

Report



Sport, Recreation and Open Space Specialists

Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance
Shires of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Nannup and Manjimup

Bridgetown to Broke Inlet Bridle Trail

Feasibility Study

February 2014



*“Enhance your
community's
health and fitness”*

Tredwell Management Services

Adelaide (Head Office) 209B Henley Beach Road, Torrensville SA
Perth Office Level 28, AMP Tower 140 St Georges Terrace Perth WA 6000
Phone: (08) 8234 6387 Email: info@tredwell.com.au www.tredwell.com.au



Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained within this report is complete, accurate and up to date, Tredwell Management Services (TMS) make no warranty, representation or undertaking whether expressed or implied, nor do they assume any legal liability, whether direct or indirect, or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Bridle Trail Feasibility Study 2014	3
1.2.1 Project Development.....	3
1.2.2 Project Aims.....	3
1.2.3 Project Methodology	3
1.3 Initial Bridle Trail Alignment Mapping	4
2. BRIDLE TRAIL ALIGNMENT & DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....	5
2.1 Trail Alignment	5
2.2 Trail Heads & Rest Stops	5
2.3 Signage.....	6
2.4 Mapping of the Bridle Trail	6
2.5 Approximate distances between Trail Heads:.....	7
2.6 Approximate distances between Trail Heads and Rest Stops:.....	7
3. DETAILED TRAIL ALIGNMENT CONSIDERATIONS.....	8
3.1 Operational Policy 13: Recreation within public drinking water source areas on Crown Land (Govt. of Western Australia, Dept. of Water; September 2012)	8
3.1.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail	10
3.2 Policy Statement No.18 Policy Guidelines – Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services (Department of Environment and Conservation) Policy Statement....	11
3.2.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail	14
3.3 Western Power – Power Line Easement	15
3.3.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail	15
3.4 Shannon & D’Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012.....	16
3.4.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail	17
3.5 Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 (Conservation Commission of Western Australia; April 2013).....	18
3.5.1 Recreation and Tourism	18
3.5.2 Travel Routes.....	19
3.5.3 Implications for the Bridle Trail	19
3.6 Perup Draft Management Plan 2011 (Department of Environment and Conservation and Conservation Commission Western Australia)	20
3.6.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail	21
3.7 Phytophthora Dieback	22
3.7.1 Managing Phytophthora Dieback in Bushland, Edition 4; 2008 (Dieback Working Group).....	22
3.7.2 Guidelines for Horse Riding.....	22
3.7.3 Implications for the Bridle Trail	22
3.8 Western Australian Government Railway, Northcliffe Branch Line: Picton Junction – Pemberton – Northcliffe.....	24
3.8.1 Northcliffe Branch Line	24
3.8.2 The Pemberton Tramway Company Pty Ltd.....	24

3.8.3	Implications for the Bridle Trail	24
3.9	Private Land.....	26
3.9.1	Implications for the Bridle Trail	26
3.10	Existing Watercourses.....	27
3.10.1	Implications for the Bridle Trail	27
3.11	Major highways	29
3.11.1	Implications for the Bridle Trail	29
3.12	Trail User Conflict.....	31
3.12.1	Implications for the Bridle Trail	31
3.13	Western Australia Bushfire Season	33
3.13.1	Implications for the Bridle Trail	33
3.14	The Noongar people	34
3.14.1	Consultation	34
3.14.2	Implications for the Bridle Trail	35
3.15	Summary.....	36
4.	BRIDLE TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE.....	49
4.1	Horse Trail Infrastructure Guidelines - Peri Urban Precincts (HorseSA; 2010)	49
4.2	Opportunities to share trail infrastructure.....	51
4.2.1	Existing facilities in the Bridle Trail Towns & Broke Inlet.....	51
4.2.2	Existing facilities along the Bibbulmun Track/ Munda Biddi Trail	51
4.3	Indicative Infrastructure Requirements	52
4.3.1	Trail Heads.....	52
4.3.2	Rest Stops	54
4.3.3	Other.....	55
5.	LINKS ONTO A REGIONAL BRIDLE TRAIL NETWORK.....	57
6.	MARKETING THE BRIDLE TRAIL	59
6.1	Guidelines	59
6.2	Indicative Costings	59
7.	FUNDING	60
8.	CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS	62
	APPENDICES	63
	Appendix 1: Mapping	



Tables

Table 1: Relevant Trail Activities and the Implications of Policy 13.....	9
Table 2: Key issues and Required Outcomes Summary Table	36

Figures

Figure 1: Proposed Horse Trail from Boyup Brook to the coast – original concept alignment.....	2
Figure 2: Initial Bridle Trail Alignments	4

Executive Summary

The Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance (WBSA) commissioned the Trails Master Plan for the Warren Blackwood Region (June 2011). The intention for that Trails Master Plan included its use as the basis for prioritising the maintenance and upgrade of existing trails and the planning and development of new trails (bush walking, mountain bike, bridle and canoeing).

Through a process of extensive regional community consultation, the Trails Master Plan highlighted as a high priority the delivery of a long distance bridle trail connecting Boyup Brook to Peaceful Bay on the south coast. The original intention for the bridle trail was to follow historic stock routes from an area to the south of Boyup Brook down to the south coast. Following preliminary investigations into potential alignments of the trail it became apparent that trying to follow historic stock routes would present significant issues, not least of which is that many sections of these historic routes have remained significant transport/ communication corridors and are now an integral part of WA's strategic road network. Also, due to changes in levels of support and funding commitments from the local Shires, the focus of the bridle trail remains on the referencing historic stock routes as an important part of the area's history, whilst adjusting the broader Bridle Trail alignment further to the west, establishing a trail that links Bridgetown and Nannup in the north, with Broke Inlet on the south coast (D'Entrecasteaux National Park), via the towns of Manjimup, Pemberton and Northcliffe.

The aims of the Bridle Trail Feasibility Study 2014 are to:

- Establish on the ground the optimum trail alignment;
- Integrate consultation findings from key stakeholders;
- Plot and map the route;
- Identify support infrastructure requirements;
- Establish preliminary construction requirements;
- Formulate implementation plan with targeted actions to deliver the trail; and
- Develop and publish a trail map and accompanying report.

A set of principles were established to inform and guide the trail alignment and associated infrastructure, including identification of trail head and rest stop locations, trail head, interpretive, warning and waymarker signage.

Several strategic considerations were identified during the process, used to inform the trail alignment investigations, including the following strategic policy documents and key issues relevant to the local context:

- Operational Policy 13: Recreation within public drinking water source areas on Crown Land (Govt. of Western Australia, Dept. of Water; September 2012)
- Policy Statement No.18 Policy Guidelines – Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services (Department of Environment and Conservation) Policy Statement
- Western Power – Power Line Easement

- Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012
- Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 (Conservation Commission of Western Australia; April 2013)
- Perup Draft Management Plan 2011 (Department of Environment and Conservation and Conservation Commission Western Australia)
- Phytophthora Dieback
- Western Australian Government Railway, Northcliffe Branch Line: Picton Junction – Pemberton – Northcliffe
- Private Land
- Existing Watercourses (crossing of)
- Major highways
- Trail User Conflict
- Western Australia Bushfire Season
- Indigenous consultation

For each of the above identified considerations, the associated implications for each section of the preferred bridle trail alignment were identified, alongside actions required to seek resolution of issues and potential risks to the successful delivery of the bridle trail.

Indicative infrastructure requirements are identified with trail heads proposed for each of the trail towns (Bridgetown, Nannup, Manjimup, Pemberton Northcliffe and Broke Inlet). Rest stop provision is also suggested at Yornup, Collins Road and Chesapeake Road. Further detailed requirements would be investigated as part of the next stage of the trail development plan.

In conclusion, the feasibility assessment process conducted through this study has shown that the development of a long distance bridle trail connecting the town of Bridgetown with Broke Inlet on the south coast is feasible, provided that a number of key issues are resolved and significant external funding is sourced to contribute towards the next stage of investigation and the initial construction of the trail.

