

**SITUATION ANALYSIS REPORT  
SUPPORTING A STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR THE HUME AND HOVELL TRACK**

FINAL 14 April 2023



DIAGNOSIS & PLANNING · PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT · FEASIBILITY STUDIES

## Authorship

Prepared by SMA Tourism, Website: [www.smatourism.com](http://www.smatourism.com), Email: [info@smatourism.com](mailto:info@smatourism.com)

SMA is an international tourism consulting firm, specialising in innovative product development, feasibility assessments and business cases for cultural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism and culinary (food and wine) tourism. Authors contributing to this Report:



Simon McArthur

Glenn Berrill

Sandy Hoy

Jane McArthur

Lead Author

Trail & Infrastructure

Recreation & Open  
Space Planner

Research

## Disclaimer

Specific investment decisions addressing recommendations in this report require further planning, engineering, environmental and heritage advice, and costing by an estimator. Costings should not be used for construction.

## Copyright

Copyright © 2023 SMA Tourism

## Hume and Hovell Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of the lands where we live, learn and work as well as across the lands and waters that we travel through.

We also acknowledge our Elders past, present and emerging.

## Project acknowledgements

SMA would like to acknowledge the Project Control Group for their direction and support on this Project: Michael Murphy, Gavin Morten, Yvette Myhill, Sarah Hope, Brad Beed, Sophie Gairn, Tim Shilling, Alison Matthews, Felicity Anderson.

## Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.	THE EXISTING ASSET	6
3.	THE EXISTING USERS	42
4.	MARKETING	50
5.	GOVERNANCE	55
6.	COMPETITOR ANALYSIS	64
7.	STRATEGIC ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	70
8.	APPENDICES	90

## Definitions

**Aboriginal tourism:** an interpretation of the wider concept of Indigenous tourism (see below) that involves tourism interpreting Aboriginal cultures and stories.

**Brand:** source of a distinctive promise for customers from a product, service or place. Everything the lead organisation does in collaboration with its partners and community should be orientated around delivering and constantly enhancing the promise. Not just a logo.

**Experience:** The emotions, feelings and sensations generated by the people met, places visited, activities participated in and memories created by travel, through watching, testing, smelling, touching, listening and being part of a culture or lifestyle that is distinctly different from everyday life and that reaches an individual's deep needs and desires. An experience is not a product (which is the simpler / stripped back / commercialisation of an experience).

**Indigenous tourism** is generally regarded as tourism specifically to interpret Indigenous cultures and stories, but it can also include and of the following attributes: Indigenous people directly operating or investing in tourism operations; business partnerships between Indigenous organisations and tourism operators; Indigenous people employed in tourism operations; mainstream tourism incorporating Indigenous culture and stories to enhance their programs; and Indigenous input into the way tourism is managed.

**Interpretation:** an experience that enriches our lives through engaging emotions, enhancing experiences and deepening the understanding of places, people, events and objects from the past and present. Interpretation communicates ideas, information and knowledge in a way which helps people to make sense of their environment.

**Local Government Area:** An LGA included in the ASGC LGA Structure is a spatial unit which represents the whole geographical area of responsibility of an incorporated Local Government Council or an Aboriginal Council. An LGA consists of one or more statistical local areas (SLAs). LGAs defined.

**Marketing:** the management process through which goods and services move from concept to the customer. It includes the coordination of four elements called the 4 P's of marketing: identification, selection and development of a product ; determination of its price; selection of a distribution channel to reach the customer's place, and development and implementation of a promotional strategy.

**Operator:** an individual or organisation that conducts a tourism activity which results in some degree of commercial return.

**Product:** a good or service (tangible or intangible) than an organisation offers to customers.

**Target market:** the portion of actual and potential visitors that an organisation most wants to attract to their destination or product. The target market is chosen because the needs of the market segments chosen most naturally fit what the destination or product can offer and offer the best return on any marketing investment to attract them

**The Track:** The Hume and Hovell Track

**Visitor (local):** a person who comes from within village / township within the local government area

**Visitor (day tripper):** a person who comes to a destination from outside the immediate local area (such as a local government area) and leaves in the same day.

**Visitor (overnight):** a person who comes to a destination from outside the immediate local area and stays overnight within the same immediate local area.

**WOW factor:** a highly differentiated experience that is so distinctive that it is a primary motivator to visit a region – which may in turn be thought of as an iconic product. The delivery of a wow factor experience should surprise and excite the consumer to such an extent that it motivates them to do it again or at least strongly recommend it to their friends and relatives. Not every visitor needs to do the wow factor, but typically those that don't want to do it still want to watch others do it.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

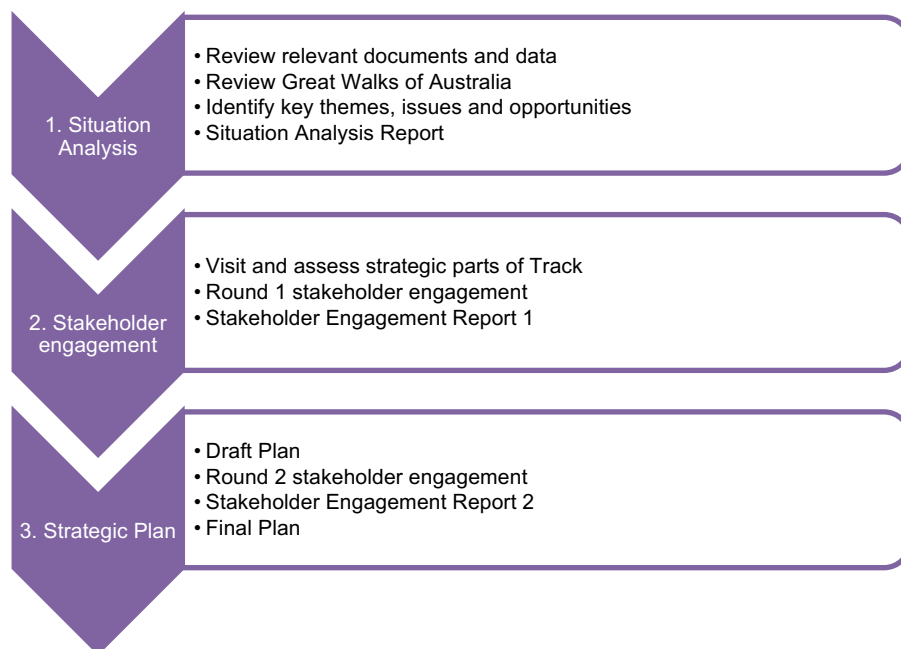
## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

### 2.1.1 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief and concise outline of the existing Hume and Hovell Track, as a background to support stakeholder consultation that leads to the development of a Strategic Plan for the Track.

The approach to reaching a Strategic Plan is presented in **Figure 1.1.1**.

Figure 1.1.1 The approach to developing a Strategic Plan for the Hume and Hovell Track



The Strategic Plan is designed to address the 'big picture' of what the Track should be and what is needed to achieve this. It will make strategic recommendations to deliver this vision that will result in various actions to be implemented over the next 5 – 10 years. The Strategic Plan will not have detailed site works, costing or forecasts. It is likely to present the following structure:

1. Background / Introduction / Context
2. Vision, positioning, visitor profiles and target markets
3. Strategic constraints
4. Strategic opportunities (options)
  - (eg. products and experiences, value adding services, accommodation, Infrastructure)
5. Evaluation of opportunities
  - History and heritage considerations
6. Strategies
7. Implementation Plan
  - Governance / roles and responsibilities
  - Action Plan (table per strategy)
8. Key Performance Indicators / Monitoring
9. Attachments

Round one consultation is scheduled for the fifth week of April and Round two is scheduled for the third week of August 2023. The Strategic Plan is forecast to be completed in September 2023.

## 2. THE EXISTING ASSET

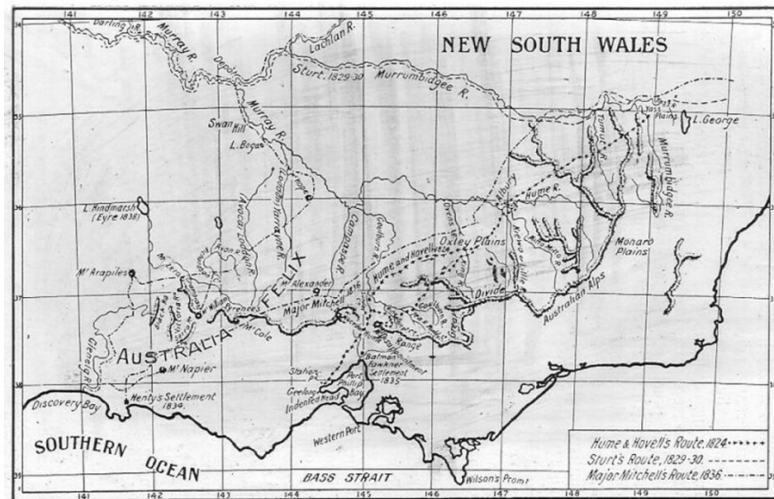
### 2.1 THE CULTURAL SETTING

We have not been provided any documents describing an Indigenous context to the Track corridor but hope to gather relevant information via consultation with Local Aboriginal Land Council's (LALCS).

#### 2.1.1 The Hume and Hovell exploration route

The NSW government commissioned William Hovell in 1824 to scout for farmlands between Sydney and Bass Strait. The plan was to explore, document and land a party on the Bass Strait Coast and then return to Sydney. The full route stretched from Hume's family farm in Yass to Corio Bay (where Geelong is now located).

Figure 2.1.1 The route of explorers Hume and Hovell



The Hume and Hovell Track is one section of their expedition, bookended by two historical markers: Hume's heritage-listed home 'Cooma Cottage' in Yass and the Hovell Tree in Hovell Tree Park, Albury, where you can still see the explorer's name that was carved into its trunk on November 17, 1824.

#### 2.1.2 The significance of exploration by Hume and Hovell

The expedition was significant for several reasons:

- It disproved the widely held theory that the interior of *Australia* was an uninhabitable wilderness. They discovered abundant, well-watered grazing lands between the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers, and also in the lands surrounding Port Phillip Bay. It was Hume that informed John Batman of the valuable grazing lands on the western shores of Port Phillip Bay – as well as to the north.
- It established a route between Sydney and Melbourne, since known as the Hume Highway – a major route for leisure and business.
- It was a real act of endurance. The return journey of almost 1,900 kilometres was accomplished in just 16 weeks. There were sections of thick scrub and 'cutting grass' that scratched and tore at exposed skin, as well as steep, unexpected escarpments that promptly halted progress. The hot weather attracted swarms of flies, mosquitoes and pests.
- It included several innovations. A detailed journal of the expedition was maintained, including bearings and distances. It was the first *Australian* expedition to use bullocks and it was also the first to use an innovative odometer. Hovell had attached a device to a baby pram wheel which, like a modern car odometer, was designed to measure the distances

travelled. Hume converted bullock drawn carts to river crossing punts and back again.

- While the explorers and local Aboriginal people generally interacted with respect, the opened route triggered the advancement of white settlers that accelerated the dislocation of many tribes. Expeditions like this highlight the lack of government consideration of the needs of local Aboriginal people and the impacts of settling on their land.

The only physical evidence of their journey is the Hovell Tree in Hovell Tree Park at Albury. The detailed journal of the expedition provides an excellent resource from which to interpret the trials and tribulations of the trip south. The book *Hume and Hovell 1824*, edited by Alan E.J. Andrews, brings together all the important primary information sources.

## 2.2 EVOLUTION OF A TRACK

In 1979 the Crown Lands Office began to develop a State-system of recreational walking tracks. The Wagga Wagga office of the organisation was particularly interested in developing a recreational track that followed the route taken by the explorers, Hume and Hovell, as it was clear that a large proportion of the historic route passed through public land (predominantly Crown Land at the time) managed by the NSW government. In 1981 the Crown Lands Office adopted a proposal and

---

<sup>1</sup> Included the then National Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Commission, Department of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, Federation of Bushwalking Clubs and the Livestock and Grain Producers Association

put it to an inter-departmental committee for the establishment and promotion of walking tracks<sup>1</sup> who endorsed the proposal.

The concept of the original development was to:

- establish a track that retraced as close as possible the original route south; and
- provide a recreational opportunity; and
- promote awareness and understanding of Australia's history, environment and development.

To assess demand for the Track and its facilities, approximately 1,200 questionnaires were issued by the Crown Lands Office to walker stakeholders in 1985 and approximately 25% were completed by stakeholders (Alston G.S., 1985, *Hume and Hovell Track potential use*, Crown Lands Office). Some 97% said that they would use the Track, and the most popular sections to use were reportedly the central sections that are more natural and mountainous. The top four preferred sections to develop (in order of preference) were:

1. Blowering Dam to Talbingo
2. Micalong to Goobarragandra
3. Blowering to Burra Creek
4. Goobarragandra to Blowering Dam

From the onset walker stakeholders were predominantly interested to walk the whole walk over multiple attempts:

- 64% said they would walk the entire route over a number of trips;
- 24% indicated that they would only walk a section(s); and
- 12% indicated that they would walk the whole track in one attempt.

The provision of interpretive signs along the route addressing its history was considered more important by walker stakeholders than the provision of toilets, designated camp sites and a camp kitchen.

Development of the track over the period 1984 – 1988 was costed at \$1.3M over five years, which included \$69,000 for marketing and \$160,000 for a documentary about the construction (Department of Lands Crown Lands Office, January 1984 ‘Hume and Hovell Walking Track – a proposed Bicentennial project’).

## 2.3 THE ROUTE

### 2.3.1 The challenges of creating an authentic route

The 426km Track roughly follows the northern half of the exploration route that Hume and Hovell took between Yass and Albury (see **Figure 2.3.1**) but stops at Albury rather than continuing to Corio Bay near Geelong in Victoria where the exploration finished. We are advised that early interest to continue the Track from Albury to Corio Bay was considered by the Victorian government but was never fully assessed and determined. The inability to follow the full route as a Track or even a set of stops accessed by vehicle, seems a major omission and is addressed as a strategic issue in **Section 7**.

Figure 2.3.1 Map of the Hume and Hovell Track route



The explorers did not publish a map of their journey, and their sketches and diary only allow for an approximate determination of their route. However, the explorers’ campsites can be located more accurately.

The walking track was constructed as closely as possible to the explorers’ determined route and much of it is less than 5km from where the explorers actually trod. At several places the two routes coincide, and locations and features described by Hovell can be clearly identified.

Where possible, existing fire trails, forestry service roads and other four-wheel drive tracks were incorporated into the walk to reduce the development and ongoing maintenance cost. A few sections of public road had to be used, and the balance (about half the track) is on constructed foot tracks (known as single track). A



consequence is considerable blogging from bushwalkers stressing to their colleagues that ‘this is not a wilderness walk’.

The track crosses the Goobarragandra and Tumut Rivers via two swing bridges over the Goobarragandra and a suspension bridge over the Tumut. Approximately 100 bridges have been constructed to cross minor streams, and many sections prone to becoming wet and boggy have been spanned with boardwalks. To manage the Track and to present it on detailed maps, it was divided into six sections and recently merged into five sections to avoid excessive overlap. We have some concerns that the overlaps between the sections could be made more consistent for ease of map interpretation.

Other challenges to reliving the explorers’ route are:

- vegetation and some landforms are not the same as when Hovell wrote his description;
- access to parts of the route is physically blocked (under water); and
- access to parts of the route is legally blocked (eg. freehold ownership).

For the purposes of this project, a new base map of the route has been developed in two halves – one from Yass to Talbingo and the second from Talbingo to Albury. This ‘base map’ of the route is presented in **Figures 2.3.2 and 2.3.3**

Figure 2.3.2 Base map showing northern half of the Hume and Hovell Track route

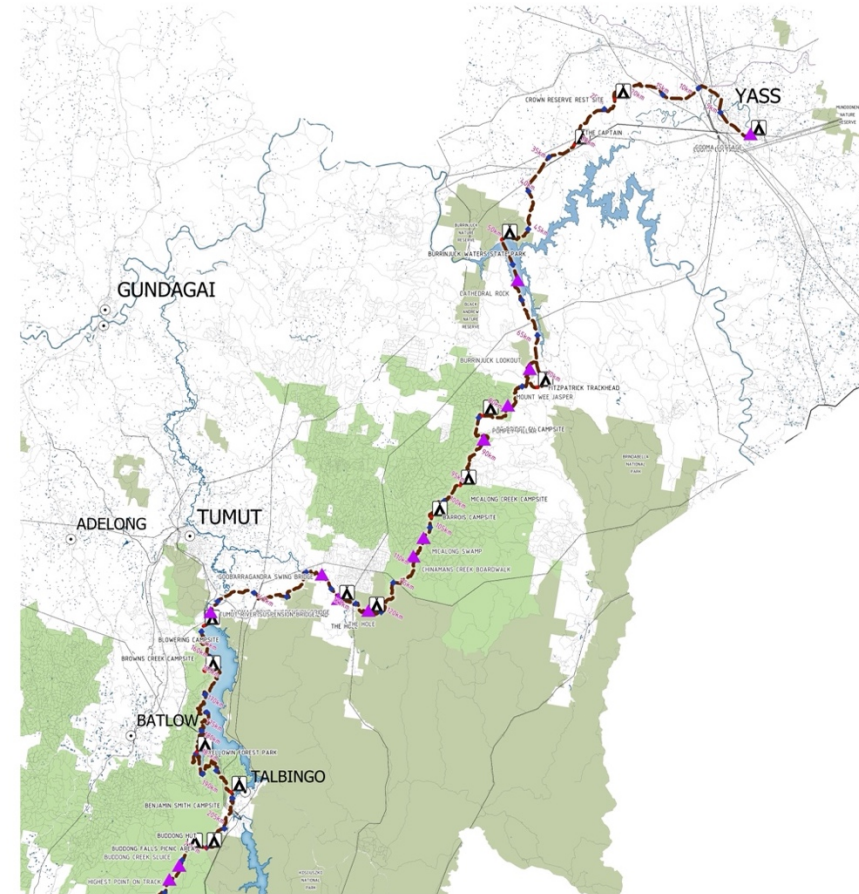
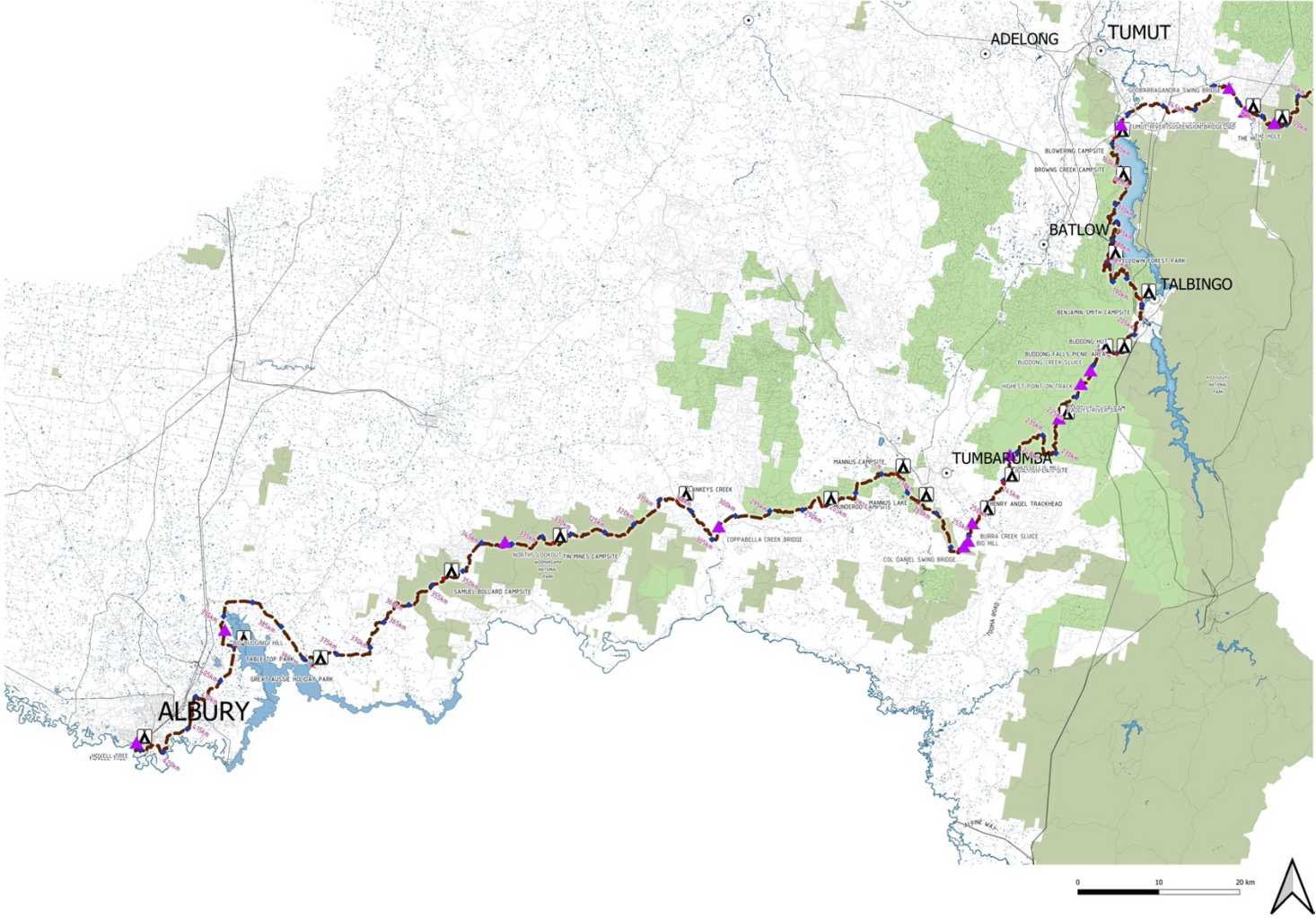


Figure 2.3.3 Base map showing southern half of the Hume and Hovell Track route



### 2.3.2 The five sections of the Track identified to help manage it

If one was to choose to walk the entire route ‘end to end’ between Yass and Albury, they would need between 18 and 26 days to complete it at a pace of 16 to 24 km per day. The Track has been broken into five sections, profiled in **Table 2.3.1**.

Table 2.3.1 The five sections of the Track (north to south)

Section	Description	Distance	Duration	Grade
1	Cooma Cottage (Yass) to Fitzpatrick Trackhead (Wee Jasper)	72.1km	25hrs	Easy
2	Fitzpatrick Trackhead to Blowering Campsite	82km	39hrs	Hard
3	Blowering Campsite to Henry Angel Trackhead (Tumbarumba)	97.5km	42hrs	Easy-Medium
4	Henry Angel Trackhead to Tin Mines Campground	81.9km	30hrs	Easy-Medium
5	Tin Mines Campground to Hovell Tree (Albury)	93.8km	33.5hrs	Easy

### 2.3.3 Multiple ways to use the Track

Since its first development, the Track was designed to provide a variety of walking experiences for a variety of users. It was designed to provide for long distance walking, overnight walks, day and half day walks. It was also designed from the onset to provide trackheads that provided picnic facilities, toilets, parking and interpretation signage.

### 2.3.4 The importance of interpreting the historic nature of the Track

As mentioned, interpreting the historic nature of the Track was one of the three reasons for creating it. The designers wanted the Track:

*to gain an insight into the history of Australian exploration and understand the perseverance, hardship, adventure and sense of achievement that this involved.*

*The Aboriginal history associated with this part of the State will also be documented, together with the history of European settlement from 1825 to 1988.*

*The route provides a graphic picture of the change that has taken place in the last 160 years. As a result, people will not only see history as related to the progress of time but in terms of environmental change.*

*The project will assist in encouraging a sense of National awareness. It will present aspects of our history in a way that will give a better appreciation of the achievements of our predecessors.*

*The track should stimulate research into the regional and local histories of the areas discovered by Hume and Hovell.*

Department of Lands Crown Lands Office, January 1984 ‘Hume and Hovell Walking Track – a proposed Bicentennial project.

There is little evidence of any significant in situ interpretation that assists Track users achieve this original aim of the Track’s development. Addressing limited interpretation is a strategic opportunity covered in **Section 7**.

### 2.3.5 Relative appeal of trail sections and highlights

#### *Appeal of track sections*

We provided a system and set of criteria for track managers to individually rate the appeal of the track and we have interpreted these inputs into an overall rating shown as:

- High appeal sections (eg. lots of highlights, very natural area, big views, single track)
- Moderate appeal (occasional highlight, natural to semi-natural / poor condition environment, some single track and some road)
- Low appeal (eg. no highlights, monotonous farmland or pine plantation, badly burnt, road as the track)

This assessment is yet to seek views of Aboriginal cultural heritage or other values from stakeholders. **Figures 2.3.4 and 2.3.5** present the relative appeal of the Hume and Hovell Track over the northern and southern halves and reveal that

- over half the Track was rated Low appeal – the northern quarter (Yass to Wee Jasper) and most of the southern quarter (Woomargama National Park to Albury);
- there are two distinct sections of the Track that have high appeal:
  - roughly from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – approximately four days walking;
  - Buddong Creek (the start of Buddong Falls, near Talbingo) south to Mannus Lake Campground (near Tumbarumba) – roughly three days walking;

- the section in between these two high appeal sections was rated moderate and represents two to three days walking.

This appeal rating significantly reduces the capability to position the Hume and Hovell Track as a 'Great Australian Walk'. It immediately appears that the Track might be better positioned to feature the two high appeal sections, or for those that like longer walks (10 days) the two high and joining moderate rated section. This will be considered further in **Section 7.1**.

Some stakeholders might have their own views on the relative appeal of sections of the Track, and the first round of consultation will seek input on this.

#### *Appeal of track highlights / attractions*

The Hume and Hovell Track website suggests that there are 12 highlights / attractions along the route, and these are profiled in **Table 2.3.2** and located on two maps and presented in **Figures 2.3.6 and 2.3.7**

Figure 2.3.4 Relative appeal of the northern half of the Hume and Hovell Track

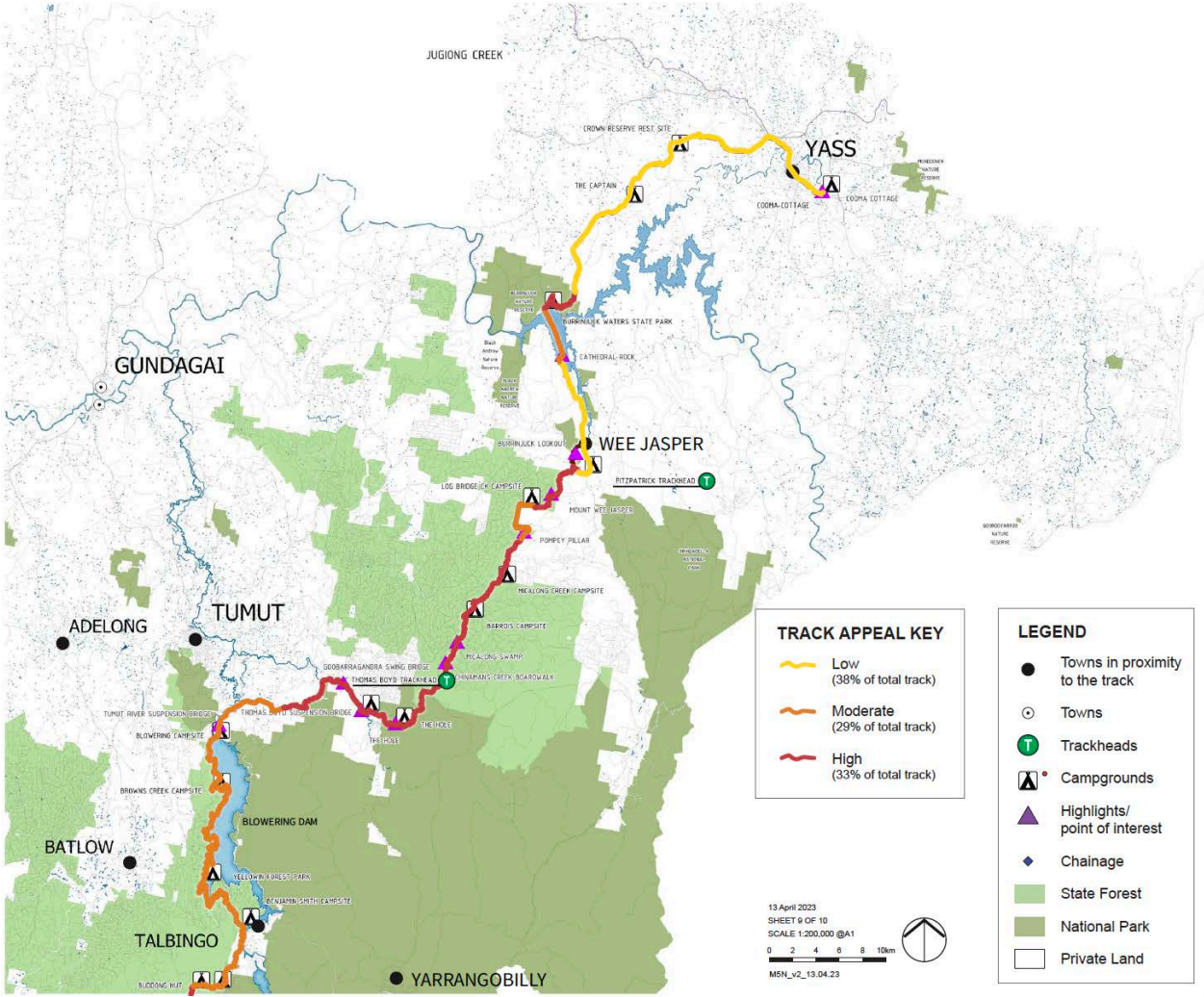


Figure 2.3.5 Relative appeal of the southern half of the Hume and Hovell Track

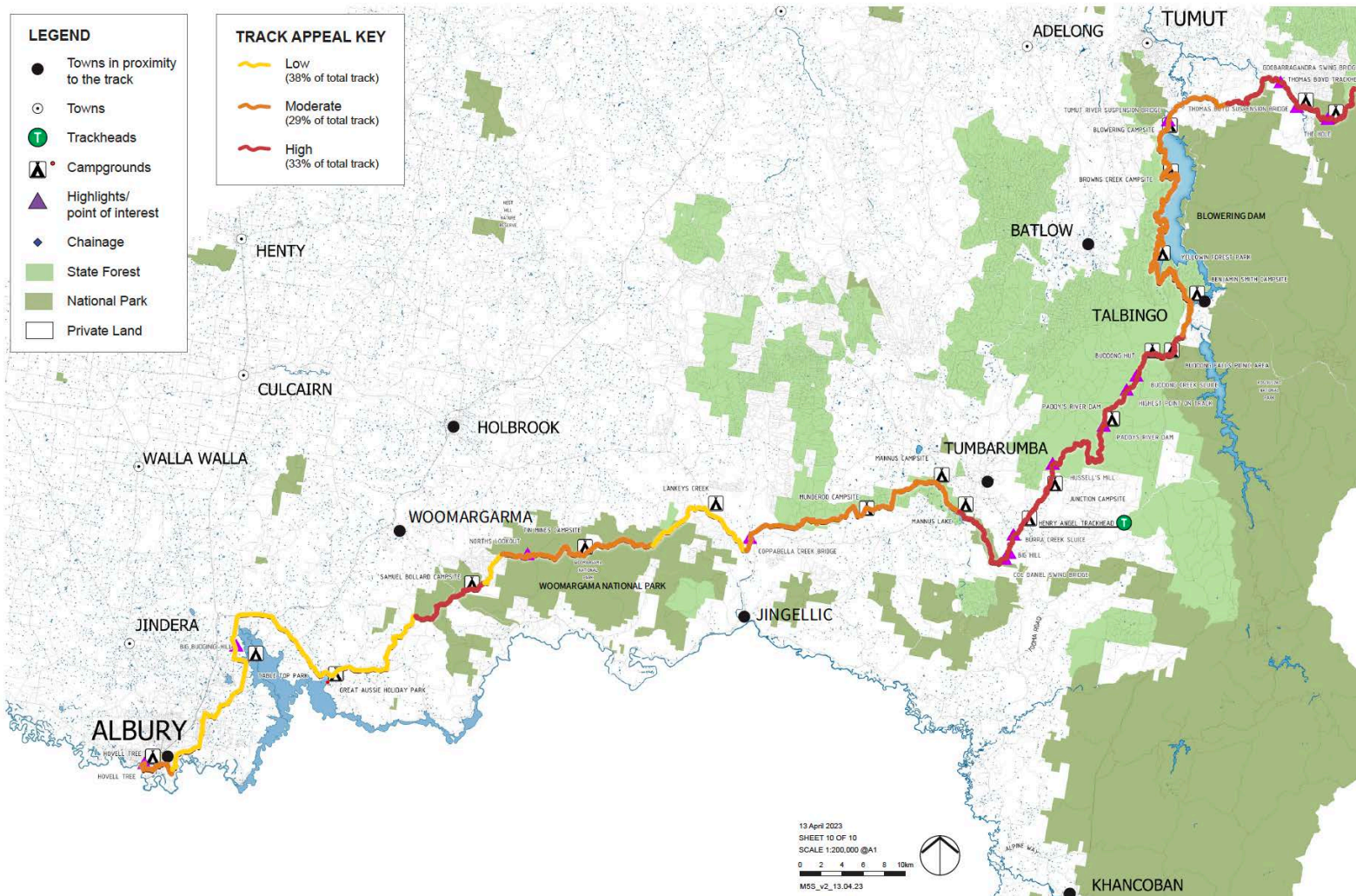


Table 2.3.2 Highlights along the Track (north to south) (Likely appeal: Low, Moderate, High, WOW factor)

