good access given it's close proximity to the coastal population;
- being a natural landscape feature offering great scenic views;
- having the Penguin - Cradle Trail; and
- having cultural heritage values.

CHAPTER 3

RECREATION TRENDS AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Section 3.1 provides a brief outline of trends in society which are influencing recreational demand with implications for planning and management of open space areas and recreational facilities.

The recreational use of the Dial Range is essentially focussed around the use of the extensive network of recreational trails and tracks. There are very few visitor facilities provided, which in part, reflects the limited demand for new facilities and the realistic constraints of land manager budgets to undertake new works or upgrading of facilities.

A number of key recreation management issues have been identified through the research and consultation stages of the project. These key issues are:

- the need for a co-ordinated recreational management approach to the whole of the Dial Range (Section 3.2);
- the problems with access into the Dial Range being experienced by landowners and recreational users (Section 3.3);
- the need to deal with potential conflicts between different recreational users (Section 3.4);
- inadequate resources for maintenance of recreational facilities (Section 3.5); and
- the lack of interpretation, information and promotion of the Dial Range (Section 3.6).

In the following sections, each of the issues is outlined, the opportunities for resolution are discussed and recommendations made.

3.1 TRENDS IN RECREATION

Changes within Australian society are influencing the way in which people allocate their time and resources between work, family life and leisure. Some of the more noticeable changes are:

- changes in the make-up of the community include ageing of the population¹;
- changing employment structures and work hours;
- changing retailing and trading hours;
- rising long term unemployment and under-employment;
- growing recognition of the intrinsic rights of the natural environment and of the importance of the environment as a ecological, cultural, recreational, tourism, economic, educational and research resource;
- growing recognition and acceptance of the personal rights and needs of all members of the community;
- changing social values and the reduced importance of community and the parallel re-emphasis on the importance of the family as a social and recreational unit; and
- growing recognition of the strong links between recreational involvement and health and the development of activities and services which cater for this.

Not surprisingly, these social, cultural and economic changes can often have far-reaching impacts on sporting and recreation interests, involvement and attitudes toward what is provided for the community. Some of the noticeable trends which are likely to influence recreational use of the Dial Range are:

- a greater emphasis on cultural, non-competitive and passive leisure opportunities such as walking and mountain bike riding;
- expectations of high standards of facilities and of quality programming, servicing and management which can include signs, brochure information, car parking, security and interpretation;

¹ A review of population data for Central Coast between 1986 to 1996 showed a 4% increase in the total population, 2% decline in the 5-14 year age group, 12% decline in females aged 9-19 years, 18% decline in the 15-24 age group and 19% increase in the persons aged greater than 65 years.

- expectations that facilities and programs will have safe and convenient access which is an issue for the Range given some current access locations over private land;
- the application of greater levels of management expertise and use of regulations for the protection of both the leisure resources and users;
- the desire for opportunities which can be used all year;
- a preference for facilities which enhance the identity, quality and amenity of a locality; and
- a desire for bushland preservation, the protection and/or re-establishing of wildlife corridors and interpretive trails which can be accessed for recreational use.

The potential implications of these trends to the future development and management of the Dial Range has been considered in the course of this report and in determining key strategies.

3 . 2 N E E D F O R C O - O R D I N A T E D M A N A G E M E N T

3.2.1 Outline of Issues

Currently the management responsibilities for the Dial Range are divided between:

- Forestry Tasmania who manages the State Forest and Forest Reserve areas which comprise the larger land areas within the Dial Range;
- Parks and Wildlife Service who manages the Mount Montgomery State Reserve, Ferndene State Reserve and who will manage an extension and linkage of land between these two areas;
- the North West Walking Club Inc who maintains the Penguin-Cradle Trail section through the Dial Range;
- individual clubs who manage the land areas leased for their particular activity eg. motor-cross, field and game; and
- to some extent, some private landowners who have property bordering key access points into the Range.

During the 1970's a Dial Range Advisory Committee was established and attempted to co-ordinate management actions between the managers, the then Penguin Council and users. A review of some Committee minutes indicated that information exchange was occurring and that all parties were being kept informed of each other's work programs. It appears as though the commitment to the Committee faded over time with only a few meetings taking place. The Committee appears not to have been operating since the amalgamation of the Penguin Council with the Ulverstone Council into the new Central Coast Council.

Despite the goodwill and best intentions from Government agencies and the community, it appears as though the mechanism was unable to achieve an integrated management approach for the whole of the Dial Range. All of the above mentioned agencies and groups involved with the management of the Dial Range, appear to have very limited resources available for recreational management.

Forestry Tasmania has a limit to the resources available for community services and recreation as it now receives no assistance from Government for these purposes. The Parks and Wildlife Service have management responsibilities and priorities that extend across many other Reserves and protection of conservation values within the region, and consequently have very limited resources available for recreational management. The North West Walking Club Inc. rely on the efforts of volunteers to undertake track management, and this is a major burden given the age of the tracks, extent of use, age of the volunteer members, absence of funds and limited volunteer resources.

The Central Coast Council have no formal involvement in the management of the Dial Range, other than regulatory approval powers for controlling development outside of the State Forest. However in other parts of the State, some major open space areas have benefited from the active involvement of the Local Councils eg. Wellington Park, Cataract Gorge, Meehan Range. It is understood that the former Penguin Council held a legal responsibility for the walking tracks within the Dial Range, emanating from the original arrangements for funding the upgrading of tracks. Vandenberg (1984) suggests that no funds were provided for the ongoing maintenance works.

Similarly there is no mechanism to formally involve the Office of Sport and Recreation with their networks and skills in community recreation. User groups currently have little say or contribution to the management of the Dial Range, nor are there any supportive groups such as Friends of the Dial Range, Wildcare or Service Clubs being actively involved. However the North West Walking Club play a major role in track maintenance of the Penguin - Cradle Trail.

3.2.2 Discussion of Opportunities

In the absence of effective management mechanisms for the Dial Range as a whole, there is a risk that there will be:

- ad hoc or poorly informed recreation management decisions without sufficient consideration given to the needs and interests of other managers, users or interest groups;
- no formal structure or unified approach to identifying the problems, sharing resources and implementing recommended actions;
- duplication of effort between agencies;
- ineffective use of resources between agencies to tackle the priority problems and issues on a holistic basis;
- limited scope for accessing potential funds from 'outside sources' such as the Natural Heritage Trust;
- lack of commitment to enforcement, education and other measures to manage recreational impacts and conflicts;
- limited management presence within the Dial Range and therefore limited deterrent to illegal use and activities which threaten the key values identified by the community; and
- difficulty in implementing sustainable management practices.

The possible options for achieving satisfactory recreation management for the Dial Range include:

- i) maintaining existing management arrangements;
- ii) establishing more co-operative management and lasting arrangements between agencies and users;
- iii) establishing a co-ordinating Recreation Management Advisory Committee involving agencies and users;
- iv) establishing a Management Trust; or
- v) devolving management responsibility to one agency.

Discussions with the Steering Committee indicated the difficulty with achieving options iv) or v) listed above given the reality that there is no available resources or political support to create new management structures for areas like the Dial Range within the State nor is it realistic to see one agency take responsibility for the whole of the Range.