The key issue that needs to be addressed is securing access to land to develop the trail, which will involve ongoing discussions with key stakeholders such as the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Department of Water, and the Western Australian Government Railway.

The next stage of the project will include the following components:

- Negotiations with land owners/managers
- GPS mapping of the trail alignment
- Determination of specific infrastructure requirements
- Facilitating flora and fauna surveys
- Hygiene Management Plan
- Traffic assessments
- Consultation with the Noongar people
- Development of codes of conduct for trail users
- Establishing bushfire protocols/strategies

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance (WBSA) commissioned the Trails Master Plan for the Warren Blackwood Region (June 2011) with the aim *“to elevate our region to state, national and international status for enthusiasts of bush walking, mountain biking, canoeing and horse riding”*.

The Trails Master Plan introduced a vision for the regional trails network:

“The Warren Blackwood Region will be recognised for the quality and diversity of its regional trail network, developed and managed sustainably and cooperatively, enhancing the lifestyles, health and wellbeing of residents and visitors and contributing to the regional economy”.

The intention for the Trails Master Plan included its use as the basis for prioritising the maintenance and upgrade of existing trails and the planning and development of new trails (bush walking, mountain bike, bridle and canoeing).

Guiding Principles outlined in the Western Australian Trails Strategy 2009-2015 were used as a basis to identify priorities for the trails network in the Warren Blackwood Region:

1. Sustainability – balance economic, social, health, environmental and cultural considerations for the long term sustainability of the community;
2. Efficiency – create and maintain trails with minimal human intervention, providing best value for money and maximise the benefit from the application of government resources;
3. Preservation – protect the cultural and environmental identity of local areas;
4. Access – provide access for all ages and abilities;
5. Flexibility and Adaptability – acknowledge some users seek challenge and adventure as a life experience; and
6. Acknowledge – indigenous people and historical settlers.

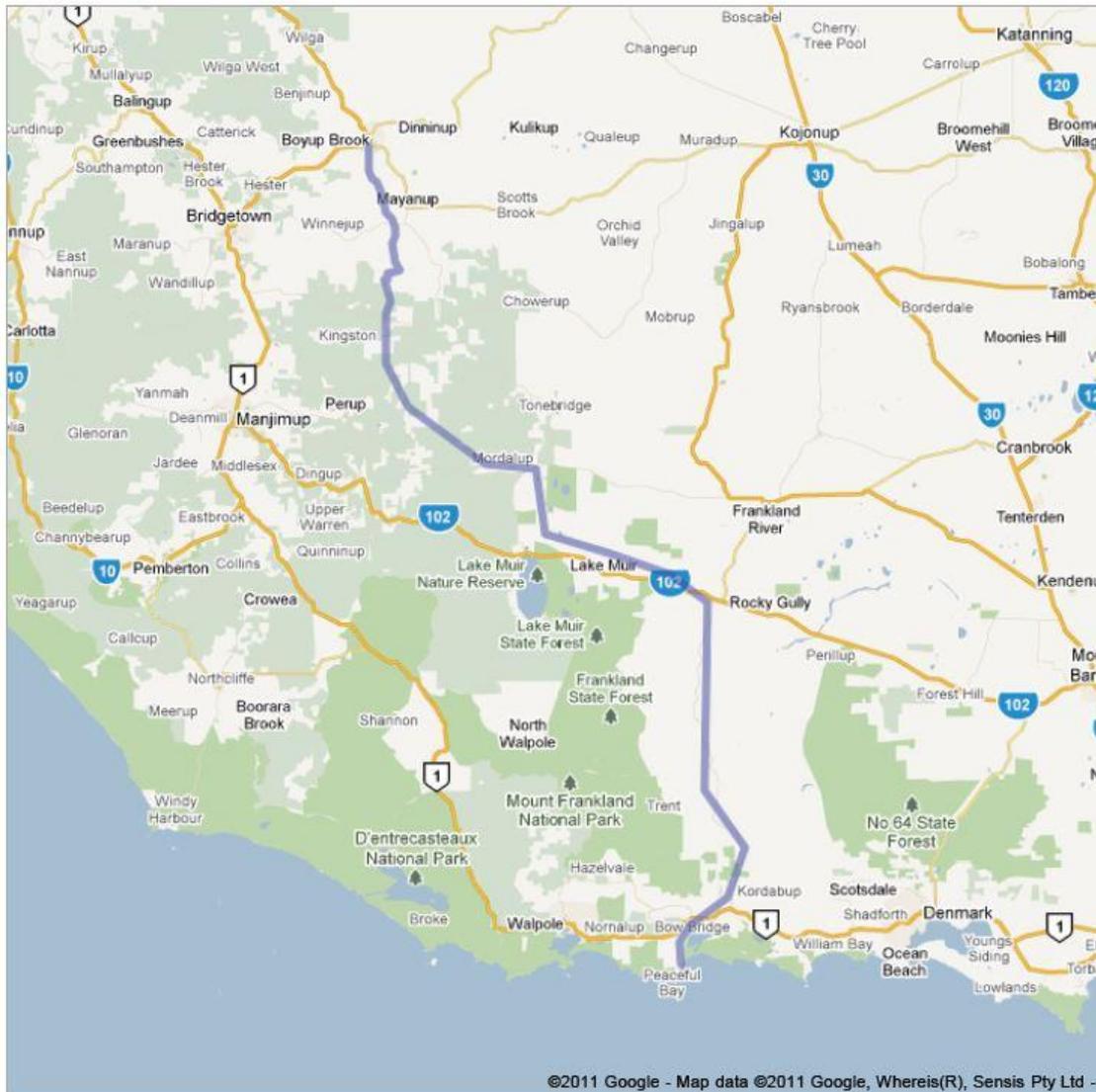
Through a process of extensive regional community consultation, the Trails Master Plan highlighted as a high priority the delivery of a bridle trail - Boyup Brook to Coast Long Distance Bridle Trail. This trail had previously been identified by the Department of Environment and Conservation (now the Department of Parks and Wildlife - DPAW) as a future project and that it presents a great opportunity for the Warren Blackwood region.

The original concept for the Bridle Trail was that it would follow historic stock routes, connecting areas to the south of Boyup Brook with the south coast, in the vicinity of Peaceful Bay (refer Figure 1). It was anticipated that trail users would include ATHRA (Australian Trail Horse Riders Association WA), local and regional pony clubs, adult rider clubs and horse enthusiasts across the State. This trail would also

encourage 'adventure' trails and tourism business development for communities across the region. It was further anticipated that a truly regional bridle trail based on historic stock routes would have the capacity to be a tourist attraction of significant appeal at a national and international level.



Notes This is NOT the alignment of the proposed trail. This only gives a general indication of the direction. Much effort will need to be spent to seek appropriate alignment.



Proposed Horse Trail From Boyup Brook to the coast

Figure 1: Proposed Horse Trail from Boyup Brook to the coast – original concept alignment

At the time, DPAW expressed broad support for the proposals and would work with the Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance to find a suitable alignment of the trail. DPAW were also in the process of preparing up a first draft code of conduct for horse riders.

1.2 Bridle Trail Feasibility Study 2014

1.2.1 Project Development

The original intention for the bridle trail was to follow historic stock routes from an area to the south of Boyup Brook down to the south coast. Following preliminary investigations into potential alignments of the trail it became apparent that trying to follow historic stock routes would present significant issues, not least of which is that many sections of these historic routes have remained significant transport/communication corridors and are now an integral part of WA's strategic road network.

In addition to this, due to changes in levels of support and funding commitments from the local Shires, the Warren Blackwood Strategic Alliance is now comprised of the Shires of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup. The focus of the bridle trail will remain on the referencing historic stock routes as an important part of the area's history, whilst adjusting the broader Bridle Trail alignment further to the west, and will now seek to establish and formalise a trail that links Bridgetown and Nannup in the north, with Broke Inlet on the south coast (D'Entrecasteaux National Park), via the towns of Manjimup, Pemberton and Northcliffe.

