

Bushwalking & MTB Trails

Principles for Co-operation

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Bushwalking Australia Inc



- Peak body for Bushwalking in Australia
- Members are state bushwalking federations
- Formed around 2001-03
- State federations and clubs go back to 1920's
- Activities include canoeing, MTB riding, skiing
- Search and rescue service (NSW, Vic, Tas, Qld)
- Best known for insurance co-op

Other things about us

- “Broad church”, catering for broad range of ages and abilities within club network
- Trying to define the term “bushwalking”
 - also known as hiking, tramping and rambling
 - recreational walking
 - green walking
 - on-track (=trail), off-track, through-walking, day-walking

Facts about bushwalking

- Several hundred clubs
- 20,000+ members
- 200,000+ regular bushwalkers
- 2,000,000+ occasional bushwalkers
- No special skill required for beginners in easy terrain
 - MTB riders need more skill on a given terrain
 - Conflict with MTB's occurs on easy terrain

Bushwalker concerns re MTB's

- Speed & safety
- Environmental damage
- Older Bushwalkers/Younger riders

Speed & Safety

- Sightlines
- Downhill MTB riders
- Hearing impaired

Environmental

- Erosion
 - Water is the main agent (not tyres or boots)
- Trail Braiding
 - Ponding, mud, side-stepping (same for both)
- Off-track walking and low use trails
 - Isolated footfalls (vs tyre track groove)
 - Stepping over and between vegetation
 - Similar impact as native animals

Three Principles

- Case-by-case
 - No blanket prohibition
 - Or open slather
- Physical design and Control
 - Don't rely on regulation
 - Bikes will be used where they physically can be
- Downhill MTB as a special case

Strategies

- Make trails “technical”
- Choose location (cross-slope)
- Construction (keep it simple)
- Sightlines (avoid fast bends)
- Width (prefer single-track)
- Evolution (don’t let tracks form in the wrong places)
- Manage spectators (avoid sensitive natural areas)

Ongoing Issues

- Conflict with bikes on Class 1 & 2 trails
 - Wheelchair accessible = bike accessible
 - Fast cycling speeds possible
 - Smooth surface
 - Quiet approach
- Downhill MTB tracks
 - Not shareable
 - Rules apply (eg one way only, specific times)

Acknowledgements

Pioneer Women's Trail

- Walking SA
- Walking Trails Support Group (Rob Marshall)
- Adelaide Cyclists
- Office for Recreation and Sport (SA)
- City of Burnside (SA)

Linking Adelaide with Nature

- Dept for Environ. and Natural Resources SA