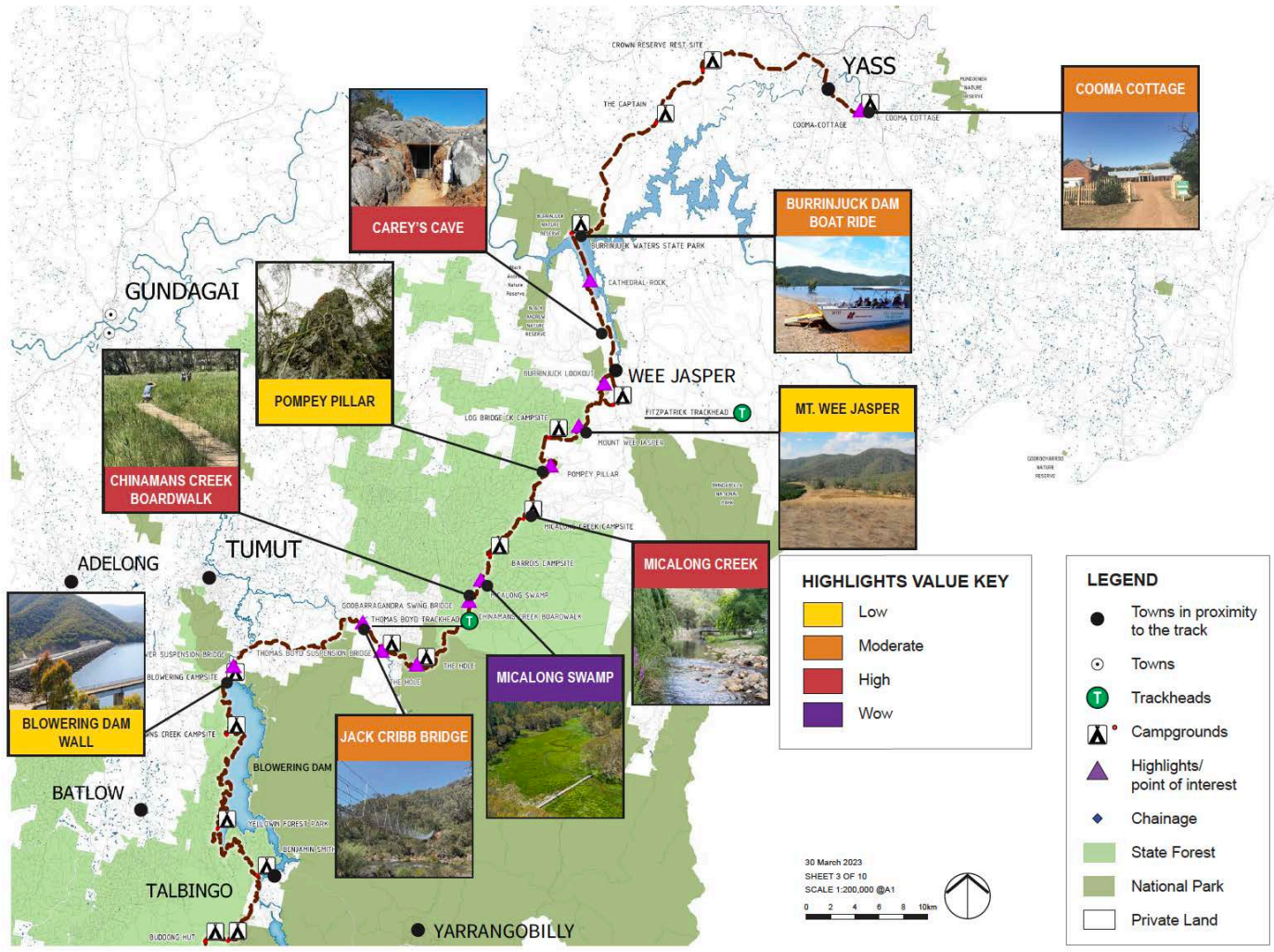
Section	Highlights	Likely visitor appeal	Description
1	Cooma Cottage	Moderate	Cooma Cottage is the official start of the Hume and Hovell Track and was the home of Hamilton Hume from 1837 through to 1873 when he passed away
1	Burrinjuck Dam Boat Ride	Moderate	Burrinjuck Dam was built before the First World War, to store water for the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. Much of the present road towards the dam is on the railway line, which was built to take in heavy materials during the dam's construction. The dam can store three times the volume of Sydney Harbour.
1	Carey's Caves	High	Carey's Cave is 6km north of Wee Jasper on Caves Road. It is not on the Hume and Hovell Track but is not far and definitely worth a visit. It is one of many caves in the Lime Stone Valley area. Carey's Cave is open to the public for tours and is lit up inside.
2	Mr Wee Jasper	Low	One of the highest points on the Track, Mt. Wee Jasper stands at 1121m. Views from the top are restricted due to the vegetation but there is a bench seat and it makes a nice place for a rest. It is approximately 8kms from Fitzpatrick Trackhead to the Mt. Wee Jasper summit, with the walk including views back over the Wee Jasper Valley and across to the Brindabella Mountain Range in the East. The walk up to the Mt Wee Jasper summit is through native forest and showcases the Wee Jasper limestone geology.
2	Pompey Pillar	Low	Positioned between Log Bridge Creek Campsite and Micalong Creek Campsite is the Pompey Pillar which is a six metre natural column of rock that was formed through erosion of the surrounding rock, leaving the only the pillar. This interesting geological feature is a dramatic landmark which is surrounded by beautiful natural vegetation.
2	Micalong Creek	High	The Micalong Creek is a highlight for all walkers, a beautiful creek that the Hume and Hovell Track follows for over 15km. A new bridge spanning 12m crosses the creek and is essential for walkers to continue their journey and makes for a perfect resting point to enjoy the spectacular native vegetation that lines the banks. Micalong Creek Campsite and Barrios Campsite reside along Micalong Creek.
2	Micalong Swamp	WOW	This swamp is the largest montane swamp in mainland Australia and home to the critically endangered Northern Corroboree Frog. It is located within the Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve. It stretches for more than 5km and is up to half a kilometre wide. It was an area of significance to the local Aboriginal Peoples and important archaeological sites have been identified. Tributary creeks running into Micalong Creek and the swamp have been prospected for gold.

Section	Highlights	Likely visitor appeal	Description
2	Chinamans Creek Boardwalk	Moderate	Located in the Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve area, Chinamans Creek Boardwalk or otherwise known as the “Harold Robinson Boardwalk” is a timber boardwalk over Chinamans Creek. Chinamans Creek was an area worked by Chinese after the Kiandra Goldfield cut out.
2	Norm Harris Bridge	Low	The Norm Harris bridge at Thomas Boyd Trackhead crosses the Goobarragandra River and was built by Army Reserve Engineers in April 2006. The Norm Harris & Jack Cribb bridges take the names of two local landowners, Norman Harris and Jack Cribb, who allowed the walking track to cross their properties.
2	Jack Cribb Bridge	Moderate	The suspension bridge was built in 1998 as an exercise by the Australian Army Reserve. It allowed 4km of walking track to be taken off the highway and on to the minor road. The Norm Harris and Jack Cribb bridges take the names of two local landowners, Norman Harris and Jack Cribb, who allowed the walking track to cross their properties. Jack Cribb could see the Track would be of benefit to the community and was supportive of the Track, agreeing to a small land swap so the bridge could be built. It turned out that wasn't necessary as an easement was taken out instead.
3	Blowering Dam Wall	Low	Blowering Dam was built in the 1960's by the NSW Government to store water released into the Tumut River. Water that is released upstream generates hydro-electricity through the Snowy Hydro Electric Scheme. At three times the size of Sydney Harbour, it is one of the biggest dams in NSW and is popular for water sports, fishing and camping.
3	Buddong Falls	WOW	A sight not to be missed, the incredible Buddong Falls. Comprised of a series of stunning cascading waterfalls, that flow over layers of land that drops away in sheer beauty. Surrounded by a tranquil eucalypt forest featuring significant native flora and fauna.  Situated between Ben Smith Campsite and Paddys River Dam Campsite, the Buddong Falls Picnic Area is at the top of this impressive water fall.
3	Paddy's River Dam	Moderate	Many consider this to be the most attractive campsite on the Hume and Hovell Track, a secluded campground in the forest with extensive wildlife and the dam full of fish. It is visited year-round by campers, fishermen and picnic-goers. The dam was constructed in the 1930's and comprised part of the 34km water race to Tumbarumba which was used to generate electricity. Paddys River Dam through to Junction Campsite has a strong mining history.
4	Burra Creek Gold Mining	Moderate	Downstream from the Henry Angel Trackhead there's evidence of some of the major mining operations on Burra Creek that occurred from the 1860's through to the 1930's. “The Tunnel” is a highlight in this section. A rock bar across the valley floor had to be breached so an upstream swamp holding loose gold could be sluiced. There are great piles of broken stone as well as a channel cut through the rock. This work was done by Nathan Giles Gitchell who had mastered the use of dynamite. Gitchell cut a 70m tunnel through a hill and the tunnel subsequently became the course of the creek. Remnants of water races can still be seen along the creek and several plaques are in the area describing the history.
4	Big Hill	Moderate	From Henry Angel Campground, past the Burra Tunnel there is a side track up to “Big Hill”. Off the main Hume and Hovell Track, it is 0.5kms one way with views of the Snowy Mountains once up top. This hill is of historical significance as it is the same place Hamilton Hume and William Hovell climbed to see if they could get a better view of what lay ahead of them, as they found the country had become too rough for the loaded bullocks. This was the first sighting of the western face of the Snowy Mountains by white men.



Section	Highlights	Likely visitor appeal	Description
4	Norths Lookout	High	Woomargama National Park has the prominent peak of Mount Jergyle featured between Tin Mines Campground and Samuel Bollard Campground. On the northern face of the summit is Norths Lookout, an incredible viewing area with uninterrupted panoramic sights with views to Battery Mountain, the Hume Weir and even the Snowy Mountains.
5	Big Budginigi Hill	High	Park your vehicle at Table Top Park and it is an easy 3km walk along Table Top Road and Mitchell Road to the base of Big Budginigi Hill where there are some picnic tables. A short but steep hike over rocks will take you over the summit up to the lookout on top of Big Budginigi Hill, providing 360-degree views over Lake Hume and farming land of the region. Table Top can be seen to the north and Albury to the south-west.
5	Hovell Tree	Low	The official end of the Hume and Hovell Track, Hovell Tree still stands and has a metal plaque with Hovell's original inscription fixed to a large stone at the base. Hume Street / Hovell Tree is at Hovell Tree Park, access from Hume Street.

Figure 2.3.6 Relative appeal of highlights / attractions along the northern half of the Hume and Hovell Track





The highlights tentatively rated strongest for appeal to attract visitors are:

- the northern quarter and the southern quarter of the Track have very few highlights and those that are found were rated low to moderate appeal, and this contributes to the low appeal of walking these sections – in some cases there is no highlight for almost two days of walking;
- there are only two highlights rated as a WOW factor – Micalong Swamp and Buddong Falls, and these are located in the same two sections of high track appeal;
- the majority of the high appeal highlights are found within the same two high appeal track sections:
  - roughly from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking; and
  - Buddong Creek (the start of Buddong Falls, near Talbingo) south to Mannus Lake Campground (near Tumbarumba) – roughly three days walking.

These findings on the relative appeal of Track highlights further reduce the case to position the Hume and Hovell Track as a 'Great Australian Walk'.

Some stakeholders might also have views on the relative appeal of highlights and attractions of sections of the Track, and the first round of consultation will seek input on this.

### 2.2.2 Short walks

The Hume and Hovell Track website suggests that there are 16 highlighted short walks along the route, and these are profiled in **Table 2.3.3** and located on two

maps and presented in **Figures 2.3.8 and 2.3.9**. The short walks tentatively rated strongest for appeal to attract visitors are:

- There were two short walks rated as having a WOW factor (both located in the high appeal track sections)
  - Micalong Creek Campsite to Barrois Campsite (native forest and wildflowers in spring and early summer, located in the northern high appeal section)
  - Buddong Falls to Paddy's River Dam (can't beat a waterfall, located in the southern high appeal Track section)
- There was only one short walk rated high appeal, and this was located in the northern high appeal Track section.

This finding further consolidates the strategic importance of the two high appeal sections of the Hume and Hovell Track – they deliver the WOW and high appeal of the entire Track.

It is hoped that some stakeholders might also have views on the relative appeal of short walks, and the first round of consultation will seek input on this.

Table 2.3.3 Short walks that are a part of the Hume and Hovell Track (Distinctiveness / appeal: \* Low, \*\* Moderate, \*\*\* High, \*\*\*\* WOW factor)

Short Walk	Distance	Grade	Distinctiveness / visitor appeal	Description
Burrinjuck Waters State Park through Burrinjuck NR	7.6 km one way (heading north)	Easy	Moderate	This is a lovely walk through Burrinjuck Nature Reserve along the shoreline of Lake Burrinjuck. It is all on single track and has a gentle gradient. It makes for a lovely out and back walk from Burrinjuck Waters State Park
Fitzpatrick Trackhead to Wee Jasper Nature Reserve	5.4 km each way or 9km loop	Medium	High	This is a great loop walk from Fitzpatrick Trackhead through the very scenic Wee Jasper Nature Reserve. In spring and early summer the wildflowers are stunning. From the top of the ridge, looking back towards Wee Jasper, there are some good viewing points to take a breather and view the village area and the Goodradigbee Arm of Lake Burrinjuck
Fitzpatrick Trackhead to Mt Wee Jasper summit	16km return	Hard	Moderate	Follow the track through native forest and along forestry fire trails to the Wee Jasper summit. From the summit, it's 4km to the Log Bridge Creek campsite. This walk affords views across to the Brindabella Mountains to the east and crosses multiple small streams and waterfalls. It is a scenic walk that will get the heart going a few times
Pompey Pillar to Miller's Creek	9 km (approx.) one way	Hard	Moderate	Log Bridge Creek to Four Trees Road. The six-metre-high rock formation of Pompey Pillar is a dramatic landmark on the hike from Log Bridge Creek Road to Four Trees Road. The Track is a mixture of fire trail and single track, with the single track following the different valleys of the two creek lines. It is a very interesting section with a variety of scenery and topography
Micalong Creek Campsite to Barrois Campsite	6.8 km	Medium	WOW	The waters of the cascading Micalong Creek provide the soundtrack for most of this walk through native forest, which is carpeted with wildflowers in spring and early summer  However, the blackberry infestations make this more of a High to Moderate ranking
Thomas Boyd Trackhead to The Hole	6.4 km one way	Hard	Low	A popular day walk for those camping at Thomas Boyd Trackhead. The Track to The Hole is a big climb but it is a beautiful walk into the edge of Kosciuszko National Park  Little remains at The Hole today but it was once the site of a slab hut, lived in by the McNamara family of 13. It has also housed outbuildings and a set of cattle yards that were part of a 14,000 acre mountain lease held by Goobarragandra Station. It is now a clearing in the bush with a clump of Elms that makes for a nice picnic spot
Thomas Boyd to Jack Cribb Bridge (return)	4.1 km one way walk + 1km to Buckleys Bridge	Easy	Moderate	A lovely easy walk alongside the Goobarragandra River that is suitable for families. The walk crosses two suspension bridges over the Goobarragandra River, could walk further to Buckleys Bridge as well if desired
Paddy's River Dam to Buddong Falls	15.8 km one way	Hard	WOW	One of the most picturesque sections of the Hume and Hovell Track, incorporating two significant features - Buddong Falls and Paddy's River Dam

Short Walk	Distance	Grade	Distinctiveness / visitor appeal	Description
Paddy's River Dam to Charcoal Gap Road	18 km	Easy	Moderate	Starting at the secluded campground of Paddy's River Dam, this hike takes you south to the site of Hussells Mill at Charcoal Gap Road where a water-powered sawmill use to operate on West Burra Creek. Natural highlights through Coffee Pot include brumbies, birds and wildlife
Henry Angel Trackhead to Mannus Lake	16.4 km + 0.6 km to Big Hill	Medium	Moderate	This is a long but beautiful walk along the Burra Creek down to the Tumbarumba Creek valley before climbing Mannus ridge through Bogandyera Nature Reserve and descending down to Mannus Lake. It is historically very significant, for both the gold mining evidence along Burra Creek and because the explorers, Hume and Hovell, followed this same route and first viewed the Snowy Mountains from Big Hill
Horse Creek / Pascoes Dam	2.5 km one way	Easy	Low	This is a brilliant short walk for families, or those looking for a nice place for lunch and a bit of a stroll. Access the Track from either Burns Road or Pascoes Dam Road, or start in the middle from CPT 49 Link Road and walk the short section along Horse Creek and its tributary
Munderoo logbook (Carboona Gap) to Lankeys Creek campsite	15 km	Medium	Moderate	This is a lovely descent from the Munderoo plateau down to the property "Clear Springs", over Copabella Creek and then along Lankeys Creek. The Track goes through native bush and spectacular grass tree stands on Munderoo plateau, with views to the Murray River and Victoria. It then enters open grazing country before crossing Coppabella Creek and then following Lankeys Creek through grazed bush to Lankeys Creek campsite, one of the campsites used on the original expedition
Norths Lookout, Tin Mines & Samuel Bollard Campsite	Tin Mines to Norths Lookout 9.7km Norths Lookout to Samuel Bollard Campsite 10.6km Tin Mines to Samuel Bollard Campsite 20.3km	Easy	Low	Aptly named, Norths Lookout has incredible 180° views, which take in the western face of the Snowy Mountains, the Upper Murray valley, the Riverina and the town of Holbrook. You can also see Mount Narra Narra while walking this section. For a long day walk, go from Tin Mines to Samuel Bollard Campsite, otherwise choose either the eastern section: Tin Mines to Norths Lookout, or the south western section: Norths Lookout to Samuel Bollard Campsite
Samuel Bollard south to Wyman Road	17.7 km	Hard	High	This is a pretty walk through the timbered Woomargama National Park, then on to undulating private property. It starts at Samuel Bollard Campsite in Woomargama National Park and finishes where the Track meets Wymah Road on the edge of the property, "Wingadel"
Table Top Park to Budginigi Hill	3 km one way	Medium	Moderate	The summit of Big Budginigi Hill provides 360 degree views. You can see for miles looking out over Lake Hume and farming land of the region. Table Top can be seen to the north and Albury to the south-west. It is a significant rock outcrop with a conical shape
Hovell Tree to Eastern Hill	5 km one way + 2 km return along Eastern Hill from the carpark to the end of the ridge line	Easy	Low	Eastern Hill lookout affords glorious views of the mountains and Murray River. Look North to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range and the upstream course of the Murray River. To the east is the Kiewa River Valley, Victoria is to the South, Albury and downstream Murray River is to the West

Figure 2.3.8 Relative appeal of the northern half of short walks along the Hume and Hovell Track

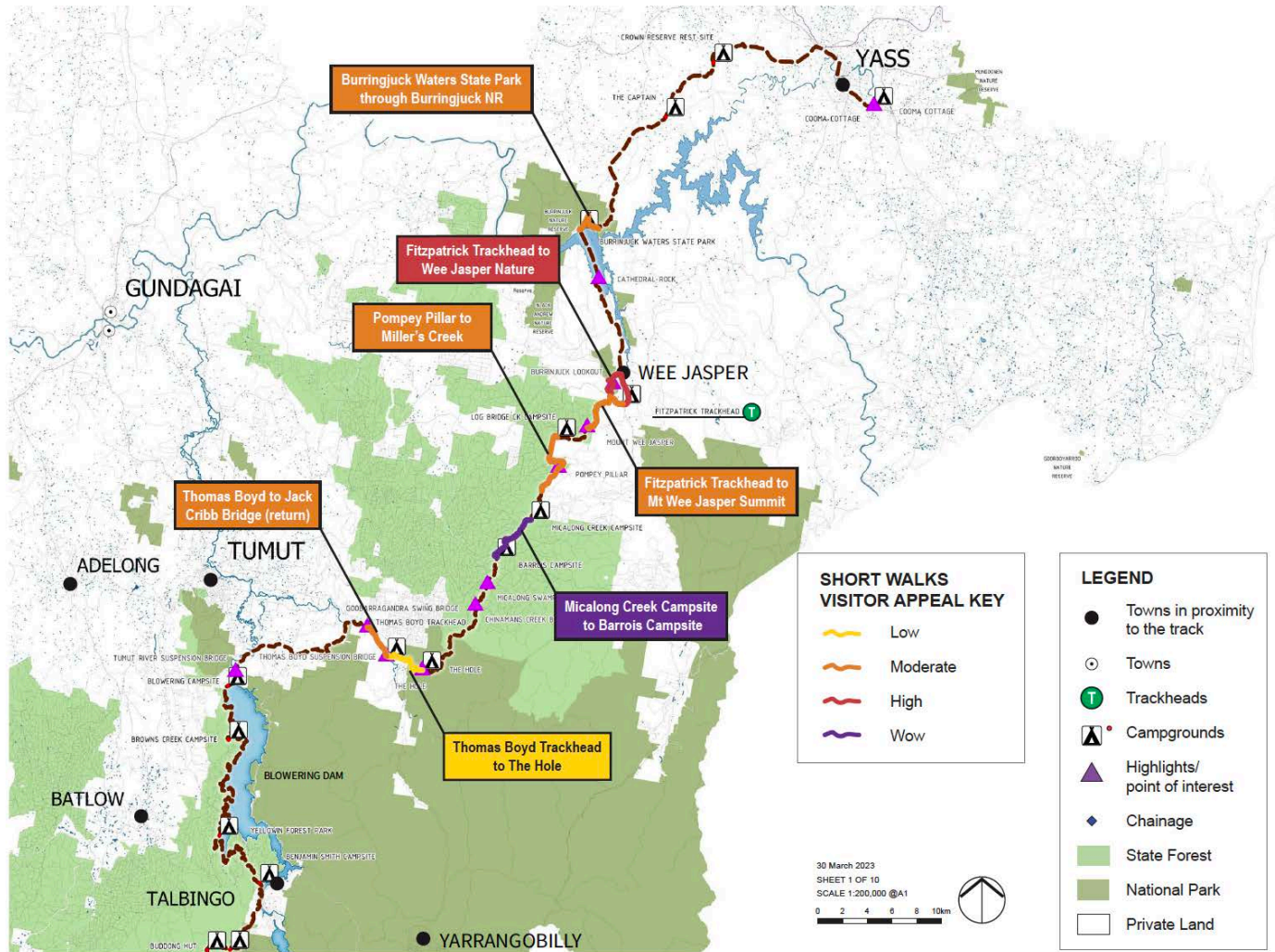


Figure 2.3.9 Relative appeal of the southern half of short walks along the Hume and Hovell Track

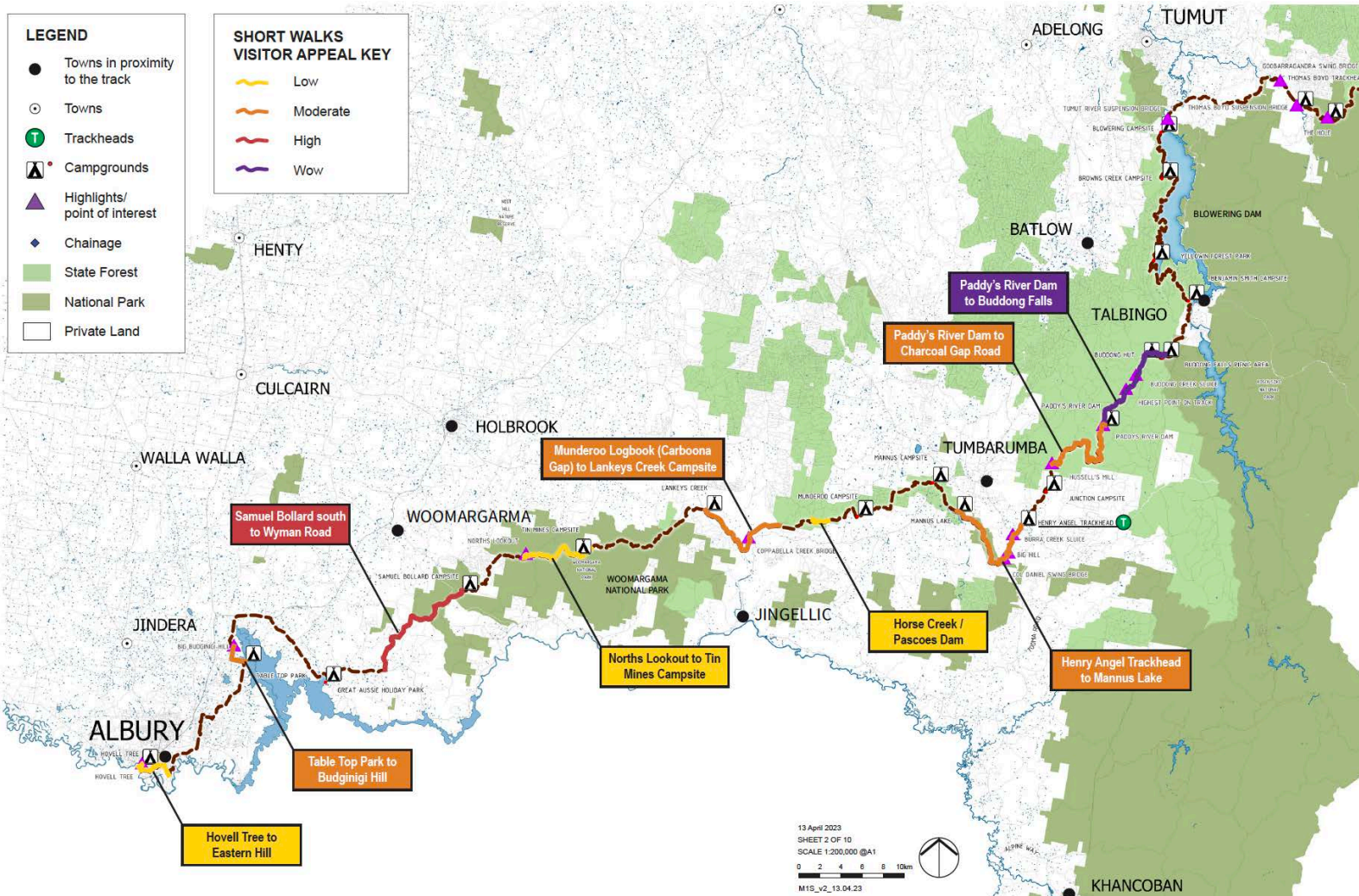
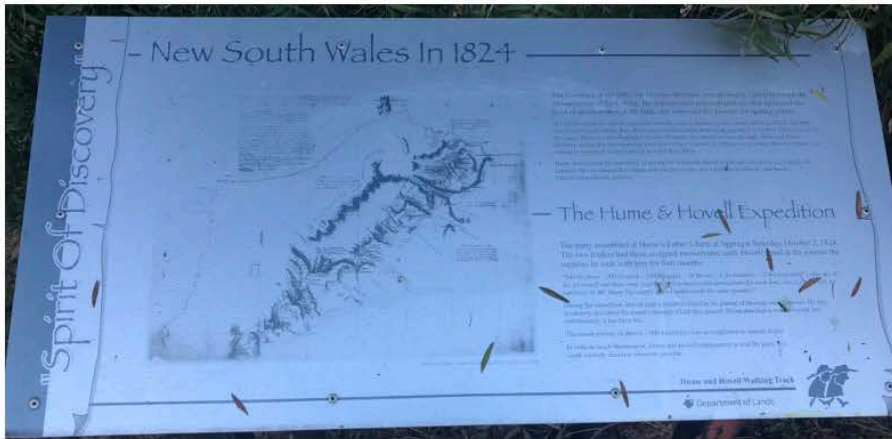
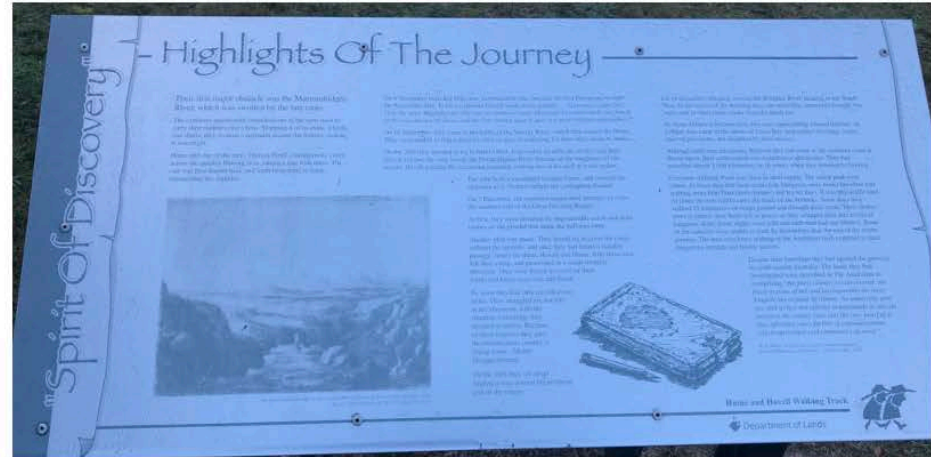
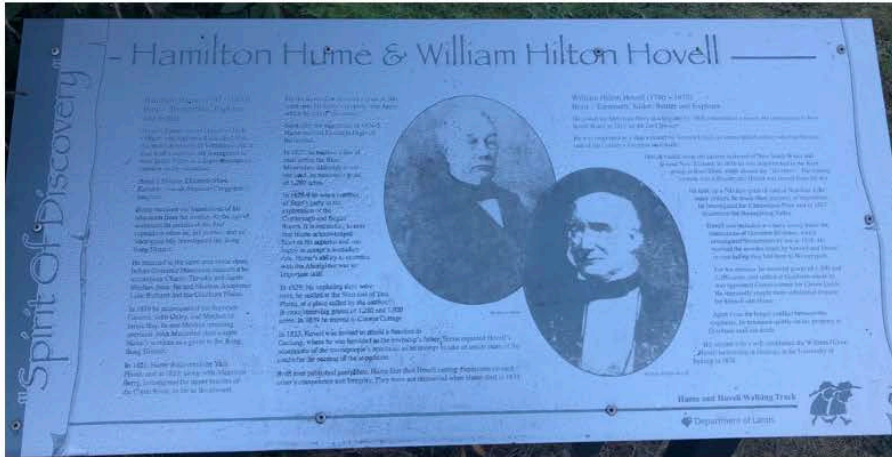




Figure 2.3.10 Examples of Hume and Hovell interpretation signs located at Trackheads (probably Fitzpatrick, Henry Angel and Thomas Buyd)



### 2.2.3 Trail infrastructure

#### *Wayfinding and in-situ walker information*

A track logo, in the form of two small stylised human figures representing Hume and Hovell, is displayed along the full length of the track to assist with track finding. Signboards showing places, directions and distances have been erected at all trackheads and other places of track access. Where the Track joins or crosses other tracks or roadways, directional bollards have been installed. If the Track passes through areas of historical interest and significance, descriptive plaques have been erected.