1.2.2 Project Aims

The aims of the Bridle Trail Feasibility Study 2014 are to:

- Establish on the ground the optimum trail alignment;
- Integrate consultation findings from key stakeholders;
- Plot and map the route;
- Identify support infrastructure requirements;
- Establish preliminary construction requirements;
- Formulate implementation plan with targeted actions to deliver the trail; and
- Develop and publish a trail map and accompanying report.

1.2.3 Project Methodology

A project methodology was developed to ensure that the Study incorporates relevant research and design processes.

- **Stage 1 – Literature Review & Initial Stakeholder Consultation**
- **Stage 2 – Development of Trail Alignment**
- **Stage 3 – Further Stakeholder Consultation, On-ground assessment & Finalisation of Preferred Trail Alignment**
- **Stage 4 –Implementation and Action Plan Development**
- **Stage 5 – Finalise and Publish Feasibility Study**

1.3 Initial Bridle Trail Alignment Mapping

Consultation has already occurred with Australian Trail Horse Riders Association WA (ATHRA), local and regional pony clubs, adult rider clubs, WA Trekkers, Western Australian Endurance Rider's Association (WAERA) and horse enthusiasts across the State who express support for long distance bridle trail developments. Local and regional horse riders consulted have also identified the need for bridle trails. The proposal will also add value to the WBSA commitment to develop and promote the region as “the place to go for trails and recreation based tourism”.

An initial map was produced following preliminary consultation with the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Shire of Manjimup and DPAW, and informal consultation with the Shire of Nannup. This map was intended to establish a starting point for further discussions and consultation and facilitate the identification of potential opportunities and constraints. The identified routes included the usage of long sections of rail service roads and gazetted roads to minimise impacts upon DPAW managed land. The main road heading south is the original stock route utilised by Bridgetown and Manjimup farmers, which informed the concept trail alignment.



Figure 2: Initial Bridle Trail Alignments

2. Bridle Trail Alignment & Design Principles

2.1 Trail Alignment

- The Bridle Trail should connect all the significant towns located between Bridgetown and Broke Inlet, either along a primary route or through use of a linking spur/branch route;
- Where feasible, the Bridle Trail should follow sections of historic stock routes (eg. Wheatley, Karri Forest and Manjimup Stock Routes). Where unfeasible, these routes should be referenced through use of interpretive signage at points where the Bridle Trail crosses the stock route;
- Seek routes that provide the rider a diverse experience with high scenic value. Where compatible, make use of 'Travel Routes', where DPAW land management of the adjacent areas is specifically geared to maximising scenic values/qualities and minimising adverse impacts as a result of silviculture practice;
- Avoid travelling along or immediately adjacent to major highways as far as possible;
- Minimise crossings of major highways and seek to minimise contact with vehicular traffic;
- Minimise travel along heavily trafficked local roads and forestry tracks;
- Follow lightly trafficked, gazetted roads and service/maintenance tracks wherever possible;
- Minimise travel through (and in close proximity to) National Parks and Nature Reserves;
- Avoid Public Drinking Water Source Areas, wherever feasible;
- Avoid areas affected by Phytophthora Dieback,
- Avoid utilising sections of the Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail (to minimise user conflict issues) whilst at the same time maximising opportunities to make use of shared trail facilities (eg. toilets, shelters, campgrounds);

2.2 Trail Heads & Rest Stops

- Closely associate Trail Head locations with existing towns, ensuring highest possible public exposure of the Bridle Trail and enabling shared use of existing facilities wherever feasible;
- Provide Trail Heads and Rest Stops at an appropriate frequency to accommodate a range of rider abilities, offering a high degree of flexibility and options for trail route planning over a variety of distances;
- Vehicle/float parking at Trail Heads located where there is sufficient space for safe manoeuvring, appropriate surfacing and good passive surveillance for parked vehicles;

- Horse yards to be provided at Trail Heads, preferably located away from other incompatible activities in the area (eg. busy car park areas);
- Rest stops provided between Trail Heads, enabling shorter distance rides and providing basic facilities such as mounting blocks, hitching rail, water supply and basic shelter;
- Provide yards (and camp facilities) approximately every 40km;
- Shared use of existing facilities along the Trail is encouraged;

2.3 Signage

- General – provide signage in accordance with the policies/strategies and guidelines of the relevant land manager;
- Develop a signage strategy that provides consistency and coherence and reinforces trail identity;
- Trail Heads – provide primary signage including overview map for the whole trail and a detailed map for the relevant section. Additional information should also include codes of practice, emergency contact information, rest stops/watering points/amenities, hazards, hygiene regimes, cultural heritage references (including indigenous) and trail project information;
- Waymarkers – provide regularly spaced waymarker/directional signage along the Bridle Trail, with additional signage utilised along sections that might potentially be difficult to navigate;
- Site specific information/hazards – conveys information specific to that location (eg. ‘close the gate’, ‘entering/exiting DRA’);
- Additional Interpretation - acknowledge crossing points/overnight camps/resting places related to Old Stock Routes that cross the path of the Bridle Trail;

2.4 Mapping of the Bridle Trail

The following Maps identify the currently preferred alignment of the Bridle Trail:

- Map 1: Contextual Map
- Map 2: Section 1: Bridgetown to Manjimup
- Map 3: Section 2: Nannup to Yornup
- Map 4: Section 3: Manjimup to Northcliffe
- Map 5: Section 4: Pemberton to Collins Road
- Map 6: Section 5: Northcliffe to Broke Inlet

These Maps are located within Appendix 1 of this Study.

2.5 Approximate distances between Trail Heads:

- **Bridgetown to Manjimup** – approx.30km
- **Bridgetown to Nannup** – approx.50km
- **Nannup to Manjimup** – approx.60km
- **Manjimup to Pemberton** – approx.25km
- **Manjimup to Northcliffe** – approx.45km
- **Pemberton to Northcliffe** – approx.30km
- **Northcliffe to Broke Inlet** – approx.50km

2.6 Approximate distances between Trail Heads and Rest Stops:

- **Bridgetown** to Yornup – approx.10km
- **Nannup** to Willow Springs – approx.20km
- Willow Springs to Yornup – approx.25km
- Yornup to **Manjimup** – approx.20km
- **Manjimup** to Collins Road – approx.20km
- **Manjimup to Pemberton** – approx.25km
- **Pemberton** to Collins Road – approx.5km
- Collins Road to **Northcliffe** – approx.25km
- **Northcliffe** to Chesapeake Road – approx.25km
- Chesapeake Road to **Broke Inlet** - approx.25km

3. Detailed Trail Alignment Considerations

3.1 Operational Policy 13: Recreation within public drinking water source areas on Crown Land (Govt. of Western Australia, Dept. of Water; September 2012)

This policy places a series of hard constraints on significant parts of the study area in relation to the future provision and management of trails that fall within the Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSA).

The intent of Policy 13 is to manage recreation to protect public health by maintaining the quality of water in PDWSAs to help ensure a safe, reliable, lower cost public drinking water supply.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- protect public health;
- maximise water quality;
- manage recreation in PDWSAs;
- facilitate increased recreation opportunities outside PDWSAs;
- provide for low cost public drinking water supply and treatment processes; and
- establish the primacy of water quality protection in PDWSAs.

The Department of Water recognises that many of the state's water catchments accommodate recreational activities and that such activities provide the opportunity for people to obtain social, physical and mental health benefits.

To protect water quality and public health, and to provide for the ongoing availability of a reliable, safe, lower cost public drinking water supply, passive land based recreation activities in public drinking water source areas (PDWSAs) are:

- supported in the outer catchments of surface water source areas, subject to recreation compatibility Tables (refer full policy for details), noting:
 - the amount/level of approved passive land based *recreation that currently occurs* in PDWSA outer catchments, is supported to continue; and
 - new or enhanced recreation will be located outside proclaimed PDWSAs.
- supported in the wellhead protection zones and outer catchments of groundwater source areas, subject to recreation compatibility Table 4; and
- Recreation is not supported in the reservoir protection zones (Reservoir Protection Zones (RPZs) comprise a 2km exclusion zone surrounding the high water mark of public drinking water supply reservoirs of surface water based PDWSAs).

