

Trail works



Woookarung
Regional Park

Autumn 2023

Why rehabilitate tracks?

The Woookarung Strategic Directions Plan (2018) sets out the management direction for Woookarung Regional Park for the next 10 - 15 years. The plan supports a primary track network, track connections and speciality circuits for specific user groups. Parks Victoria is seeking to balance of protecting the environment and the need to support sustainable recreation.

Currently, the network in the park is around 120km in length, which is extensive for a park of this size.

How will you decide which tracks to rehabilitate into the sustainable network or replant?

Since 2020, Parks Victoria has been undertaking a phased review with input from visitors, park neighbours and user groups. The criteria for this review has been as follows.

- Is the trail or track supported by the Strategic Directions Plan, park visitors and residents?
- Does the trail or track contribute to the spread of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*? (dieback – see separate fact sheet)?
- Is the trail or track location and function environmentally, historically and culturally sustainable?
- Does the trail or track contribute to habitat fragmentation, erosion/hydrology, and impacts on historical and cultural heritage sites?
- Does the trail or track support all-abilities activities?
- Does the trail or track support day-to-day park operations and emergency services?
- Is the trail or track leading to park visitor conflicts?
- Does the trail or track provide a good experience, and does it allow for permitted events?

Who did Parks Victoria consult with throughout the review process?

Extensive community consultation took place during 2016 – 2018 which led to finalising the Strategic Directions Plan. Key outcomes were to create a primary trail network, trail connections and specialty trails, all with the condition that these improve the ecological resilience of the park and not compromise the health of the waterways and vegetation.

Parks Victoria has since met with representatives of the following key stakeholder groups: Ballarat Bushwalking and Outdoor Club, Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat, Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club and the Ballarat Social Trail Horse Riders. There were also park drop-in sessions for park visitors and neighbours.

What did we hear from the community?

Themes were:

- how special Woookarung is for protecting important natural environment
- active park management is welcomed, and positive changes are being noticed.
- that it is important to ensure that activities in the park do not compromise the conservation principles
- that the number of trails currently in the park is unsustainable with unacceptable impacts on fauna and flora
- the health of the grass trees was important
- people want to see the impact of *Phytophthora* (dieback) reduced
- safe and sustainable tracks was a priority to allow events to be organised
- disappointment of some about losing the use and connections to certain trails, earmarked for rehabilitation.
- that the trail network also needs to provide protection to the environment, support fire and emergency activities and day-to-day management.

What's happening to the tracks and trails earmarked for closure and rehabilitation?

Treatments will vary from passive rehabilitation to actively encouraging rehabilitation by and installing signage, fencing or bollards and combinations of revegetation techniques.

How many of the current informal trails are closing?

The total length of road/ tracks/trails in the park is 120.1km.

Currently, with the Zone 1 (Bakers Rd), 6.7km (or 5.6% of the trail network) will be closed and rehabilitated. This was reduced after community consultation from the proposed 8.1km.

Where can I drive?

Licensed trailbikes and vehicles are permitted on formed roads in the park. Driving or riding off-road or on unofficial tracks and trails is not permitted.

Where can I ride my bike?

Cyclists are permitted on all sections of the park's formal and informal road, track and trail network, except on specialty walking tracks which are clearly signposted. The Mount Clear Specialty Loops are designated as bike riders only. In future there will be the development of an increase to the mountain bike area with additional loops added. See the attached visitor guide map.

Where can I ride my horse?

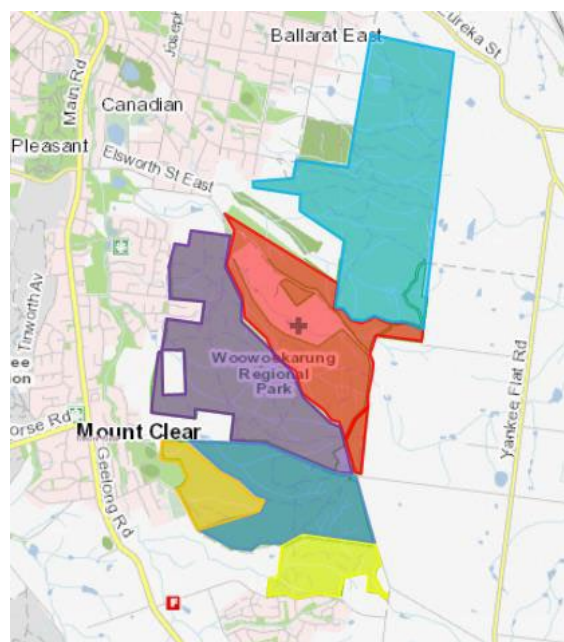
Horse riders are permitted on all sections of the park's formal and informal road, track and trail network, except on: specialty walking tracks, specialty mountainlike tracks at Mt Clear and neighbourhood trails. Horse riding will also be permitted on a shared-use trail under development.

What is a neighbourhood trail?