At all trackheads and other places of access, signboards showing places, directions and distances have been erected.

#### *Interpretation*

There are several interpretation signs about the Hume and Hovell expedition, and these are shown in **Figure 2.3.10**.

It has been reported that Parklands Albury Wodonga placed QR codes on some signs in the southern section that link additional interpretation that is hosted on a website managed by Parkland Albury Wodonga.

#### *General maintenance regime*

Maintenance of the Track reportedly targets sections with the highest use, which is a logical approach. However, the monitoring of this use is very poor (see **Section 3.1**), so it is questionable just how effectively this principle is being enacted. This policy could be enacted much more effectively with accurate visitation data along the entire route, as well as improved visitor profile data, which is addressed in

**Section 7.** This more robust approach to prioritising maintenance might attract more engagement from land tenure managers.

#### *The impact of recent fires and floods*

Since the 2019-20 fires and 2022 floods an extensive program of Track and facility repairs and replacement of infrastructure was undertaken. During this period extensive sections of the Track had to be closed for walker safety. A positive outcome of this work is increased infrastructure resilience to these natural disasters and more standardisation of design that is making the work more efficient and cost effective.

The cost of replacing or building toilets on tenure managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife has been estimated to be approximately three times more, due to their higher specification design requirements.

In some damaged areas, some significant improvements have been made to the visitor experience. For example, in the fire devastated Bago State Forest, the Forestry Corporation is upgrading visitor facilities at Paddy's River Dam, the Pilot Hill Arboretum, Lochinvar Rest Area, Paling Yards and Sugarpines 2.0. In addition to trail, amenities, signage, picnic and camping facility upgrades will be the introduction of sculptural elements, an amphitheatre, nature-based playground and wellness walk.

#### *Proposal for mountain biking infrastructure*

A Master Plan for the development of sections of the Track for mountain bike (MTB) use was commissioned by the Snowy Valleys Council (TRC Tourism 2018). The proposed development was identified as a 'game changer' in the Snowy Valleys Destination Management Plan 2018. The rationale for the proposed development was:

- there is a relatively young market seeking more mountain biking opportunities;
- the existing track in many sections is ideal for mountain bike riding particularly on the highest point on the track which is generally a flat plateau;
- it could offer opportunities in the winter when the Thredbo mountain bike trails are closed for skiing; and
- economic spend could be leveraged into local villages and townships through provision of new bike services and accommodation.

We note that there was no analysis of alternative tracks and trails in the region and why the Hume and Hovell Track was the best location for development. We also note that there was no analysis of the impact of the proposal on existing users.

The proposal was for an overnight one to three day cycling experience combined with camping or accommodation, shuttle services or an alternate day riding experience providing exceptional forest and gravity assisted trails. The core trail would be developed to an IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling Association) Easy – Green Circle Trail, being designed as a wide single track with an average trail grade for segments of 10% or less and a maximum trail gradient of 15% and an open and flowing trail that links the user with landscape features. Four sections were proposed between Tumut and Tumbarumba:

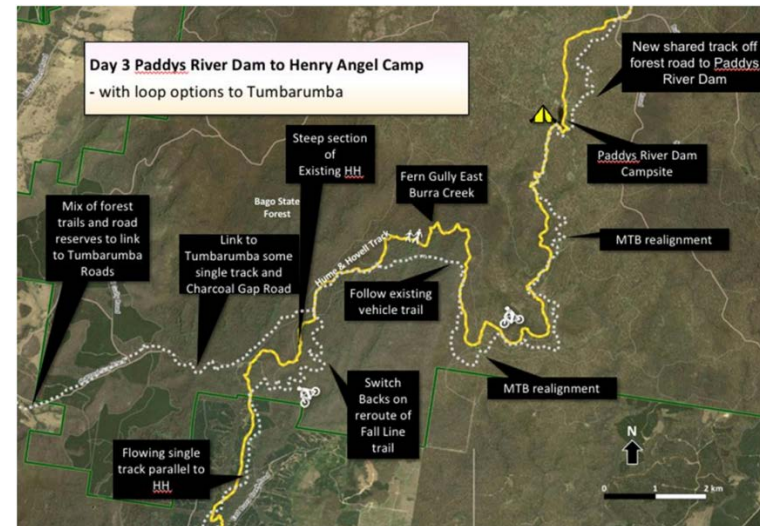
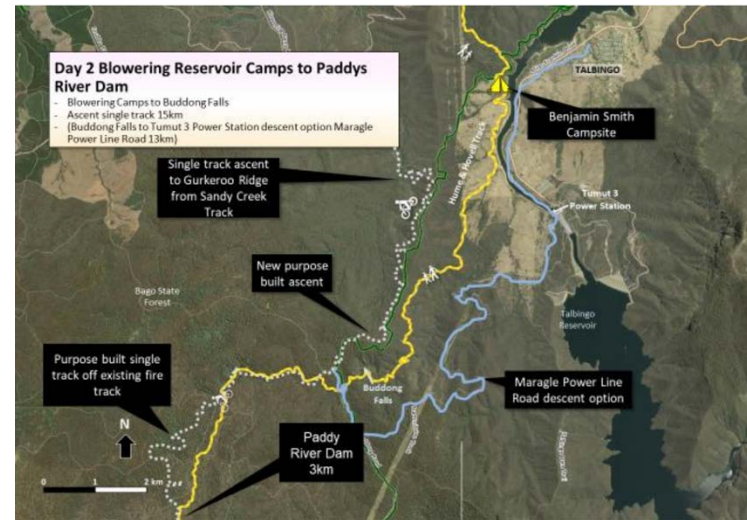
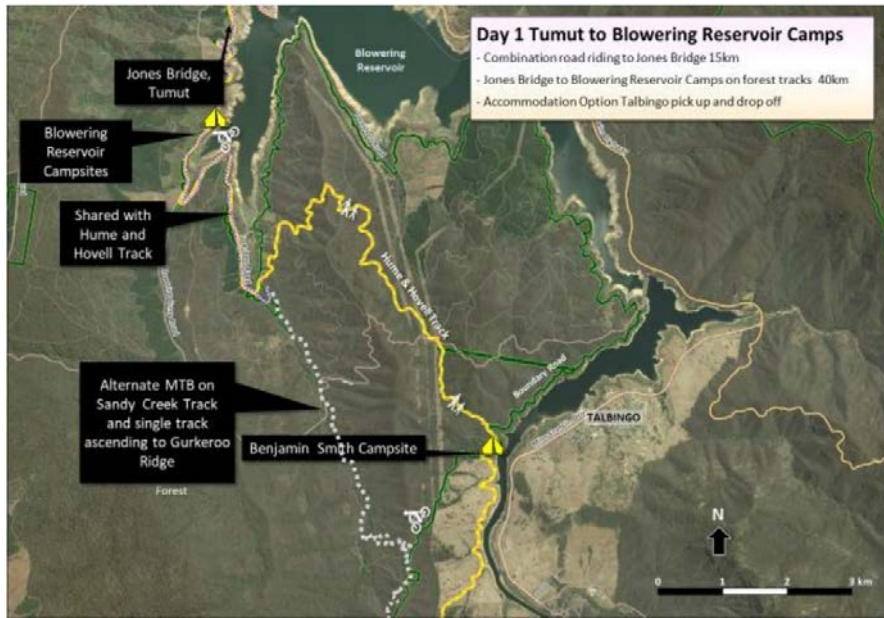
- Tumut to Buddong Falls including Talbingo Loop via Maragle Power Line Road;
- Tumbarumba loop via Tooma Road stock route, West Burra Road, pine plantation and reroute of Hume and Hovell via switch backs and west link to Tumbarumba via some single track and road reserves. Includes West Burra Creek to Henry Angel Campsite with trail restoration, boardwalks styles and signs;
- Buddong Falls to Paddy River Dam to Tumbarumba link the core Hume and Hovell MTB experience across the range through free-flowing trails; and

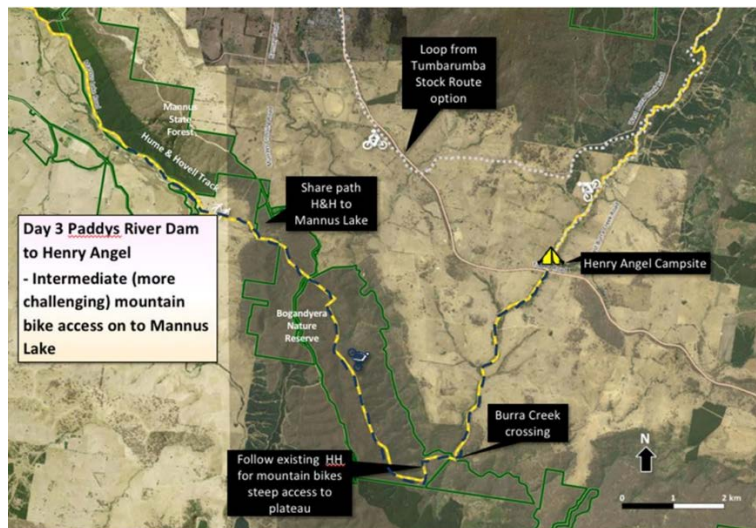
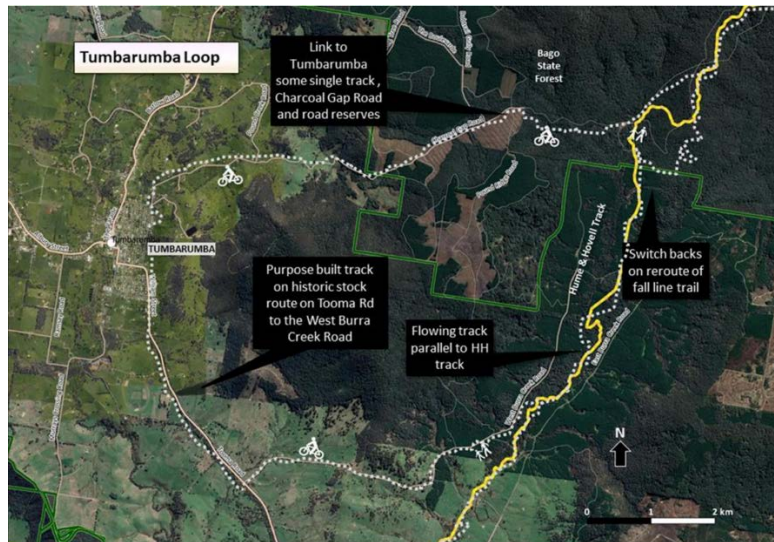
- Henry Angel to Mannus Lake track upgrading to IMBA Intermediate standards and stiles and signs.

**Figure 2.3.10** presents the four proposed sections that would offer four days of mountain biking. The total cost of the development was estimated at \$3.2M and annual maintenance was estimated at \$60,000 per annum. The Masterplan identified the following issues with the proposal:

- on road access from Tumut to the Hume and Hovell Track, and limited access from Talbingo to the Track with an unsafe highway bridge crossing for cyclists;
- steep terrain generates challenges for sustainable and safe mountain biking. Challenging ascents to the range will require significant works to establish a trail suitable for target markets
- ensuring ongoing track governance, management and partnerships; and
- obtaining ongoing commitment to high quality maintenance and service delivery;

Figure 2.3.10 The mountain bike track development proposals (TRC Tourism 2018)





Two strategic advantages of this proposal are:

- it links the Hume and Hovell Track with MTB tracks and parks; and
- it increases overall visitation in the area, which could improve visitor economy services such as transfer shuttles, food supplies and accommodation in townships.

However, we have several concerns with the proposal:

- there was no analysis of alternative locations that might perform better;
- there will be safety risks for walkers at track junctions – especially where mountain bikers are travelling downhill and walkers have their head down moving uphill; and
- it could divert maintenance funds from the Hume and Hovell to MTB track work.

#### 2.2.4 Overnight accommodation

##### *On track accommodation*

Very little hard roofed accommodation is provided along the route (huts, cabins or lodges). One site (Log Bridge Creek Campsite, see **Figure 2.3.11**) has recently received a basic walker hut. For any future hut construction, consideration be given to design development of a more interesting and thematic character, with enhanced utility should be considered. This is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

The 28 campsites / rest stops along the Track are profiled in **Table 2.3.4**. The three major trackheads, Fitzpatrick, Thomas Boyd and Henry Angel are the only sites that two-wheel drive access (all other are 4WD access only) and car-based camping, with day walks in either direction from the Trackhead. The other 17 campsites have been developed at a varied distance which is generally a day's walking distance apart. Two campsites on Crown land (Thomas Boyd Trackhead and Fitzpatrick

Trackhead) currently charge for overnight stay, with the charging system generating useful visitor data. There is a charge to stay at any of the campsites in National Parks (eg. Tin Mines and Samuel Bollard) and these must be booked in advance.

Figure 2.3.11 Walker hut at Log Bridge Creek Campsite



Feedback from Track managers was used to determine which campsites or nearby sites might have potential for further accommodation development, such as:

1. Upgraded campsite facilities (eg. more campsites, toilets, camp kitchen shelter, tent platforms)
2. Simple overnight hut supporting existing campsite

### 3. Multiple huts and upgraded facilities

The results of this high-level assessment are presented in **Table 2.3.4 and Figures 2.3.11 and 2.3.12**. From this data, we make the following interpretations:

- there is Low opportunity to upgrade campsites on the northern quarter and southern quarter of the Track;
- most of the campsites with high or moderate potential for upgrade are located in the high appeal sections of the Track:
  - roughly from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – two moderate (Barrois Campsite and Micalong Creek Campsite) and one high potential for further development (The Hole)
  - Buddong Creek (the start of Buddong Falls, near Talbingo) south to Mannus Lake Campground (near Tumbarumba) – one high (Benjamin Smith Campsite) and three moderate potential sites for further development (Paddys River Dam Campsite, Junction Campsite and Mannus Lake Campsite)

All of these sites were identified as having potential for camper hut development.

It is hoped that some stakeholders might have views on which sites might have potential for enhanced accommodation, and the first round of consultation will seek input on this.

There has been a proposal to build ecotourism / glamping accommodation and a café overlooking Blowering Dam in the Snowy Valleys Destination Management Plan. The Plan recommends further investigation for an appropriate location.

### *Off track accommodation*

Some Track users stay in hard roofed accommodation in nearby towns and villages.

They do this either:

- before and/or after an end-to-end or multi-day day walk;
- as a hub and spoke model to do a collection of short walks; or
- as part of a hub and spoke exploration of the area, for which a short walk on the Hume and Hovell Track is just one of a variety of experiences they do during their travel experience.

Very few examples of hard roofed accommodation are available within 30 minutes' walk of the Track (this being the optimum time walkers are comfortable to spend leaving the Track to access hard roofed accommodation). However, a range of 'hard roofed accommodation' is available within 30 minutes' drive of the Track. This includes cabins within caravan / tourist parks, motels, hotels, bed and breakfast and houses for rent. **Figure 2.3.13 and 2.3.14** present a visual depiction of the number and capacity of hard roofed accommodation, food supplies and food and beverage outlets at townships in close proximity to the Track, which suggests that:

- The largest suppliers of hard roofed accommodation, food supplies and food and beverage services are located at Albury, Tumut and Yass;
- The most strategically important towns to service the highest valued sections of the Track are:
  - Tumut – it represents THE key service centre in between the northern and southern high appeal sections, allowing walkers to finish a high appeal section of the Track at the Thomas Boyd Trackhead (a 24 minute drive to Tumut) or perhaps a new Trackhead at the end of the high appeal section

Figure 2.3.11 Extent of hard roofed accommodation, food supplies and food and beverage services close to the northern half of the Hume and Hovell Track

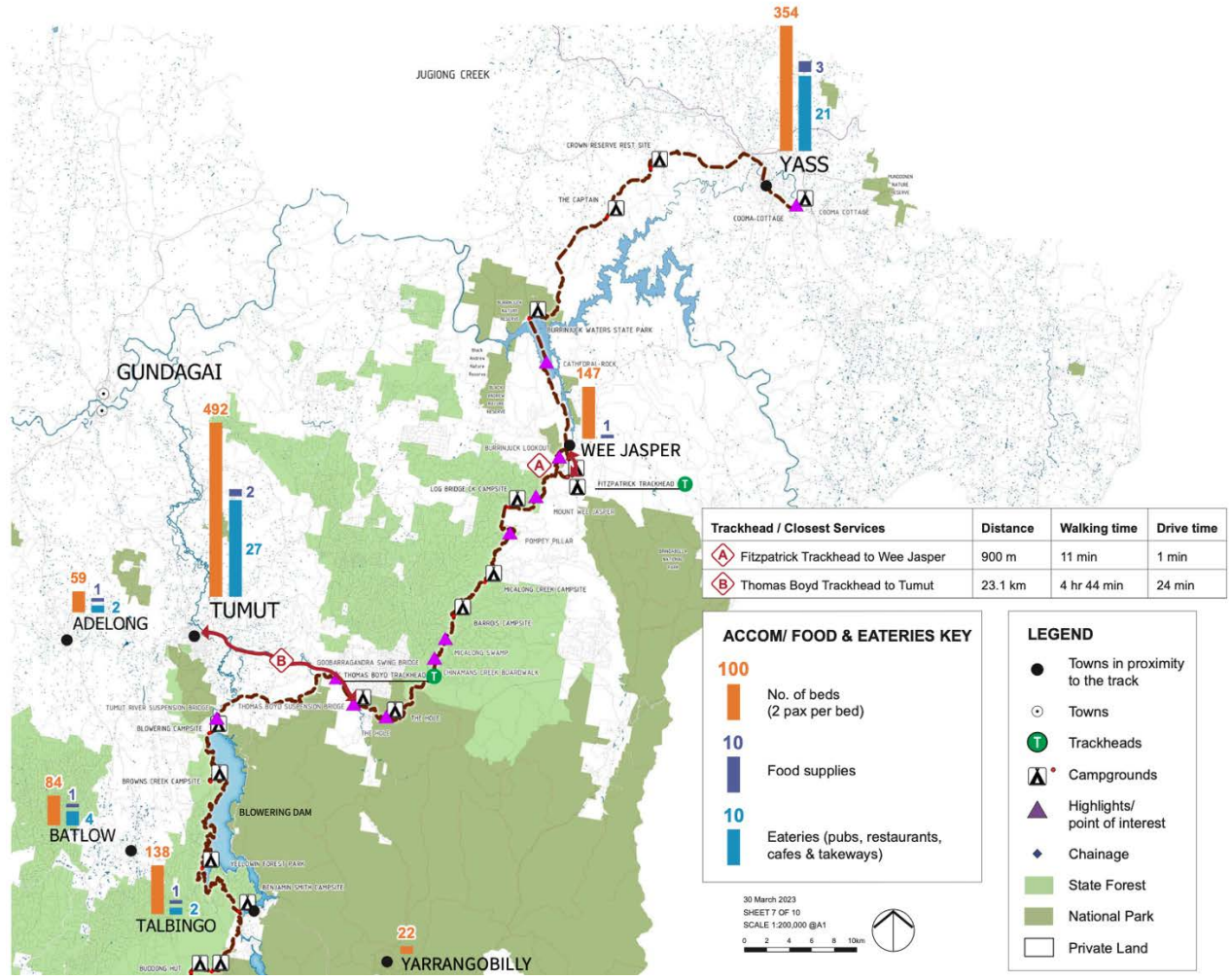
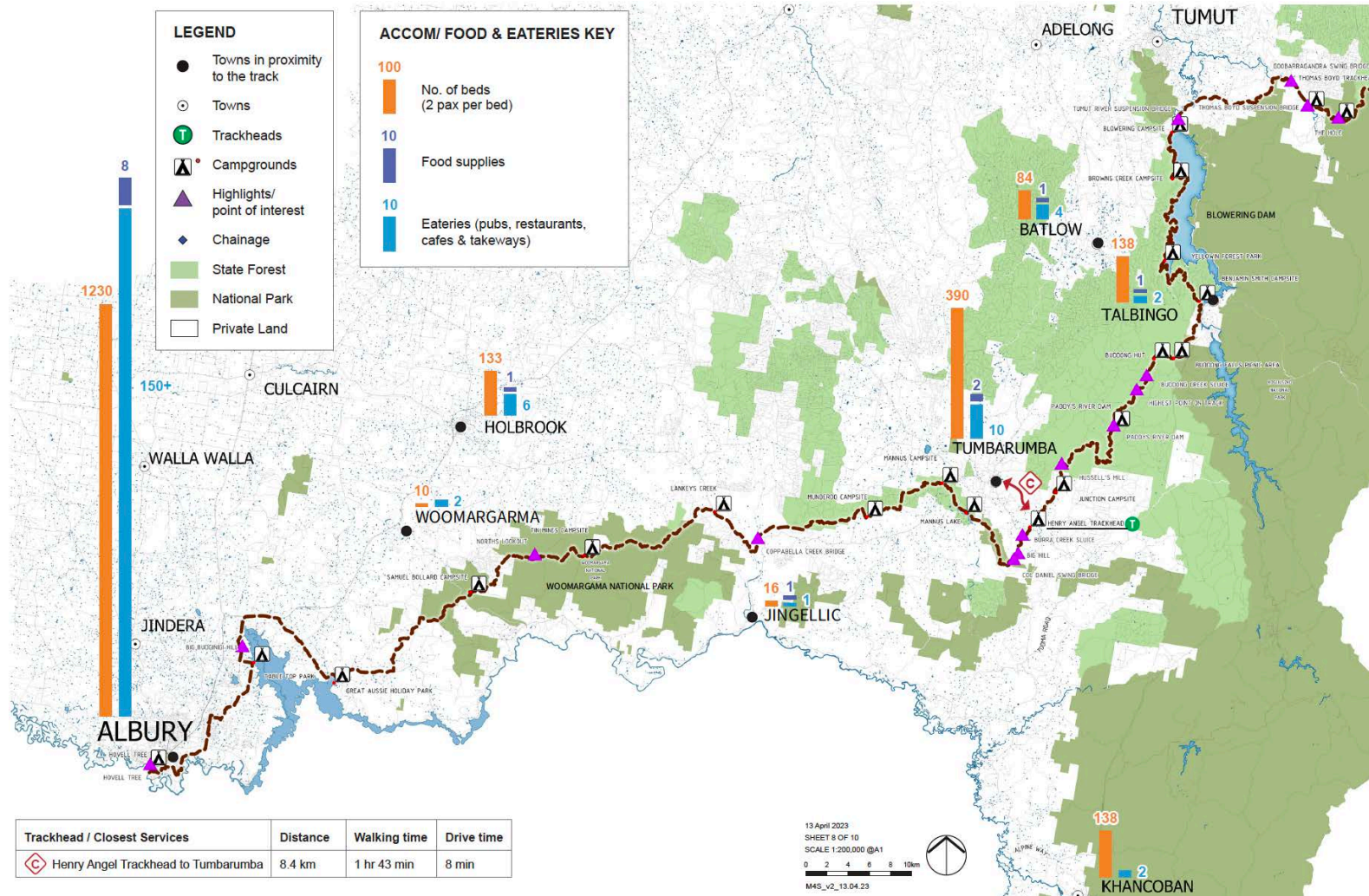




Figure 2.3.12 Extent of hard roofed accommodation, food supplies and food and beverage services close to the southern half of the Hume and Hovell Track



- Tumbarumba represents the second most critical service centre, because it could service walkers finishing the southern high appeal section of the Track at Henry Angel Trackhead

If transfer services between off track accommodation and Trackheads could be formalised and promoted (see **Section 2.2.4**) then the use of this accommodation could increase, which could:

- increase the appeal and subsequent use of the Track;
- increase the economic benefits of Track users for the region; and
- reduce pressure to develop and maintain accommodation along the Track.

The Track does not pass close to townships providing hard roofed accommodation (within 30 minutes walking time, a common limit to leave and return to the track). This is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

The connection of hard roofed accommodation and transfer service to the Track is also a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

Table 2.3.4 Campsites along the Track (north to south as profiled by the Hume and Hovell website)

Section	Campsites	Toilets	Water	Cost	Booking rd	Hard roofed accom potential	Description (from the H&H website)
1	Crown Reserve Rest Site	No	No	Free	No	High Camping upgrade	Crown Reserve Rest Site has no facilities and therefore a very high potential for upgrade. There is a strong reason to upgrade because hikers starting from Yass have nowhere else to stop on their first day of walking (22km and the first campsite). There is no water here and this is really needed
1	Captain Campsite	Pit toilet toilettoit	Tank water	Free	No	Low Low appeal	Captain Campsite takes its name from the lead bullock. When the expedition reached Corio Bay, Captain, having broken the trail through difficult country, had become so weak he was slaughtered to provide meat. Part of the bullock's hide was also turned into moccasins for the travellers.
1	Burrinjuck Waters State Park	Yes	Yes	\$40 for boat ride includes camping site	Yes	Low Already provided	A Reflections Holiday Park resides on the bank of Burrinjuck Dam. This is paid accommodation, but a campsite is included for free if taking the boat transfer to cathedral rock the following day - a charge of \$40. The boat is usually available on Mondays and Thursdays for track users, or by special arrangement for groups. Boat bookings are essential
1	Fitzpatrick Trackhead	Yes	Yes	\$18 per night for up to 6	Yes	Low Low appeal close to Wee Jasper	There is plenty of camping space and it is popular with car campers and caravaners as it is located on Wee Jasper Road at Wee Jasper. This Trackhead is named after one of the convicts on the expedition: James Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick was transported from Ireland for an offence under the Insurrection Act. He was assigned to Hamilton Hume and was rewarded for his work after the expedition with a Ticket of Leave. He went on to accumulate property, including the mansion and property "Glenlee" at Campbelltown. He died there in 1882, aged 85. Bookings through Wee Jasper Reserves.
2	Log Bridge Creek Campsite	Pit toilet	Creek water	Free	No	Low Limited room, maybe a hut	Only walker hut on the existing Track – no site profile on H&H website. Picnic tables and BBQ available
2	Micalong Creek Campsite	Pit toilet	Creek water	Free	No	Moderate, hut potential	Roofed shelter with picnic tables and BBQ available. No description on H&H website
2	Barrois Campsite	Pit toilet	Creek water	Free	No	Moderate Not needed	Covered picnic tables and BBQ available. This campsite, on Micalong Creek, takes its name from one of the convicts, Claude Barrois. Barrois was a shoemaker from London, possibly with French ancestry as suggested by the name. He was unpopular with his fellow convicts and they took to calling the perambulator 'Claude's wheelbarrow'. Afterwards, he sank into oblivion and died at the age of 42. He, and the campsite named after him, was also referred to as Bossawa.