The Department of Water has developed Policy 13 2012 on the basis that:

- The recreation types and levels currently approved in PDWSA outer catchments are supported to continue;
- Existing recreational facilities can be maintained or improved; and
- New recreation facilities and recreation types will be located outside proclaimed PDWSAs, noting that the ‘recreation types’ in Policy 13 are subject to review at five yearly intervals along with the policy.

Table 1 below outlines the relevant trail activities within this study and the implications of Policy 13. All activities are incompatible within the RPZ with the exception of the bike riding on the Mundi Biddi Trail and walking on the Bibbulmun Track. Therefore any other trail and related activity is not permitted in RPZ. A number of trails or parts thereof e.g. the Paton’s Brook Trail would be required to be decommissioned as per Policy 13. Off road driving of motorised vehicles and horse riding are also incompatible in both the RPZ and outer catchment. Cycling and walking will be supported at “September 2012 levels” which is defined as the recreation activity is supported up to the level when Policy 13, 2012 is approved. This level will be determined by the Department of Water, based on Department of Parks & Wildlife management plans, approved before the approval of Policy 13, 2012 and in consultation with recreation stakeholders. The findings within this study will provide some base information to inform these levels.

Table 1: Relevant Trail Activities and the Implications of Policy 13

Relevant Trail Activity	PDWSA – reservoir protection zone*	PDWSA – outer catchment
Off road driving (e.g. trail bikes/4WD’s)	Incompatible	Incompatible (except on existing approved tracks)
Bike riding	Incompatible (except on existing 2012 Mundi Biddi Trail)	Supported at September 2012 levels Φ
Bushwalking / hiking	Incompatible (except on existing 2012 Bibbulmun Track)	Supported at September 2012 levels Φ
Riding / walking / training of animals including dogs and horses - recreational or commercial (except on public roads and designated trails)	Incompatible	Incompatible

* Public access to Crown land in reservoir protection zones is prohibited, except along public roads.

Φ Recreation events, currently approved for the outer catchments of PDWSAs, will continue to be supported using the level of recreation infrastructure present at September 2012.

Given that a significant parts of the study area are located within a PDWSA the implications of the revised Policy 13 appear to be great for trail based activities. The policy has yet to be tested in terms of what types of enhancements/developments will be permitted and it is understood a framework is currently being drafted between the Department of Water and DPAW to determine a practical way forward. However, it is clear that new developments that would promote additional usage would unlikely be supported. It is noted that existing facilities within PDWSAs can be improved as long as the recreational capacity of those sites is not increased. Improvements may include environmental, amenity, public safety or public health reasons. However it is clear that new or enhanced recreation facilities, roads, tracks, trails, picnic areas, toilets and so on should be developed outside PDWSAs, to attract and accommodate increasing recreation numbers. The full policy can be viewed at www.water.wa.gov.au.

3.1.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- Bridgetown to Manjimup
- Nannup to Yornup
- Manjimup to Northcliffe (north of Northcliffe Road)
- Pemberton to Collins Road

Proposal

- Utilise gazetted roads, forestry tracks, maintenance tracks (Western Power easement and Northcliffe Branch Line) within the PDWSA.

Actions required:

- Negotiate permission from Department of Water to access and utilise land currently identified as PDWSA;

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If permission not granted, given the extent of PDWSA coverage, the Bridle Trail would be restricted to southern extents of the proposed trail alignment (to the south of Northcliffe Road), with very limited scope for alternative routes to the north of Northcliffe Road.

It is understood that the Department of Water are currently reviewing PDWSAs, potentially including those areas affecting the Bridle Trail alignment. We are currently awaiting further information from Department of Water.

3.2 Policy Statement No.18 Policy Guidelines – Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services (Department of Environment and Conservation) Policy Statement

Policy No.18 was developed by the Department of Environment and Conservation (now DPAW) WA. The objective of the policy guidelines contained within Policy 18 is:

- To provide world-class recreation and tourism opportunities, services and facilities for visitors to the public conservation estate while maintaining in perpetuity Western Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

Section A of the Policy Statement includes a set of Policy Guidelines applicable to all activities that may be undertaken on lands and waters managed by DPAW. These policy guidelines seek to protect and manage existing recreational sites of value, aboriginal sites and sites of heritage value. Public access is generally permitted and, where appropriate, facilitated to areas of lands and waters managed by DPAW.

The policy asserts that recreation and tourist facilities will be continually developed to ensure that residents and visitors are afforded quality nature based tourism and recreation opportunities and that DPAW will attempt to accommodate organised activities and events that are compatible with management/maintenance plans and 'necessary' operations.

Section B details Policy Guidelines applicable to specific activities. Broadly speaking, the policy guidelines seek to accommodate a wide variety of activities as far as possible, where they do not conflict with the protection of the natural and cultural environment, other park visitors or management operations. The suitability of a particular area to host any one activity will be considered, based in part on the proposed intensity, frequency and timing of the activity.

In relation to horse riding, the objective of the policy guidelines is to manage horse riding activities on DPAW -managed lands so that such activities will not detract from the overall values of these natural areas. Horse riding is accepted as a suitable means of appreciating and enjoying those natural areas where environmental and social impacts can be kept to acceptable limits.

Potential impacts associated with horse riding may include:

- Introduction of weeds or parasites
- Spread of disease such as dieback
- Trampling or browsing of native flora
- Soil erosion
- Siltation or fouling of watercourses
- Disturbance of native fauna
- Potential conflict with other users.

Under the *Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002*, areas where horse riding is allowed need to be designated. Regulation 17 allows for a person to bring a horse on to a designated area; the person must control and manage the horse in a designated area in accordance with conditions specified on the signs erected in or in the vicinity of that area.

Horse riding on dedicated public roads within the estate managed by DPAW must comply with the *Road Traffic Act 1974* (CALM Act does not apply).

Policy Guidelines for DPAW -managed lands include the following:

- **Horse riding may be permitted:**

- National Parks/Conservation Areas – by way of an approved management plan, where ‘right of access’ is recognised, or where the activity has been previously allowed (and where the impacts of the activity can be minimised and controlled)
- Land categorised under section 5(1)(g) and 5(1)(h) of the CALM Act
- State Forest
- Timber Reserves
(provided such activities will not detract from the overall values of the area).
- In areas where horse riding is permitted, riding will be along defined tracks, firebreaks and roads, unless other provisions/agreements are in place.

- **Horse riding will not be permitted:**

- wilderness/remote areas
- areas of special scientific or cultural value
- other areas requiring special protection
(Unless approved by DPAW CEO)

- **Horse riding will not generally be permitted:**

- Nature reserves
(Unless permitted by way of an approved management plan, where ‘right of access’ is recognised, or where the activity has been previously allowed and where the impacts of the activity can be minimised and controlled)

- **Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002** – all horse riding to accord with these regulations

- **Disease Risk Areas (DRA):**

- Horses may use dedicated public open roads but must not leave the road surface
- In dry summer months, horses may be allowed to enter DRA on road surfaces if a DPAW permit has been issued.

- **Special events** – require DPAW approval

- **Control** - Horses must be controlled at all time and kept within specified zones/designated horse trails
- **Dedicated trails** – where practicable trails for horse riding, cycling and bush walking should be separated
- **Camping** – in areas where camping is permitted, camp at approved/ designated campsites
- **Feeding** – the use of processed, weed-free feed may be required. Grazing in National Parks and Conservation Parks is not permitted, with restrictions in other areas, as detailed in local management guidelines
- **Trail Closure** – trails may be closed due to weather conditions, erosion, disease, weed introduction/spread, degradation of vegetation/water source, user conflict, visitor safety, lack of compliance.
- **Fees** – fees may be charged

Appendix 4 of the Policy Statement includes a tabulated reference guide that should be read in conjunction with the Policy Guidelines summarised.