Option iii) would allow for re-invigorating the role of the previous Advisory Committee. Option ii) was considered to be preferable to Option i) as it would provide some scope for involving a wider range of stakeholders (including input from recreational users and landowners) and would facilitate co-ordination and co-operation. This arrangement could be altered in the future if additional resources were available.

Co-operative management arrangements could involve, but not be limited to:

- meetings on a regular basis between the agencies and groups involved with the Steering Committee and others that may be invited to participate (eg. Tasmanian Fire Service, user groups);
- looking at ways of better sharing of information between agencies and groups;
- a community briefing forum being held each year with agencies, users and stakeholders to review issues, works program and future priorities for the Dial Range;
- encouraging the formation of community based groups which may support ongoing management initiatives including Friends of the Dial Range, Wildcare, Landcare, Rivercare, recreational user clubs;
- co-operative efforts to provide available resources, equipment or advice to deal with agreed priorities for the Dial Range;
- co-ordinated review of agency plans and policies covering or affecting the Dial Range; and
- joint approaches to seeking funding and research support for initiatives within the Dial Range eg. baseline assessment of track conditions and upgrading of tracks.

3.2.3 Recommended Actions

1. The Steering Committee consider the three identified options for establishing the basis for co-operative management arrangements to assist with the ongoing co-ordination of management efforts in the Dial Range.

3.3 ACCESS ISSUES

3.3.1 Outline of Issues

Some landowners expressed concern with the illegal entry of recreational users over their private land and into the Dial Range. The concerns related to loss of privacy, vandalism to property, damage to tracks, the leaving of gates open, shooting of stock and wildlife, illegal removal of trees and firewood and general anti-social behaviour and attitude to private landowner rights.

One landowner specifically referred to the ongoing problems with managing a forestry plantation on private land adjacent to the tracks and trails near the motor-cross course. Some users were continuing to use the area as though it was also set aside for trail bike activities.

Some landowners were also concerned about the risks and liability to private landowners if recreational users were injured whilst using the private land areas.

A number of users indicated that they had experienced problems gaining access over private land into the Dial Range at Bannons Park, Purtons Flat and Lobster Creek. However other recreational users indicated that personal approaches to the land owners had allowed approval in most cases. Some trail bike riders indicated that they had been recently been denied access over private land near Bannons Bridge.

3.3.2 Discussion of Opportunities

The above access concerns have been largely addressed by the Office of Sport and Recreation's recent investigations into these issues as summarised in Appendix 1.

Bannons Park is a public open space but entry beyond the bridge into the Dial Range requires access over private land (which overlays a public road reserve) which is currently being used for farming purposes. This is in conflict with the Visitor Guide that promotes Bannons Park as one of the main starting points and does not indicate the existence of private land or the need to seek permission for access. Forestry Tasmania have erected a sign which indicates pedestrian access only. The location is

promoted as one of the main starting/ending points for both horseriding and mountain bike riding trails within the Dial Range. The access arrangements need to be finalised and the signage altered to reflect shared use by pedestrians, mountain bike riders and horseriders.

Similarly the Visitor Guide suggests that access is possible for horse riders and mountain bikers from Fabers Road but this also requires access over private land. However there may be scope to discuss the option with the current landowner to alter the road reserve to follow the path of the existing road (refer to Appendix 1). There is no sign at Fabers Road to indicate what access arrangements are at this location.

Purtons Flat is widely recognised within the local community as being an entry into the Dial Range, and it appears as though many regular users are aware of the need to obtain approval from the private landowner. Signs on the property indicate the need for consent to access across the private land. It is understood that this arrangement has generally been satisfactory on most occasions, but there have been users (especially trail bike riders) who are either not aware or deliberately ignore the need to obtain permission. However, it could be expected that if there were serious damage or problems for the landowner, then restricting access would need to be considered as a management tool. The Dial Range visitor guide appropriately does not show Purtons Flat as an entry into the Dial Range.

The Penguin - Cradle Trail involves access along a road on private land from south of Walloa Creek to reach Winduss Road. This arrangement was negotiated in the past by the North West Walking Club Inc., and if need be, assistance should be given to ensure this access arrangement is maintained in the long term. The private landowners have indicated approval for walkers but are concerned about fire risks associated with public access. It has been proposed that signs be used to help minimise this risk.

Lobster Creek Road ends as a public road some 1-1.5 kms from the Dial Range, but local landowners indicated that some users continue to traverse over private land whilst attempting to reach or leave the Range. The Dial Range visitor guide does not show Lobster Creek Road as an entry location. It is likely that some trail bike users may be using this route as a convenient way to reach the riding tracks set aside within the Dial Range.

The Dial Range is bordered by a large number of freehold properties and it is difficult to realistically manage access, especially with many of these properties being 'bush blocks' without permanent residences or regular surveillance of users. The network of tracks and trails within the Dial Range allows users to easily access much of the Range and this makes it almost impossible to control access. The limited

resources available to Forestry Tasmania and Parks and Wildlife Service has meant there is very limited management presence within the Dial Range, and this may also encourage some illegal access and activities to occur.

The opportunities to respond to these access difficulties would be:

- to consider the options for negotiating access arrangements at Bannons Park, Fabers Road and Purtons Flat whilst respecting and responding to the private landowners management needs;
- instigate measures which can be taken to improve access, user awareness to allow appropriate conditions for access (eg. fencing, gates, signposting, upgrading of access track, formalising parking area);
- to revise visitor guide, interpretative panels and other information sources to indicate legal access arrangements; and
- to advise user clubs, local community and the media of the arrangements.

3.3.3 Recommended Actions

2. The main entry locations for the Dial Range to be promoted as:

- Dial Road;
- Mount Montgomery Road off Ironcliffe Road;
- Ferndene State Reserve off Ironcliffe Road; and
- Hales Road.

3. Access arrangements be negotiated with the private landowners at Bannons Park, Purtons Flat, Fabers Road, and Winduss Road (part of the Penguin - Cradle Trail) to improve public access whilst meeting the needs of the private landowners (eg. track works, signs, education of users). This would allow these locations to be identified as entry points into Dial Range for some uses. Appendix 1 identifies the issues at these locations and potential options for resolution.

4. Undertake further site investigations to identify the opportunities for rationalising the network of walking tracks and fire trails within the Dial Range (whilst ensuring management and recreational use).

5. Develop a new parking area for the Mount Montgomery State Reserve off the entrance road to the Council refuse site and the existing 150m vehicle track to Myrtle Creek be retained for management vehicle use only.

3.4 POTENTIAL USER CONFLICTS AND CONCERNS

3.4.1 Outline of Issues

Given the multiple use of the Dial Range for different recreational activities, it is not surprising that potential conflicts and concerns arise in the absence of an overall recreation management plan. The consultation with users and the general community suggested that whilst there are some conflicts that need to be resolved, the Dial Range has the capacity to cater for a wide spectrum of uses without creating major problems for users. Appendices 2-4 provide a record of community views expressed at the recreation users forum, landowner forum and the public meeting.