Section	Campsites	Toilets	Water	Cost	Booking rd	Hard roofed accom potential	Description (from the H&H website)
2	The Hole	No	No	Free	No	High Demand on walk for hut to reduce walk time, on NP	Located 6.5km from Thomas Boyd Trackhead, "The Hole" was settled in 1888 by Jim McNamara. The Track follows an old road cut by Jim McNamara that was used by bullocks pulling a slide to send produce out, or bring supplies in. There is only a small lean-to structure that remains at The Hole, and a planting of elm trees.
2	Thomas Boyd Trackhead	Yes	Tank or river	\$10 per person per night	Yes	Moderate But problematic, good sized site heavy car-based camping / caravans requires many huts	One of the 3 major Trackheads on the Hume and Hovell Track. It is located on the Goobarragandra River 24kms east of Tumut. There is plenty of camping space and it is popular with car campers and caravanners.  This Trackhead is named after one of the convicts on the expedition, Thomas Boyd. Boyd was convicted of highway robbery and transported to NSW. His 'master' gave him to Hovell to be one of his servants and he proved to be very valuable. After the expedition, he opted to return to the Tumut district where he took up land. To supplement his income, he conveyed some of Tumut district's first settlers to their new homes. In time he became a wealthy and well-respected citizen but he fell on bad times, lost everything and ended up dying penniless. He is buried in Tumut Pioneer Cemetery. Camping fee collected by Goobarragandra Valley Trust managers.
3	Blowering Campsite	Pit toilet	Tank or dam water	Free	No	Low Limited space	Sheltered picnic area. The area below the Blowering Dam wall is called Brandy Marys Flat. It was one of the most favoured spots for picnics in Tumut. Currently there is no toilet here but a new one is being planned
3	Browns Creek Campsite	Pit toilet	Dam water	Free	No	High Campground upgrade	This Campground is currently closed due to damage caused by the 2019/2020 Bushfires. Sheltered picnic area and a fireplace.
3	Yellowin Forest Park	Pit toilet	Dam water	Free	No	Low Existing users	Picnic table, campsites. No description - water-frontage camping area, limited facilities. Attractive for fishing and boating
3	Ben Smith Campsite	Pit toilet	Dam water	Free	No	High Potential for hut	This Campground is currently closed due to damage caused by the 2019/2020 bushfires. Sheltered picnic area and a fireplace. Campsite to be rebuilt and track re-established
3	Buddong Falls Picnic Area	Pit toilet	Creek water	\$6 for up to 6 adults	Yes through NPWS	Low No space, day use only	This Campground is currently closed due to damage caused by the 2019/2020 Bushfires. Picnic table and a fireplace. Small picnic area at the top of the Falls. Right on the boundary between National Parks and Forestry. Car park area, picnic table and small campfire

Section	Campsites	Toilets	Water	Cost	Booking rd	Hard roofed accom potential	Description (from the H&H website)
3	Buddong Hut	No	Creek water	Free	No	Low Existing historic hut	No description – Existing older hut, no other facilities, small clearing Hut was built in the 1920's
3	Paddy's River Dam Campsite	Pit toilet	Dam water	Free	No	Moderate Potential for hut	2023 upgrade and new picnic shelters, new shelter at entrance, upgraded toilets and updated signage Located amongst alpine ash forests, a site of gold mining in the 1800's the dam was built as a source of water for those activities.
3	Junction Campsite	Pit toilet	Creek water	Free	No	Moderate Potential for hut	Junction of the West Burra Creek and East Burra Creek. Sheltered picnic area and a fireplace.
3	Henry Angel Trackhead	Yes	Tank water	Free	No	Low Area floods	Electric BBQ's, campsites and covered seating areas. The southernmost Trackhead on the Hume and Hovell Track, Henry Angel is only 8kms from Tumbarumba via the Tooma Road. It has plenty of camping space by the Burra Creek. Please note, this campsite has been impacted by flooding during current the La Nina rain events and there may be high water levels surrounding the campsite and soft grounds when camping, need to be prepared for wet conditions.
4	Mannus Lake Campsite	Pit toilets	Lake water	Free	No	Moderate Existing car campers	Covered seating, fish cleaning facilities. Mannus Lake is located in the Mannus State Forest, 16.5km south of Henry Angel Trackhead and only 10km by car from Tumbarumba on Mannus Lake Road. It offers waterfront camping with beautiful views over the lake and is popular with car campers, caravanners and day trippers to the Lake.
4	Mannus Campsite	Pit toilets	Creek water	Free	No	Low Limited space	Covered picnic table, BBQ. It is 5.5kms upstream of Mannus Lake, on Mannus Creek. It can be a quieter option for camping during summer when Mannus Lake Campsite is popular.
4	Munderoo Campsite	Pit toilets	Creek water	Free	No	High Potential for hut, another site between MC & Horse Creek	Covered picnic table, BBQ. Munderoo is an Aboriginal word meaning 'place of thunder'. The early settlers attempted to translate Aboriginal wording and this resulted in many variations of the spelling of these places. Munderoo is one such example where the two spellings are both used for the area. The State Forest is Munderoo, but the access road is Munderoo Road, and the Hume and Hovell Track campground is spelt Munderoo.
4	Lankeys Creek Campsite	Pit toilet	Creek water	Free	No	Low Limited space	Shelter. No further description.

Section	Campsites	Toilets	Water	Cost	Booking rd	Hard roofed accom potential	Description (from the H&H website)
4	Tin Mines Campground	Pit toilets	Tank water	\$6 for up to 6 adults	Yes through NPWS	Moderate Tenure is NP which may constrain development	Large open area, sheltered picnic area, campsites and fireplaces. No description
5	Samuel Bollard Campground	Pit toilet	Tank water	\$6 for up to 6 adults	Yes through NPWS	Moderate Tenure is NP which may constrain development, on NP, limited space	Sheltered picnic area and a fireplace. No description
5	Ingenia Holiday Park	Yes	Yes	\$39 per night for 2 adults	Yes	Low Already provided	The Ingenia Holiday Park is privately owned with a range of accommodation available and camping permitted.
5	Table Top Park	Yes	Yes	No	No	Low Day use only	Site camping is meant to be available for H&H Walkers only, no camping for anyone else. Seek an alternative option to this location – potential to change campsite location to base of Budginigi Hill

Figure 2.3.13 Potential to upgrade campsites on the northern half of the Hume and Hovell Track

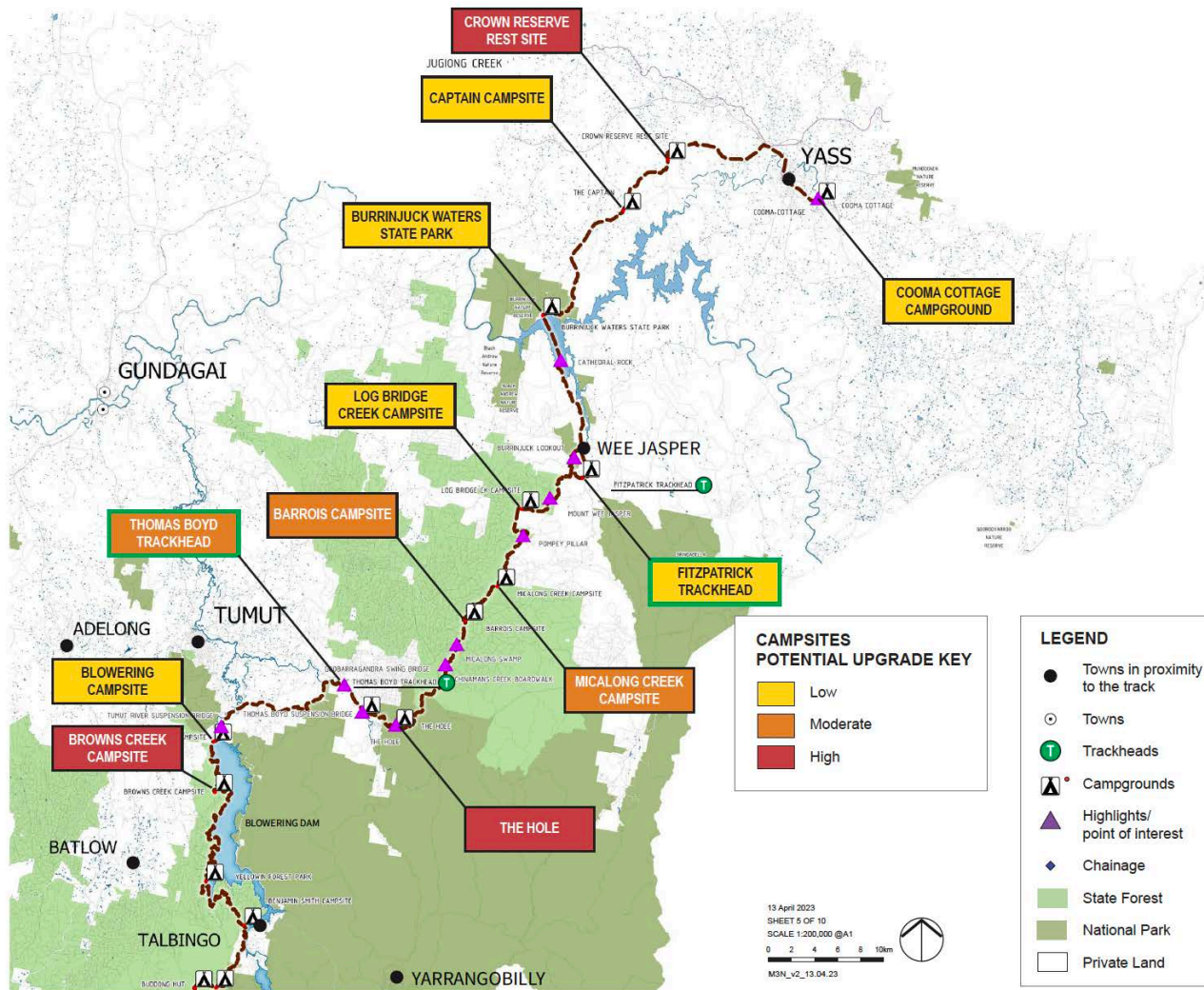
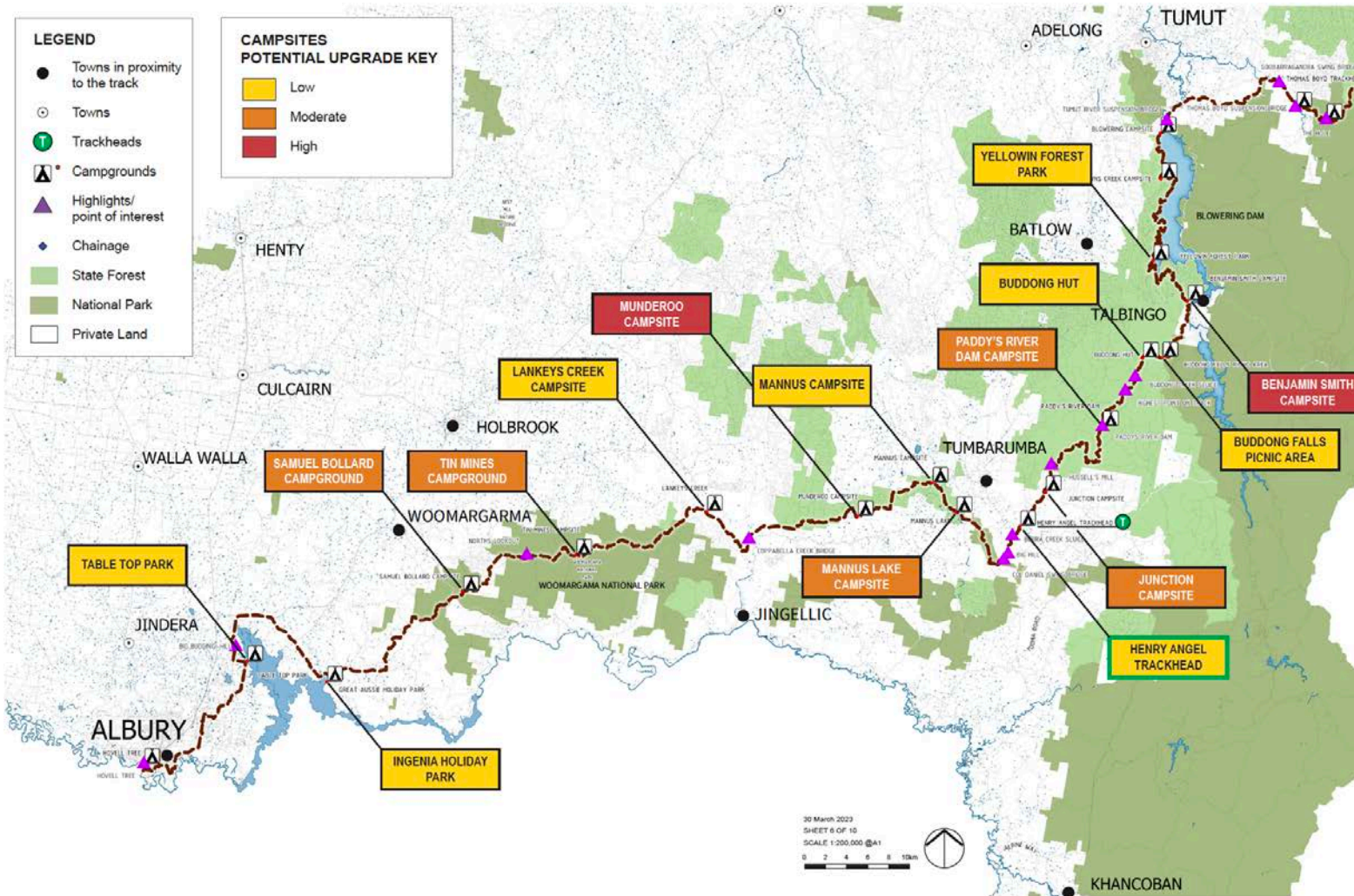


Figure 2.3.14 Potential to upgrade campsites on the southern half of the Hume and Hovell Track





#### 2.2.4 Track services

##### *Transfers*

The only known operator promoting the provision of transfers between the Track and hard roofed accommodation in nearby townships, or between different points on the Track so that walkers could skip a section and resume further along, is 'Our Snowy' is based out of Talbingo. This operator offers bus tours around Tumut and also has a 4WD that could take people to the track. Destination Riverina Murray is working with an additional operator to provide transfers, gear hire and food drops.

However, some accommodation operators and taxi drivers provide this service on an ad-hoc basis. The provision and promotion of a more formal transfer service offer is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

A boat ride is required to cross Burrinjuck Dam, from Burrinjuck Waters State Park and disembarking near Cathedral Rock, a journey of 6-7km taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The service is usually available on Mondays and Thursdays for track users, or by special arrangement for groups. Boat bookings are essential. Usage of this services is extremely low. There is also no kayak or canoe hire service offered here.

##### *Food drops*

No service providers offer food drops or rubbish removal for multi-night walkers. Experienced long-distance walkers have organised this with individuals that they choose (eg. Blowering Campsite and Munderoo Campsite). The provision and promotion of a more formal food drop / rubbish removal service offer is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

Bushwalkers report that hiding food drops is more difficult on the Hume and Hovell Track than most walks due to few safe locations to stow and retrieve it at some sites. There is an opportunity to construct lockable drop off facilities at strategic locations (eg. trackheads) – this is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

### 3. THE EXISTING USERS

#### 3.1 VISITATION

Very limited data is collected, stored, analysed and reported in relation to visitation and use of the Hume and Hovell Track – this is a strategic issue addressed in **Section 7**.

Six points on the track have track counters that have generated walker data. **Table 3.1.1** presents an annual visitation count for each and comments on their count.

This is a really limited account of usage, given the financial investment made in the walk and its maintenance. It is reported there is some data for Mount Wee Jasper, but this has not been incorporated into the overall reporting system.

**Table 3.1.1** Estimated annual walkers from track counters

Location	Likely 2022 walkers	Comments
East Hill Albury	18,161	Track Management suggests that at least 23,000 are short walkers, leaving 13,323 as overnight walkers
Tumut River Bridge	6,651	Considered a reliable estimate of walkers
Thomas Boyd Trackhead	6,586	Considered a reliable estimate of walkers
Lankeys Creek	251	Averaged over two year data count
Buddong Falls	-	Limited data to present reliable figure
Burrinjuck Singletrack	2,946	Limited data
Henry Angel Trackhead	-	Data not supplied

The data suggests that as few as 251 walkers per year undertake the entire Hume and Hovell Track, from end to end. This conclusion comes from Track managers

using data from Lankeys Creek as the best indicator, because as a more remote section there is minimal short walk use distorting the longer walker data.

Track counters suggest the most used section of the track is East Hill in Albury, which has had an average of 18,161 visits per year. This higher use is indicative of this section being close to a major population centre looking for outdoor recreation, and this section has attractions that convert it to a short walk proposition. While there is no data differentiating the proportion of short, day use and overnight walkers, we suspect that most of it is short walker use.

Putting aside East Hill in Albury, trackheads attract the most walkers, because they are the only access points to the track using two-wheel drive access that also supports car-based camping, and because they have easier access to nearby towns for resupply. The surprisingly low number of trackheads (only three for over 426kms of trail) hinders the potential of a higher number of short walk tourists (in 2WD cars) being able to reach the trail and raises the question, why so few trackheads have been constructed? The limited number of trackheads has created a bias towards 4WD tourism, which limits numbers of short walk tourists and limits potential spend to the local towns and accommodation. The reasons for low number of track heads will be explored in the site investigation phase. The other major influence on the number of walkers is whether the site has car-based camping and a potable water supply servicing it. This raises the prospect of the walk supporting camping, rather than camping supporting the walk.

The largest day and overnight walker use along the track is likely to be the at the Tumut River Bridge (6,651 annual visitors) and Thomas Boyd Trackhead (6,586 annual visitors).

It has been reported that track use was declining in the years leading up to 2018. Data since 2019 suggests increasing use at all monitored sites. The highest increases are:

- 22% per annum East Hill Albury (over three years 2018 – 2021);
- 14.4% per annum at Tumut River Bridge (two years 2019 to 2021); and
- 2% per annum at Thomas Boyd Trackhead (over two years 2019 – 2021).

Growth appears to be mainly from short walkers and day walkers, not overnight or end to end walkers.

Reflections Holiday Park (Lake Burrinjuck) operates a boat transfer for walkers up and down the lake. The operator reports that in a good year they transfer 50 walkers and a quiet year just 25 walkers. However, data supplied by the operators suggests use is lower than this, never exceeding 32 passengers in a year. **Table 3.1.2** provides user data for the years 2017 – 2023 and demonstrates very low take-up of this service. This further suggests very low usage of the adjacent northern and southern sections of the Track.

**Table 3.1.2** Estimated Hume and Hovell Track users taking boat access on Lake Burrinjuck 2017 - 2023

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan							1
Feb							1
Mar	5		5				3
Apr	10	7	5		2	2	
May		2				2	
June		2		1			
July							
Aug							
Sept	1	6				1	
Oct	1	12		1			
Nov	2			14			
Dec		3			2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>

## 3.2 NATURE OF TRACK USE

### 3.2.1 Use of the Track

Very little data about the nature of use of the Track is available. Ironically, we know more about potential stakeholders (from a questionnaire prior to construction<sup>2</sup>) than we do about actual users. The two principal information sources are track counters and logbooks at some Trackhead locations<sup>3</sup>. Logbooks collect useful visitor profile information related to:

- residence of visitor;
- party size;
- one way or return walking; and
- end to end walking or not.

We note that few locations have both track counters and logbooks. Insufficient visitor use data and its adequate analysis and reporting is a strategic issue addressed in **Section 7**.

The 2015-18 log book data was used to determine the proportion of entries stating they were walking end to end, and returning to the same starting point.

#### *Tendency to walk end to end*

**Section 3.1** identified that end to end walkers might represent around 251 walkers per annum. **Table 3.2.1** identifies varying but generally high intentions to walk end to end of between 8 – 39% of walkers. At two points almost a third of walkers plan to

walk end to end (30 – 39% of Peter Wood Boardwalk and Munderoo), and one point where end to end intention is very low (Coffee Pot at 8%). These proportions are likely to be higher than reality, because short distance walkers are less likely to complete log book entries, distorting the results towards overnight and especially multi-night walkers.

Table 3.2.1 Proportion of end to end and return walkers from Logbook data (2014-17)

Logbook location	End to end %	Return route %
Fitzpatrick Trailhead	11%	29%
Col Daniel Bridge	19%	11%
Coffee Pot	8%	6%
Peter Wood Boardwalk	30%	2%
The Hole	17%	27%
Munderoo	39%	3%
Micalong Creek	No data	No data
Mt Wee Jasper	No data	No data

**Table 3.2.1** also indicates relatively low double back / return to start intentions. The higher intentioned walkers were at The Hole and Fitzpatrick Trailhead (27 – 29%). Very low intentions to return were logged at the Peter Wood Boardwalk, Munderoo and Coffee Pot (2%, 3% and 6% respectively).

<sup>2</sup> Alston G.S., 1985, Hume and Hovell Track potential use, Crown Lands Office

<sup>3</sup> Locations were: Coffee Pot; Col Daniel Bridge; Fitzpatrick Trackhead; Micalong Creek; Mount Wee Jasper; Munderoo; Peter Wood Boardwalk; and The Hole.

Most marketing and walker blogs recommend to walk north to south, to coordinate with the Burrinjuck ferry and to imagine being Hume and Hovell on their outward exploratory rather than return route.

### *Total track usage*

To determine total usage of the Track, we developed a very rough analysis<sup>4</sup>, and suggest that total walking and running use might be around 50,648 per annum, and slowly increasing by around 2% – 3%. Determining a more accurate total use level could be very useful for supporting funding applications and building positive public relations – this is a strategic opportunity addressed in in **Section 7**. We also suggest that the walkers are probably half short walk and half overnight, broken down as follows:

- Total 'end to end' walk 0.5% (251)
- Endurance running events 1% (500 competitors in annual running event)
- Short walkers at least 45% (East Hill Albury 23,000)
- Overnight walkers on some sections 53% (27,897) excluding end to end

As mentioned in **Section 1.1**, if the market is camping and then using part of the trail as an activity supporting their camping, then the proportion of overnight walking may well be less than half the total visitors.

### **3.2.2 Seasonal use of the Track**

Unfortunately, the track counters do not provide day of use, but an analysis of the campground data suggests a highly seasonal use of the Track based on summer

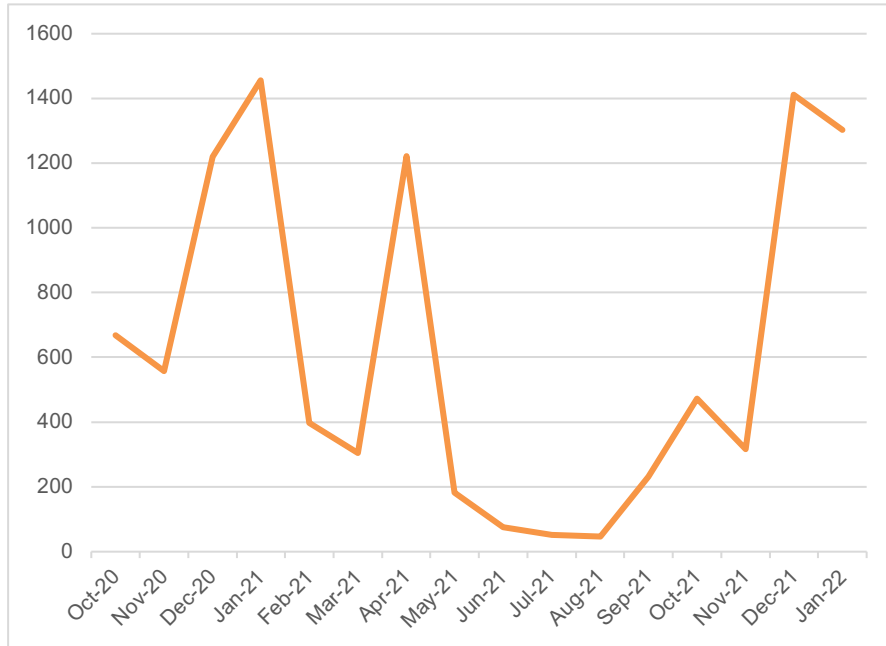
(December to January) and Easter (April) holiday periods. This trend is visually depicted in **Figure 3.2.1**. This focus is important when considering user safety in bushfire season and water availability during these drier months.

---

<sup>4</sup> To generate total visitors at 50,648, we added East Hill Albury (36,323), Tumut River Bridge (13,303), and Burrinjuck Singletrack (1,022). We treated the majority of track data as being

individual and not double counted users. We assumed Tumut River Bridge and Thomas Boyd Trackhead were same users. We assumed the 251 at Lankeys Creek were 'end to end' walkers captured in one of the other counts.

Figure 3.2.1 Number of campground users / month at the Thomas Boyd Trackhead (Oct 2020 – Jan 2022)



### 3.3 VISITOR PROFILE

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

Very little data about the profile of users of the Track is available. There are no visitor segmentation splits, no purpose of visit, needs, unmet needs, satisfaction,

likelihood to recommend, section walked, length of stay, sites of overnight use etc. The lack of visitor profile is a strategic issue addressed in **Section 7**.

#### 3.3.2 Place of residence

An analysis of the log book data from Peter Wood Boardwalk Trailhead data suggests 62% come from NSW, 34% from interstate and 4% from other countries. A more specific residence split is as follows:

- 32% Riverina Murray region;
- 20% other regional NSW;
- 10% Sydney;
- 11% ACT;
- 23% interstate; and
- 4% international.

In a potential economic impact assessment of increased visitation to the Hume and Hovell Track, it was posited that 50% of Track visitors were visitors to the Riverina. This is lower than the data from the logbooks presented above.

#### 3.3.3 Walking party size

The 2015-18 log book data suggests that the party size most commonly varied between 1 and 6 persons and averaged 3.6 persons. Larger groups were 12-15 or 25 persons, but these have only occurred approximately 15 times between 2016 and 2022. This information is useful for campsite size, any future transfers and food drops to Trailheads.

### 3.3.4 Overnight users

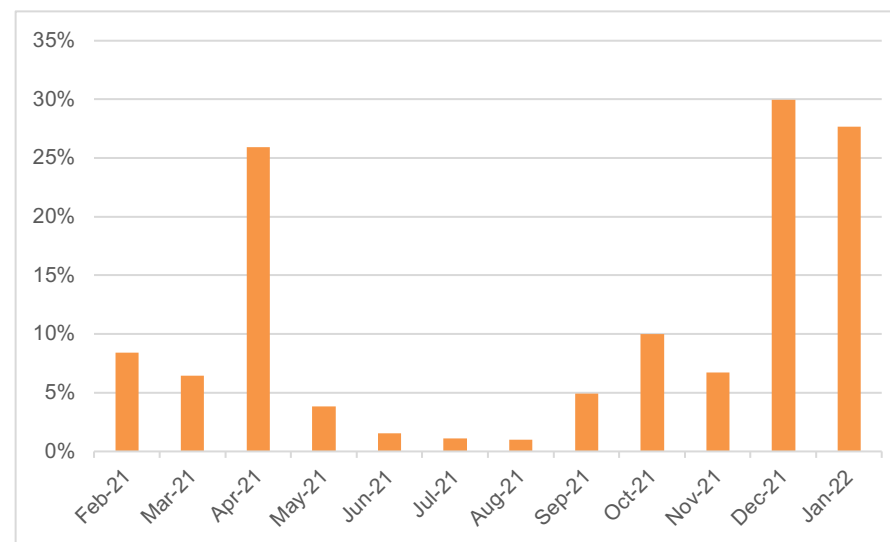
In a potential economic impact assessment of increased visitation to the Hume and Hovell Track, it was proposed that 50% of hikers were visitors from outside the region that would need to stay at least one night in accommodation in a nearby town – most likely at the start and / or end of their walk.

There are no hard roofed accommodation properties right on the route. This will be addressed as a strategic opportunity in **Section 7**. It is unknown what the takeup of these accommodation options is – this information would be very useful in building business cases for further investment in accommodation associated with the Track.

The principal form of overnight accommodation while walking the Track are campgrounds for self-sufficient camping. These campgrounds attract both walkers, pure campers, and campers that use sections of the Track as short or day walks. Unfortunately, the only campground data sourced was for two sites: the Thomas Boyd Trackhead and Fitzpatrick Trackhead, because these are the only two that charge for overnight stay. **Figure 3.3.1** presents the monthly camping seasonality for Thomas Boyd Trackhead Campground. Use of these campgrounds for February 2021 to January 2022 was 4,707 people at Thomas Boyd Trackhead Campground and 3,099 people for the campground at Fitzpatrick Trackhead. Some 84% of this use happens in just three months (December, January and April).

Camping is charged at \$7.50 per person. Annual revenue in 2021 was subsequently \$35,303 from Thomas Boyd Trackhead Campground and \$36,805 from Fitzpatrick Trackhead. Annual revenue from other campgrounds was not provided.

Figure 3.3.1 Percentage of monthly use for Thomas Boyd Trackhead Campground (Feb 2021 to Jan 2022)



### 3.3.5 User information

It has been reported that visitors to the region using Visitor Information Centres (VIC's) and adventure stores are much more interested in and enquiring about local short walks in VICs. Multi-day hikers are unlikely to directly enquire about the track in VICs or adventure stores and will instead rely on their own online research or hiking network for advice and recommendations (including Hume and Hovell Team directly via the website).

### 3.3.6 Visitor feedback

There is no formal mechanism to objectively collect user feedback from the Hume and Hovell Track. Log books are inadequate for this purpose because they leave it up to the visitor what to say. The lack of a formal objective visitor feedback system is a significant constraint to meeting visitor needs, evaluating the effectiveness of trail investments and identifying which markets to target. Analysing feedback and feeding it back into management and decision making will significantly improve track management effectiveness and optimise return on investment. This will be addressed as a strategic issue in **Section 7**. We have sourced and reviewed feedback from the following sources:

- Track logbook comments (approximately 500 users from multiple sites);
- Hume and Hovell Track Facebook Page;
- Google reviews;
- All Trails reviews; and
- Bushwalker blogs (Lotsafreshair, Bushwalk.com, Hiiker).