Parks and Visitors Services Strategy 2007-2011 (Department of Environment and Conservation)

The Parks and Visitors Services Strategy provides a framework for managing nature-based tourism and recreation to protect natural areas. Although the Strategy provided a management framework up until 2011, the vision and focus areas identified remain relevant, and the Strategy forms part of DPAW's Policy Statement No.18.

The Strategy articulates a number of key focus areas in relation to managing natural areas for public use. These focus areas include:

- **Focus 1 Ecological sustainability:** each recreation opportunity and each developed tourism site has to be evaluated to determine its compatibility with DPAW's conservation objectives. Acceptable levels of environmental change that can be sustained within a given ecosystem need to be identified. All new recreation developments and visitor facilities must recognise the need to manage for ecological sustainability.
- **Focus 5 Spectrum of experiences:** DPAW maintains a wide spectrum of recreation and tourism experiences and avoids pressure to promote, upgrade and develop all sites to the same degree, recognising that nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities vary from site to site.
- **Focus 10 Equity:** in providing nature-based recreation and tourism facilities and services, the department is committed to providing equity of opportunity for the recreation seeking public on DPAW -managed areas, best achieved by allowing the community to access and participate in the widest range of nature-based activities on the public conservation and forest estate, providing these pursuits do not significantly diminish conservation and cultural heritage values or impair other forms of use and/or the enjoyment of other users.



The Bridle Trail alignment currently travels through (or adjacent to) areas with the following DPAW land classifications:

- National Parks
- State Forests
- Timber Reserves
- Nature Reserves

Sections of the Trail also pass through Disease Risk Areas (see later section).

Under the *Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002*, areas where horse riding is allowed need to be designated.

3.2.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- All Bridle Trail Sections (all sections utilise DPAW managed land, to a greater or lesser degree)

Proposal:

- Parts of the Bridle Trail alignment runs through National Parks and State Forests and adjacent to Timber Reserves and Nature Reserves.

Actions required:

- Seek and gain permission to access and utilise DPAW managed land.
- Bridle Trail would need to be specifically designated by DPAW

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If permission not granted, extent and potential alternative routes for the Bridle Trail would be highly restricted.

3.3 Western Power – Power Line Easement

Western Power’s Easement brochure defines their understanding of an easement:

“An easement provides the holder of the easement a right to use the land belonging to another in a particular manner and restricts the owner of that land from using the land in a particular manner. An easement is in place for the protection of and access to the network, safety of the public, contractors and visitors to the premises at all time”

Western Power’s standard easement prohibits within the easement:

- Altering/disturbing present level of the surface of the land;
- Construction of any building, structure or improvement within the easement (with the exception of max 2m high fencing)
- Construction/alteration of contour banks, storm water drain, compensating basin, or artificial lake, without prior written consent;
- Growing/maintaining vegetation exceeding one metre in height from the natural surface of the land;
- Stacking/storing any material;
- Bringing within the easement any vehicle/machinery that exceeds 4.5 metres in height from the natural surface of the land;
- Parking any vehicle/machinery exceeding 2.5 metres in height from the natural surface of the land;
- Explosive, flammable, or unstable substances or blasting activities
- Carrying on (or permitting) any activity/operation which endangers the safety of the transmission works or the safe, efficient and continuous operation of those works.

3.3.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- Nannup to Yornup

Proposal:

Utilise the access/maintenance track associated with the powerline (and easement);

Actions required:

- Seek and gain permission to utilise the access/maintenance track associated with the powerline (and easement) from Western Power;

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Provision of certain infrastructure within the easement may be restricted, in accordance with the above stated guidelines
- If permission not granted, use of adjacent forestry tracks/gazetted roads will be required. These routes would be more heavily trafficked.

3.4 Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012

The Plan states that horse riding may be permitted in national parks where:

- The activity is a pre-established use;
- Environmental and social impacts are considered manageable;
- The activity does not conflict with other values.

Horses are classed as vehicles under the Road Traffic Act and are therefore permitted on gazetted public roads, managed by Main Roads Western Australia or local government. The Management Plan recognises that horse riding has been occurring alongside Deeside Coast Road and Chesapeake Road, which can continue under the Road Traffic Act, as long as it is contained within the road reserve, which is not part of the conservation estate.

Key points identified in the Plan relating to horse riding include:

- Horse riding can lead to conflict with other users, trampling and grazing of plants, spread of weeds and plant disease, disturbance to native fauna, soil compaction and erosion;
- The landforms of the D'Entrecasteaux National Park have low capacity to sustain horse riding;
- There is currently one commercial horse riding company licensed in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park and recent research suggests that the impacts can be managed if adequately confined;
- There are opportunities for public bridle trails in the adjacent parks of the Walpole Wilderness and neighbouring State forest.

In relation to horse riding, the stated objective is *'to provide horse riding opportunities in the parks that minimise the impact on the environment and on other visitors'*, achieved by:

- Allowing one commercial horse riding operator, restricted to identified routes, with the application of suitable environmental criteria to license conditions;
- Investigate options for one or two loop bridle trails from Shannon townsite;
- Investigate options for overnight tethering at Shannon townsite;
- Trial horse riding along the beach between Windy Harbour and Gardner River;
- Otherwise prohibiting horse riding within the parks;
- Monitoring all horse riding within the parks to ensure all impacts are managed appropriately and discontinuing use if impacts cannot be managed
- Encouraging recreational horse riding in areas outside the parks which are able to sustain this activity

The Plan suggests that, in comparison to D'Entrecasteaux National Park, much of the Shannon National Park may be capable of supporting horse use on the network of existing roads and tracks as the soils are more stable, the vegetation is less susceptible to Phytophthora, and the conflict with other users is not as great.

Chesapeake Road is identified as an unsealed road, suitable for 2WD (Map 11 of the Management Plan). Visitor Management Settings identified the entire length of Chesapeake Road (between Windy Harbour Road and Broke Inlet Road) as 'Recreation'.

Visitor Management Settings criteria are identified in Appendix 10 of the Management Plan, identifying acceptable levels of access, site modification, commercial use and visitor management style, in relation to recreational use in a particular area.

For areas identified by the settings as 'Recreation':

- **Principal Purpose:** conservation, medium level recreation, education and interpretation;
- **Access:** Vehicles: 2WD on unsealed roads; Cycle (type 2 and 3 trails); Walking trails (AS Walking Track class 1 and 2) Horse: designated bridle trails possible;
- **Site Modification:** low key facilities at specific sites such as simple car parks, toilets, shelters, picnic areas;
- **Probable Social Interaction:** high level of contact and interaction with other users, groups of more than 15 people may be expected;
- **Style of Visitor Management:** moderate on-site regimentation, including some signs and barriers. Facilities may be common and clustered. Track signs may include interpretation, with brochures and track guides often available.

3.4.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- Northcliffe to Broke Inlet

Proposal:

- Utilise gazetted roads (Chesapeake Road and Broke Inlet Road)

Actions required:

- Seek agreement in principle from DPAW to utilise gazetted roads (Chesapeake Road and Broke Inlet Road);
- Address any DPAW concerns with regards to use of these roads and any implications on adjacent land managed by DPAW
- Negotiate potential locations for Trail Head and Rest Stop related infrastructure, preferably located within Shannon National Park;

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If the proposed route is opposed, there are no alternatives available.

3.5 Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023 (Conservation Commission of Western Australia; April 2013)

Western Australia's national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves, State forests and timber reserves are vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia.

The basis of the approach to forest management in the plan stems from the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management; the economic and social values derived from the use of the natural areas covered by the plan should be provided through a management system that is based on consideration of its impacts on biodiversity and is precautionary in nature.

3.5.1 Recreation and Tourism

The Plan recognises that the area covered by the plan provides important opportunities to meet the growing public demand for outdoor recreation and nature based tourism and seeks to protect and maintain the range and quality of these opportunities and experiences. Threats to identified values include:

- Degradation of natural areas, assets and facilities that support recreation and tourism;
- Inadequate planning, leading to conflicts with other land uses or activities and/or recreation and tourism opportunities not matched to community demand;
- Poor design of assets and facilities leading to user dissatisfaction or safety risks
- Inappropriate behaviour affecting the enjoyment of others, and inappropriate use of and/or wilful damage to facilities provided;
- Inappropriate fire regimes, including uncontrolled bush fires.

