



# NQ Mountain Bike Forum

Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2018

Riverview Tavern, Douglas (Townsville)

## Introduction

The NQ Mountain Bike Forum was attended by a range of interested stakeholders. Dom Courtney from QORF and Denise Cox from [MTBA](#) co-hosted the evening.

Rockwheelers MTB Club was well represented at the forum, in addition to Mackay and Districts MTB Club, Scouts QLD, Girl Guides Qld, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Adventurethon, Outer Limits Adventure Fitness, and Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service.

## Topics for Discussion

1. National MTB Guidelines
2. Queensland MTB Strategy
3. Australian Adventure Activity Standards
4. Trail etiquette
5. Adaptive MTB
6. MTB Destination Planning
7. E-bikes

### 1. National MTB Guidelines

- Background was provided on the National MTB Guidelines - reference to the 2014 MTB Summit and 2016 MTB Summit, where the National Guidelines were proposed and workshopped.
- MTBA is developing a working draft document – community feedback has been that the preference is for a “guideline”, rather than a “standard”. The IMBA trail rating system will be incorporated into the guideline, and existing Western Australian documents will be used to inform the guideline.

- Within the guideline, it will be recognised that there is a difference between volunteers and professional trail builders.
- The National Guidelines will incorporate specific requirements for each state to put trail development in the State or Territory legislative context.
- The draft document will be published on the MTBA website when available.
- Clubs and club members are encouraged to provide further feedback on the draft document when available.

## 2. Queensland MTB Strategy

- In April, MTBA conducted a road-trip from Gold Coast to Townsville, stopping at Hervey Bay, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay to catch up with clubs, visit trail networks and produce short promotional clips for social media. The Queensland MTB Strategy is about better understanding of existing use of MTB across the state.
- Download [Queensland MTB Strategy Fact Sheet](#)
- It was acknowledged that MTB is an informal activity, and that people do not need to be a member of a club to participate (even though club membership is strongly recommended due to the benefits of joining clubs)
- MTBA has contacted various local government authorities to gauge their understanding of MTB and their relationships with MTB clubs in their areas and future plans (if any) for MTB in their region.
- Use of [Trailforks](#) and [Strava](#) as ways to measure participation in MTB was discussed
- Queensland MTB Strategy outcomes will be to deliver recommendations around participation, trails, MTB tourism, events, clubs, governance, leadership, and to guide future investment in the development of MTB facilities.
  - Discussion around opportunities to partner with MTB magazines to feature MTB tourism destinations other than the main go-to places like Blue Derby, Mt Buller and Atherton.
  - Discussed how MTB fits into event tourism.
  - It was highlighted that clubs can help themselves and tell their own wonderful stories about the good things that they are doing, especially through social media and through videos, which can be shared on social media.
- [Common Ground Trails](#) has been engaged by MTBA to deliver the Queensland MTB Strategy. Common Ground has conducted a survey of riders to help inform the strategy, as well as contacting local authorities re MTB and land managers such as QPWS, Seqwater, Scouts Qld, government agencies like State Development Qld and Sport and Recreation Services, and clubs.
- Each region has been analysed based on the Tourism and Events Queensland regions to paint the picture of how MTB works in each area and the potential, desirability and scope.
- Discussion around inclusion of juniors and how to grow MTB within the strategy.
- The strategy is due for completion at the end of May – a report and an implementation plan will be produced.

## 3. Australian Adventure Activity Standards

- Dom Courtney provided background to the Australian Adventure Activity Standards project, and emphasised the need for informed comments, including positive comments on each draft.

- The Australian AAS are intended to provide guidance for anyone who leads groups of dependent people in outdoor activities, including MTB.
- The Aust AAS for cycling, which includes mountain biking, is at the practical completion stage, and will soon be finalised and released in coming weeks.
- Information is available on the Australian AAS website – [www.australianaas.org.au](http://www.australianaas.org.au)
- Encouraged all interested people to sign up for Aust AAS newsletters
- Discussion around difference between the Australian AAS and the MTBA national coaching/skill instructor qualifications and remit. Clubs affiliated with MTBA are required to follow the coaching remit and operate under the NCAS framework.

#### 4. Trail Etiquette

- Discussion around how trail networks can be best managed.
- Discussed need for education of trail users about local rules or local systems.
- Preference to have common systems, rather than massive local variations, as a means of making visitors/new riders feel welcome, but it was acknowledged that at times there will be local ways of doing things that work in one location which may not work in another location.
- Discussed sharing trails with other users, particularly pedestrians and horse-riders. Also spoke about etiquette regarding other MTB riders in opposite direction.