The main points raised during the consultation were related to the extensive use of the Dial Range by trail bikes outside of the designated trail bike riding area. These concerns included the:

- limited control over trail bike users;
- lack of respect for private land and property;
- potential for trail bike and horseriding conflict;
- trail bike riding in the pony club area;
- noise impacts on nearby private properties which affected their amenity (referring to noise from trail bikes using the motor-cross site and designated site affecting some residences immediately to the east);
- degradation of the designated trail bike area site;
- trail bikes were damaging the old tramway along the Leven River and some other walking tracks; and
- widening or duplicating existing tracks.

Other concerns included:

- limited tracks and trails permitted for mountain bike riding;

- conflict between management roles with horses not allowed in the Mount Montgomery State Reserve;
- the impact of forestry operations on the recreational use, landscape and conservation values of the Dial Range;
- the Council allowing subdivision and residential uses in proximity to the North West Field and Game Association Inc. range site; and
- illegal use of the Motorcross Club site by non-members which has often been associated with vandalism of Club facilities.

Some recreational activities have the potential to create a range of impacts on the Dial range environment including:

- hardening of ground surfaces;
- erosion of soils;
- spread of weeds and diseases;
- increased fire risk;
- fishing for whitebait out of season;
- damage to wattle trees by fishermen searching out grubs for bait;
- the creation of new tracks;
- destruction of vegetation;
- pollution of watercourses; and
- disturbance to wildlife.

Whilst the fieldwork was limited during the Study, many of these impacts were evident and will require management action in the future.

The visitor guide for the Dial Range has attempted to deal with the potential conflicts between users by:

- identifying two areas for trail bike users off Dial Range (that being a small area around the existing motor-cross lease site and a larger area to the south of this site);

- identifying specific shared trails for horseriding and mountain bike riding;
- identifying leased areas for the Coastal Motorcross Club Inc and the North West Field and Game Association Inc; and
- identifying the main walking tracks for walking only.

3.4.2 Discussion of Opportunities

TRAIL BIKE RIDING

The consultation program involved discussions with a number of trail bike riders who have regularly used the Dial Range, including some who have ridden there for over 20 years. These trail bike riders expressed their views that:

- the current area set aside for trail bike use within the Dial Range is inadequate for many trail bike users and creates dangerous riding conditions due to the many 'loop' intersections;
- the designated trail bike area has inappropriate restrictions on its uses such as restricted vehicle registration, over 16 years otherwise need to be accompanied by an adult etc (however it should be noted that this is a requirement of law and not the land managers role or responsibility) ;
- land managers need to recognise traditional use of the Dial Range by trail bike riders over many years;
- there is an apparent lack of major conflicts with other users (some trail bike riders indicate they choose to use other areas and avoid the walking tracks);
- they have met some difficulty with access over private land into the Dial Range at some locations (refer to Section 3.2);
- trail bikes help to keep 'open' some of the fire trails; and
- there is a lack of information for trail bike riders (refer to Section 3.3).

It is recognised that trail bike riding is occurring on many tracks and trails outside of the existing designated areas for the activity, and that land managers simply do not have the resources to effectively control such use. Given this situation, it is likely that continued 'illegal' use will occur throughout the Dial Range and may create potential conflicts and hazards for others enjoying the area.

The Consultants investigated opportunities for providing a new and larger area for trail bike riding in the southern part of the Dial Range (east of Mt Lorymer) where it was considered there was a network of forestry tracks that may be suitable for trail bike use subject to more detailed assessment of natural and use values within this area. Consultation with Forestry Tasmania indicated that this area was a Forest Reserve reserved with identified special flora, fauna, landscape and erosion hazard values under its Management Decision Classification system. Outside of the State Forest area, Parks and Wildlife Service have identified concerns with several plant species within the Dial Range area being identified as rare or vulnerable under the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and the susceptibility of some soils to severe erosion problems. These values along with the limited resources available to manage trail bike use, indicated the limited ability to provide or manage any new additional trail bike areas within the Dial Range.

The opportunities for responding to the trail bike issues are considered to be:

- reviewing the current designated area for trail bike riding near Dial Creek Road with trail bike riders to consider one-way track systems and the rationalisation of the existing tracks so as to create safe and more attractive riding conditions;
- removing the smaller trail bike riding area and closure of the tracks around the surrounds of the motorcross site (which some trail bike riders considered to be unsuitable for riding and where there are known to be problems and conflicts with nearby landowners); and
- working with trail bike riders in preparing a Code of Conduct for trail bike riding within the Dial Range which is then used in signs at the main entry points to the trail bike riding area, visitor guide and other relevant information.
- involving trail bike riders in on-site management including signage, land management efforts to reduce site impacts and preparation of a code of conduct for the area;
- prohibiting trail bikes on all other tracks, trails and areas outside of the designated trail bike areas;
- closure, where possible, of all tracks leading out of the designated trail bike riding area; and
- the Dial Range visitor guide, interpretation panels and signs to indicate use of the designated area by trail bikes.

None of the above options should preclude any legal requirements for use of trail bikes within public places (eg. age limits, registration requirements etc).

These measures, if adopted, will not meet all the expectations of the community and other users or the trail riders. However they do recognise that a recreation management problem exists, and that there are limited resources to deal with the management issues. It is considered that the above measures would improve the present situation by providing the opportunity for trail bike riders to become more actively involved in the management of the Dial Range for their own benefit. This will help generate goodwill and help improve riding conditions for trail bike riders in the future.

MOUNTAIN BIKE RIDING

Recent research by L. Chiu (1999) and preparation of a draft *Bike Strategy for Wellington Park* (Inspiring Place, 1999) has revealed the growth of mountain bike riding occurring in natural areas within Tasmania. Extensive research in North America and New Zealand suggests that the impacts of mountain bike riding on other uses and the environment are not as significant as some may believe, and that it is possible to consider management measures which allow for some shared use with other users of trails and tracks .

A number of mountain bike riders attended the community consultation sessions and indicated their current use of tracks and trails across the Dial Range and their desire to continue using such facilities.

The management directions for mountain bike riding are unclear at present with the visitor guide making no mention of whether mountain bike riding is permitted or not within the Range, and the information boards indicated that use can only be made of the selected horseriding trails. PWS have indicated difficulties with mountain bike riding within State Reserves under the current legislation, as they are effectively treated as 'vehicles' and would require permits to be issued.

The potential for conflict is considered to be higher between horseriders and mountain bikes (mainly because they are silent and can sometimes frighten horses) than with walkers. However, there are management measures which can be taken to reduce conflict, including:

- selecting tracks and trails which may be suitable for some shared use;
- prohibiting bike riding on walking tracks where safety risks are too difficult to manage;
- undertaking some base-line assessment of track conditions to monitor potential impacts;
- adopting a code of conduct for bike riding (refer to Appendix 5);

- discouraging bike training (thus higher speeds) or competition events on walking tracks except for approved events or time of use;
- adopting 'go slow' speed management measures at intersections and blind corners;
- using the signs system and coloured markers to assist bike riders in identifying where they can go, grade etc; and
- seeking the involvement of bike riders in the management of tracks (eg. research, maintenance, education).