There is no TripAdvisor site for the Hume and Hovell Track. This is a missed opportunity to generate interest, visitors and practical feedback from users. The closest connection to TripAdvisor is a listing for Cooma Cottage. A site for the Track can be built – the Overland Track has a listing with 127 reviews and rated #6 out of 24 things to do in Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. Creating a site for the Hume and Hovell Track is an opportunity acknowledged in **Section 7**.

#### *Feedback from Track logbooks*

Logbooks are generally not an ideal source for visitor feedback, because they tend to capture a lot of generalist comments on the weather, anecdotes and other topics of limited use. An analysis of approximately 500 comments from the logbooks of

2018 – 2022 suggests the following positive feedback – in order of the most number of comments:

- some tough walking (ascents) but worth it for the peace and serenity;
- appreciate the campsites in natural / secluded areas with basic facilities (toilet, picnic table and water) at most sites;
- appreciate the H&H website News section and Facebook site for track updates;
- definitely not a wilderness walk, but like the transitions between rural character and natural settings;
- nice to see so few other walkers; and
- really appreciate the track maintenance.

An analysis of the comments from the logbooks of 2018 – 2022 suggests the following negative feedback – in order of the number of comments:

- H&H website needs better maps suitable for wayfinding;
- blackberry and thistle infestations (2018 – 23);
- some boring sections – particularly roads and plantations; and
- more track markers in places needed (2018 – 20).

#### *Feedback from Track Facebook page*

The Hume and Hovell Facebook page has generated very little feedback and is part of a strategic opportunity identified in **Section 7**. A lack of feedback suggests that the site may be under subscribed and under supplied with posts from management and users. Generating feedback is easy with active posting, assuming a reasonable number of followers have been generated.

The two respondents posting feedback in 2019 gave brief but positive support for the Track.



There were only nine reviews of the Track on Google Reviews, which generated a positive score of 4.6 out of 5. The positive feedback came from the connection to the Hume and Hovell expedition. The small amount of negative feedback was associated with inadequate directional signage, causing walkers to take the wrong route at times (2021 – 2021).

#### *Feedback on All Trails site*

There were 12 reviews for the Track on the All Trails site, generating an average score of 4.6 out of 5. The small amount of negative feedback was associated with inadequate directional signage

#### *Feedback from bushwalker bloggers*

The blogger Lotsafreshair undertook a three-day section of the Track between Talbingo and Tumbarumba because it had a real strength of options to link up local townships and communities, re-supply, and access beds and a hot shower.

Bushwalker.com provides a number of highly experienced bush walker accounts and feedback, as well as significant useful advice that is not covered in the Hume and Hovell Track website. There is a rare account of the end-to-end experience over 15 days, not experiencing a single other walker, which indicates an extremely low track use. The positive feedback came from:

- the historical aspect of the journey and the hardships endured by Mr Hume and Mr Hovell;
- the native forests and especially the section of track through Bago State Forest;
- seeing decaying tractors made for some great photos;
- the well maintained trackheads;
- the friendly trail towns of Tumut and Tumbarumba for resupplying; and

- the provision of lifts by Tumbarumba Caravan Park to and from the caravan park.

Bushwalkers emphasis that nobody should position the Track as a bushwalk, given the extensive use of roads and extensive tracts of pine plantations and farmland. The negative feedback comprised too many blackberry and thistle infestations that grew over the Track or just reduced the visual amenity.

Another walker sampled a collection of preferred sections. They questioned the validity of claiming a reasonably close match to the explorers' route where there are numerous deviations due to flooding of various valleys for reservoirs etc. They also suggested:

- making more of track attractions, such as Pompeys Pillar, Careys Cave and Jumpers Hill, and especially the dead ends that Hume and Hovell reached and had to re-navigate;
- created a bike trail section to link up access to Travelling Stock Reserves and see more of the original vegetation that Hume and Hovell would have seen (eg. Micalong Falls and where Burrinjuck Dam is between the peaks of Black Andrew and Barren Jack);
- using more Crown land easements to avoid some pine plantations;
- establish locations for resupplying provisions to reduce the requirement of walkers to leave the trail; and
- promote more use in early to mid-Spring when there are less insects.

The blogger named 'Hiiker' had no comments but positive ratings – three five-star ratings and one four star rating.

## 4. MARKETING

### 4.1 Brand

A brand pyramid or other tool used to identify the brand essence (key strengths) of the Track does not appear to have been developed for the Hume and Hovell Track – it is not addressed in the Marketing Plan for the Track. However, a track logo, in the form of two small stylised human figures representing Hume and Hovell, is displayed along the full length of the track, especially where walkers might appreciate some sign of assurance that they are on the track (see **Figure 4.1.1**).

The logo is dated and difficult to present in small size. Changes to the logo are strictly limited. The logo also presents a somewhat resigned image of two men hunched over in poor weather, looking downwards with exaggerated heads, which combined, is not an encouraging or inspiring message. A new logo that represents endeavour, vision, courage and inspiring landscapes could significantly improve the image and perception of the walk to a wider audience. There are style guidelines for the logo and track name.

Figure 4.1.1 Application of logo as Track pictogram and naming



### 4.2 Target markets

The Marketing Plan for the Hume and Hovell Track identified six target markets for the Track:

1. Experienced bushwalkers and hikers (current market)
2. Trail runners (current market)
3. Active mainstream – seeking a nature day-trip to nearby locations
4. Outdoor/camping – seeking a 1-3 night nature experience
5. Families looking for short walks with picnic facilities
6. Mountain bikers – seeking new trails to explore

This is a diverse range of markets to 'target'. Ideally, these markets could be matched up to particular sectors of the Trail or particular campsites, so that the type and standard of facilities and their servicing matches market needs. This will be addressed as a strategic opportunity in **Section 7**.

### 4.3 Promotional channels

The Hume and Hovell Track is currently most extensively profiled via the website [www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au](http://www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au). The site is well optimised, being the first listing from a Google search – without advertising to place it there. The positioning statement emphasises diverse landscapes enroute, rather than the linkage to the explorers' route:

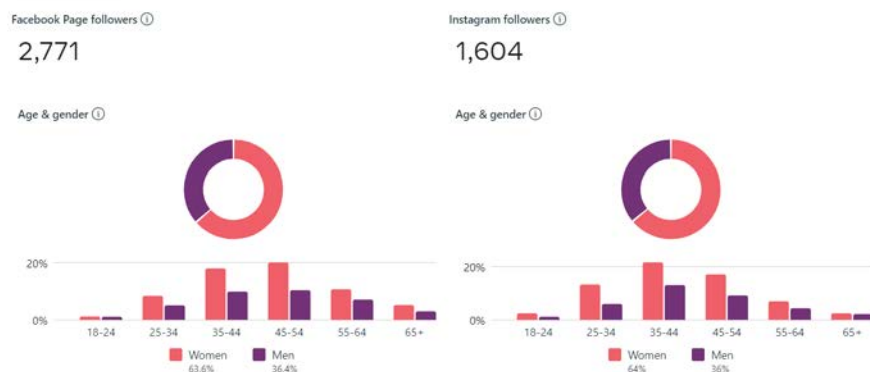
*Find your way...Through diverse forests, over alpine streams, past geological wonders and amidst rolling farmlands, you'll find your feet along the Hume and Hovell Track.*

The website is structured to cover: Towns; Sections; The Track; Short walks; Highlights; Campsites; and Plan your trip. A Hume and Hovell Trip Planner is being scoped and its functionality and subsequent budget needs to be determined.

The immediate missing ingredient is a contemporary standard interactive map of the route, also showing trackheads, campsites and attractions built on a high-resolution aerial photograph. A version of this map has been built but could be further enhanced through the addition of more interactive and pop-up layers and content, such as photos of all sites, contours, sections of track closures / detours, vegetation types, nearest supplies and meals and links to hard roofed accommodation along the route, and reliable fresh water sources. This is a strategic opportunity identified in **Section 7**.

There is a Facebook and an Instagram site for the Hume and Hovell Track. **Figure 4.3.1** presents the gender and distribution of these users.

**Figure 4.3.1** Gender and distribution of Hume and Hovell Track Facebook and Instagram sites



Additional metrics from these platforms suggest that:

- there are approximately 2,771 Facebook users, and they predominantly live in Sydney (13%) and Canberra (12%), followed by Wagga Wagga (8%) and Tumbarumba (6%); and
- there are approximately 1,604 Instagram users, and they predominately live in Sydney (28%).

There is no listing of the Track under the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse. This listing would allow many tourism marketers and distributors to promote the trail and even incorporate it into overnight tour programs. This is a strategic opportunity identified in **Section 7**.

There is an existing Map Kit produced in 2013 by Crown Lands available for purchase that is being updated. In addition to the Map Kits that are being upgraded there is also a promotional 'short walk' style brochure being produced.


We understand that a series of Map Kits are being finalised for each of the five sections of the Track, featuring contoured maps with campsite facilities, logbook locations, the original Track, nearby shops, restaurants, accommodation and hospitals. Another feature of the Map Kits are the interpretive content on the Hume and Hovell expedition and in particular, interactions with local Aboriginal people. **Figure 4.3.2** presents a portion of one of these forthcoming Map Kit.

**Table 4.3.1** presents a list of other parties that are promoting the Track, listed in order of their Google search rating. These sites offer a big opportunity to drive users of these sites to the Hume and Hovell website – especially once an interactive map is added. This opportunity is addressed in **Section 7**.


Figure 4.3.2 A section of the new Map Kit for the Hume and Hovell Track

### Hiking notes

The Hume and Hovell Track commences at **Cooma Cottage**, Hume's main residence during his lifetime. The first 37km of track, heading towards **Burrinjuck Dam**, is on public roads with only right turns. The track heads west along the Yass Valley Way towards the Hume Highway. From the centre of **Yass**, the track turns left onto **Black Range Road** and follows this road for a further 22.3km to the first campsite, **The Captain Campsite**.



From the **Captain Campsite**, the track continues to follow **Black Range Road** until the intersection with **Burrinjuck Road**. It turns left and follows **Burrinjuck Road** for 9km, and then left again onto **Waterloo Road**. This road then enters **Burrinjuck Nature Reserve** along a rough bush track. A benched foot track then drops down to **Lake Burrinjuck**. Near the shore, a foot track is used to pass around **Carrolls Bay** to reach **Burrinjuck Waters Holiday Park**.




**Lake Burrinjuck**

From here, a boat service is used to cross **Lake Burrinjuck**, a journey of 6-7km taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The boat is usually available on Mondays and Thursdays for track users, or by special arrangement for groups. Boat bookings are essential - please call (02) 6227 8184 to arrange timings. There is a charge of \$40 for the boat journey, payable at **Burrinjuck Waters Holiday Park**. This includes camping at **Burrinjuck Waters Holiday Park** the night prior and use of their facilities, including laundry and showers. Small change is required for these facilities: 20c for showers and \$1 for laundry. A kiosk is also available that stocks staple groceries and provides hot meals. Please note the shop shuts at 5pm on Sundays. For further information visit their website.

The disembarkation point is near **Cathedral Rock**. From here, a vehicular track is followed south for 4km to intersect with a sealed road **Burrinjuck Waters Holiday Park**.

near **Careys Cove**. The track takes **Cave's Road** into **Wee Jasper**, passing **Barber's Bay** near **Carey's Cave** and **Carey's Reserve**, a public camping ground used by campers, fishermen and water sport enthusiasts. From **Carey's Reserve**, it is 2.3km to **Wee Jasper Village** and then only a short distance to the entry of **Wee Jasper Nature Reserve**.



**Carey's Cave / Wee Jasper**

From **Wee Jasper** two track options exist to get to the **Fitzpatrick Trackhead**: straight along **Wee Jasper Road**, or on a foot track through the **Wee Jasper Nature Reserve**. The foot track heads into the reserve and climbs steeply over a stony ridge covered with a dry sclerophyll forest. In spring and early summer the wildflowers are very attractive. From the top of the ridge, looking back towards **Wee Jasper**, there are some good viewing points to take a breather and view the village area and the **Goodradigbee Arm** of **Lake Burrinjuck**.

The track descends down the western side of the ridge, crosses **Wee Jasper Creek** and reaches the **Wee Jasper Road**. From here the track heads left along a foot track for 1.5km to **Fitzpatrick Trackhead**, or straight ahead to skip the **Trackhead** and continue on to **McWee Jasper** on Section 2.

### Estimated walk times


**Section 1 / Grade: Easy (entire section)**

- Cooma Cottage (Yass) >> Fitzpatrick Trackhead:** 72.3 km / 28 hrs
- Cooma Cottage (Yass) >> Crown Reserve Rest Site:** 22.5 km / 7 hrs
- Crown Reserve Rest Site >> Captain Campsite:** 8.6 km / 3 hrs
- Captain Campsite >> Burrinjuck Waters State Park:** 20.4 km / 7 hrs
- Burrinjuck Waters State Park >> Fitzpatrick Trackhead:** 20.3 km / 7 hrs

### How to access the track



1 **Burrinjuck Waters State Park /** Accessed via Burrinjuck Road. The track starts where Burrinjuck Road meets the Wee Jasper end of Burrinjuck Dam.

5 **Fitzpatrick's Trackhead /** Accessed via the Wee Jasper Road from either Yass or Tumut.




We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of the lands where we live, learn and work as well as across the lands and waters that we travel through.

We also acknowledge our Elders past, present and emerging.

### Visit the website


- Trail updates & maintenance
- Trail history
- Hiking stories
- Digital maps
- Compasses

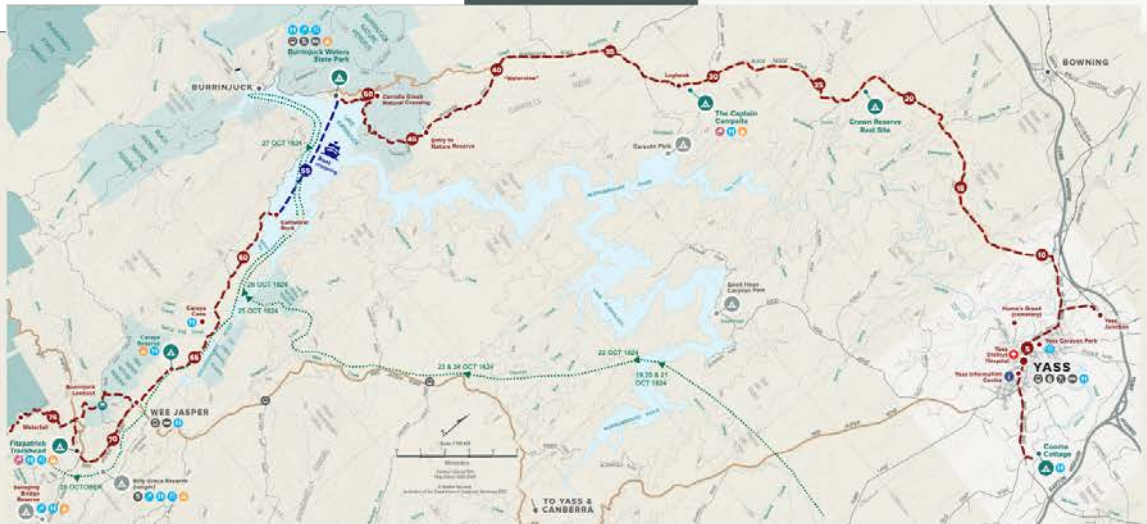


Signatures used on this map have been reproduced from DCS System Document © State of New South Wales Department for Customer Service NSW. For research information go to [publications.parliament.nsw.gov.au](http://publications.parliament.nsw.gov.au)

### 1 Cooma Cottage to Fitzpatrick Trackhead

Section 1 / Grade: Easy  
72.3 km / 28 hrs





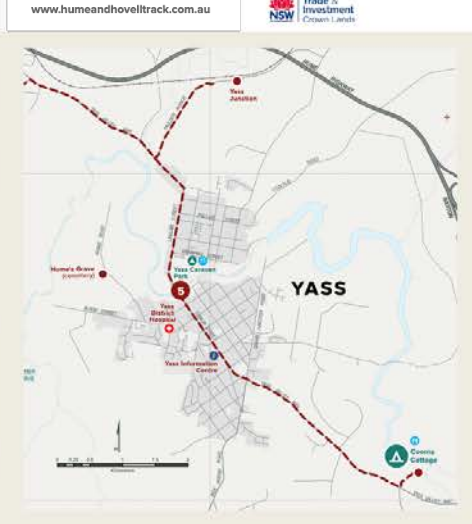


Table 4.3.1 Other parties promoting the Track listed in order of their Google search rating

Promotional channel	Source
1. Hume and Hovell website	<a href="https://www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au/">https://www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au/</a>
2. Australian Hiker	<a href="https://australianhiker.com.au/trails/hume-and-hovell-track-nsw-426-km/">https://australianhiker.com.au/trails/hume-and-hovell-track-nsw-426-km/</a>
3. lotsafreshair	<a href="https://lotsafreshair.com/hume-and-hovell-track">https://lotsafreshair.com/hume-and-hovell-track</a>
4. All Trails	<a href="https://www.alltrails.com/trail/australia/new-south-wales/hume-and-hovell-walking-track-full-route">https://www.alltrails.com/trail/australia/new-south-wales/hume-and-hovell-walking-track-full-route</a>
5. Trail Hiking Australia	<a href="https://www.trailhiking.com.au/hikes/hume-and-hovell-track/">https://www.trailhiking.com.au/hikes/hume-and-hovell-track/</a>
6. Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/humeandhovelltrack/">https://www.facebook.com/humeandhovelltrack/</a>
7. Hiiker	<a href="https://hiiker.app/trails/new-south-wales/yass-valley/hume-and-hovell-track">https://hiiker.app/trails/new-south-wales/yass-valley/hume-and-hovell-track</a>
8. Greater Hume Council	<a href="https://www.visitgreaterhume.com.au/Featured-Content/Natural-Wonders/Hume-Hovell-Track">https://www.visitgreaterhume.com.au/Featured-Content/Natural-Wonders/Hume-Hovell-Track</a>
9. FKT (Fastest Known Time)	<a href="https://fastestknowntime.com/route/hume-hovell-walking-track-nsw-australia">https://fastestknowntime.com/route/hume-hovell-walking-track-nsw-australia</a>
10. Visit NSW	<a href="https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/snowy-mountains/tumbarumba-area/tumbarumba/attractions/hume-and-hovell-track-henry-angel-trackhead">https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/snowy-mountains/tumbarumba-area/tumbarumba/attractions/hume-and-hovell-track-henry-angel-trackhead</a>
11. Tom's Outdoors	<a href="https://www.tomsoutdoors.com.au/blogs/films/goobarragandra-river-via-the-hume-and-hovell-track-explore-with-toms">https://www.tomsoutdoors.com.au/blogs/films/goobarragandra-river-via-the-hume-and-hovell-track-explore-with-toms</a>
12. Track notes by Hohn & Lyn Daly	Included at the back of the book Take a Walk in Southern New South Wales & the ACT

#### 4.4 Desired growth in use of the Track

A Draft Marketing Plan for the Hume and Hovell Track was prepared, and while it has been used as a guide, was never finished and endorsed. The Plan stated that a

key objective was to increase visitation to the track but did not propose any specifics for this. This will be addressed as a strategic opportunity in **Section 7**. The follow-on activation of this objective within the Marketing Plan appeared to be through:

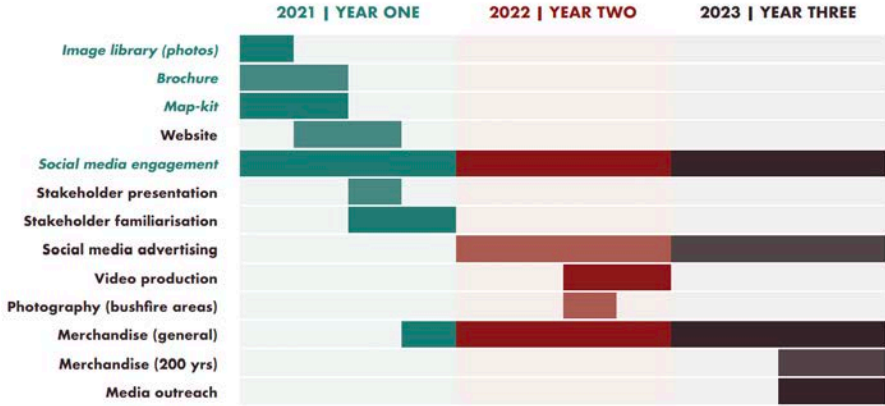
- further development of short walks;
- improve the way key attractions can be accessed and interpreted;
- reposition multi-day and end to end walks to be an aspirational aim for walkers; and
- generation of new images, collateral, branded merchandise and more effective use of social media and local tourism operators to create conversations and interest about the walk.

While the promotional actions were costed and time scheduled, the first two initiatives involving the product and its supporting infrastructure were not.

#### 4.5 Marketing strategies for the Track

**Figure 4.5.1** presents the marketing actions for the Hume and Hovell Track. These actions have a quite modest supporting budget of approximately \$30,000 (incl gst) per annum (excluding printing costs). Marketing Plans should be more than promotion. The Marketing Plan for the Track (Angry Ant Web + Marketing, Version 2.1, no date on document) should address visitor data, visitor profiles, visitor feedback and visitation forecasts, because these are the major influences on how to position and promote the Track. This opportunity is addressed in **Section 7**.

Figure 4.5.1 The marketing actions for the Hume and Hovell Track



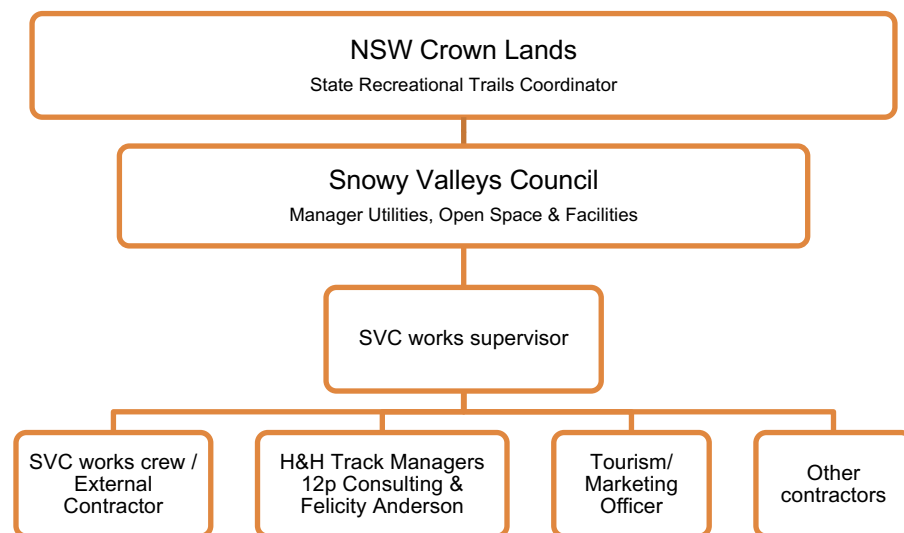
## 5. GOVERNANCE

### 5.1 OVERALL AND DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT

#### 5.1.1 Introduction

**Figure 5.1.1** presents the governance structure for managing the Hume and Hovell Track.

Figure 5.1.1 The current governance structure for managing the Hume and Hovell Track



The NSW Department Planning and Environment – Crown Lands is responsible for overall management, direction and funding of the Hume and Hovell Track. Crown Lands is ultimately responsible for all Track management and maintenance over all Crown reserves and Crown roads, and related signage / infrastructure, single track and benching maintenance/upgrades on all other tenures. Crown Lands owns more than 350 built assets along the Track (with a replacement value of \$20M).

#### 5.1.2 Asset management system

There are over 350 built assets, with a replacement value of nearly \$20M, identified along the entire length of the track. These assets are entered in the asset management system Asset Edge ‘Reflect’, which is used by Snowy Valleys Council to plan, prioritise, and record asset maintenance within the shire and also on the Hume and Hovell Track.

Reflect is software designed for asset management and includes both asset condition database as well as a defect and action module for planning maintenance work. The Reflect system integrates track asset management with that of the rest of Snowy Valleys Shire. Crown Lands reports that Reflect does not meet their needs. Crown Lands would like this system (or an alternative) to provide a more user-friendly approach for them to monitor works, such as Dashboard Summary easily usable statement of works being done and what needs to be done.

Reflect includes a 1-5 condition rating on assets and can be used for certain types of reporting. Crown Lands would like ratings to be matched to maintenance standards and a maintenance program.

Crown Lands has suggested either using another asset management system or Asset Edge 'Reflect' project management. The use of other asset management systems by managers of other long-distance tracks should be investigated.

### 5.1.3 Scope of Works

#### *Roles of Snowy Valleys Council*

Crown Lands has contracted Snowy Valleys Council through an annual contract *Scope of Works Hume and Hovell Track: Maintenance, Marketing and Fire/Flood Recovery* (August 2022) to deliver the following roles on its behalf:

- provide maintenance services on the H&H to provide a safe, sustainable and quality natural experience for users;
- provide H&H promotional, marketing and information services, including social media to provide information and raise the profile of the track to visitors and the community, and incorporating the H&H into the Council's Destination Management Plan and associated Visitor Service Strategy;
- report on a quarterly basis to Crown Lands on all relevant aspects of H&H management.
- maintain partnerships through liaison and progression as required with all stakeholders involved in the operation of the H&H.

#### *Contents of Scope of Works*

The Scope of Works addresses:

1. Aims and Objectives
2. Hume and Hovell Track management indicative governance structure
3. Services undertaken by Snowy Valleys Council

- Inspection and maintenance service of the Hume and Hovell Track and facilities (5 full-time equivalent staff)
  - Asset condition inspections
  - Marketing, promotion and information service (0.2 full time equivalent staff)
  - Reporting to Crown Lands (incorporated into above services)
  - Project manage and undertake minor capital project management
4. Existing Tenure Agreements & Management Responsibilities
  5. Crown Lands Responsibilities
    - Annual contract funding
    - Contact with Snowy Valleys Council
    - Resolving track access issues
    - Payment of invoices
    - Audit of any aspect of the contract
  6. Snowy Valleys Council Responsibilities
    - Facilities and Equipment
    - Environmental Management
    - Communications and Stakeholder Relationships

The Scope of Works is quite comprehensive and covers most track management related issues. The Scope of Works is generally open to negotiation between Crown Lands and Snowy Valleys Council if unforeseen issues arise.

In addition to the maintenance contract, there is/was a capital works renewal fund that was used to replace around 100 bridges and other minor infrastructure. Parallel to this there is an insurance funding that has been used to replace infrastructure damaged by the recent fires and floods. This is being delivered by SVC / 12P Consulting.



The contracted scope of works is comprehensive but in reality, the burden of vegetation management overwhelms other items in the scope of works, such as track benching, facilities cleaning and repair etc.

### *Contract budget*

There is separate funding for 'maintenance' and for 'capital works renewal' plus additional money from insurance from fires and flooding. This should be separated into the different categories of work undertaken. 'Maintenance' is classified as vegetation management, track benching, repairing picnic tables etc.

Revising the budget allocation for the contract should be considered, given the current inflationary pressures on construction and difficulties procuring skilled contractors and staff in regional areas.

### *Subcontracting*

There is a need to increase Snowy Valleys Council's flexibility to subcontract certain works when they do not have the human resources and equipment to undertake the works themselves.

There could be interest from AlburyCity and Yass Valley Councils to subcontract Hume and Hovell track management services within their LGAs to the Snowy Valleys Council. We understand progress with AlburyCity was made and abruptly stopped. This could be more efficient and less costly and deserves further exploration with Crown Lands and the Councils – a strategic opportunity covered in **Section 7**.

### *Contract review and renewal*

The annual contract has just been extended to a five-year contract. This was critical to establishing security of operations and staffing for Snowy Valleys Council.

However, there is no clause indicating the timing for review and extension, which is a common practice. Given the extension, there are several matters needing updating in the contract, including:

- an updated governance structure;
- the cessation of support services from the Mannus Correctional Facility; and
- improved budget reporting that addresses matters such as what happens to unspent funds (eg. when contractors are unable to do work).

## **5.2 RELATIONSHIP WITH LAND MANAGERS WHERE TRAIL IS LOCATED**

### **5.2.1 A multi-tenure track**

The Hume and Hovell Track passes through multiple land tenures managed by multiple public and private sector organisations / individuals. To summarise:

- 62km of track passes through various national parks managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS);
- 121km of track passes through various State Forests (managed by Forestry Corporation NSW);
- 43km of track passes through various Crown Lands (managed by the NSW Department Planning and Environment – Crown Lands); and 200km of track passes through private property / Council managed lands and roads. Parklands Albany-Wodonga Limited state on their website that they maintain 74km of the Hume and Hovell Track in NSW, including the Woomargama section.

We understand that other organisations that have an interest in the Track include NSW State Water, NSW Local Land Services and NSW Roads and Maritime Services. Crown Lands believes that all of these organisations above are responsible for all non-related track management and maintenance over their respective tenures (including Crown land managed by them as statutory managers) and their public roads, fire trails, reserves, and associated maintenance and provision of any infrastructure not related to the Track. These landholders are also responsible for advising any planned impacts from their maintenance operations, bush fire hazard reduction activities, harvesting activities and the like and should provide Crown Lands with details on necessary temporary closures and diversions.

### 5.2.2 Agreements with various land managers

There are no existing formalised agreements for track access and management between Crown Lands (or its delegated day to day Track manager Snowy Valleys Council) and the NSW NPWS nor State Forests NSW. More specifically:

- there is no regular or formal engagement between Crown Lands and the respective land tenure managers;
- there is no formalised easement over the Track;
- there is no formal acknowledgement of who owns the assets on the Track – a sizeable investment from Crown Lands that could theoretically be removed by the respective land manager; and
- Crown Lands would like other land managers to recognise the importance of the Track and contribute to Track maintenance and management where it passes through land tenure that they are responsible for. There appears little interest by land managers to take on the asset renewal and maintenance of the Track, or even just make a contribution – they all leave it to Crown Lands.