The Department commits to:

- Maintaining understanding of visitor and recreation demand including knowledge, attitudes and activities of visitors in the area;
- Continuing to support and plan for recreation and tourism, and provide and maintain safe and appropriate recreation and tourism facilities and services, in location and in a manner that seeks to meet demand and minimise conflicts with other ecologically sensitive forest management values;
- Providing for the expansion of camping and caravanning facilities in the area covered by the plan;
- Working with relevant water agencies and utilities in planning for and managing tourism and recreation activities in water catchment areas;
- Seeking to enrich visitor experiences and develop and nurture lifelong connections between the community and natural areas, by providing opportunities to learn, explore and interact with the natural and cultural environment.

3.5.2 Travel Routes

Travel Routes are identified by the Management Plan as informal reserves, for the purpose of protecting aesthetic and social values. They provide linkages between other formal and informal reserves, thereby making an important contribution to conservation outcomes, while also providing socio-economic benefits (particularly for tourism and recreation). Travel routes have been identified where it is considered they would provide most benefit in terms of managing scenic quality, with consideration given to changes in land category, levels and nature of use of the road network, visual impacts of silvicultural practices.

The Travel Route zone includes:

- A corridor that extends at least 200 metres from each side of Level 1 travel routes in the Warren Region (and each side of the Bibbulmun Track); or
- A corridor that extends at least 100 metres from each side of Level 2 travel routes in the Warren Region.”

Wherever possible, opportunities to utilise Travel Routes along the Bridle Trail alignment should be sought, subject to compatibility with existing Travel Route users and sufficient space on roadside verges.

3.5.3 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- All Bridle Trail Sections (all sections utilise DPAW managed land, to a greater or lesser degree)

Proposal:

- Significant parts of the Bridle Trail run through DPAW managed land, following forestry tracks, gazetted roads and maintenance tracks.

Actions required:

- Seek and gain permission to access and utilise DPAW managed land.

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If the proposed alignment is opposed, there are no alternatives available.

3.6 Perup Draft Management Plan 2011 (Department of Environment and Conservation and Conservation Commission Western Australia)

The draft management plan covers two national parks and seventeen nature reserves, referred to as the planning area, including two reserves in close proximity to the proposed alignment of the Bridle Trail:

- Wilgarrup Nature Reserve (Reserve No.12381)
- Alco Nature Reserve (Reserve No.32142)

The primary purpose of each reserve is the conservation of flora and fauna. The Northcliffe Branch Line (and the alignment of the Bridle Trail) dissects Wilgarrup Nature Reserve. Both reserves were being considered for upgrade to 'class A' reserves in the draft management plan.

A number of major threats are identified in the management plan, covering the planning area (which includes the two reserves) including:

- *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (refer next section)
- Invasive plants and animals, particularly foxes, cats, pigs, deer, goats and horses (wild)

The draft management plan recognises the importance of planning for visitor use to the planning area, to manage visitor risk, environmental impacts, social benefit, equity, public demand and potential economic benefit, and that more planning may be needed for certain activities, including horse riding.

Horse riding in bush settings is part of the cultural heritage of the south-west, and still occurs along some roads and tracks open to the public, although demand, use and location often changes. Horse riding trails on some roads and tracks open to the public, with associated facilities and trails, will be investigated and, where permitted, monitored for the prevalence of weeds, erosion, degradation of vegetation and *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

A stated desired outcome is:

- A range of recreational activities appropriate to the environment and management settings that facilitates visitor enjoyment and appreciation of key values.

One of the strategies employed to achieve this outcome is:

- Investigate the establishment of horse riding trails on roads and tracks open to the public, consistent with the purpose of the land and, where established, monitor to minimise adverse impacts (for example *Phytophthora cinnamomi*).

Visitor management settings have been established to provide the greatest range of recreation opportunities in a given area, while limiting unintended incremental development and minimising visitor impacts:

- Wilgarrup Nature Reserve – 'Recreation'

3.6.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- Bridgetown to Manjimup

Proposal:

- Utilise maintenance track associated with non-operational sections of the Northcliffe Branch Line, including a section that dissects Wilgarrup Nature Reserve;

Actions required:

- Seek agreement in principle from DPAW to utilise Northcliffe Branchline maintenance track (dissects Wilgarrup Nature Reserve);
- Address any DPAW concerns with regards to use of this maintenance track in proximity to Wilgarrup Nature Reserve.

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If the proposed route is opposed, options to utilise adjacent forestry tracks/gazetted roads will be required. These routes would be more heavily trafficked.

3.7 Phytophthora Dieback

3.7.1 Managing Phytophthora Dieback in Bushland, Edition 4; 2008 (Dieback Working Group)

Phytophthora Dieback is a disease caused by the introduced pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamom* and causes significant damage in the South West Ecoregion of Western Australia (one of the world's top 34 'biodiversity hotspots') because:

- Over 40% of native plant species in the region are susceptible
- The climate and soils of the South West Australia Ecoregion suit the pathogen's survival and spread; and
- The pathogen was spread widely before it was identified as the cause of permanent damage to our ecosystems.

Human activity causes the most significant, rapid and widespread distribution of this pathogen, including road construction, earth moving, driving vehicles on bush roads and stock movement.

3.7.2 Guidelines for Horse Riding

Horse riding can contribute to the spread of Phytophthora Dieback through the spread of soil via the horse's hooves. To minimise risk, horse riders should:

- Contact DPAW or the local council to find out areas where horse riding is appropriate;
- Avoid riding in bushland areas, particularly following rain or when the soil is wet;
- Avoid muddy areas and puddles;
- Obey signs that specify no horse riding;
- Stay on tracks;
- Ensure that your horse's hooves are clean before entering bushland; and
- Do not enter declared DPAW Disease Risk Areas and obey 'track closed' signs. It is illegal for horses to enter Disease Risk Areas.

3.7.3 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- Nannup to Yornup
- Further detailed investigations will be required to establish the extent of dieback presence and any impacts upon the bridle trail alignment.



Proposal:

- To utilise existing maintenance track (Western Power easement) and sections of gazetted roads where ground has already been disturbed.
- Hygiene Management Plans to be put in place
- Flora/fauna surveys along proposed Bridle Trail alignment to be undertaken

Actions required:

- Seek and gain permission to access and utilise DPAW managed land identified as Disease Risk Areas.
- Develop a Hygiene Management Plan to mitigate risks of the spread of the disease
- Identify suitable locations for hygiene stations (entry and exit points to DRA areas)

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Bridle Trail would need to be specifically designated by DPAW;
- If permission not granted, extent and potential alternative routes for the Bridle Trail would be restricted given the extent of DRA in this area.

3.8 Western Australian Government Railway, Northcliffe Branch Line: Picton Junction – Pemberton – Northcliffe

3.8.1 Northcliffe Branch Line

The Bridle Trail alignment (as currently drawn) utilises significant distances of an access/maintenance track that is associated with, and runs adjacent to, the Northcliffe Branch Line. The majority of the Line is currently non-operational. The precise nature (width and clearance heights) of the access/maintenance track associated with the Line is yet to be established and will require confirmation on the ground to ensure its suitability. The Line is leased to Brookfield Rail.

In theory, non-operational sections of the Line could go back into operation; the existing condition and viability of bringing additional sections of the Line into operation is currently unknown. Whilst it is proposed to utilise the access/maintenance track as the route for the Bridle Trail, rather than the railway line itself, it is presently unclear if sufficient distance is available between the access/maintenance track and the railway line to enable both activities to occur concurrently. This matter will need to be addressed as part of subsequent, more detailed assessments on the ground.