It is suggested that mountain bikes could be allowed on all fire/forestry trails and most walking tracks within the Dial Range with the exception of:

- the tracks within the State Reserve managed by PWS until such time as the legal difficulties with mountain bikes being classified as 'vehicles' can be resolved;
- the preferred Mount Montgomery walking track (currently there are four track options to the top and its considered that further investigations would find a route suited for mountain bikes and could limit potential conflict with walkers once the above mentioned legal issues are resolved);
- Mount Duncan walk from Hales Road;
- Mount Gnomon walk from Hales Road;
- Mount Dial walk from Ironcliffe Road;
- Tall Trees Nature Trail;
- Ferndene State Reserve walks; and
- areas set aside for trail bike riding and other areas leased to Clubs.

OTHER CONFLICTS

Consideration should be given to using additional tracks and trails for horseriding within the Dial Range if there is a demonstrated need for the use, no adverse conflicts to other users and appropriate management mechanisms in place to deal with any site impacts.

The future plans for any forestry operations within the Dial Range have a separate statutory process with the preparation and approval of Tactical and Operational

Plans in the Forest Management Plan for Murchison District. Any concerns about potential impacts of further forestry operations on recreational use and values should be considered in the review of these planning documents and also in the preparation of a land management plan for the Dial Range.

The concerns of the North West Field and Game Association Inc. need to be addressed by the Central Coast Council through its statutory planning controls and development approval process. Given the potential interest of relocating other related sporting activities to the site, it would be appropriate to manage nearby uses and development to avoid the risk of future complaints about the sporting activities eg. noise, times of use, traffic.

Vandalism will continue to be a major problem within the Dial Range, but may be reduced over time through:

- having a more integrated recreation management approach and presence for the Dial Range;
- establishing a vandalism management system involving developing a baseline conditions inventory, setting up reporting and monitoring programs, establishing priorities, changing design of damaged elements and education;
- looking at the opportunities for consistency in some regulations by PWS, and Forestry Tasmania for the Dial Range and if resources allow, increased commitment to enforcing regulations (eg. may include greater management presence during weekends);
- appealing to users and community for support (eg. Bushwatch numbers available with information on the Dial Range);
- training staff from all agencies to deal with vandalism incidences;
- encouraging passive surveillance and reporting by users/community (eg. similar to Bush Watch); and
- seeking greater involvement of users in management and maintenance efforts.

3.4.3 Recommended Actions

6. Review the current designated area for trail bike riding near Dial Creek Road with riders to consider one-way track systems and the closure some sections of the existing tracks so as to reduce safety risks with dangerous intersections.

7. Remove the smaller trail bike riding area and closure of the tracks around the exterior of the motorcross site.
8. Prepare a Code of Conduct for trail bike riding within the Dial Range which is then used in signs at the main entry points to the trail bike riding areas, visitor guide and other relevant information.
9. Trail bike riding be prohibited on all other tracks, trails and areas outside of the designated trail bike areas and formed public roads (unless meeting all other legal requirements as a vehicle).
10. Mountain bike riding be permitted on all fire/forestry trails and most walking tracks within the Dial Range, other than:
 - within the Mount Montgomery State Reserve and Ferndene State Reserve until the legal issues with such use can be resolved under the current legislation;
 - the preferred Mount Montgomery walking track;
 - Mount Duncan walk from Hales Road;
 - Mount Gnomon walk from Hales Road;
 - Mount Dial walk from Ironcliffe Road;
 - Tall Trees Nature Trail;
 - Ferndene State Reserve walks; and
 - areas set aside for trail bike riding and other areas leased to Clubs.
11. Use the range of identified management measures (as listed in Section 3.4.2) to reduce potential conflict between mountain bike riders and other users on shared tracks and trails.
12. Monitor the need for use of any additional tracks and trails by horseriders in the Dial Range.
13. Central Coast Council seek to minimise the potential for conflicts between residential uses and the operation of the North West Field and Game Association Inc site when considering its statutory powers and development approval processes.

3 . 5 MAINTENANCE ISSUES

3.5.1 Outline of Issues

Consultation with users indicated concern with the lack of maintenance occurring within the Dial Range, which if left unaddressed, may create safety problems and degrade the recreational experiences being sought. Some of the problems were mentioned by users as being:

- logs lying over tracks which limited access and needed to be removed;
- the damage being caused to the tracks from poor drainage and the need to prevent washouts by providing cut-out drains and levelling some tracks;
- the Mount Montgomery - Mt Dial - Mt Gnomon track becoming overgrown and difficult to follow;
- the potholes and overgrown tracks limiting the appeal and use by horseriders;
- litter and dumping of rubbish (especially near the Council refuse tip area); and
- erosion on the tracks.

There is evidence of vandalism within the Dial Range with:

- signs being damaged and removed;
- dumping of stolen cars within the Range and not being removed;
- vandalism of club facilities; and
- damage to trees from fishermen hunting for grubs.

There does not appear to be any co-ordinated mechanisms for responding to these maintenance problems, with users frustrated about the declining condition of the Range and the managers lacking sufficient resources to take remedial action.

3.5.2 Discussion of Opportunities

The walking tracks making up the Penguin - Cradle Trail within the Dial Range, outside of the Mount Montgomery State Reserve, are presently maintained by individual members of the North West Walking Club Inc. on a voluntary basis. This is an onerous task for the Club, but one that they agreed to undertake after assisting with the design and construction of the Trail in the early 1970's and finding that no agency would accept overall responsibility for track maintenance.

The Club has been concerned about their limited resources for ongoing maintenance of the walking tracks for some time. In May 1978, the North West Walking Club Inc. advised the Penguin Council and the Lands Department that "if the tracks are not maintained, kept clear, and suitably marked, then they become difficult to follow, delays develop, and groups become lost " (Club correspondence).

The maintenance of the recreational facilities will continue to be a difficult problem given the limited resources available for management within the managing agencies.

The priorities for maintenance should be:

- preparing an inventory of base-line conditions and risks along each of the formed roads, tracks and trails so as to help identify priorities for track maintenance;
- closure of tracks no longer required for management purposes or approved recreational use;
- undertaking works to reduce the risks and improve the safety of recreational users on priority tracks;
- developing education and information programs to assist recreational users in minimising damage to tracks, trails and facilities within the Dial Range;
- upgrading of the popular short walks to a sustainable level; and
- upgrading of sections of the Penguin - Cradle Trail.

A number of landowners indicated that more household rubbish was being dumped within the Dial Range since the Council restricted opening hours at the refuse site and imposed a fee for use of the site.

3.5.3 Recommended Actions

14. Priority for maintenance be given to:

- reviewing the inventory of base-line conditions with the existing track and trail network² ;
- reducing the risks and improving the safety of recreational users using tracks, trails, signs and facilities within the Dial Range;
- closure of tracks that no longer service management requirements or approved recreational use; and
- upgrading of the popular short walks and Penguin - Cradle Trail.