- As Crown Lands don't manage roads, they are maintained by the NSW Forestry Corporation and / or NSW NPWS, mainly at the southern end.
- Minimal co-ordination of road closures and their impact on track access occurs, which reduces the effectiveness of track maintenance. An option could be for Crown Lands to offer funding to agencies to upgrade and possibly maintain roads.

These matters and the development of formalised agreements is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

### 5.2.3 Sub-optimal relationships

Crown Lands staff report that relationships with land managers where the Track passes through could be improved to clarify aspects such as:

- engagement of Aboriginal communities on matters and opportunities relating to the Track
- building relationships with local Aboriginal people and groups to engage on cultural and cultural tourism opportunities with the Track included shared history, protection of areas of cultural significance and sharing of local knowledge and stories;
- a common approach to planning, design, construction, maintenance, monitoring and reporting;
- common agreements on asset management and maintenance and replacement (from toilets to bridges and signage);
- common standards for design of infrastructure and construction materials;
- common approach to insurance policies and claims;
- liaison with land managers with regard to marketing; and
- common approach to risk management.

### 5.2.4 Track Coordinating Group

Related to the matter above, there is no group established to facilitate regular group discussions on track management issues and opportunities. A Coordinating Group for the Hume and Hovell Track could feature the land managers and Local Aboriginal Land Councils. The establishment of a Track Coordinating Group is an opportunity suggested in **Section 7**.

## 5.3 SUPPORT IN PLANS OR POLICIES

### 5.3.1 Support in Plans of Management

Plans of Management for public lands that the Track passes through were reviewed to identify whether the Track is acknowledged and if so, how. **Table 5.3.1** presents the results of this analysis, and shows that:

- the Track is acknowledged in Plans of Management for Burrinjuck Nature Reserve, Wee Jasper Nature Reserve, Jingellic, Bogandyera and Clarkes Hill Nature Reserves, Woomargama National Park, Woomargama State Conservation Area, Mullengandra Nature Reserve and Mullengandra State Conservation Area, and the Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve Working Plan;
- the Track is not acknowledged in Plans of Management for Brindabella National Park and State Conservation Area, Werboldera State Conservation Area, Kosciuszko National Park, nor any of the State forests in Tumut, Bago, Mannus and Mundaroo sections; and
- there is minimal commitment to maintaining, managing or upgrading the Track in any of the Plans of Management – this is a strategic opportunity addressed in **Section 7**.

Table 5.3.1 Plans of Management reviewed for references to the Hume and Hovell Track

NPWS Plans of Management	Reference
Burrinjuck Nature Reserve (2010)	There are no public facilities in the reserve other than the Hume and Hovell walking track, which is managed by the Land and Property Management Authority
Wee Jasper Nature Reserve (2010)	Part of the Hume and Hovell Walking Track passes through the southern part of the reserve along a corridor that is excluded from the reserve. The track is managed by the NSW Department of Lands  Data obtained from a traffic counter on the Hume and Hovell walking track indicates that up to 200 walkers use the section of the track within the reserve each year
Brindabella National Park and State Conservation Area (2009)	No reference
Werboldera State Conservation Area (2009)	No reference
Kosciuszko National Park (2006, amended 2010 and 2014)	No reference
Jingellic, Bogandyera and Clarkes Hill Nature Reserves (2006)	The route taken by the early explorers Hume and Hovell in 1828-1829 passes through the northern end of Bogandyera NR. The Hume and Hovell track, which is managed by the Department of Lands, follows the route taken by these early explorers. The Hume and Hovell Track traverses the northern section of the Mannus block of Bogandyera NR and is occasionally used for bushwalking  Information is required to inform potential users of the areas that are accessible to the public, particularly the Hume and Hovell Track. There are no recreational facilities in the reserves

Woomargama National Park, Woomargama State Conservation Area, Mullengandra Nature Reserve and Mullengandra State Conservation Area (2009)	<p>The Hume and Hovell Walking Track passes through Woomargama. Recreation and tourism values include the Hume and Hovell Walking Track passing through Woomargama. The Hume and Hovell Walking Track attracts a number of visitors to Woomargama. This track, which traces the 1824 Hume and Hovell expedition from Cooma Cottage in Yass to Albury, is managed and maintained by the NSW Department of Lands. Liaison with this department regarding the management and promotion of the section of the HHWT within the park has continued since gazettal in 2001.</p> <p>Two designated camping areas associated with the HHWT are located within Woomargama</p> <p>Medium Priority: Liaise with Department of Lands regarding management of the Hume and Hovell Walking Track within the national park, particularly regarding visitor safety, track maintenance and promotion and interpretation</p>
Forestry Corporation NSW	Reference
Micalong Swamp Flora Reserve Working Plan (undated)	The Hume and Hovell walking track was established by the Department of Lands in 1988. Permission was granted to construct a boardwalk and footbridge across the swamp. The track is now managed by the Department of Lands, with the permission of State Forests of NSW for the sections within State Forest
State forests in Tumut, Bago, Mannus & Mundaroo track sections	No reference

### 5.3.2 Support in other plans and strategies

Several local and regional plans address the Hume and Hovell Track, as profiled in

**Table 5.3.2.** In particular are proposals for:

- inclusion of the Track in the Great Walks of Australia collective;
- developing a connection to the Murray River Adventure Trails; and

- creating strategic links between the Track and the region's towns and villages.

Management and delivery of the Track aligns with many other State and regional plans (eg. Regional Economic Development Strategies), but these have no specific reference or commitment to the Track.

**Table 5.3.2** Direct references to the Hume and Hovell Track in local and regional plans and strategies

Regional Plans	Reference
Destination Management Plan for the Riverina Murray	<p>Advocate for the development and promotion of the Hume and Hovell Track for inclusion in the Great Walks of Australia collective (2022 – 2026)</p> <p>Local priority project for Snowy Valleys Council – include in the Great Walks of Australia collective</p> <p>Local priority project for Greater Hume – development and connection to Murray River Adventure Trails</p>
Local Plans	Reference
<b>Albury City Council</b>	
Albury Mountain Bike Strategy, Sep 2021	<p>There is some Indigenous significance around Mungabareena Reserve, where the Track passes through.</p> <p>Eastern Hill provides an opportunity for a small-scale trail MTB network. To achieve this, the Hume and Hovell Track alignment needs to be refined and incorporated into the network design to minimise user conflict.</p> <p>Promote the longer distance trails and touring in the region – Murray River Adventure Trail, Hume and Hovell Track, High Country Rail Trail.</p>
Draft Eastern Hill Activation Masterplan, August 2022, AlburyCity and	Re-align the Hume and Hovell Track. Develop a new alignment for the Hume and Hovell Track which is separated from MTB trail network, vehicular movement routes, and

Regional Plans	Reference
yonder landscape architecture	
<b>Greater Hume Shire Council</b>	No reference
Greater Hume Visitor Experience Plan 2014-2018	Hume and Hovell Walking Track, Bowna to Lankeys Creek, is a nature-based attraction.  Strategy for Hume and Hovell Walking Track to liaise with Department of Lands regarding management of the track including visitor safety, track maintenance and promotion and interpretation. 5 years, Crown Lands. KPI: Increased usage of Hume and Hovell Walking Track.
<b>Snowy Valleys Council</b>	
Snowy Valleys Council 2021-22 Operational Plan	Commitment to deliver the Hume and Hovell capital works by the Community & Corporate Directorate and achieve more than 90% of required maintenance
Snowy Valleys Council Regional Tracks and Trails Masterplan 2023	Recognised as a Track of State significance for walking, running and mountain biking  Proposed for inclusion as a Great Walk of Australia  Action – Develop and implement a Strategic Plan to develop the Hume and Hovell Track into one of Australia’s Great Walks  Action – Enhance and promote the Track as a premier trail showcasing one of Australia’s most unique and spectacular regions  Action – Seek opportunities to connect the Hume and Hovell Track with the region’s towns and villages by creating strategic links  Action – Seek opportunities to promote short sections and track highlights on <a href="http://www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au/short-walks">www.humeandhovelltrack.com.au/short-walks</a>  Action – Seek opportunities to support commercial services which will enhance the trail user experience and contribute to the ongoing sustainability of the track network.  Action – Inspect the Hume and Hovell Track in line with maintenance intervals recommended in AS2156.1

Regional Plans	Reference
	Action – Continue to maintain and progressively upgrade the track, including support infrastructure in line with the terms and conditions of the Crown Lands contract.  Action – Continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and collaboratively across land tenures to ensure consistency in trail experience.
Hume and Hovell Track Mountain Bike Master Plan (2018)	Proposes upgrades of sections of Track to facilitate mountain biking shared with walkers and runners and a separate single track for MTB users, off the main Hume and Hovell Track
<b>Yass Valley Council</b>	
Yass Valley Destination Action Plan 2020-2025 (2020)	Action for Destination Infrastructure Development: Continue to advocate and support the enhancement and development of key infrastructure projects that will help drive visitor economy growth to the area (e.g. drive routes such as the Old Hume Highway route, the Hume and Hovell Track, walking and cycle tracks, camping ground amenities).
Yass Valley Open Space Strategy – in preparation (2023)	Numerous tracks and trails link public open spaces for walking, cycling and horse riding. Such trails include the Hume and Hovell Track linking south Yass with Wee Jasper and the south-west.  Wee Jasper is a hub for walking tracks, including Hume and Hovell Track and Native Dog Trail.  Strategies and actions are proposed to tie in with the Hume and Hovell Track Strategic Plan

### 5.3.3 Other plans and strategies with indirect references

There is no direct reference to the Hume and Hovell Track in the latest round of Regional Economic Development Plans for the Snowy Valleys and for Albury Wodonga. Relevant observations, strategies and actions are provided in **Table**

#### 5.3.3.

Table 5.3.3 Indirect references to walking and trails in Regional Economic Development Strategies and other plans

Plans	Reference
Snowy Valleys Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023	<p>The region has seen significant investment in nature and adventure tourism, focused around enhancing tracks and trails</p> <p>Significant investment in nature and adventure tourism, in particular to develop tracks and trails assets will help efforts to diversify the visitor economy offering in the region</p> <p>A range of further investment opportunities exist for nature and adventure tourist experiences such as recreational walking tracks, lookouts and mountain biking trails. The Snowy Valleys Regional Tracks and Trails Masterplan commissioned by Snowy Valleys Council and currently under development is designed to create a long-term vision for tracks and trails across the region.</p> <p>Expand and diversify the Snowy Valleys region's visitor economy by growing the region's agritourism and adventure tourism. Promote adventure tourism opportunities within the region including trail and mountain biking, hiking, winter sports and fishing.</p>
Albury Wodonga Regional Economic Development Strategy 2023	<p>Significant investment since 2018 to diversify and grow the visitor economy offering in the region provides opportunities for the region to expand its offering and improve resilience in the sector.</p> <p>Opportunities exist to support expansion of eco-tourism and adventure tourism, such as activation of Lake Hume and continued development of the Murray River Experience and Gateway Island.</p> <p>Continue to develop and grow the visitor economy. Support a diverse visitor economy through flexible land use planning, sustainable river management, and engagement with industries to develop a diverse visitor economy, including agritourism, adventure tourism, and facilities for cultural activities and the arts.</p>
Adventure Cycling Strategy, Department of Regional NSW, No Date	The NSW Government will support local councils and communities to maximise economic and social benefits of regionally significant adventure cycling experiences.

Plans	Reference
	<p>NSW Government grant programs or other funding streams (may require a business case), often with support from local councils and community.</p> <p>Actions: Partner with proponents to promote regionally significant tracks, trails, tour and experience providers, events and competitions. Support opportunities for adaptive adventure cycling in the design of trails and tracks to provide access to all riders including people with a disability.</p>
Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041, NSW government	<p>Strategic and statutory planning will support and promote visitor activities and locations and ensure planning controls support and enable tourism developments and complementary land uses in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Strategic planning by councils adjoining the Murray River should include major tourism projects in Victoria. Tourism activities do not recognise state borders.</p>
NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030, NSW government	The Strategic Pillar 3 – Showcase our strengths includes – Reconnect with nature and lists iconic walks, rail and mountain bike trails and cycling as supporting this
20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW - Refresh	Identified opportunities for underutilised public land and infrastructure to play a bigger role in tourism – for example, as rail trails. The Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct focuses on increasing year-round tourism by creating year-round employment opportunities and investing in the region's infrastructure. Within 5 years will investigate opportunities to improve access to, and management of, areas of significant natural amenity and ecotourism potential
Crown land 2031 State Strategic Plan for Crown land 2021	Established a strategic framework to encourage investment, facilitate innovative new uses and rethink the way in which Crown land contributes to the economy

## 5.4 OTHER GOVERNANCE MATTERS

### 5.4.1 Public liability and asset insurance

Insurance of the Track and its infrastructure assets is covered by Crown Lands. However, it is uncertain how any insurance or legal claim for damages relating to any other infrastructure, natural or cultural asset managed by another party would be reconciled, and this issue is further raised in **Section 7**.

### 5.4.2 Other stakeholders that may require liaison and partnerships

As services contractor to Crown Lands, Snowy Valleys Council may need to liaise with a range of organisations to maintain partnerships with and on behalf of Crown Lands, including:

- Various community statutory Crown Land managers (including Wee Jasper Crown Land Manager (CLM) and Goobarragandra Valley CLM (formerly known as 'Trusts'));
  - AlburyCity Council;
  - Greater Hume Shire Council;
  - Yass Valley Council;
  - Neighbouring freehold property owners / managers;
  - National Parks & Wildlife Service;
  - Forestry Corporation of NSW;
  - Local Aboriginal Land Councils and other Aboriginal organisations of groups not associated with the LALCs
- NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). The RFS work with Crown Lands and other land management agencies to undertake bush fire hazard reduction activities, including hazard reduction burns and fire trail maintenance.
  - Destination NSW and Destination Riverina Murray;
  - Commercial operators, licence holders and various event organisers. Crown Lands hold contracts/licences with various groups including adjoining land holders that are not the responsibility of the Snowy Valleys Council. However the Snowy Valleys Council can expect that they will need to liaise with these licence holders where necessary to adequately deal with track management and maintenance issues in the interests of both or either party;
  - Individual trekkers;
  - Event organisers / licence holders, such as for the H&H Ultra Marathon.

## 6. COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

The three objectives of this section are to:

1. Reveal the competitive elements that make multi-day walks popular and attractive to supporting investment
2. Contrast these elements with the current and the potential of the Hume and Hovell Track to have them
3. Address what it might take for the Hume and Hovell Track to be a Great Australian Walk (as requested in several regional and local plans).

### 6.1 Visit NSW best multi-day hikes in NSW

#### 6.1.1 The top six walks

Destination NSW is the State's primary marketing of visitor experiences in the State via campaigns, expos, media and its Visit NSW website. The website has proposed six multi day hikes as the best in NSW at this point in time. These walks are:

1. Six Foot Track (Katoomba to Jenolan Caves)
2. Green Gully Track (Oxley Wild Rivers National Park)
3. Light to Light Walk (Boyd's Tower to Green Cape Lighthouse)
4. Solitary Islands Coastal Walk
5. New England Wilderness Walk
6. Great North Walk (Sydney to Newcastle)

#### 6.1.2 What are the success factors for a Great Walk of Australia?

**Section 8.1** profiles these walks as they are marketed by Destination NSW. This profile reveals the following characteristics about the walks:

- average distance walking per day is 10 – 15km;
- while they are all rated difficult, all but one are just three to four days in duration;
- they all offer big views;
- they all present a huge diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes; and
- their landscapes feature at least two of the following – coastlines, mountains, dense forests or waterfalls.

#### 6.1.3 What is needed to become one of Visit NSW best multi-day hikes?

From our analysis, the Hume and Hovell Track is currently not on par with a Visit NSW best multi-day hike. The main reason for this conclusion, is that there is no three to four, high appeal section providing big views and a diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes that is being promoted and managed as a separate experience.

However, there is potential to create a three to four day section from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking. This is addressed in **Section 7.2**.



## 6.2 Australian Traveller's 'Australia's 25 best walking holidays'

Australian Traveller is a highly influential magazine and social media distributor whose mission is to connect people to incredible experiences through their understanding of outstanding and inspirational content. Founded in May 2005, the Australian Traveller magazine and Australian Traveller website quickly gained a reputation for inspired travel writing and photography and a dedication to independent advice. Australian Traveller became the best-selling travel magazine in the country in 12 months.

In 2012 Australian Traveller Media expanded with the launch of International Traveller magazine and International Traveller website, catering to the outbound Australian traveller. The brand delivered the same standard in travel writing and photography, as well as a fierce dedication to sound and independent advice, and quickly become the market leader for outbound travel.

### 6.2.1 The top 25 walks

Australian Traveller has proposed its own collection of Australia's best walks as:

1. Overland Track, TAS
2. Bay of Fires, TAS
3. Maria Island, TAS
4. Port Davey Track, TAS
5. Three Capes Walk, TAS
6. Heysen Trail, SA
7. Yurrebilla Trail, SA
8. Kidman Trail, SA

9. Jatbula Trail, NT
10. Giles Track, NT
11. The Tabletop Track, NT
12. The Larapinta Trail, NT
13. Fraser Island Great Walk, QLD
14. The Thorsborne Trail, QLD
15. Scenic Rim Walk, QLD
16. The Six Foot track, NSW
17. Budawangs Circuit, NSW
18. Yuraygir Coastal Walk, NSW
19. Gibraltar – Washpool World Heritage Walk, NSW
20. Australian Alps Walking Track, NSW/VIC/ACT
21. Croajinolong Wilderness Walk, VIC
22. The Great Ocean Walk, VIC
23. The Wallaby Track, VIC
24. Cape to Cape, WA
25. Bibbulmun Track (WA)

### 6.2.2 What are the success factors to be one of the 25 best walking holidays?

**Section 8.2** profiles the 25 walks as they are marketed by Australian Traveller. This profile reveals the following characteristics about the walks:

- four are located within NSW;
- the majority are four or less days and the most common is four days (2@1 day, 3@3 days, 8@4 days, 3@5 days, 2@6 days, 7@>6 days);
- average distance walking per day is 8 – 10km;

- they all offer big views;
- they all present a huge diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes;
- their landscapes feature at least two of the following – coastlines, mountains, dense forests or waterfalls; and
- 18 of the 25 walks offer a guided service and several offer eco-luxury accommodations (hard roofed), food and wine.

### 6.2.3 What is needed to become one of Visit NSW best multi-day hikes?

From our analysis, the Hume and Hovell Track is currently not on par with a Visit NSW best multi-day hike. The two main reasons for this conclusion are that:

1. There is no three to four, high appeal section providing big views and a diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes that is being promoted and managed as a separate experience
2. There is no regular guided service for this shorter section
3. There is no eco-luxury hard roofed accommodation along the route
4. There is no matching quality food and wine offer as part of the walk

However, there is potential to create a four-day section and incentivise the private sector to deliver the required services. This is addressed in **Section 7.2** – establishing a specialised section from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking.

## 6.3 Great Walks of Australia

### 6.3.1 What is a Great Walk of Australia?

Great Walks of Australia is the brand and company name of a private company that promotes guided walks offered by a variety of operators.

Each walk operator takes the utmost care to select their guides, as well as maintaining the highest standards of training, safety and equipment. Walking groups are kept small, ensuring personal service. The guided experience emphasises the delivery of storytelling-based interpretation that delivers to customers a deeper understanding of the places visited. Operators offer warm and genuine hospitality accompanied by high quality meals and Australian wines. The accommodation is primarily exclusive, often remote and includes semi-permanent campsites, purpose built eco-lodges, private villas, safari style tents and historic homesteads. Each walk meets a strict set of selection criteria to become ecotourism certified and a member of Great Walks.

### 6.3.2 Where are the Great Walks of Australia?

The 12 Great Walks currently listed are:

1. Seven Peaks Walk, Lord Howe Island
2. Scenic Rim Trail, QLD
3. The Arkaba Walk, SA
4. Murray River Walk, SA
5. Bay of Fires Lodge Walk, TAS
6. Cradle Mountain Huts Walk, TAS
7. Freycinet Experience Walk, TAS
8. The Maria Island Walk, TAS

9. Three Capes Lodge Walk, TAS
10. Twelve Apostles Lodge Walk, VIC
11. Cape to Cape Walk, WA
12. Classic Larapinta Trek in Comfort, NT

### 6.3.3 What are the success factors for a Great Walk of Australia?

**Section 8.3** profiles the 12 Great Walks as they are marketed by Australian Great Walks. This profile reveals the following characteristics about the walks:

- none are located in NSW;
- the majority (9 of the 12) are four day experiences. The remainder are one five day and two six day walks;
- average distance walking per day is just 10km
- the walk comes as a mix of hub and spoke (4), end to end (4) and circuit (3);
- maximum group size is a modest 10 – 12 people;
- accommodation is predominantly ecolodge / eco-villa (8) or glamping (3);
- they all offer big views;
- they all present a huge diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes;
- their landscapes feature at least two of the following – coastlines, mountains, dense forests or waterfalls; and
- 18 of the 25 walks offer a guided service and several offer eco-luxury accommodations (hard roofed), food and wine

### 6.3.4 Is the Hume and Hovell Track on par with a Great Walk of Australia?

From our analysis, the Hume and Hovell Track is currently not on par with a Great Walk of Australia. There are many reasons for this conclusion, but our four key constraints are:

1. There is no three to four day, high appeal section providing big views and a diversity of rugged and attractive landscapes that is being promoted and managed as a separate experience
2. There is no guided service
3. There is no hard roofed eco-luxury accommodation
4. There is no matching quality food and wine offer as part of the walk.

However, there is potential to create a four day section and incentivise the private sector to deliver the required services. This is addressed in **Section 7.2** – establishing a specialised section from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking.

## 6.4 Explorer route walks

As the Hume and Hovell Track is basically an explorer walking route, it is useful to determine how many other explorer walking routes are available to the market. We only found six across the World:

1. The Aussie Camino Pilgrimage
2. The Camino de Santiago
3. Camino Ingles (The English Way)

4. Kumano Kodo Nakahechi, Japan
5. Saint Olav's Way Norway
6. Lycian Way Turkey

#### 6.4.2 What are the success factors for an Explorer Route?

**Section 8.4** profiles these six explorer walking routes and suggests the following characteristics about them:

- They are much longer than standard multi-day walks – typically seven days or 30 – 35 days, and they are located within a track network that provides lots of diversion routes that make them longer or shorter;
- They are generally moderate to challenging grade, or challenging, and finishing them is therefore perceived as a great achievement; and
- They often have a historic and a spiritual dimension to them, where the walker undergoes reflection and even revelation along the way; and
- They are typically located in mountainous areas with dramatic views and diverse landscapes; and
- They often inter-connect with villages and towns that allows for overnight stays, renewal and supply replenishment.

#### 6.4.4 Is the Hume and Hovell Track on par with an Explorer Route?

From our analysis, the Hume and Hovell Track is currently not on par with an Explorer Route. There are several reasons for this conclusion:

1. There is insufficient interpretation designed to help a walker reflect and achieve a revelation along the route – existing interpretation is limited and not at all personal in its design and impact
2. The Track lacks adequate connections with villages and towns that allows for overnight stays, renewal and replenishment

## 6.5 Explorer themed self-drive routes

### 6.5.1 Five examples of Explorer themed self-drive routes

Since explorers often cover distances longer than what most walkers want to walk, some explorer routes have become self-drive tours. We only found five of these across the World:

1. Pioneers Pathway, WA
2. Golden Pipeline Heritage Trail, WA
3. The Explorers Way, NT & SA
4. Five Great Regional Drives, Charters Towers, QLD
5. The Sir Samuel and Lady Florence Baker Historical Trail (South Sudan and Uganda).

### 6.5.2 What are the success factors for an Explorer themed self-drive route?

**Section 8.5** profiles these five explorer-themed self-drive routes and suggests the following characteristics about them:

- they cover significant distances of 300 – 800km;

- most have an interactive website but offer little interactive interpretation along the route;
- they identify specific relevant stops but do not provide interpretation that threads the stops into a coherent story, and generally do not provide storytelling in between the stops.

There are one or two interpretive drive tools, such as CD's that are loaded into the car sound system. However, the content of these tools is not updated to keep up with evolving markets, nor does their technology get updated to keep up with what is used (and no longer used).

## 7. STRATEGIC ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

### 7.1 SWOT Analysis

The Draft Marketing Plan for the Hume and Hovell Track identified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This is presented in **Table 7.1**.

Table 7.1 SWOT Analysis for Hume and Hovell Track (Source: Marketing Plan for Hume and Hovell Track)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The 426km length of the trail which enables it to cover a diverse range of natural environments – creating ongoing interest for the hiker and options for shorter walks of varying nature</li> <li>▪ Proximity of the trail to other significant natural features, such as Lake Burrinjuck, Wee Jasper Caves, Carey’s Cave, Blowering Reservoir, Tumut River, Paddy’s River Dam, Mannus Lake and Lake Hume</li> <li>▪ Diversity of types of environments, with the track traversing through rural private land, state forests, national parks and reserves</li> <li>▪ Diversity of trail type, including single track, fire road, and sealed road</li> <li>▪ Options to walk portions of the 426km walking track, allowing hikers bite size options that do not require extended leave from work and other commitments. Many hikers who wish to complete the entire trail are breaking up the walk and returning at a later date to restart the walk where they left off</li> <li>▪ Established camping spots spaced out along the trail provide interest, motivation and practical respite for hikers. They also serve as useful landmarks for meeting points, start/finish of shorter walks, and a point of discussion for increased awareness of the trail.</li> <li>▪ Access to natural water sources throughout the trail (filtering/boiling of water required).</li> <li>▪ Some towns and cities within relatively close proximity (for driving) to the trail (eg. Yass, Tumut, Tumbarumba, Albury). Trackheads and trail access points within a short drive from Visitor Information Centres in these locations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Walking distance from the trail to towns is too far and impractical. The route alignment of the trail is positioned such that it closely matches a large section of the original expedition by Hume and Hovell in 1824. This route rarely ventures near towns, making resupply challenging during extended walks, as the distance is often too great to warrant walking to town / back</li> <li>▪ Some sections of the track are likely to be too remote to encourage shorter walks, due to driving time from town hubs and difficulty navigating without signage and mobile telephone service.</li> <li>▪ Limited options to walk in a circuit (loop). Most recommended short walks are out and back, returning on the same route or require pick-up/transport to return</li> <li>▪ Lack of emergency shelters, historic huts, and historic information/signage on route</li> <li>▪ Significant bushfire damage. Sections of the trail continue to be closed and are slowly reopening after the 2019/20 bushfires. Maintenance team continues to assess the safety of the trail and repair known issues. This delay and reopening in sections has caused some confusion about the trail status and discourages use at present</li> <li>▪ Limited options for resupply of food. Hikers need to be self-sufficient. Multi-day hikers typically rely on a support team or pre-planned food stashing (in a storage cache) to avoid carrying food (weight) for the entire journey. The current (limited) drinking water options and food resupply options are not promoted to trail users. Water requires treatment or boiling.</li> <li>▪ Limited mobile service throughout the track due to remoteness from populated areas</li> <li>▪ Maps must be printed or preloaded on digital devices</li> <li>▪ In some sections, it has been reported that grasses and weeds (thistles and blackberries) are often found covering the trail. This can make navigation challenging and can diminish the experience of the trail user. Many maintenance issues are not reported</li> <li>▪ Lack of signage along the trail and inconsistent sign style/colour. This can make navigation more challenging and stressful. It is also a missed opportunity to brand the trail and raise awareness</li> <li>▪ Lack of available knowledge on road/vehicle requirements (if 4WD is required and road conditions). It is difficult for trail users and support/resupply crew to know the condition of access roads</li> <li>▪ Suitability and accessibility for varied fitness levels not noted. Providing information on elevation and difficulty in promotional resources is likely to provide more confidence to new trail users to plan a trip</li> <li>▪ Mixed land ownership along the trail can cause confusion for hikers. It is challenging to understand which regulations apply (ie. permission to camp, light a fire, book/register a camp) along the trail</li> </ul>

- Geographic location conveniently positioned well for travellers from major cities, including Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne
- Support and strategic interest of relevant local councils, tourism bodies, and funding sources.

- Safety and security of trail users. General safety risks exist as per any remote bushwalking experience. Some sections of the trail can include other land use such as forestry clearing and hunting feral animals (including hunting wild pigs with dogs)
- Lack of information on Indigenous Australians significance in areas along the trail. This requires more research and understanding

#### Opportunities

- Remove the need for day-trippers to return back on the same path, by running a shuttle booking service for day hikers and cyclists. This may require collaboration with existing adventure/transport services such as Toms Outdoors. This same service could be used by multi-day hikers to get them in to town for resupply, abandon a walk, drop supplies to them, or pick up rubbish. Other tour options and drop-offs can be booked with Tumbarumba Caravan Park and Laurel Hill Forest Lodge
- Collaborate with Reflections Caravan Park (Lake Burrinjuck) regarding accommodation, supply drop off, shuttles and boat service
- Improve the facilities at the trackheads and camp-sites to be more appealing and useful. The addition of more emergency huts/shelters would create unique landmarks (an accomplishment to reach) and also serves as a functional shelter in poor weather. Historical signage could also be placed at these locations
- Improve navigation signage, make it consistent, and consider the addition of kilometre markings at a consistent distance the whole way along the track. Avoid using white in areas that may experience snow
- Increased informational signage in towns and at camp-sites to create awareness and understanding of the significance of the expedition and link to the current track
- Engage with Indigenous elders to understand any cultural significance or stories that should be included in relation to the original expedition, or the traditional land that the trail passes through
- Introduction of guided hiking tours by a commercial operator through the most appealing sections of track. Other private tours that experience a taste of the trail amongst other regional highlights (eg luxury tour organised by Genivieve Fleming)
- Collaborate with Hume and Hovell Ultra event to assist in marketing their event. Growth in the event would increase awareness of the trail and usage. The Hume and Hovell Ultra are planning to run an event that includes the entire track in 2024 to celebrate the anniversary of the expedition

#### Threats

- Bushfires damaged approximately 120km of track in 2019/2020 resulting in closure of large portions of the trail. This creates confusion and uncertainty for hikers planning a trip. Future closures due to bushfire damage or bushfire threat remains an ongoing threat each summer, to ensure the safety of trail users
- Negative hiking experience due to poor trail condition and/or lack of signage. The nature of monitoring and maintaining 428km of trail in relatively remote locations can leave sections of the trail overgrown or in poor condition for short periods of time until the issue is reported and resolved. A casual hiking audience is likely to have a greater expectation of a well-maintained trail than the existing hiking user group. Maintenance scheduling and access can be impeded by weather, staff resourcing, constraints on when specialist work can be undertaken (bridge repairs), seasonal issues with blackberry growth, and specifically in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic with travel restrictions
- Risk of providing misinformation or not enough practical advice to trail users due to the complexity in regulations, caused by mixed ownership of land. This affects where a hiker can camp, fire bans, and cycling access
- Unrealistic expectation from marketing material. With such diversity in environments and trail condition, it is important that first time users of the trail have a realistic expectation of the experience
- Cycling on some sections of the trail is not currently permitted (private land and some sections within National Parks). It was noted some bushwalkers and trail runners may also not enjoy sharing a trail with cyclists (that can often travel at greater speeds). If cycling on the trail is to be promoted, it should clearly indicate where it is and is not permitted
- Snowy Valley Council has no control and limited influence on third-party/commercial tour operators. Any poor experience on the trail as a result of these operators could negatively impact the Hume and Hovell Track brand
- Potential for misinformation or lack of information about Hume and Hovell Track from information centres, if they are not provided with adequate information or training

## 7.2 Strategic issues and opportunities

This section introduces some emerging strategic issues and opportunities to trigger stakeholder consultation and some degree of prioritisation of what should be tackled in the Strategic Plan. It is expected that stakeholders will add / change and emphasise these and other ideas.