A neighbourhood trail connects park neighbours to the park and to some of the major formal trail network. These shared use, dual direction trails support a local recreation experience, being less formed and allowing locals to get away from it all in nature.

What areas are you reviewing next?

Below is a map showing the phased approach we are taking to review and rehabilitate the informal tracks and trails in the park.



Phasing

- Zone 1: Bakers Rd area (red) completed
- Zone 2: Greenhill Avenue (light yellow)
- Zone 3: Recreation Rd North (purple)
- Zone 4: Woowookarung North (aqua)
- Zone 5: Mt Clear Loops (dark yellow)
- Zone 6: Recreation Rd South (blue)

Further information

For more information on Woowookarung Regional Park visit parks.vic.gov.au or call 13 1963.

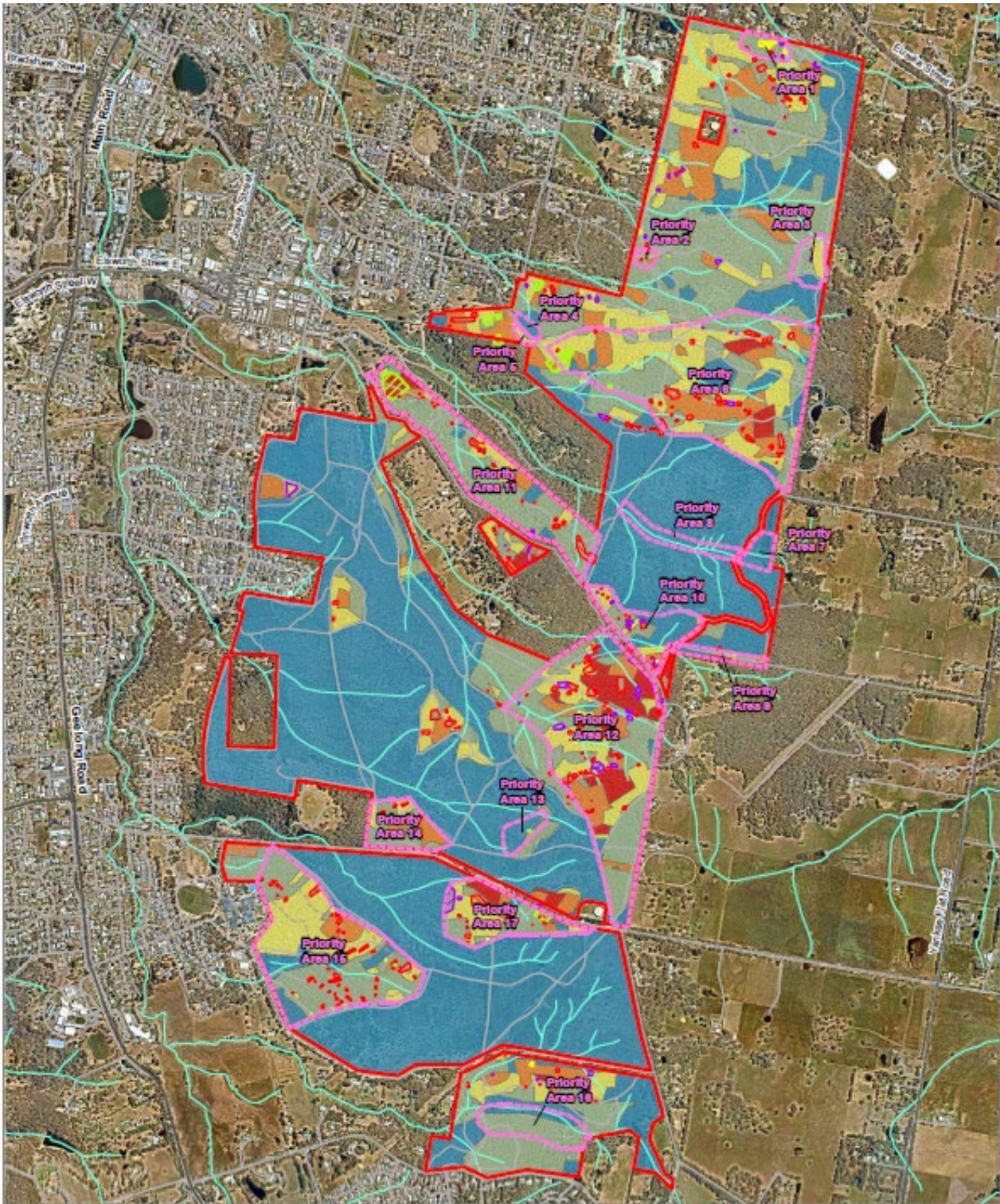


Figure 2 Overview
 Ecological features 2022
 Ecological survey for
 dieback for
 Woowookarung Regional
 Park



Legend

- Study Area
- Priority Area
- Percentage cover**
- None
- <10%
- 10-25%
- 25-50%
- 50-75%

Notes

- Dead patch
- Dieback
- Dieback - old
- X. minor



Map Data: The State of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

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