3 . 6 I N T E R P R E T A T I O N A N D I N F O R M A T I O N I S S U E S

3.6.1 Outline of Issues

Consultation with users of the Dial Range indicated some concerns with the limited information about the Study Area, including:

- lack of signs to inform users whether they can use or continue on tracks and trails (eg. no signs at Purtons Flat to indicate whether users can continue to Gunns Plains);
- lack of signs at entry points into the Range including Bannons Bridge, Purtons Flat, Fabers Road, Cookes Road and the entry to Mount Montgomery State Reserve;
- the need for multiple use signs to inform users;
- no signs to alert users of private land;
- the need for trackhead signs and welcome signs; and
- only general map information available.

² Appendix 1 contains an inventory of the existing track and trail network based on investigations undertaken for the Office of Sport and Recreation. It found that almost all tracks have a basic requirement for minor works and maintenance and that works on the Penguin - Cradle Trail should be a high priority. Three tracks were identified for closure. It was recommended that trail bikes be discouraged from using the existing walking trails due to damage being caused by this activity.

It was also apparent that some users were confused about which agency was responsible for the management of the Dial Range, and thus who to approach on specific matters.

3.6.2 Discussion of Opportunities

A visitor guide has been produced for the Dial Range by Forestry Tasmania which provides information on major recreational activities, a map of the tracks and trails for different activities and where to obtain more information. Recently two information panels have been located off Dial Road and Hales Road. They provide a welcome to visitors and similar information to the visitor guide. The Visitor Guide does not show access across freehold land to enter State Forest, but the mapping of existing trails to places such as Bannons Bridge and Purdons Flat (which need to be shown), may be interpreted by some users as having connection to existing public roads. More than likely, some existing users have just assumed rights of access exist based on their past recreational use of the area.

The North West Walking Club Inc. provide some detailed walking route notes and maps for the Penguin - Cradle Trail. Haygarth (1995) is a published booklet for sale on the Penguin - Cradle Trail and historical information, photographs and references. Other commercial publications present a number of the short walks within the Dial Range. There are also a number of general tourist brochures for the region which encourage visitors to the Dial Range and in particular to the Mount Montgomery scenic walk, Ferndene State Reserve and Penguin - Cradle Trail.

The objectives for education and interpretation should be:

- to inform and inspire the community about the diversity and quality of the values found within the Dial Range;
- to assist visitors to enjoy their visit and gain an appreciation of the multiple use values; and
- to promote a better understanding of management policies and practices that are aimed at conserving the natural and cultural use values of the Dial Range.

Such education takes many forms and includes interpretation facilities, visitor guide books, maps, pamphlets, trackhead signs etc. To date, however, the education, information and interpretation of the Dial Range has been limited to a brochure, two information panels and published route guides.

Information boards need to be part of the overall signage system developed for the Dial Range and aimed at catering for all recreational users. As part of the total information provided, it would be desirable to indicate:

- the key features, facilities and access to the Dial Range;
- what tracks and trails are available for different activities and those that may be prohibited, restricted or closed to some uses;
- the grade/difficulty of the tracks and trails available for walking, horseriding and mountain bike riding;
- distance (which may be scaled off a map of the Dial Range); and
- key messages for users to respect multiple use of tracks and trails and to take care for management purposes (eg. meeting at track intersections, conditions for access over private land).

The current visitor guide and interpretative panels on Dial Road and Hales Road meets most of these basic needs. As resources permit, it would be useful to have signs also placed at:

- Penguin township (perhaps on the foreshore) which would encourage visitors to enjoy the Dial Range;
- Ferndene State Reserve;
- Mt Gnomon car park;
- proposed new car park to service the Mount Montgomery walk; and
- Bannons Park.

There is also the need for directional signs and markers at key locations on the tracks and trails within the Dial Range. The North West Walking Club Inc recognised this need in 1995 and proceeded to erect signs at Keddies Creek Track junction, Dial Road and Purtons Flat. Unfortunately the signs have been vandalised and not repaired. Despite these problems, the need for good directional signs remains and there needs to be procedures for replacement of signs as identified in the Office of Sport and Recreation report (as summarised in Appendix 1).

Given the network of tracks and trails, there is also the need for some track markers to re-affirm this directional information, but in a way that will:

- be simple to understand;
- be suitably located and seen by users of the track and trail;
- have limited cost to produce and install; and
- not detract from the enjoyment as a natural area by users.

The use of small markers could indicate which users may use the track and trail and the assessed grade/difficulty (eg. easy, moderate, hard). For instance, the *Draft Wellington Park Bike Plan 1999* has proposed using the following markers for mountain bike riding on fire trails and selected walking tracks:

- a bike symbol over a green background to indicate that bike riding is permitted on the track and trail;
- using the words easy, moderate or hard on the green markers to indicate the grade/difficulty;
- a bike symbol over an orange background with words 'go slow' to indicate specific riding action required by bike riders (eg. slow down for 'blind corners', track intersections or specified high use track sections); and
- a strike-line through the bike symbol over a red background to indicate that bike riding is prohibited on the track and trail.

3.6.3 Recommended Actions

15. PWS and Forestry Tasmania to consider additional interpretation and information for the Dial Range including:

- the selection of key interpretation themes (eg. multiple use trails, Tall Timbers) related to the key visitor access points;
- identifying suitable sites for interpretation and trackhead signs (eg. Dial Road, Mount Montgomery State Reserve, Ferndene State Reserve, Mt Gnomon car park, Bannons Park, Penguin town foreshore);
- use of information panels, summer walks interpretation program, track markers - as resources permit; and
- upgrading the existing visitor guide for the Dial Range consistent with the key directions of the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan.

16. Develop educational resources and information that will encourage learning programmes for school groups using the Dial Range and promote it as a nature study and recreation learning area for outdoor education and special interest groups.
17. Review available information for visitor trip planning (pre, on-site and return) and identify areas where a consistent approach to this information can be achieved.

CHAPTER 4

VISION AND POLICY PRINCIPLES

This Chapter sets out the need for a strategic vision for the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan (Section 4.1), proposed visionary goals (Section 4.2) and policy principles for achieving the vision (Section 4.3).

4.1 NEED FOR A STRATEGIC VISION

The need for a strategic vision to guide the recreational management of the Dial Range is largely derived from the information presented in Chapters 2 and 3. These Chapters identified a range of values, uses and issues which influence the future recreational management of the Dial Range. Some of the key findings were:

- the need to recognise the specific recreation management objectives of the land areas managed by Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Tasmania within the Dial Range (as set out in the respective Acts under which these agencies operate);
- the scale, diversity and integrity of the geoconservation and biodiversity values of the Dial Range are fundamental to many of its other values such as landscape values, therefore, amongst the highest priorities for recreation management should be the protection of these systems from adverse recreational impacts;
- the Dial Range has multiple use values which require recreation management efforts to also consider the opportunities for protecting the natural and cultural values from degradation whilst maintaining quality visitor experiences;
- some recreational activities should be limited and managed in those areas where the impacts can be monitored and controlled; and
- the need to have sufficient resources to effectively manage the multiple use values of the Dial Range, including recreational use.

The multiple use values of the Dial Range and the extent of recreational activity occurring, requires an integrated management approach which guides and embraces the efforts of the community, interest groups, Central Coast Council and State Government. It recognises that no one agency, no one tool, no one measure can ensure the future recreational management of the Dial Range to retain its value to the present day community and future users.