### 7.2.1 Determining the focus of the Track

*Why have a Hume and Hovell Track that doesn't interpret the expedition in situ?*

The Hume and Hovell Track is unique as a track as it is largely based on an explorer route which retraces as close as possible the original route south. Positive feedback from track users recognised the connection to the historical Hume and Hovell expedition and the hardships endured by these early explorers.

One of the three reasons that the Track was built has not been delivered in situ. The Track does not interpret the Hume and Hovell expedition, nor the subsequent changes in land use. This was a major justification for development.

Compounding this issue is that the Track only represents half of the Hume and Hovell expedition. There is no interpretation at the end of the Track in Albury recognising that the expedition continued south through Victoria to Corio Bay near present day Geelong, nor any interpretation about the return route. There is no track through Victoria to Corio Bay where they reached the end of their expedition, and no interpretation at Corio Bay interpreting this critical end point.

*Hardly anyone walks the Track end to end – so why is it so long?*

The Track was built from Yass to Albury because these sites offered physical evidence of the expedition. However, Cooma Cottage at Yass is only open for just a few hours a week on one day of the week. The Hovell Tree in Albury is regarded by all feedback from logbooks as a disappointment and not worth a visit, let alone the many days of low appeal Track to reach it from the last more appealing sections.

Very, very few people walk the entire 426 km track between Yass and Albury. Almost none of Australia's Great Walks require walking of more than three days and nights. The full 426km Track does not rate as a Great Australian Walk, so it raises a valid question why does it promote such a long walk route, when almost no one does it?

*A drift to focussing on a collection of short walks*

The Track was designed to provide a variety of walking experiences for a variety of users, offering long distance walking, overnight walks, day and half day walks. Following bushfires damaging extensive sections of the Track, management has shifted marketing to direct visitors to short walks (sections of the existing Track accessing a highlight / attraction) where there was minimal to no bushfire damage to the landscape, Track and facilities. However, these short walks have several constraints, including:



- many of the short walks have limited 2WD access to get to the track<sup>5</sup>, or the 4WD access can be quite challenging;
- none of the short walks are a circuit (loop) – the more popular type of walk because there is no duplication of the experience;
- normally short walks have interpretation to add value and appeal – this appears missing;
- there are only two short walks that rate as having a WOW factor:
  - Micalong Creek Campsite to Barrois Campsite (native forest and wildflowers in spring and early summer, located in the northern high appeal section)
  - Buddong Falls to Paddy’s River Dam (located in the southern high appeal southern Track section)
- Some sections of the track are likely to be too remote to encourage shorter walks, due to driving difficulty and or time from town hubs and difficulty navigating without signage and mobile telephone service.

There are only three two-wheel drive vehicle access points along the track: at Fitzpatrick Trackhead, Thomas Boyd Trackhead, and Henry Angel Trackhead, which is a very low number of higher volume visitors that would use 2WD, considering the total length of the track. If the short walk marketing focus continues, then several access roads should be upgraded to 2WD capability, so that 2WD and less competent 4WD users can access the walks.

---

<sup>5</sup> Recent car sales indicate that roughly half are all wheel drive or 4WD, predominantly purchased for towing and their higher seating than 2WD. Less than half of these vehicles are

### *What about a focus on the two high appeal multi day sections, to move towards a Great Walk?*

We do not believe that the entire Hume and Hovell Track could become a Great Walk of Australia. However, there is potential to develop one section, and then perhaps a second section, to achieve this. There are two sections of the Track rated as having high appeal and used more than other sections:

- from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking;
- Buddong Creek (the start of Buddong Falls, near Talbingo) south to Mannus Lake Campground (near Tumbarumba) – roughly three days walking;

After a review of the successful ingredients of successful multi day walks, we can advise that these two sections of the Track are the ONLY close match, particularly because they:

- represent a suitable length of walk, the number of overnight stops and critically, high appeal;
- there are several campsites in these sections that are rated as having high potential to add walker huts, which would increase safety, comfort and widen the appeal for all year use of the Track; and
- there are two townships that could service overnight walks and allow them to finish the northern section or take a break before tackling the southern high appeal section:

driven on roads requiring their off road or 4WD capability, and that their drivers do not have skills to drive such roads (NRMA and RACV report 2012)

- Tumut – it represents THE key service centre in between the northern and southern high appeal sections, allowing walkers to finish their southern walk at the Thomas Boyd Trackhead (a 24 minute drive to Tumut) or perhaps a new trackhead at the Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge Campsite or Goobarragandra Swing Bridge
- Tumarumba represents the second most critical service centre, because it could service walkers finishing the southern high appeal section of the Track at Henry Angel Trackhead

The section of Track in between these two high appeal sections was rated moderate, represents two to three days walking, and could be enhanced with better trails and improved camp sites, to present an attractive longer walk.

So, if there is a desire to create growth in overnight walking on the Hume and Hovell Track, then the option with the most potential is to first target the northern high appeal section and specifically:

- develop at least one new Trackhead at the southern end of the high appeal section, and support with 2WD access (for users and suppliers);
- upgrade the track to make walking easier and a little faster;
- upgrade camping facilities with huts; and
- working with the local visitor economy establish private sector walker transfers and food drops.

Further site investigation is required to refine this proposal. If it works, and the upgrades generate a significant boost in overnight walkers on this section, then there may be some justification to build a business case for a higher standard of serviced hard roof accommodation on the Track in the future.

### *Matching track user profiles to the track*

It might be possible to match sections of the Trail and their campsites to particular target markets, so that the type and standard of facilities and their servicing matches market needs. The six target markets for the Track in the Marketing Plan were:

1. Experienced bushwalkers and hikers (current market)
2. Trail runners (current market)
3. Active mainstream – seeking a nature day-trip to nearby locations
4. Outdoor/camping – seeking a 1-3 night nature experience
5. Families looking for short walks with picnic facilities
6. Mountain bikers – seeking new trails to explore

This approach would provide greater differentiation in facility design and scale. Marketing would need to support this concept.

### *What to do with the low appeal sections*

The low appeal sections represent a significant portion of the Track and therefore a significant portion of the ongoing maintenance budget. One logical approach could be to use and market these sections differently, or at least set a lower standard and associated maintenance budget for the longer sections.

### *Options for consideration*

- Explore with the Victorian government whether there is interest and opportunities to interpret the rest of the Hume and Hovell expedition through Victoria and down to Corio Bay, either as a set of interpretation stops or as any additional walking track, or an inspirational interpretative installation at Corio Bay

- Enhance the current ‘bookends’ of the Track at Cooma Cottage and Hovell Tree to encourage a sense of ‘setting out’, and achievement of reaching the end of the Track. Liaise with the National Trust to consider opening Cooma Cottage more often than only six hours on a Sunday
- Enhance the Track to deliver the highest rating long distance walking experience possible
- Continue the transition towards a short walks focus, and investigate the potential to turn some into ‘circuit’ loop walks
- Focus on the two high appeal multi day sections, perhaps starting with the northern section, then the southern and then the joining section
- Provide more walker access/extraction points
- Upgrade current 4WD roads to more 2WD drive vehicle access points – ideally between Wee Jasper and Tumut, but also at medium to high value and less accessible parts of the track, to lift visitation rates and increase viability of local service providers
- Explore links and detours to the national parks or hardwood State Forests
- Refocus the longer low appeal and lower use sections in the far north and south as bike sections
- De-market use of the longer low appeal and lower use sections in the far north and south and then reduce their the maintenance regime and budget.

### 7.2.2 Improving the Track user experience

#### *Wayfinding and directional signage*

The small amount of negative feedback received from track users was mainly associated with a lack of or inadequate directional signage, causing walkers to take the wrong route at times which can make navigation more challenging and stressful.

The H&H website needs better maps suitable for wayfinding, and more track markers are needed in some places.

#### *Options for consideration*

- Work with protected area managers to allow wayfinding and interpretation signs to include more of the Hume and Hovell Track branding
- Install more road signs to reach Trackheads and other connection points with the Track
- Install more Track directional signs at junctions and add distance to next attraction and campsite
- Introduce kilometre marking posts along the Track at a consistent distance the (avoid using white in areas that may experience snow)
- Work with protected area managers to allow wayfinding and interpretation signage to include more of the Hume and Hovell branding.
- Install pictograms (bollards with symbols) to indicate where cycling is and is not permitted along the Track

#### *More interpretation*

There is little evidence of any significant in situ interpretation that assists Track users achieve one of the original aims of the Track’s development – to interpret the Hume and Hovell expedition and its flow effects on land use. In addition, there is a lack of information on the significance of local Indigenous Australians along the trail – even their interactions with the Hume and Hovell expedition are not interpreted insitu.

#### *Options for consideration*

- Conduct consultation with local Aboriginal groups to discuss how they would like Aboriginal culture portrayed as part of the Track experience, and if they are

supportive, conduct research and develop stories. There could be an opportunity for recognition of a shared history, traditional place naming or dual naming areas / locations

- Engage with local Aboriginal elders to understand any cultural significance or stories that should be included in relation to the original expedition, or the traditional land that the trail passes through. Historical signage could also be placed at these locations.
- Make each short walk deliver a really strong and differentiated interpretive theme, story and technique. Each could be designed to tell particular stories about the Hume and Hovell expedition and contrast with various contemporary perspectives. The collection could be interlinked with an overarching idea and marketing to make it worth walking all of them to get the 'full picture'.
- Start interpreting the Hume and Hovell expedition in situ. The content could draw from the Hume and Hovell diaries. For example, there could be:
  - a day walk designed to summarise the entire route (given there is no track to the Victorian destination, and few people walk end to end);
  - a walk designed around perseverance, such as having to double back and find another route, dragging carts up steep terrain, river crossings, being separated at night, lack of water and food etc);
  - a half day walk designed to demonstrate the explorers' navigation, survival and bushcraft skills;
  - one or several walks to reveal interactions with Aboriginal people – one walk could present the Hume and Hovell perspective and another that of Aboriginal people;
  - a half day walk that provides alternative interpretations about the Aboriginal land use before the explorers and flow on settlement; and

- a half day walk providing alternative interpretations of flow on land use after the explorers and use benefits to the State economy and private land-owners and impacts on Aboriginal people – this could be contrasted with more recent and optimistic changes of perspective and recovery efforts.

- The walks could be supported on signs or apps by diary extracts and artist visualisations, as well as three dimensional sculptures that help visualise stories.
- Produce and install more interpretation signage with a QR code linked with the Hume and Hovell Track website to access additional content on the topic shown on the sign.
- Install interpretation signage in nearby towns and at camp-sites to create awareness and understanding of the significance of the expedition and link to the current track.

#### *Access to the Track*

The Hume and Hovell Track is suitable primarily for people who have the physical ability to walk. There is an opportunity to re-engineer sections of the track for people with disability to experience suitable trackheads and small accessible sections of the track

#### *Options for consideration*

- Investigate the potential of Fitzpatrick Trackhead as a 'pilot' location for providing a more accessible Track experience – given it has an existing accessible bathroom (subject to site investigations).

### *Accommodation*

The number of overnight walkers is being severely limited by insufficient hard roofed accommodation along the Track, and insufficient transfers between the Track and hard roofed accommodation. It is further limited by a limited service across the Burrinjuck Dam – which in turn is limited due to low demand.

### *Options for consideration*

- Investigate all of the campsites rated as having high potential for further development to receive huts for walker accommodation
- Prioritise the development of huts along two track sections:
  - from Wee Jasper south to Thomas Boyd Suspension Bridge near Tumut – roughly four days walking; and
  - Buddong Creek (the start of Buddong Falls, near Talbingo) south to Mannus Lake Campground (near Tumbarumba) – roughly three days walking
  - Three existing campsites were identified as having high potential for hard roofed accommodation (The Hole, Ben Smith Campsite and Munderoo Campsite) and another seven with moderate potential.
- Consult with visitor economy stakeholders in Tumut and Tumbarumba to determine interest in providing accommodation, transfers and food drops for walkers
- Provide and promote a more formal transfer service offer:
  - Collaborate with Reflections Caravan Park (Lake Burrinjuck) regarding accommodation, supply drop off, shuttles and boat service

- Run a shuttle booking service for day hikers and cyclists to remove the need for day-trippers to return back on the same path. This may require collaboration with existing adventure/transport services such as Toms Outdoors. This same service could be used by multi-day hikers to get them in to town for resupply, abandon a walk, drop supplies to them, or pick up rubbish.

- Investigate options and sites for lockable food drops at Trackheads and other strategic locations
- Investigate among the townships the opportunity for laundry services for walkers (washing, drying, drop-off)
- Relocate or improve access to Ben Smith Campground
- University research project (from the Snowy Valleys Trail Masterplan).

### *Increasing linkages to the Track*

Several plans highlight opportunities to improve connectivity between the Hume and Hovell Track and towns / village, other tracks and trails and local attractions, mountain bike tracks, rail trails and drive trails.

### *Options for consideration*

- Seek opportunities and support Councils to implement off road links between the track and nearby villages and towns
  - Implement the concept plans for a new 2.5 metre wide sealed pathway from Henry Angel camp ground along Tooma Road to the existing pathway ending at Tumbarumba Cemetery.
  - Establish a trail link between the Thomas Boyd Trackhead camping area and Tumut (Snowy Valleys Council)

- Develop a trail link between the track and Batlow via Blowering Foreshore Road and Bago State Forest walking and fire trails such as Snubba Walking Track (Snowy Valleys Council)
- Establish an off-road connection between the Hume and Hovell Track and Talbingo.
- Investigate a suitable connection between the track start point at Cooma Cottage to the Yass urban area.
- Investigate the opportunity to develop a connection to the Murray River Adventure Trails.
- Investigate the potential for a bike trail section to link up access to Travelling Stock Reserves and see more of the original vegetation that Hume and Hovell would have seen (eg. Micalong Falls and where Burrinjuck Dam is between the peaks of Black Andrew and Barren Jack).
- Investigate the potential to connect the Hume and Hovell Track with the proposed Talbingo Mountain Bike Trail and Skills Park, the Batlow to Tumbarumba Cycle Link, Tumbarumba to Rosewood Rail Trail, Tumbarumba Mountain Bike Trail Networks and Pump Track, and the Waterfall Drive Trail which is proposed to include Buddong Falls.
- Investigate the opportunity to provide off-road connectivity between Tumbarumba and Henry Angel Flat by continuing the 8km long Tooma Road walking and cycling path. Concept plans for a new 2.5 metre wide asphalt pathway from Henry Angel camp ground along Tooma Road to the existing pathway ending at Tumbarumba Cemetery are shown in the Masterplan.
- Investigate the potential for a connection between the Track start point at Cooma Cottage to the Yass urban area is recommended in the Draft Yass Valley Open Space Strategy

- Support links to nearby points of interest:
  - Develop a trail link from the Hume and Hovell Track to Tumut 3 Power Station/Talbingo Park to connect with the T3/Foreshore Trail into Talbingo.
  - Highlight track attractions, such as Pompeys Pillar, Careys Cave and Jumpers Hill, and the dead ends that Hume and Hovell reached and had to re-navigate.

### 7.2.3 Improving visitor data collection, analysis and application

The Marketing Plan aims to grow visitation to the Track, and over the past few years' visitation to and use of the track appears to be increasing. However, there are no forecasts as to what the desired growth is and in particular, where along the Track the growth should occur, which months the growth should occur in, which types of use the growth should be represented by and which target markets the growth should be distributed across.

There is very limited data collected, stored, analysed and reported in relation to visitation and use of the Hume and Hovell Track. The data being generated needs to be more consistently presented and then incorporated into regular reporting.

There is very little data about the profile of users of the Track. There are no visitor segmentation splits, no purpose of visit, needs, unmet needs, satisfaction, likelihood to recommend, section walked, length of stay, sites of overnight use etc.

Very little data about the nature of use of the Track is available. Ironically, we know more about potential stakeholders (from a questionnaire prior to construction<sup>6</sup>) than we do about actual users.

We note that few locations have both track counters and logbooks. Insufficient visitor-use data and its adequate analysis and reporting is a strategic issue.

There is no formal mechanism to objectively collect useful user feedback from the Hume and Hovell Track. As such, there is a significant lack of user feedback on the Hume and Hovell Track, which is a significant constraint to meeting visitor needs, evaluating the effectiveness of trail investments and identifying which markets to target. Analysing feedback and feeding it back into management and decision making will significantly improve track management effectiveness and optimise return on investment.

Determining a more accurate total track use level could be very useful for supporting funding applications and building positive public relations.

#### *Options for consideration*

- Improved track use data collection and management should be written into a revised Marketing Plan, and regular reporting across key stakeholders should be done.
- Growth forecasts should be written into a revised Marketing Plan, and regular reporting across key stakeholders should be done.

- The method, budget and timing of collecting user profile information should be written into a revised Marketing Plan, and regular reporting across key stakeholders should be done.
- A method for collecting, analysing and responding to user feedback should be written into a revised Marketing Plan, and regular reporting across key stakeholders should be done.
- Investigate alternative track counters that collect more useful data, including the time and day, and even the direction of the walker, as well as having downloadable systems directly into data management systems
- Install at least another 10 track counters along the Track to get a more accurate idea of total Track usage. This could include counters within and outside short walks so that different usage can be contrasted
- Revise the license conditions for the Lake Burrinjuck boat operator to record passenger (walker) numbers and send monthly data back to Hume and Hovell Track management
- Design and implement a user survey needs to be initiated at multiple times of the year at multiple track points, to capture different user groups. The data being generated needs to be more consistently presented and then incorporated into regular reporting

---

<sup>6</sup> Alston G.S., 1985, Hume and Hovell Track potential use, Crown Lands Office

#### 7.2.4 Greater engagement & support of land managers

##### *Access and management agreements*

There are no existing formalised agreements for track access and management between Crown Lands (or its delegated day to day Track manager Snowy Valleys Council) and the NSW NPWS nor State Forests NSW. More specifically:

- there is no regular or formal engagement between Crown Lands and the respective land tenure managers;
- there is no formalised easement over the Track;
- there is no formal acknowledgement of who owns or manages the assets on the Track – a sizeable investment from Crown Lands that could theoretically be removed by the respective land manager; and
- Crown Lands would like land managers to recognise the importance of the Track and contribute to Track maintenance and management where it passes through land tenure that they are responsible for. There appears to be limited interest by land managers to take on the asset renewal and maintenance of the Track or make a contribution – they tend to leave it to Crown Lands.

##### *Governance models*

The Hume and Hovell Track is currently a sole agency managed trail (Crown Lands), even though it is multi-tenure. While the sole agency governance model has many benefits it is also limiting the opportunities for the trail to grow, because it is not enlisting buy-in and cooperation from other organisations responsible for various land tenures that the Trail passes through.

Crown Lands staff report that relationships with land managers where the Track passes through could be improved to clarify aspects such as:

- engagement of Aboriginal communities on matters relating to the Track;
- a common approach to planning, construction, maintenance, monitoring and reporting;
- common agreements on asset management and maintenance (from toilets to bridges and signage);
- common standards for design and construction materials;
- common approach to insurance policies and claims; and
- liaison with regard to marketing.

**Table 7.2.1** presents features, strengths and limitations of the sole agency management model against alternatives such as partnerships, and private models. The existing sole agency manager (Crown Lands) believes the Track should be managed under one of the following three partnership arrangement models:

- vesting control of the trail from a land management agency to a Committee of Management (eg. via a s146 NPW Act – would need NPWS endorsement)
- an MOU between different management parties, possibly with a coordinating committee
- a foundation, trust or incorporated body acting as the governance entity or assisting with management (through activities such as funding, coordination, stakeholder liaison, experience development, marketing and promotion) with agency responsibility for trail maintenance,

This Report is seeking feedback from land tenure agencies where the Track passes through, as well as other stakeholders, on which model they think is likely to be best for governing the Track into the long term.



### Track Coordinating Group

There is no group established to facilitate regular group discussions on track management issues and opportunities. A coordinating group could be made up of mostly public land managers (Crown Lands, NPWS, Forestry Corporation and local governments who have management responsibility over most of the track) and Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal corporations.

### Land ownership and access

The track route is on land managed by several state jurisdictions and crosses four local government areas.

### *Plans of Management*

There is minimal commitment to maintaining, managing or upgrading the Track in any of the Plans of Management whose land includes the Hume and Hovell Track.

### *Management Opportunities for consideration*

- Develop a mechanism to integrate land manager and traditional owner involvement
- Seek legal advice and agreement on who funds, owns and maintains the Track
- Choose and form up the optimum governance model
- Establish a Track Coordination Group
- Liaise with NPWS, Forestry and adjoining land owners to investigate opportunities to utilise Crown land or create easements so the track avoids low track experience value pine plantations where possible
- Review and update Plans of Management that represent areas where the Track passes through, and provide suggested information about the Track and its

management requirements to the respective management agency for a future Plan update

- Liaise with Charles Sturt University-Albury Campus/ANU/University of Canberra to implement Citizen Science projects for track users to engage with and contribute to science,

Table 7.2.1 Trail Governance Types (modified from TRC Tourism Report to Yarra Ranges Council 2017)

Governance Type	Features	Interstate examples	Situations where it is applied	Advantages	Disadvantages	Opportunities in NSW
<b>Sole Agency Management</b>	<p>Exclusive governance and management of a trail by one or more Federal, State or local government agencies – such as a national park or other land management agency, or a local government authority.</p> <p>Ultimate responsibility lies with the governing agency.</p> <p>Visitor products, accommodation and services may (or may not) be provided directly by the agency (e.g. ranger guided tours) or through licenses to commercial operators.</p> <p>Participation by user groups and volunteer groups in trail management may or may not occur.</p>	<p>Great Ocean Walk (Vic).</p> <p>Mount Buller Mountain Bike Park (Vic)</p> <p>Overland Track (Tas)</p> <p>Larapinta Trail (NT)</p> <p>Mount Stromlo Forest Park - mountain bike and other trails (ACT Government).</p> <p>Blue Derby Mountain Bike Trails (Tas).</p> <p>All Great Walks in New Zealand.</p>	<p>Trails that are mostly on public land, such as in national parks, conservation and State Forest areas. (In some cases, single agency management is used where there is a complex destination with multiple tenures and interests.)</p> <p>Easements may be obtained where sections of trail pass over private land.</p> <p>Liaison and arrangements with nearby land-owners, government land managers and private landowners may be used to facilitate visitor access to the trail and provision of services and products on adjoining tenures.</p>	<p>Clear management and executive decision-making roles.</p> <p>Quick, clear decision making is possible (but this does not always occur).</p> <p>Operational budgets and access to staff (though not always adequate).</p> <p>Responsibility and expertise to protect natural, cultural and recreational values.</p> <p>Application of consistent service standards across a trail or network may be easier (but is not guaranteed).</p>	<p>Visitor experiences, effective tourism industry partnerships and marketing and promotion are dependent on the agency's performance and decisions.</p> <p>Ability to leverage investment and community support may be limited.</p> <p>Agency-wide priorities and budgets may affect resources available for trail management.</p> <p>Government agencies may not be eligible to apply under some grant programs.</p> <p>Different parts of the agency may not work together towards an agreed outcome</p>	<p>Most trails in NSW are managed this way.</p>

Table 7.2.1 Trail Governance Types (modified from TRC Tourism Report to Yarra Ranges Council 2017) (CONT)

Governance Type	Features	Interstate examples	Situations where it is applied	Advantages	Disadvantages	Opportunities in NSW
<b>Partnerships</b>	<p>A variety of partnership models exist:</p> <p>(i) vesting control of the trail from a land management agency to a Committee of Management (e.g via a s146 NPW Act – would need NPWS endorsement)</p> <p>(ii) an MOU between different management parties, possibly with a coordinating committee</p> <p>(iii) a foundation, trust or incorporated body acting as the governance entity or assisting with management (through activities such as funding, coordination, stakeholder liaison, experience development, marketing and promotion) with agency responsibility for trail maintenance</p> <p>(iv) agency as the primary trail manager drawing on voluntary assistance from trail users and stakeholders for activities such as trail maintenance (e.g. through Friends and user groups).</p>	<p>Murray to Mountains Rail Trail (Vic)</p> <p>Surf Coast Walk (Vic)</p> <p>Bibbulmun Track (WA)</p> <p>Munda Biddi Trail (WA)</p> <p>Queenstown Trails (NZ)</p> <p>Otago Central Rail Trail (NZ)</p> <p>Motu Trails – cycle trails (NZ)</p> <p>Forrest Mountain Bike Trails (Vic)</p>	<p>Trails that involve a mix of land tenures, land managers and landholders.</p> <p>Situations where partnerships are required to guarantee access over private land.</p> <p>Situations where agency funding is constrained.</p> <p>Situations where there is strong user group and stakeholder involvement in trail development and ongoing management and maintenance.</p>	<p>Leverages a broad support base for trail funding, management and maintenance and for on and off-trail products and services.</p> <p>Governance and business arrangements can define roles and can include access to appropriate expertise and staff.</p> <p>Effective where there is strong commitment and clarity of direction among partners.</p> <p>Eligibility for grant programs.</p>	<p>Effectiveness depends on the way the partnership operates and its access to resources. Challenges that have sometimes been encountered are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> poor performance of Committees and Boards</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> different cultures of public and private partners</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> high reliance on volunteers and/or part-time personnel leading to burn out over time</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities where there is no single entity charged with overall responsibility for the trail implementation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Membership models including skills based not representative based can be critical to success but can lead to some stakeholder issues.</li> </ul>	<p>Six Foot Track</p> <p>Great North Walk</p> <p>Hume and Hovell Track</p> <p>National Trail</p>

Table 7.2.1 Trail Governance Types (modified from TRC Tourism Report to Yarra Ranges Council 2017) (CONT)

Governance Type	Features	Interstate examples	Situations where it is applied	Advantages	Disadvantages	Opportunities in NSW
<b>Private</b>	<p>Land owner management of trails on private land, often as a tourism venture with associated facilities, accommodation and tour products.</p> <p>Concessions or licenses may be negotiated with adjoining public land managers for tour access to public protected areas.</p>	<p>Banks Peninsula Track (Canterbury, NZ) – exclusive self-guided hiking with linked accommodation and products, limited to 12 walkers per day.</p> <p>Welcome Rock Trails (Southland NZ) - shared walking and mountain bike trails with huts and camping.</p>	<p>Private land (one or more properties) where a tourism opportunity is seen, sometimes where no opportunities exist on public land or links can be formed with public land and trails.</p>	<p>Clear decision-making.</p> <p>Quick response to market preferences.</p> <p>Can provide niche experiences and add to the variety of trail experiences in a region.</p>	<p>Typically only cater for small visitor volumes.</p> <p>Reliant on owner finances and trail- related income.</p> <p>Vulnerable to economic conditions and may close without public consultation.</p>	<p>Glenworth Valley Outdoor Adventures</p>

### 7.2.5 Funding the Track

#### *Strategic issue / opportunity*

The NSW Department Planning and Environment – Crown Lands is responsible for overall management, direction and funding of the Hume and Hovell Track. Snowy Valleys Council is contracted to manage and upgrade the track within provided funding.

Funding is required for capital investment in developing and upgrading the trail, and for ongoing operational costs such as maintenance and marketing.

Funding from government can be uncertain depending on the political climate, so other funding sources should be explored and pursued.

#### *Options for consideration*

- Explore the potential for other sources of funding for the Hume and Hovell Track, including:
  - rates and charges
  - State and federal government grant funding
  - private sector funding
  - user fees
  - commercial operator fees
  - sponsorship programs
  - trail event proceeds
  - fundraising and donations
  - merchandise and information sales.
- Apply for relevant State and Federal Government grants. State and Federal government operate funding programs relevant the Hume and Hovell Track. Such programs may be in the fields of cultural heritage, natural environment, recreation, regional linkages, community development and tourism. Relevant grants for capital investment in the development and enhancement of regional walking trails include:
  - Crown Reserves Improvement Fund
  - Stronger Country Communities Fund
  - Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund Stream 2
  - Regional Recovery Fund for Tourism.
- Seek private sector funding
  - Philanthropists could be approached to support specific projects matching their interests
  - Private sector funding may be sought for accommodation, facility naming rights, in-kind donations of labour and materials, etc.
  - Registered clubs operate community development grant programs.
  - A key consideration is that private sector involvement must not compromise the natural, low-key character of the track.
- Seek opportunities for partnerships with commercial operators
  - Partnerships with desirable and suitable commercial operators, such as businesses offering transport transfers, guided hiking tours through the most appealing sections of track, food drops and laundry services should be entered into without compromising the natural, low-key character of the track.