#### 5. Adaptive MTB

- MTBA has worked with an organisation called [Break the Boundary](#) (advocates for accessibility and inclusion for people with physical and neurological disabilities in Mountain Biking) to develop the [Australian Adaptive Mountain Biking Guidelines](#).
- MTBA also assisted with the first adaptive MTB camp in Western Australia, where participants camped and learnt to ride adaptive MTBs.
- Discussion around impacts on trail networks to accommodate adaptive MTB, and whether this is about retrofitting existing trails or alterations to design of new trails.
- Discussion about opportunities for funding for future adaptive MTB camps and opportunities for funding for the development of adaptive MTB trails.

#### 6. MTB Destination Planning

- Discussed the potential for North Queensland to be a premier winter MTB destination.
- Discussion around the difference between paying to bring one-off events to a location or investing in long-term tourism potential of a region.
- Acknowledged the need for councils, including Townsville City Council, to be on board regarding MTB as a destination. Discussion around methods to get councils on board, including development of champions within each organisation, who are invited to attend club functions and events. A key part of this strategy is having decision makers better understand the world of MTB.
- Rockwheelers would like to be more involved in discussions around Townsville as a MTB destination. Discussion around the things that need to line up to make a destination work for MTB – bike friendly accommodation, MTB hire, MTB maintenance, clear mapping. Suggested that Townville Enterprise Limited could put together strategy.

- Mackay and Districts MTB Club is involved in destination planning for Mackay, with plans regarding trail networks and a positive partnership with local council.

## 7. E-bikes

- Discussion about the implications of e-bikes for MTB. E-MTBs are here to stay and can provide benefits by increasing participation.
- Concerns were raised about potential damage to trails caused by e-MTBs – discussion ensued.
- Identified the need for a definition to decide what is and what isn't an "e-MTB". MTBA has released a [statement](#) on this point, which refers to the Australian Standard. Whether e-MTBs are permitted on a specific trail network is up to the local land manager.
- Concern was raised over how e-MTBs differ from e-motorbikes, and whether e-MTBs may be regulated in the same manner as e-motorbikes.

## Fact Sheet

# Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy



COMMON  
GROUND



MOUNTAIN BIKE AUSTRALIA



### QUEENSLAND MOUNTAIN BIKE STRATEGY

Mountain biking is a rapidly growing recreational, sport and tourism activity across Australia and the world. The growth of participation and popularity in Queensland presents exciting opportunities, particularly for regional towns set amongst unique and stunning landscapes.

Common Ground Trails have been engaged by Mountain Bike Australia to undertake a review of existing, planned and potential mountain bike trails and infrastructure across the state to cater for growing market demand.

Queensland has been developing mountain bike trails, events and tourism product for many years; this project provides a unique opportunity to enable a strategic approach to the long term development and sustainability of mountain biking in Queensland. The Strategy will provide a planning hierarchy, as well as identify and prioritise key projects in regional mountain biking hot spots.

Market research and analysis will be undertaken to identify supply and demand for trails, facilities and infrastructure and their impact in Queensland. A broad assessment of existing and proposed trails will be undertaken, both at a desktop level and on the ground. Potential trail locations will also be assessed for the opportunities presented, as well as constraints regarding land tenure, environment, fire, heritage, access, safety and other challenges.

Trail planning hierarchy, development models (such as trail towns), user types, supporting infrastructure requirements and potential revenue generation models will be explored through identification and comparison of benchmark mountain biking destinations.

The draft strategy is due to be released for public consultation by the end of 2017. It will be finalised in the first quarter of 2018, in anticipation of major funding applications to support its implementation.

### PROJECT AREA

The project area encompasses the state of Queensland, with a focus on key regional areas with existing and planned mountain bike developments. Land to be considered incorporates urban and rural land owned and/or managed by state government, local governments and private organisations/individuals, including diverse parks, reserves and tenures.

### PROJECT GOVERNANCE & CONSULTATION

Major stakeholders including Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation (QORF), land managers, private land owners, commercial operators, tourism bodies, state and local government agencies, mountain bike clubs and trail care alliances will be consulted throughout the project to determine key opportunities and issues for mountain biking development and governance.

A request for information will be issued to key stakeholders to introduce the project and capture data regarding demand for mountain biking and potential land available for mountain biking development within relevant stakeholder tenure.

Stakeholders will be consulted through a series of face to face meetings, site investigations and structure workshops.

The broader mountain biking community will have the opportunity to provide input into an online survey.

To register your interest in being involved, and to indicate your availability and willingness to be involved in engagement activities for the Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy, please contact:

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