The protection of the multiple use values to the community depends on the Dial Range Recreation Management Plan achieving an integrated mix of:

- *knowledgable* solutions based on developing a fuller understanding of the extent and significance of the values within the Dial Range;
- *appreciation* for the differing needs and interests of users and managers within the Dial Range;
- *considered* solutions which strategically address the need for research, planning, management and monitoring whilst using limited resources to their best advantage;
- *creative* solutions which introduce new management tools to support actions which have proven successful;
- *active* and *on-going* solutions to management which recognise the need for direct intervention and for continuing maintenance;
- *cooperative* solutions which combine the skills and resources occurring in government with the active and informed involvement of the community; and
- *value added* solutions which not only meet environmental and social objectives but also provide potential economic benefits to the wider community.

4.2 VISIONARY GOALS

Three main goals have been identified for the recreational management of the Dial Range. These goals are, in order of importance.

GOAL 1

Develop the capacity for co-operative recreation management of the Dial Range.

GOAL 2

Manage recreation in a sustainable manner as one of the multiple uses of the Dial Range.

GOAL 3

Promote, maintain and improve the quality of recreational experiences within the Dial Range.

The rationale for each of the goals is set out below.

4.2.1 Goal 1 : Capacity to Manage

Develop the capacity to undertake co-operative recreation management of the Dial Range.

The limited co-ordination processes and budgets for recreation management of the Dial Range have been discussed in Chapter 3. Given the identified values and the relative significance of the Dial Range consideration should be given to:

- securing adequate resource allocation within the managing agencies to respond to the recreation management needs for the Dial Range;
- ensure the relevant planning scheme, approvals processes, leasing and licensing procedures be coordinated in such a way that they support the goals of the Recreation Management Plan;
- co-operative liaison arrangements between government agencies and users to ensure that an integrated and site specific approach to the recreation management of the Dial Range occurs;
- engage the skills and resources of the community to assist in achieving the desired recreation management outcomes; and
- apply best recreation management practices to the day to day activities of caring for the Dial Range.

4.2.2 Goal 2 : Multiple Uses

Manage recreation in a sustainable manner as one of the multiple uses of the Dial Range.

Recreation, forestry, tourism and educational pursuits (and to a more limited extent mining activities) have been associated with the Dial Range. In particular the Dial Range is easily accessed and is recognised as a multiple use recreation area able to cater for a diversity of recreational activities without major conflicts occurring. It provides natural features and facilities (especially tracks and trails) to attract visitors for a range of activities.

The identification of values in the Dial Range have shown that:

- it provides a range of natural and cultural values whilst also being a multiple use area that attracts a diversity of recreation activities and uses;
- people recognise and actively enjoy those values and uses; and
- the community seek management to protect the natural and cultural values of the Dial Range for present and future generations.

However, unplanned and poorly managed recreation uses or overuse can threaten the natural and cultural values of the Dial Range - for example unacceptable environmental impacts or conflicting developments that threaten the accessibility, the image or visitor experience.

The goal, therefore, acknowledges that recreation use of the Dial Range will occur but that it needs to be managed in such a way to ensure that the inherent values are sustained.

4.2.3 Goal 3 : Quality Visitor Experiences

Maintain, promote and improve the quality of visitor experiences within the Dial Range.

The rationale for this Goal lies in the need to:

- identify the potential for recreational use of the Dial Range to create problems, issues and threats to the natural and cultural values of the Dial Range and to determine strategies that are effective in responding to their causes;
- reduce conflicts between different uses;
- encourage the provision of facilities and services which meet visitor needs and expectations;
- provide directional and informative signs and interpretation that enhance the visitor experience and understanding of the values of the Dial Range; and
- recognise the limits of the Dial Range to cope with the flow on impacts of increased human activities such as high visitor numbers, parking, traffic, special events etc.

CHAPTER 5

RECREATION MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This Chapter sets out an action plan for implementation of the recommendations made in the current study. Each recommendation is listed along with the responsibility for its implementation, priority for works and suggested timing.

The responsibility for implementing many of the recommended actions will rest with the current manager of the land or resource in question as there is no co-ordinating management structure in place.

Abbreviations used in the recommended actions are:

FT - Forestry Tasmania

CCC - Central Coast Council

PWS - Parks and Wildlife Service

OSR - Office of Sport and Recreation

Priority has been assigned according to the following criteria.

Urgent priority actions are those which require immediate attention to help address the overall management of the Dial Range, and the recreation management issues identified within this Plan.

High priority actions are those which:

- allow for more effective management once the management structure and resources have been identified;
- secure key access arrangements for continued recreational use of the Dial Range;
- respond to the major recreational user conflict involving trail bike riding and involve users in achieving a better management outcome;
- lead to upgrading of the key recreational walks and trails;
- provide the Dial Range with a more unified image for promotion and management; and

- set the basis for implementing practical actions for accommodating multiple recreational use of the Dial Range.

Moderate priority actions include those which:

- will assist with the long term management of the Dial Range but are not critical in the short term;
- reinforce existing management directions;
- require further input, advice and information from users and/or managers; and
- provide education and information to increase the awareness of users within the Dial Range.

A number of the recommended actions are ongoing - that is they require consideration on a regular basis to ensure such actions are taken when the need arises.