- Snowy Valleys Council has no control and limited influence on third-party/commercial tour operators. Any poor experience on the trail as a result of these operators could negatively impact the Hume and Hovell Track brand.
- Seek expressions of interest for sponsorships and donations
- Engage volunteer groups to have ownership over the maintenance of parts of the track (act on the frequent requests for volunteers to work on the Track)
- Recoup a proportion of track costs from users
  - Possibilities for recouping part of the cost of operating, managing and maintaining the track include charging a track use fee or walker permit fee, a membership fee, and charging for accommodation such as occurs at Thomas Boyd and Fitzpatrick Trackheads.
- Collaborate with trail event organisers to hold events on the track
  - The Hume and Hovel Ultra are planning to run an event that includes the entire track in 2024 to celebrate the anniversary of the expedition. Collaborate with the organisers of the Hume and Hovel Ultra event and any other event organisers to assist in marketing their event. Growth in the event would increase awareness of the trail and usage.
- Investigate the feasibility of track merchandise and information sales

### 7.2.6 Day to day management of the Track

#### *Maintenance*

Ongoing trail and infrastructure maintenance requires ongoing allocations of financial and human resources. The costs associated with maintenance will vary along its length depending on varied track characteristics such as access by

maintenance vehicles, slope, drainage, weather, soil types, construction standards, vegetation type, and usage patterns.

Maintenance of the Track reportedly targets sections with the highest use, which is a logical approach. However, the monitoring of this level of use is very poor, so it is questionable just how effectively this principle is in development of maintenance priorities. This policy could be applied much more effectively with accurate visitation data along the entire route, as well as improved and more detailed visitor profile data.

Positive feedback from track users includes that they really appreciate good track maintenance.

#### *Subcontracting of track services*

There could be interest from AlburyCity and Yass Valley Councils to subcontract Hume and Hovell track management services to the Snowy Valleys Council. We understand progress with AlburyCity was made and abruptly stopped. This could be more efficient and less costly and deserves further exploration with Crown Lands and the Councils. Parklands Albury Wodonga were previously subcontracted to provide maintenance services on the southern section of the track.

There could also be an opportunity for local Aboriginal organisations to undertake Track maintenance.

#### *Asset management*

Crown Lands has suggested either using another asset management system or Asset Edge 'Reflect' project management. The use of other asset management systems by managers of other long-distance tracks should be investigated.

## *Risk management*

Risks to trail users in the Snowy Valleys Region were identified by Snowy Valleys Council (2023). Such risks also apply to the Hume and Hovell Track, such as

- Fall heights, cliff edges, falling objects
- Unpotable water
- Bites/stings (eg. snakes and spiders)
- Trips, slips and falls
- Unstable land formations (eg. erosion)
- Trail user conflict
- Traffic (eg. road crossings)
- Impacts on sensitive environments
- Unsafe built elements
- Getting lost in remote environments
- Unpredictable water bodies and tides
- Bushfire, flooding, drought
- Alpine weather conditions (e.g. ice on trails, rapidly changing conditions)

Snowy Valleys Council uses a Risk Assessment Matrix to determine the overall risk rating for trail users. By understanding the potential risks and finding ways to minimise their impacts, trail managers can confidently respond should an incident occur. Key components of risk management are related to ensuring that:

- Users are aware of the risks involved in the trail they choose to use
- The level of risk is kept consistent with that outlined in the trail information
- The trail manager is in a position to adequately and rapidly respond to hazards such as bushfire and flooding

Deliberate sabotage or vandalism of the track may also be a risk to the track and users. Damage to the track may be caused by people who may not agree with significant financial investment in the track, or any proposed re-routing of the track. Insurance of the Track and its infrastructure assets is covered by Crown Lands. However, it is uncertain how any insurance or legal claim for damages relating to any other infrastructure, natural or cultural asset managed by another party would be reconciled.

## *Options for consideration*

- Enter into formal access and management agreements
- Explore other asset management systems
- Regularly update Trail Management Plans and include assessment of risks and identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

## **7.2.7 Marketing and promoting the Track**

### *Marketing Plan*

The Marketing Plan for the Hume and Hovell Track stated that a key objective was to increase visitation to the track but did not propose any specifics for how to achieve this. The follow-on activation of this objective within the Marketing Plan appeared to be through:

- further development of short walks;
- improve the way key attractions can be accessed and interpreted;
- reposition multi-day and end to end walks to be an aspirational aim for walkers; and
- generation of new images, collateral, branded merchandise and more effective use of social media and local tourism operators to create conversations and interest about the walk.

While the promotional actions were costed and time scheduled, the first two initiatives involving the product and its supporting infrastructure were not.

The Marketing Plan for the Track should address visitor data, visitor profiles, visitor feedback and visitation forecasts, because these are the major influences on how to position and promote the Track.

A risk is unrealistic expectations generated from marketing material. With such diversity in environments and trail condition, it is important that first time users of the trail have a realistic expectation of the experience.

### *Brand and name*

It could be really useful to confirm brand essence for the Track – of all the experiences it could provide, what should it specialise in and be marketed as. This positioning could also inform the ongoing use of the name of the Track as the Hume and Hovell Track.

### *Hume and Hovell Track website*

Feedback from track users shows they appreciate the Hume and Hovell website News section for track updates.

### *Maps*

The immediate missing ingredient to assist marketing is an interactive map of the route, also showing access road conditions and vehicle type required to reach the track, trackheads, track features, distance and walk times, campsites and attractions built on a high-resolution aerial photograph. A version of this map has been built and further planning is underway to enhance the map some more. We suggest that it be further enhanced through the addition of more interactive and pop-up layers, such as destinations and features, regulatory information, mobile

reception, contours, sections of track closures / detours, vegetation types, nearest meals, reliable potable water sources and hard roofed accommodation along the route.

### *Listings of the track*

**Table 4.3.1** presented a list of other parties that are promoting the Track. These sites offer an attractive opportunity to drive users of these sites to the Hume and Hovell website, especially once an interactive map is added.

AlburyCity, Greater Hume Shire, Snowy Valleys and Yass Valley Councils could be encouraged to post the Hume and Hovell Track website link on their respective websites for access by residents and visitors.

There is no listing of the Hume and Hovell Track under the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, which would allow many tourism marketers and distributors to promote the trail and even incorporate it into overnight tour programs.

- Review and update Track information channels
  - Track information communicated to users to include access road conditions, vehicle requirements, suitability and accessibility of the track for varied fitness levels (elevation, track difficulty), regulations apply (ie permission to camp, light a fire, book/register a camp, cycling access), track closures and any detours.
  - Ensure that visitor information centre staff are provided with adequate information and training.

### *Social media*

Feedback from track users shows they appreciate the Hume and Hovell Track Facebook site for track updates.



The Hume and Hovell Facebook page has generated very little feedback, which suggests that the site may be under subscribed. Generating feedback is easy with active posting, assuming a reasonable number of followers have been generated.

### *Track information for potential users*

Limited mobile service is available throughout the track due to remoteness from populated areas. Maps must be printed or preloaded on digital devices.

Lack of available knowledge on road/vehicle requirements (if 2WD is OK, or if 4WD is required and road conditions). It is difficult for trail users and support/resupply crew to know the condition of access roads.

Suitability and accessibility of the track for varied fitness levels is not noted.

Providing information on elevation and trail difficulty in promotional resources is likely to provide more choices and confidence to new trail users to plan a trip.

Mixed land ownership along the trail can cause confusion for hikers. It is challenging to understand which regulations apply (ie. permission to camp, light a fire, book/register a camp) along the trail.

There is potential for misinformation or lack of information about the Hume and Hovell Track from information centres if they are not provided with adequate information or training.

There is a risk of providing misinformation or not enough practical advice to trail users due to the complexity in regulations, caused by mixed land ownership. This affects where a hiker can camp, fire bans and cycling access.

### *Options for consideration*

- Determine brand essence for the Track.

Determine whether to retain the name Hume and Hovell Track, or incorporate a dual local Aboriginal name, which could help generate more participation with local Aboriginal people.

- Complete the track brochures and distribute through local distribution channels
- Review and update website content to more accurately depict:
  - an interactive map of the Track similar to the forthcoming Map Kits;
  - Track section descriptions, supported by photographs;
  - recommended focus on the high appeal track sections; and
  - campsite profiles and photos
- Promote more use in early to mid-Spring when there are less insects.
- Work with external organisations to list or post links to Hume and Hovell Track website
- Create a TripAdvisor site for the Hume and Hovell Track
- Pursue listing of the track under the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse

## 8. APPENDICES

### 8.1 Visit NSW best multi-day hikes in NSW

<https://www.visitnsw.com/things-to-do/adventure-and-sport/hikes-and-walks/multi-day-hikes>

Name	Distance	Suggested duration	Difficulty	Redeeming features
Great North Walk	250km one way	16 days	Difficult	Huge variety of landscapes and scenery, urban jungle, dense bushland, suburban neighbourhood scenes and small country town, wide-open walking along the coast, cafes, pretty architecture. Lots of accommodation options ranging from motels and rental properties to campsites.
Six Foot Track	46km one way	3 days	Difficult	Waterfalls, large swaths of dense forest, iconic swing bridge and expansive lookouts
Green Gully Track	65km loop	4 days	Difficult	Extensive greenery and massive elevation. Refurbished heritage huts with beds, toilets, rainwater and cooking equipment
Light to Light Walk	30km one way	3 days	Difficult	Phenomenal coastline, open air cliff tops, brushy heath and woody forest. Minimal interruptions as not well frequented walk, established campsites.
Solitary Islands Coastal Walk	60km one way	3-4 days	Difficult	Extensive beachside landscape with rocky outcrops and bushland. There are multiple points to leave the walk early. Activities on the walk include beach swims, visiting beachside towns for supplies, coffee etc
New England Wilderness Walk	33km one way	3 days	Difficult	1,000m descent from New England Tableland to headwaters of Bellinger River, big views from Snowy Ridge, creek side camping.

## 8.2 Australia's 24 best walking holidays

This section profiles Australia's 24 best walking holidays, generated by Australian Traveller.

<https://www.australiantraveller.com/australia/australias-best-walking-holidays>

Name	Distance	Suggested duration	Difficulty	Redeeming features
Heysen Trail, SA	1200km	60 days		Starts in Parachilna Gorge, travels through five wine regions, the outback and surf coast finishing at Cape Jarvis. Several operators cover sections of the walk, particularly Flinders Ranges.
Jatbula Trail, NT	58km	5		Walk travels through lush rainforest, waterfalls and waterholes, divided into five sections. Guided hikes available
Giles Track, NT	22km	2	Challenging	Starts in Kings Canyon Rim Walk then through weathered sandstone domes to Watarrka lookout, series of creek crossings. Guided hikes available
The Tabletop Track, NT	39km	3-5 days		A circuit walk through Litchfield National Park, numerous waterfalls and savannah, pandanas and secluded oases.
The Larapinta Trail, NT	223km	13 days		A 12 stage walk along the spine of the West MacDonnell Ranges takes in expansive lookouts then descends into serene gorges and waterholes. Guided hikes available
Fraser Island Great Walk, QLD	90km	8 days		Walk travels through lush rainforest, open woodlands, vine forests, kauri pines, and freshwater lakes. Guided hikes available
The Thorsborne Trail, QLD	32km	4 days		Pristine island walk on Hinchinbrook Island, following the coast and includes several creek crossings, green sea turtles and dugongs feed offshore and can be seen during an afternoon swim. Trail is highly protected with only 40 walkers at a time.
Scenic Rim Walk, QLD	47km	4 days		A series of 5 – 10km day walks through World Heritage-listed Gondwana rainforests. This is a private eco-luxury walking experience
The Six Foot track, NSW	45km	3 days		Follows an old bridle trail through Megalong Valley, sheer sandstone cliff faces and escarpments with expansive vistas of valleys, fern glens, river crossings, suspended bridges and bird life. Luxury guided hike is available
Budawang Circuit, NSW	32km	4 days	Challenging	Pockets of rainforest interspersed with bush and thickets, stands of eucalyptus and sandstone cliffs. Track passes through tunnels and along scraggy cliffs, expansive views.
Yuraygir Coastal Walk, NSW	65km	4 -6 days		Track travels along pristine coastline, beaches and freshwater creeks and lakes. Guided hikes available

Gibraltar – Washpool World Heritage Walk, NSW	40km	5 days		Hugh variety of landscapes from eucalyptus forests, granite outcrops, lush wet rainforest, waterfalls and coachwood trees. 40km of side trips
Australian Alps Walking Track, NSW/VIC/ACT	650km	60 days		Huge ascents and descents with windswept plains, snow gum glades, wildflowers in spring and pioneers' mountain huts, Guided hikes available
Croajinolong Wilderness Walk, VIC	45km	4 days	Difficult	Coastal walk traversing wild and remote terrain. Guided hikes available
The Wallaby Track, VIC	90km	6 days		Lookout tower with 360-degree views, historic goldfield relics, old waterways, historic slab and bark hut. Walk ends in Daylesford with the opportunity to go to the Hepburn Mineral Springs for recovery
The Great Ocean Walk, VIC	104km	8 days		Trail hugs pristine coastline, can be completed in numerous ways from one day walks, upwards. Guided hikes available
Kidman Trail, SA	260km	18 hours on a horse		A multi-use track share by horses, trekkers and mountain bikers travels through wine regions and populated area that provide opportunity for reprovisioning, pub visit or an B&B.
Yurrebilla Trail, SA	54km	3 days		Starts at Ambers Gully and traverses plains with views of city and sea, eucalypt forests, waterfalls, deep gullies and an odd orchard and vineyard
Cape to Cape, WA	135km	7 days		Route follows the coastline through Margaret River wine region, experience wine tasting and beach swims. Guided hikes available
Bibbulmun Track, NT	961km	54 days		Track runs through jarrah and karri forests, skirts coast, wildflowers in spring. A Township or a three sided wooden shelter for campers with freshwater, bunks and cooking facilities is available at end of each day's walk. Guided hikes available
Overland Track, TAS	65km	6 days		One directional walk through World Heritage area with expansive views and high peaks. Guided hikes available
Bay of Fires, TAS	23km	4 days	Leisurely	A coastal walk on white sandy beaches, lichen covered rocks and coastal scrubland. Guided hikes available
Maria Island, TAS	42km	4 days		Walk starts on the beach and then into rare cloud rainforests. Guided hikes available
Port Davey Track, TAS	70km	5 days		Remote walk through primitive landscape, no road access so boat or flight transfer required or another six day walk to adjoining track. Guided hikes available
Three Capes Walk, TAS	46km	4 days		A series of cliff-hugging coastal day walks, 180-million-year-old dolerite columns, stringy bark forest, old she-oak woodland and coastal banksia scrub, primordial cliffs, ocean views to Bruny Island and during spring and autumn whale spotting. Guided hikes available

### 8.3 Review of Great Walks of Australia

With coastal, inland and outback trails, these walks cover some of Australia’s more iconic landscapes. The walks offer high levels of service, small walking groups, gourmet food and wine, and exclusive accommodation, ensuring you are treated to some creature comforts of a great holiday but with a sense of adventure in remote wilderness locations.

Each walk is also led by expert guides, giving you a chance to hear the stories behind the place you are exploring, and enabling you to truly reconnect with nature and with yourself, all whilst disconnecting from your everyday life.

Name	Distance	Suggested duration	Grade	Operating months	Max group size	Walk model	Accommodation	Redeeming features
Seven Peaks Walk, NI	45km	5 days	Moderate to hard (with options)	April & May, September - November	12	Hub and spoke	Lodges with ensuites	Diverse UNESCO World Heritage listed landscapes including pristine beaches, exposed coral platforms, subtropical palm forests, freshwater creeks, rugged sea cliffs and volcanic peaks and mist forests. Accommodation is in casual relaxed luxury lodges with ensuites, hot showers, sunset drinks and four-course dinner in Australia’s first ever certified carbon neutral hotel.
Scenic Rim Trail, QLD	60km	4 day	Moderate to hard	February to November	12	Circuit (fully portered)	Luxury eco-cabins	Spicers Scenic Rim Trail is a continuous fully ported through-walk the Great Dividing Range and UNESCO World Heritage Listed Gondwana Rainforest. The landscapes is diverse with mountainous sub-tropical wilderness, spectacular views and ancient rainforests, native flora and fauna including koalas, kangaroos, goannas, abundant birdlife. Accommodation is at a different ‘relaxed luxury’ eco-cabins each night with low-footprint, eco-friendly amenities and gourmet food and wine.
The Arkaba Walk, SA	45km	4 day	Moderate	March – October	10	Circuit	Homestead & deluxe swags	Arkaba’s 63,000km private nature conservancy is a former sheep station blending tourism and conservation whereby tourism proceeds are invested in the protection of the land. Craggy sandstone bluffs and dry creek beds lined with River Red Gums, abundant wildlife including large numbers of kangaroos, wallaroos, emus, conservation stories and historic stories the outback and often heroic failures of early pioneers who tried to make a living first and last night’s accommodation in the homestead, while on the trail guests sleep in deluxe swags under the stars with three course campfire dinners and SA wines.

Murray River Walk, SA	40km+70km boat cruising	4 days	Easy	May – September	10	Moving houseboat	Luxury houseboat	An easy walk on primarily flat ground through ancient red gum forests and red ochre coloured cliffs. Diverse wildlife and waterbirds are seen along the Murray River, creeks and old oxbow lagoons. Nights are spent on a houseboat with three course dinners, hot showers and top deck spa. Belongings are kept onboard, so only have to carry day pack on walks. Final day is a tour and lunch at Wilkadene Woolshed Brewery.
Bay of Fires Lodge Walk, TAS	33km	4 days	Moderate	October – May	10	Circuit	Glamping & ecolodge	An immersive off-grid experience with easy walking along remote stretches of coastline. White sand beaches, tranquil waterways, diversity of coast, woodlands and red lichen covered boulders. Kayak down the Ansons River to see plants and wildlife from a different perspective. Accommodation for first night is in a beach camp, second and third night in an award-winning sustainable lodge. The lodge provides gourmet meals, an outdoor bath and spa care treatments
Cradle Mountain Huts Walk, TAS	60km	6 days	Moderate to hard	October – May	12	End to end	Ecolodges	The Overland Track provides diverse terrain including mountain climbs, button grass plains, temperate rainforests, alpine meadows and open moorlands, lakes, rivers, tarns and waterfalls. Wildlife encountered include wombats, paddymelons, echidnas, and birdlife. Side trip to highest peak in Tasmania and a 17km boat trip across St Clair. Accommodation in private eco-lodges set off the main trail have hot showers and drying rooms, with guides preparing three course dinners served with wine in front of the fireplace.
Freycinet Experience Walk, TAS	37km	4 days	Moderate	October – April	10	Hub and spoke	Ecolodge	Walk on ancient bush tracks along coastal wilderness and discover diverse marine and wildlife, nesting lagoons, wildflowers and other unique flora and fauna. Boat ride to remote corners of Freycinet National Park with choice of challenging mountain climbs or leisurely coastal routes, returning each night to the off-grid barefoot luxury ecolodge serving local Tasmanian produce.
The Maria Island Walk, TAS	25km	4 days	Easy to moderate	October – April	10	End to end	Glamping	This island national park has an abundance of wildlife, history, geology and spectacular landscapes, white sand beaches, mountain peaks and UNESCO World Heritage Listed settlement site of Darlington with stories from traditional owners and custodians. Wildlife includes wombats, kangaroos, geese, Tasmanian devils, wallabies, parrots, birds of prey, whales and dolphins. Accommodation is in two different wilderness camps, simple but comfortable bush tents, designed for a light footprint in the environment with candle-lit three course dinner of local produce and wine.

Three Capes Lodge Walk, TAS	48km	4 days	Moderate	Year round	14	End to end	Ecolodges	Boat voyage, dolerite spires and 37,000 years of history form part of this walk. Accommodation is in two architecturally designed ecolodges discreetly off the trail with sustainability features such as water-recycling showers.
Twelve Apostles Lodge Walk, VIC	46km	4 days	Moderate	September – May	10	Hub and spoke	Eco-luxe villas	Trek through forests of grasstrees, hear stories of shipwrecks and settlement and visit remote beaches. Native flora and fauna include birds, fur seals, wallabies, koalas and many unique plant species.. Accommodation is based at sustainably designed and constructed purpose-built hiker eco-luxe villas. Healthy meals are prepared using regional food and Victoria's best wines.
Cape to Cape Walk, WA	41km	4 days	Moderate	Mar – June and Sept – Nov	12	Hub and spoke	Ecolodge	Hiking next to the Indian Ocean the trail takes in coastal heaths, lush forests, headlands, limestone caves, karri forests and the opportunity for beach and rock pool swimming. Accommodation is in a breakfront property for the duration of the walk which also includes a spa retreat..
Classic Larapinta Trek in Comfort, NT	72km	6 days	Moderate to hard	April – September	16	End to end	Glamping	Following the trails and hearing stories of traditional owners and early explorers the track takes in dynamic landscapes passing over remote ridges and canyons. Accommodation is in three semi-permanent wilderness campsites with hot showers, heated kitchen tent, with small elements of guest participation to add to the hands-on experience.

## 8.4 Explorer route walks

While there are many attractions interpreting Australian explorers, there are very few multi day walking trails that follow Australian explorer routes.

Name	Explorer and cultural significance	Distance	Suggested duration	Grade	Redeeming features
The Aussie Camino Pilgrimage	Inspired by the life and journeys of Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop and her mentor Fr Julian Tenison Woods. A study of a woman who carried many crosses in her life and responded to the challenges through her faith and her courage.	176km	10 days	Moderate	There are several guided tours available of 9-10 day starting in Portland, Victoria and following the great South West Walk trail along the Victorian coast into SA, north from Port Macdonnell through Mt Gambier, finishing in Penola. Coastal sea capes and quintessential outback landscapes, visit remote regional communities.
The Camino de Santiago	The Camino de Santiago, or the Way of St. James is an ancient pilgrimage trail originating in medieval times. Made up of a vast network of roads and paths, pilgrims travel these to arrive at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. The pilgrimage began in the 9th century and since then, it has grown massively in popularity. Around 350,000 Compostela pilgrim certificates were issued in 2019 alone (compared to just over seven in 1976). Today, people from over 190 different countries make the journey along this UNESCO-listed trail every year.	804km	35+ days	Moderate	The Camino made up of a network of routes. There is no official starting point, since pilgrims came from all over Europe. There are dozens of routes to take, all weaving together like tree branches and all waymarked with the iconic scallop shell symbol. Travellers choose their route based on many factors including weather, landscapes, popularity and amenities. Some routes are up to 1,000km long, while others are half that length. Traverses varying landscapes with sweeping mountainous views, dense forest with wildlife, grassy undulating hills and plateaus. Architectural feats and examples of building from throughout the ages, religious buildings, churches, cathedrals, convents, and monasteries. Food and wine are highlights.
Camino Ingles (The English Way)	The English Way was one of the main routes for English, Irish, Scottish and Scandinavian pilgrims. They sailed to the Northern Spain coastline then travelled overland to Santiago de Compostela.	110km	7 days	Moderate	Starting in Ferrol with historical docks and coastal scenery, then into Galician countryside finishing at the Cathedral in Santiago
Kumano Kodo Nakahechi, Japan	The Kumano Kodo Pilgrimage exists, simply, because the Kumano mountains are blessed with incredible natural beauty, and the forests, waterfalls and hot springs have been drawing people to the area for thousands of years. The Japanese propensity to appreciate and worship nature developed into a religion – Shinto – which remains one of the strongest faiths in Japan to this day. Shinto doesn't have a founder or a particular scripture to follow, and the Shinto gods, or 'kami' take the form of natural elements such as wind, rain, mountains, trees and rivers. Over time the	70km	7 days	Moderate to challenging	One of two world heritage listed walks the Kumano Kodo Nakahechi travels through mountains, waterfalls, forest, small villages and Japanese temples where Japanese monks live. An immersive Japanese experience soaking in Onsen at the end of the day and multi-course traditional breakfasts and dinners. The Kumano mountains are home to a wide array of exotic and beautiful native species. The most prolific being the mighty cedar tree, which can be found all over the mountains and valleys. It is characterised by steep trails that cross over three passes of over 1,000 metres elevation.



	three grand Shrines of the Kumano were built to represent these natural spirits, and now they form the centrepiece of the Pilgrimage.				
Saint Olav's Way Norway	The St. Olav Ways – the pilgrim paths to Trondheim – consist of nine pilgrim routes, all leading to the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim. The routes make up a total of around 3,000 kilometres of tranquil scenery through picturesque villages with a strong cultural heritage.	643km	32+days	Challenging	Gudbrandsdalsleden, is the most popular route which spans from the capital of Oslo to Norway's third-largest city, Trondheim. The route is the longest pilgrim path in the country and was the main road to Nidaros (now Trondheim) during the Middle Ages. The route passes historical and cultural landmarks, through cultural landscapes and untouched nature, and into medieval farms that offer culinary experiences based on seasonal ingredients from the district, and a comfortable bed for the night.
Lycian Way Turkey	The Lycian Way, parts of which were used by the Lycians as routes between their cities and ports, was conceived by Kate Clow, a British expatriate. The trail was opened in 1999. The Garanti Bank sponsored the waymarking, which was carried out by volunteers, organised by Clow	510km – 760km	30 – 45 days	Moderate to challenging	The Lycian Way passes by rugged coastline, through numerous small towns, tourist resorts and fascinating archaeological and cultural sights, many of which date back to the Bronze Age. Visit the ancient city of Xanthos featuring pillar tombs and an ancient amphitheatre. Due to the notable heritage, Letoon and Xanthos have together been named a UNESCO World Heritage site
Costa Brava Coastal Path, Caledonia Spain	The Carabineros, Spain's former frontier guards, patrolled the coast along this trail in search of smugglers. The hiking trail name is "Ronda" Spanish for patrol.	43km linear or 140 km looped	2 for linear and 8 days for looped	Challenging	The trail has many completely flat stretches, and is made up of narrow paths, suitable only for walking, with continuous climbs up and down. It passes by beaches, rugged coastline, stone villages and pine covered hills.

## 8.5 Explorer route self-drive tours

While there are many self-drive routes that follow some of Australia's explorer routes, there are very few walking trails.

Name	Explorer and cultural significance	Distance, duration and vehicle	Redeeming features
Pioneers Pathway, WA	<p>Follows early gold prospectors</p> <p>Discover the people who have helped make the Wheatbelt the place it is today. Learn their stories, of the men from bushrangers to farmers and pastoralists and how the company that is Australia's largest exporter of grain was started right here in the Wheatbelt. Hear the accounts of the women who were lawyers, nurses, teachers, wives and mothers who conquered, survived and thrived in the harsh conditions of these towns that remain today.</p>	2WD, 309km, Fremantle to Merredith (WA), 4 hrs drive pitched as 3 day experience golden pipeline trail	<p>Website and downloadable brochure</p> <p>Western Australia's wheatbelt and former gold mining towns, nature walks, historic buildings &amp; museums</p>
Golden Pipeline Heritage Trail, WA	<p>Early explorers relied on, and sometimes forced, Aboriginal people to take them across the land and show them where water could be found.</p> <p>Then in 1903 the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme became the 'golden pipeline', bringing reliable fresh water to the parched area. Once labelled a 'scheme of madness', it is now internationally acclaimed.</p> <p>Designer C.Y. O'Connor believed fresh water could be pumped so far and lifted so high through a steel pipeline that it would reach the gold fields at Kalgoorlie, 560 km from the storage reservoir in the Perth Hills. It was such an audacious plan for the time that it was met with both wild optimism and harsh condemnation.</p> <p>While it is now considered an incredible feat of engineering, its designer didn't live to see it implemented, committing suicide less than a year before its construction was commissioned.</p> <p>The pipeline, together with the ensuing population expansion and the clearing of land for agricultural purposes, spelled prosperity for many colonist farmers and miners, but disaster for traditional Aboriginal ways of life.</p>	2WD, Mundaring Weir in the Perth Hills, through WA's Wheatbelt to Mount Charlotte Reservoir	<p>Visit the sites of the former steam driven pump stations; some you can walk around following signed trails. The 25 stops also include other sites significant to the story of water in our state, including magnificent railway dams built to catch runoff from granite outcrops.</p> <p>Visit the sites of the former steam driven pump stations; some you can walk around following signed trails. The 25 stops also include other sites significant to the story of water in our state, including magnificent railway dams built to catch runoff from granite outcrops.</p>
The Explorers Way, NT & SA	<p>The route from Darwin to Adelaide pushes through what was the greatest barrier to early European travellers; the deserts and vast salt pans, and the cruel irony of country that would flood in winter yet desiccate in summer. For the Aboriginal people that have inhabited and prospered in this country for tens</p>	2WD if staying on main highway, 4WD if exploring off-road outback	<p>Remarkable for how much it transitions from a coastal, Mediterranean climate in the south, through arid desert landscapes in the centre, to the tropical climate of the far north. The Explorers Way website (<a href="https://explorers-">https://explorers-</a></p>

	of thousands of years, this is a land which sustains them and shapes the oldest living culture in the world. The sealed highway follows the route of the 1862 explorer John McDouall Stuart.	tracks 2,994km over a minimum of 14 days	<a href="http://wav.com/view-interactive-map/">wav.com/view-interactive-map/</a> ) has an interactive map, detailing things to do and see, with some accommodation suggestions. The suggested itinerary breaks the route into sections giving information such as driving time, distance and places and points of interest. Northern Territory Tourism has a 14-day downloadable itinerary
Five Great Regional Drives, Charters Towers, QLD	The Charters Towers Regional Trails Guide links five authentic trail experiences that cover Heritage, Geological, Explorers, Tropics and Desert Uplands and encourage you to discover more of the region's unique history, culture and natural wonders.	Total distance 526km	The website outlines each of the five trails which is supported by a CD/USB obtained from the VIC
The Sir Samuel and Lady Florence Baker Historical Trail	<p>The trail will stretch from Gondokoro, the location of the modern-day capital of the new nation of South Sudan to Baker's View overlooking Lake Albert in western Uganda. The markers which are placed at 15 locations in South Sudan and Uganda will provide the visitor information about the explorations and the lives of Sir Samuel and Lady Florence Baker.</p> <p>Quotes from Baker's diaries which relate to each location as well as observations about the place are giving the reader a true sense of the historical significance of the journey of Sir Samuel and Lady Florence Baker and their observations and discoveries.</p>	805km, 4WD, bicycle & hiking	"The beauty of the people as well as the landscape should be reasons enough to visit the region." The Sir Samuel and Lady Florence Baker Historical Trail provides the adventure traveller a route through a spectacular scenery and to historical places, that can be accessed by 4 x 4's, mountain bike and also by hiking. Website is a static, non-interactive map ( <a href="http://www.thebakertrail.com">http://www.thebakertrail.com</a> )