



NATIONAL TRAIL Board

COMMUNIQUE #5

April 2021

Dear Members and Friends of the National Trail

It was wonderful to see hundreds of horse riders actually on the National Trail on the 9th & 10th April participating in the Great Kilkivan Horse Ride, which celebrates the 1988 Queensland opening of the Trail. Board Members Marianne Kranenburg, Rob McLaren and I attended the event to wave the National Trail flag. Marianne set up a display and provided useful information to anyone showing the slightest bit of interest. Thanks Marianne – you're a great ambassador! We met and had heaps of fun with many National Trail Members. Spending this time with our fantastic Members was a salient reminder of the spirit and character of the people attracted by the National Trail and reaffirmed the importance of continuing to improve and consolidate the National Trail in our landscape and culture.



Marianne hard at work



Rob McLaren, Neil W. and Kim Rockman (member)

While we rode only a few kilometres along the Trail in this beautiful part of Australia, there are 12 serious Trekkers, eight of them doing the entire the 5,330kms, currently taking on the challenges and enjoying the splendour of the Trail.

The Board met in Scone in late February to look closely at the business of the National Trail and to determine our next steps forward.

Thanks primarily to the efforts of Nicky Austin (our GIS wizard), Rob McLaren (mapping coordinator and wordsmith) and our Section Coordinators and sponsors, remapping is steadily progressing. Sections (Guidebooks) 5 (*all 18 maps completed*), 10 (*all 18 maps completed*), 6 (*16 of 18 maps completed*), and 9 (*13 of 14 maps completed*) with Sections 7, 8 and 12 well underway. This work not only involves remapping the Trail in a more accurate format, but checking and altering the route where required, rewriting the directions and updating the contacts. The Board is committed to completing this project and Sections 1,2 and 11 will be tackled in 2022. More map sponsorships will certainly help accelerate the process, so please think about sponsoring a map or finding a business that might be interested.

We are currently obtaining quotes to update and improve our website and are hoping to have a new website up and running by our AGM in October.

Work will continue on our Strategy document to ensure it reflects contemporary values and sets a direction that will consolidate the National Trail as an iconic Australian trekking experience.

New Fees

Our biggest challenge at the Scone Board meeting was developing a fair and reasonable pricing schedule for our new, accurate A3-sized maps currently being produced which will replace the outdated Guidebooks and their associated maps, which are difficult to read and lack detail.

The new A3 maps will be downloadable from our future website and will also come with a GPS track-lines product to be loaded onto various navigation Apps. This will give Trekkers accurate data which can be loaded onto Smart Phone Navigation tools (e.g. Avenza or Pocket Earth Pro) and accurate and up-to-date maps for printing. The map pricing is comparable to the current guidebook price, however the products are superior.

We also attempted to keep the fee structure simple so that it was easy to understand and manage. Based on our current budget figures and trying to future-proof our organisation, we arrived at the following, which will come into effect on 1 July 2021:

- Membership fees will move from \$40 to **\$50** per annum
- Family Memberships will move from \$65 to **\$75** per annum
- Individual Maps will cost **\$2.00**
 - Purchases of 50 - 99 maps will receive a **5%** discount
 - Purchases of 100 - 199 maps will receive a **10%** discount
 - Purchases of more than 200 maps will receive a **15%** discount
- *Section Coordinators and Owners of property containing Trail campsites will be given Honorary Membership (i.e. no fees)*
- *Club memberships will be phased out*

Board Vacancies

We currently have two current vacancies on the Board and our AGM is only six months away. I would like to strongly encourage Members to step up and face not only the challenges of trekking on the Trail, but to contribute to the future viability and growth of the Trail. Working to ensure the National Trail goes from strength to strength is complex and incredibly rewarding; it involves negotiating with Governments, running the business, promoting the Trail, mapping and, like most things in this world, managing the IT. Naturally, we don't expect anyone to be across all of these skills, but we are looking for people with enthusiasm and experience. We will warmly welcome you into our small team.

As always, please let us know what you think about the direction we are steering the National Trail as an organisation, and continue to share your ideas about how our management and the Trail can be improved.

All the best

Neil Ward
Chairperson, National Trail Board
0419 010 744