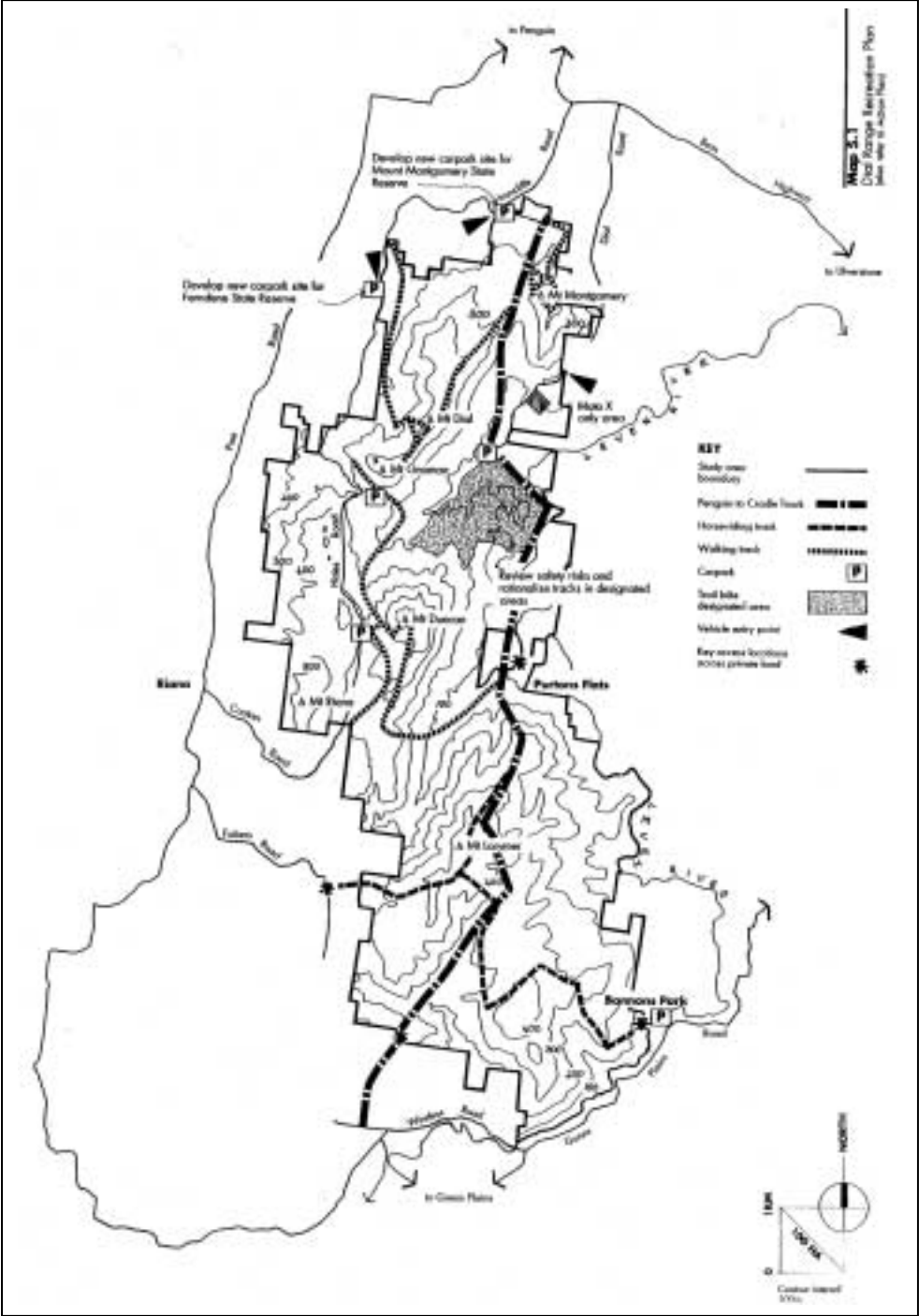
Map 5.1 provides a recreation plan for the Dial Range showing some of the recommended actions outlined in the Action Plan.

It is recognised that the total package of recommended actions is likely to be well beyond the funds available from the respective agencies or stakeholder interest groups in the immediate to short term. In many cases additional planning will be required before a recommendation can be acted upon.

No costing estimates are provided for the actions as these are best determined by the agencies/interest groups at the time of support for the listed action and knowing that some resources will be available in the future - some actions will require policy review and management time by these agencies/interest groups.

The Recreation Management Plan has been formulated around a long term vision for managing recreational use within the Dial Range. The Plan is not a statutory document which is binding upon managers and users but rather a guide to taking future decisions. The Plan will need to be adapted in response to new information, new agency priorities and new demands/pressures which emerge. However it is expected that the intent and general thrust of the Plan should be carried through until such time as a major review of recreational use and management of the Dial Range is required.

Map 5.1



Rec No	Recommended Action	Vision Goals	Responsibility	Priority	Timing
1	The Steering Committee consider the three identified options for establishing the basis for co-operative management arrangements to assist with the ongoing co-ordination of management efforts in the Dial Range.	1, 2, 3, 4	Steering Committee	Urgent	By December 2000
2	The main entry locations for the Dial Range be promoted as Dial Road, Mount Montgomery Road off Ironcliffe Road, Ferndene State Reserve off Ironcliffe Road and Hales Road.	1, 2	Steering Committee	Moderate	Ongoing
3	Access arrangements be negotiated with the private landowners at Bannons Park, Purtons Flat, Fabers Road and Winduss Road (part of the Penguin - Cradle Trail) to allow these locations to be identified as entry points for some recreational uses.	1, 2, 3, 4	Steering Committee	High	Ongoing
4	Undertake further site investigations to identify the opportunities for rationalising the network of walking tracks and fire trails within the Dial Range (whilst ensuring management and recreational use).	1, 3	Steering Committee	High	Complete by June 2001
5	Develop a new parking area for the Mount Montgomery State Reserve off the entrance road to the Council refuse site and the existing 150m vehicle track to Myrtle Creek be retained for management vehicle use only.	2, 4	PWS	Moderate	Complete by June 2001
6	Review the current designated area for trail bike riding near Dial Creek Road with riders to consider one-way track systems and the closure some sections of the existing tracks so as to reduce safety risks with dangerous intersections.	1, 3, 4	FT, trail bike riders	High	Complete by June 2001
7	Remove the smaller trail bike riding area and closure of the tracks around the exterior of the motorcross site.	1	FT	Moderate	Complete by June 2001
8	Prepare a Code of Conduct for trail bike riding within the Dial Range which is then used in signs at the main entry points to the trail bike riding areas, visitor guide and other relevant information.	1, 2, 4	FT, trail bike riders, OSR	High	Complete by June 2001
9	Trail bike riding be prohibited on all other tracks, trails and areas outside of the designated trail bike areas, formed public roads (unless meeting all other legal requirements as a vehicle) and the proposed trail bike link track between the two designated areas.	1, 2, 4	FT, PWS	High	Maintain current policy and regulations
10	Mountain bike riding be permitted on all fire/forestry trails and walking tracks within the Dial Range, other than those nominated in Section 3.4.	3	PWS, FT	High	Allow by Dec 2000

Rec No	Recommended Action	Vision Goals	Responsibility	Priority	Timing
11	Use the range of identified management measures to reduce potential conflict between mountain bike riders and other users on shared tracks and trails.	2, 3, 4	PWS, FT	High	Complete by Dec 2000
12	Monitor the need for use of any additional tracks and trails by horseriders in the Dial Range.	3	OSR	Moderate	Ongoing
13	Central Coast Council should seek to minimise the potential for conflicts between residential uses and the operation of the North West Field and Game Association Inc site when considering its statutory powers and development approval processes.	3	CCC	High	Review situation by August 2000
14	Priority for maintenance be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewing the existing inventory of base-line conditions with the existing track and trail network as listed in Appendix 1; reducing the risks and improving the safety of recreational users using tracks, trails signs and facilities within the Dial Range; upgrading of the popular short walks and Penguin - Cradle Trail. 	1, 3, 4	PWS, FT	High	Ongoing
15	PWS and Forestry Tasmania to consider additional interpretation and information opportunities for the Dial Range (as set out in Section 3.6.3)	4	PWS, FT, CCC	Moderate	Complete by Dec 2002
16	Develop educational resources and information that will assist learning programs for school groups using the Dial Range and promote it as a nature study and recreation learning area for outdoor education and special interest groups.	4	PWS	Moderate	Complete by Dec 2002
17	Review available information for visitor trip planning (pre, on-site and return) and identify areas where a consistent approach to this information can be achieved.	4	PWS, FT, CCC	Moderate	Complete by June 2002

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DIAL RANGE
RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
SUPPLEMENT

Appendix 2 : Recreational Users Forum

Dial Range Recreation Management Plan

Sunday 11th July 1999, Penguin High School

Important Values of Dial Range

abundance of tracks

centrally located to the population

interesting area

Penguin to Cradle Trail

visual backdrop/variety of scenery

terrain

bordered by the Leven River

historic features (eg. tramway)

users groups using the Range include walkers, mountain bikes, motocross, clay target shooters, pony club, horseriding, amateur radio group, kayakers, orienteering, "Dial Descent", trail bike riding, school groups, dog exercising, scouts, field naturalists, abseiling, fishing.