3.8.2 The Pemberton Tramway Company Pty Ltd

A section of the Line is sub-leased to The Pemberton Tramway Company Pty Ltd; a privately owned tourist railway in the South West of Western Australia. It is understood that the majority of the leased Line (running between Lyall Siding in the north and Northcliffe in the south) is presently non-operational. The Company does however operate a tourist railway service (Warren River Service) along an approximately 10km stretch of the line, running from the organisation's base at Pemberton Railway Station, heading south to Warren River Bridge, and returning along the same route.

3.8.3 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Section:

- Bridgetown to Manjimup
- Manjimup to Northcliffe (section up to Pemberton)

Proposal:

- Utilise maintenance track associated with non-operational sections of the Northcliffe Branch Line (and avoiding operational section running between Pemberton Railway Station and Warren River Bridge)

Actions required:

- Consult and seek agreement with the land owner (Public Transport Authority) and the leasees (Brookfield Rail and the Pemberton Tramway Company) to secure access and use of the maintenance track adjacent to the Northcliffe Branch Line.

- 
- Seek agreement in principle from DPAW to utilise Northcliffe Branchline maintenance track and address any DPAW concerns with regards to use of this maintenance track in proximity to environmentally sensitive areas, for example, Wilgarrup Nature Reserve.

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If the proposed route is opposed, options to utilise adjacent forestry tracks/gazetted roads will be required. These routes would be more heavily trafficked. It is hoped that significant sections of the Northcliffe Branch Line can be utilised; if this is not achievable substantially greater lengths of the Bridle Trail will require the use of gazetted roads and forestry tracks.

3.9 Private Land

Privately owned land should be avoided wherever possible to minimise potential issues and delays associated with access negotiation. Where there are no feasible alternatives, rights of access and responsibilities for maintenance, risk and liability will need to be discussed and agreed with the land owner.

3.9.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- Nannup to Yornup (Western Power easement crosses approx.6km of privately owned land)
- Manjimup to Northcliffe (short section to directly link Northcliffe Branch Line with currently closed section of Collins Road)

Proposal:

- To utilise approximately 6km section of privately owned land (albeit, with an existing easement and rights of access to maintain Western Power infrastructure)

Actions required:

- Identify landowner and gain permission to access and utilise land for the purposes of a permanent Bridle Trail;
- Discuss with landowners management, maintenance and risk liability issues and put appropriate agreements in place

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- If permission not granted, potential alternative routes along gazetted roads and forestry tracks would need to be explored:

Nannup to Yornup: use Boundary Road to divert from the easement (DPAW managed land)

Manjimup to Northcliffe: continue along Northcliffe Branch Line until reach Vasse Highway, travel north east along Vasse Highway and take Collins Road, heading south.

3.10 Existing Watercourses

Significant watercourses to be negotiated by the Bridle Trail:

- Bridgetown to Manjimup: Donnelly River
- Pemberton to Northcliffe: Lefroy Brook and Dombakup Brook
- Northcliffe to Broke Inlet: Gardner River and Shannon River

With the exception of Gardner River and Shannon River it is thought that horse and rider will be able to utilise existing bridges to cross these watercourses. Consideration will need to be given to the feasibility of constructing expensive new infrastructure along Chesapeake Road to enable year-round crossings of the Gardner and Shannon Rivers. Bridges may also have to accommodate other traffic, potentially including vehicles and walkers.

Other watercourses and significant areas of excessively wet ground conditions are highly likely to exist along the Bridle Trail, during some or all times of the year.

An on-ground assessment of the Trail alignment will be required to establish whether or not additional infrastructure is required to navigate these areas, such as bridges or boardwalks. This will be undertaken in the detailed design stage of the project.

3.10.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- Northcliffe to Broke Inlet (possible requirements for bridges)
- All Bridle Trail Sections (all sections likely to have localised areas of excessively wet ground conditions, with seasonal variations)

Proposal:

- Utilise bridges, boardwalks, surface upgrades and/or drainage improvements to address potential accessibility constraints relating to existing watercourses/areas of excessively wet ground

Actions required:

- Bridges – investigate further water flows, conditions (and seasonal variations) of the Shannon and Gardner Rivers and establish need/requirements for bridge construction;
- Bridges – investigate opportunities to share costs of infrastructure with other trail users with an interest in the area (eg. Bibbulmun Track). Detailed requirements for different types of user would have implications on costs of construction and need to be factored in.
- On-ground assessment to identify areas of excessively wet ground conditions, which may require diverting around, surface upgrade, drainage improvements or construction of boardwalk (or similar)
- Discuss proposals and seek in principle agreement with land manager/ landowner to implement proposals (eg bridge, boardwalks, drainage).



Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Bridges – failure to secure funds (and appropriate agreements) to construct such infrastructure would likely result in sections of the trail being inaccessible, with the seasonal closure of the Northcliffe to Broke Inlet section of the Bridle Trail;
- Areas of excessively wet ground should be manageable through use of surface upgrades and improved drainage and, in extreme cases, diversion of the alignment to adjacent gazetted roads/forest tracks.

3.11 Major highways

The Bridle Trail alignment has been established with the intention of avoiding major highways wherever possible. However, there are several points along the Trail where major highways must be crossed:

- Nannup to Yornup – cross Vasse Highway
- Bridgetown to Yornup – cross Brockman Highway
- Manjimup to Pemberton – cross Vasse Highway

Where crossings are required suitable infrastructure must be in place to ensure a safe crossing environment. Further details are provided in the Trail Infrastructure section.

For the most part, travelling on (or immediately adjacent to) major highways is successfully avoided. However, there are a number of locations where, should suitable alternative access arrangements fail to be agreed with relevant land managers/owners, travel along the verges of short sections of major highways will be difficult to avoid:

- Nannup to Yornup: Brockman Highway (approx.2km section upon leaving Nannup);
- Manjimup to Pemberton: Vasse Highway (approx.1km section upon leaving the Northcliffe Branch Line).

In proximity to the Trail Towns and at Trail Heads, there will be a significantly higher likelihood of encountering vehicular traffic, and the use of more heavily trafficked highways will be unavoidable. Along the Bridle Trail there will also be a significant number of crossings of secondary and tertiary highways, such as local access roads, forestry tracks and fire access tracks.

A detailed traffic assessment will be required to establish appropriate safety requirements and risk mitigation strategies.

3.11.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- Nannup to Yornup – cross Vasse Highway (possible use of section of Brockman Highway roadside verge)
- Bridgetown to Yornup – cross Brockman Highway
- Manjimup to Pemberton – cross Vasse Highway (possible use of section of Vasse Highway roadside verge)

Proposal:

- Crossing points of major highways will be restricted to crossing Vasse Highway (twice) and Brockman Highway (once);
- Travel along major highways only where there are no suitable alternatives.



Actions required:

- Seek agreement from Main Roads Western Australia to locate crossings (and associated trail infrastructure) adjacent to/within the road/road reserve;
- Comply with all safety requirements of Main Roads Western Australia;
- Where use of major highway roadside verge is unavoidable, liaise with Main Roads Western Australia to ensure all safety and risk issues are addressed, with due consideration given to possible use of natural and artificial barriers;

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Agreement with Main Roads Australia is essential to ensure that safe crossing and use of roadside verges of major highways is provided;

3.12 Trail User Conflict

In addition to watercourses and highways, the Bridle Trail alignment also crosses the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track at various points along the Trail. The trails cross at the following points:

- Nannup - Munda Biddi Trail
- Willow Springs - Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Manjimup – Munda Biddi Trail
- Pemberton - Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Northcliffe – Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Chesapeake Road (between Northcliffe and Broke Inlet) – Bibbulmun Track

Whilst the crossing of these trails may offer opportunities to share trail infrastructure (see later section) careful consideration of user conflict issues will be required.

