



## **THE MURRAY VALLEY TRAIL**

A new way to explore the Murray Valley and Australia's greatest river

*The Murray Valley Trail will provide the backbone that links and promotes a network of tracks and trails on public land that improves community understanding and knowledge of the Murray River, its ecosystems, Indigenous culture and heritage from the mountains to the sea.*

*The Trail, winding through three states, will provide tourism and recreational business and employment opportunities, promote healthy lifestyles, recreation and community development, while helping to protect a vast natural resource.*

The Murray Valley Trail project is underpinned by a need to improve our understanding and knowledge of the Murray River's ecosystems and fragile ecology, as well as the importance of protecting and enhancing the river's environment. The trail will build on and enhance sustainable environmental tourism, recreation, business, community development and employment opportunities of the Murray Valley while also protecting a vast natural resource.

### **THE TRAIL WILL.....**

- ◆ Have a strong environmental focus to help improve community knowledge and appreciation of Australia's greatest river system and associated ecosystems, as well as foster protection of a fragile environment.
- ◆ Provide opportunities to explore by bike, walking, car, horse, camping, canoe and other environmentally friendly recreation activities, the natural beauty of the Murray Valley from the mountains to the sea.
- ◆ Pass through a range of diverse natural systems, including mountains, lakes, floodplains, wetlands, forests, arid areas and coastal regions.
- ◆ Be a community project supported by the community, governments, tourism operators and regional businesses.
- ◆ Provide an ideal way to start discovering the rich Aboriginal heritage of the Murray Valley.
- ◆ Provide employment, tourism, business and eco-tourism opportunities.
- ◆ Be a major environmental tourism and recreation drawcard, adding to the existing attractions along the Murray Valley.
- ◆ Enhance healthy, outdoor recreation activities.
- ◆ Be one of the world's longest trails, attracting people from throughout Australia and overseas.

## **A LINK**

The Murray Valley Trail will not be a 'built' path or track but a clearly identified backbone that will make use of and connect existing and proposed roads, forest trails, bike paths, walks and tracks close to the River Murray. The Trail will avoid major highways, linking up and promoting existing and proposed trails and tracks (on public land) the length of the Murray Valley.

## **THE BENEFITS**

As well as the environmental, eco-tourism, health, education and recreation benefits, a feasibility study/ business plan anticipates that the Murray Valley Trail has the potential to:

- ◆ Create up to 160 new jobs
- ◆ Attract up to 3.8 million per year, and
- ◆ Generate, through a multiplier effect, up to \$5.3 million per year.

Other studies indicate that such benefits may be even greater.

## **MARKETING AND SIGNAGE**

A marketing strategy will include booklets and brochures explaining the Murray Valley Trail with information about the river, environmental features and major points of interest. Publication's will include maps, accommodation, access to water, distances, estimated times for travel, suitability for families, safety notes, food, wildlife, etc. Signs will clearly indicate the Trails route and linkages and will be consistent with state and national signage.

A web site will advertise the Trail, promote the natural beauty of the River Murray and provide information to attract people to the network of tracks and trails along the Murray Valley.

## **BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES**

Regional tourism and business associations could promote the Murray Valley Trail through their existing networks. These organisations can also add value to the Trail by developing or participating in marketing strategies. Development and maintenance of the Trail offer commercial sponsorship opportunities, particularly by food industries throughout the Murray Valley.

## **MANAGEMENT**

The Murray Darling Association is managing this project. The Association has membership of 90 regional councils along the Murray, Darling and other rivers in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and South Australia. The Association has been promoting a sustainable environment and development since 1944.

## **PARTNERSHIP**

The Trail's development will be a partnership of Local Government, governments and community groups. A steering committee has been established with representatives from Local Government, community, tourism, regional development and governments from the three states.

The Murray River is Australia's greatest river and one of the world's significant catchments. The river sustained indigenous people, provided a highway for explorers, water for settlers and inspiration for artists. The Murray's water contributes to the nation's wealth and is crucial for the environmental health of Australia. Extending the length of the Murray Valley through NSW, Victoria and South Australia, the Murray Valley Trail will allow visitors to experience the magnificence of the Murray River and its inspiring environment, heritage, culture and beauty.

### **For more information please contact:**

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