Issues

1. The need to maintain good communications between groups eg. field and game arrange events to avoid conflicts with other users such as pony riding
2. Tracks run thru private land at Purdons Flat where permission from the landowner is required. Also entry from Lobster Creek across private land
3. Motocross Club indicated concerns with illegal user of their area leading to vandalism, litter, unauthorised access and problems with signposting (Council not allowed signs to continue when recent rationalisation took place)
4. Maintenance of tracks - future problems and who maintains
5. Rubbish dumping- tip times and tip fees have led to increased dumping
6. Concern from mtn bike riders about the risk of being 'locked out' of the Range
7. Vandalism of dog exercising area by cars - skid panning and by trail bikes in the pony club
8. Need to actively promote wise use through clubs
9. What about the future of the existing leases - will the Plan alter these arrangements
10. Need to market to outside community so they know what to see, do and look after
11. Need to have better co-ordination of information to promote opportunities
12. Undertake review 5-10 years or as required

Appendix 3 : Landowners Forum
Dial Range Recreation Management Plan
Sunday 11th July 1999, Penguin High School

The Issues, Problems and Concerns

lawlessness of some users of the Range

the recreation management plan is not legally binding - not an enforcement document - will it change things, or lead to any action being taken - failure of past plans

dumping of rubbish which increased with tip charges being introduced

future forestry operations within the Reserve

illegal activities - mainly trail bikes that are unregistered - 99% of the Range is subject to trail bike use - invasion of privacy

signage being torn down

quarry site - unregistered cars (2 twice a month being dumped) - flaunting of the law

access for fishing - felling trees for grubs

poaching of timber/firewood and trees for Christmas - major problem

shooting of live stock and spot lighting

Dial Road access - low loader cannot make turn

erosion on tracks and fire trails increasing especially with high rains last year - bikes are affecting drainage

appears as though many small trees are unstable and falling in some areas

fire protocols need to be place

liability for landowners when recreational access and use occurring

feral animals - dumping of cats and dogs

noise pollution from motorbikes especially in weekends - not using Blackwood Park and noise echoing around; gun club noise also (lead pollution concern?)

protection of heritage eg. old sleepers and along old tramway, being destroyed by bikes

Dial Range to Lobster Creek - link should remain closed as produces a lot of problems

Appendix 4 : Public Meeting
Dial Range Recreation Management Plan
Monday 12th July 1999, Civic Centre, Ulverstone

Appendix 5

Draft Code of Conduct for Mountain Bike Riding

Dial Range Recreation Management Plan

PRINCIPLE 1

RESPECT OTHER TRAIL USERS

Slow to their speed

Always be alert and give right of way to pedestrians and stop and move off the trail when meeting horses on the trail

Avoid riding in large groups

Slow down or stop when approaching other trail users

Anticipate other trail users around corners and blind spots and be prepared to stop

Keep to the left

Alert other trail users of your presence

Give way to uphill bike users

PRINCIPLE 2

STAY ON DESIGNATED BIKE RIDING TRACKS AND TRAILS

Ride only on the approved tracks and trails

Respect rights of land managers to close trails and tracks

Do not create new tracks and use steps where they exist

Do not shortcut 'switchbacks' or cut corners on tight turns

Do not trespass on private land

Respect local bike riding restrictions (if they apply)

Leave gates as you find them or as signposted

PRINCIPLE 3

MINIMISE YOUR IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Ride responsibly to protect the natural environment and avoid widening of tracks by riding over the vegetation

Do not ride on very soft, wet and muddy trails

Avoid damaging the trail by skidding or sliding around turns

Keep your bike clean to prevent spread of weeds and plant diseases

Take out litter

Never 'frighten' animals and wildlife on the trail

PRINCIPLE 4

BE A SAFE RIDER

Plan ahead, get information and prepare accordingly

Know your ability and keep your bike under control

Keep your bike in good repair

Always wear a helmet

Be prepared for a change in weather conditions

Carry emergency repair equipment

Inform others of where you are riding

Appendix 2 : Recreational Users Forum

Dial Range Recreation Management Plan

Sunday 11th July 1999, Penguin High School

Important Values of Dial Range

abundance of tracks

centrally located to the population

interesting area

Penguin to Cradle Trail

visual backdrop/variety of scenery

terrain

bordered by the Leven River

historic features (eg. tramway)

users groups using the Range include walkers, mountain bikes, motocross, clay target shooters, pony club, horseriding, amateur radio group, kayakers, orienteering, "Dial Descent", trail bike riding, school groups, dog exercising, scouts, field naturalists, abseiling, fishing.

Issues

1. The need to maintain good communications between groups eg. field and game arrange events to avoid conflicts with other users such as pony riding
2. Tracks run thru private land at Purdons Flat where permission from the landowner is required. Also entry from Lobster Creek across private land
3. Motocross Club indicated concerns with illegal user of their area leading to vandalism, litter, unauthorised access and problems with signposting (Council not allowed signs to continue when recent rationalisation took place)
4. Maintenance of tracks - future problems and who maintains
5. Rubbish dumping- tip times and tip fees have led to increased dumping
6. Concern from mtn bike riders about the risk of being 'locked out' of the Range
7. Vandalism of dog exercising area by cars - skid panning and by trail bikes in the pony club
8. Need to actively promote wise use through clubs
9. What about the future of the existing leases - will the Plan alter these arrangements
10. Need to market to outside community so they know what to see, do and look after
11. Need to have better co-ordination of information to promote opportunities
12. Undertake review 5-10 years or as required

Appendix 3 : Landowners Forum
Dial Range Recreation Management Plan
Sunday 11th July 1999, Penguin High School

The Issues, Problems and Concerns

lawlessness of some users of the Range

the recreation management plan is not legally binding - not an enforcement document - will it change things, or lead to any action being taken - failure of past plans

dumping of rubbish which increased with tip charges being introduced

future forestry operations within the Reserve

illegal activities - mainly trail bikes that are unregistered - 99% of the Range is subject to trail bike use - invasion of privacy

signage being torn down

quarry site - unregistered cars (2 twice a month being dumped) - flaunting of the law

access for fishing - felling trees for grubs

poaching of timber/firewood and trees for Christmas - major problem

shooting of live stock and spot lighting

Dial Road access - low loader cannot make turn

erosion on tracks and fire trails increasing especially with high rains last year - bikes are affecting drainage

appears as though many small trees are unstable and falling in some areas

fire protocols need to be place

liability for landowners when recreational access and use occurring

feral animals - dumping of cats and dogs

noise pollution from motorbikes especially in weekends - not using Blackwood Park and noise echoing around; gun club noise also (lead pollution concern?)

protection of heritage eg. old sleepers and along old tramway, being destroyed by bikes

Dial Range to Lobster Creek - link should remain closed as produces a lot of problems

Appendix 4 : Public Meeting
Dial Range Recreation Management Plan
Monday 12th July 1999, Civic Centre, Ulverstone

Appendix 5

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