The Bridle Trail will also cross other local walks and trails. Conflicts between the following users will need to be considered:

- Walkers
- Mountain Bikers
- Horseriders
- 4WD/trail bike users

3.12.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- All Bridle Trail Sections (all sections of the Trail are crossed on multiple occasions by one or both of the trails/tracks)

Proposal:

- Minimise trail user conflict through avoidance of shared use trails wherever possible;
- Where mutually beneficial (or unavoidable) utilise appropriate signage to alert trail users to one another's presence, either at crossing points, along unavoidable sections of shared use trail or at shared use facilities;



Actions required:

- Seek agreement with relevant management bodies (land owners/managers, Munda Bididi Trail Foundation, Bibbulmun Track Foundation) for appropriate management strategies and protocols;
- Where shared use of a trail/track is unavoidable (or mutually beneficial) agreement must be reached in terms of any required upgrades to the existing route and assignment of management/maintenance responsibilities;

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Agreement with the various land owners/managers should be reached, with key issues identified and appropriate management strategies put in place.

3.13 Western Australia Bushfire Season

Large areas of south west Western Australia suffer from the threat of bushfires. It is recommended that closures of part or all of the Bridle Trail should be considered during high risk periods of the bushfire season, which typically runs between October and April. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) should be consulted to ensure appropriate policies are in place and information is readily accessible by potential users of the Bridle Trail.

3.13.1 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- All Bridle Trail Sections

Proposal:

- Closures of part or all of the Bridle Trail should be considered during high risk periods of the bushfire season;

Actions required:

- Consult with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services to establish an appropriate protocol/strategy

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- Bushfire risks should be managed in line with recommendations from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, and with reference to the policies of the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track.

3.14 The Noongar people

3.14.1 Consultation

The Noongar people are the traditional Aboriginal custodians of the Study area, (covered by the South West and Warren Regions of the Department of Environment and Conservation).

As part of the Noongar Values project on the Derbarl Yerrigan and Djarlgarro Beelieer a Protocol Guidelines document was developed to ensure full and effective engagement with the Noongar community.

The Protocol Guidelines establish a set of Principles:

- Free, prior and informed consent
- Mutual respect
- Nation building/relationship building (equal partnership)
- Acknowledgement of Noongar country
- Acknowledgement of Noongar culture
- Acknowledgement of Noongar knowledge and expertise
- Understanding that Noongars live their culture
- Women's/Men's Business

Following protocols to ensure a successful consultation process:

- Early engagement
- Create realistic timeframes
- Cultural Protocols
- Resources
- Welcome to Country/Acknowledgement of Country
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Confidentiality
- Showing Results

The *Noongar Consultation Protocol Guidelines (Swan and Canning Rivers Iconic Trails Project)* could be utilised to inform and guide the consultation process going forward.



3.14.2 Implications for the Bridle Trail

Relevant to Bridle Trail Sections:

- All Bridle Trail Sections

Proposal:

- Consult with the Noongar people on all aspects of the Bridle Trail

Actions required:

- Consult with the Noongar people on all aspects of the Bridle Trail,

Potential risks to successful implementation of Bridle Trail:

- A mutually acceptable proposal must be found to satisfy the Noongar people.

3.15 Summary

The following table summarises the main components for each section of trail, and identifies the key issues requiring address, the relevant land owner/manager, key stakeholders, related policy guidance and required outcomes.

Table 2: Key issues and Required Outcomes Summary Table

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Bridgetown Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure in vicinity of Blackwood River Park car park	Negotiate with Shire B-G and key stakeholders (existing user groups) the enhancement /re-design of existing car park to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure	Shire Bridgetown-Greenbushes (Shire B-G) User groups Local community		Council approval
Bridgetown to Yornup	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	Western Australian Government Railway (WAGR) Shire B-G		Lease agreement/licence with WAGR
	Significant road crossing – over Brockman Highway	Road crossing (at current railway reserve crossing point) meeting safety standards for vehicular traffic and trail users	Main Roads WA (MRWA) Shire B-G WAGR		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings
	Minor road crossings (multiple)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire B-G		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Yornup Rest Stop	Establishment of rest stop infrastructure in vicinity of the former Yornup Station	Negotiate with WAGR an area to be set aside to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure	WAGR Shire B-G		Formal agreement with WAGR
Yornup to Willow Springs	Use of short section (1.5km) of eastern end of Donnelly Mill Road (MRWA Access Road)	Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) Public highway	MRWA Shire B-G Shire of Nannup (Shire Nan) Department of Water (DoW)	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use
	Use of access/ maintenance track associated with Western Power overhead powerline easement (including sections crossing private land)	Conservation Reserve – State Forest PDWSA Disease Risk Area (DRA)	Department of Parks & Wildlife (DPAW) Private land owners (PLO) DoW Western Power (WPow) Shire B-G Munda Biddi Foundation & user groups (MBF) Bibbulmun Track Foundation & user groups (BTF)	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan Formal agreement with private land owner <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Minor road/track crossings (multiple)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	DPAW MRWA Shire B-G Shire Nan		Agreement with MRWA/DPAW on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings
	Minor water crossings - seasonal creeks/ drainage etc. - multiple	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements and allow safe passage	DPAW Shire B-G Shire Nan		Agreement with DPAW on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with water crossings
	Use of Gold Gully Road (MRWA Access Road)	Conservation Reserve – State Forest PDWSA DRA	DPAW MRWA DoW Western Power WPow Shire B-G MBF BTF	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Agreement with MRWA/DPAW on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Willow Springs Rest Stop	Establishment of enhanced rest stop infrastructure at Willow Springs (existing trail infrastructure associated with Munda Biddi Trail & Bibbulmun Track)	Conservation Reserve – State Forest PDWSA DRA	DPAW DoW BTF	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Formal agreement from DPAW <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
Willow Springs to Nannup	Use of Stallard Road (MRWA Access Road)	Conservation Reserve – State Forest PDWSA DRA	MRWA DPAW DoW	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Agreement with MRWA/DPAW on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Use of access/ maintenance track associated with Western Power overhead powerline easement	Conservation Reserve – State Forest PDWSA DRA	DPAW DoW WPow Shire Nan MBF BTF	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	Use of Lindsay Road	Forest Track	DPAW Shire Nan		Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan
	Establish bridle trail / shared use trail to provide access through new development to the east of Nannup township, linking Lindsay Road and Struthers Street	Area allocated for new residential development	Shire Nan Developers		Formal agreement with private land owner / developer/ Shire of Nannup
	Use of Struthers Street (MRWA access road)	Safety issues on MRWA access road	MRWA Shire Nan		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Significant road crossing – over Vasse Highway	Road crossing meeting safety standards for vehicular traffic and trail users	MRWA Shire Nan		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings
Nannup Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure in vicinity of Marinko Tomas Bicentennial Park (& oval)	Negotiate with Shire Nan and key stakeholders (existing user groups) the enhancement/re-design of existing car park to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure	Shire Nan User groups Local community		Council approval
Yornup to Manjimup	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	PDWSA Conservation Reserve - Nature Reserve (track passes adjacent to Wilgarrup Nature Reserve) Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	WAGR DoW DPAW Shire B-G Shire of Manjimup (Shire Manj)	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Perup Draft Management Plan 2011	Lease agreement/licence with WAGR <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	Minor road crossings (multiple)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire B-G Shire Manj		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Manjimup Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure in vicinity of Manjimup Railway Station	PDWSA Negotiate with WAGR, Shire Manj and key stakeholders (existing user groups/ local community) the enhancement/ re-design of existing car park and/or surrounds to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure	WAGR Shire Manj DoW User groups Local community	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA	Council approval <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	Local road crossings (multiple) in and around Manjimup (relatively busy)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire Manj		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings
Manjimup to Vasse Highway / Collins Road	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	PDWSA Conservation Reserve - Nature Reserve (track passes adjacent to Eastbrook Nature Reserve) -State Forest Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	WAGR DoW DPAW Shire Manj	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA	Lease agreement/licence with WAGR <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	Minor road crossings (multiple)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire Manj		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Short section of private land (preferred option)	PDWSA Agree permission/right of access across short section of private land	Private land owner DoW Shire Manj	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA	Formal agreement reached with private land owner <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
Vasse Highway / Collins Road Rest Stop	Establishment of rest stop infrastructure in vicinity of Vasse Highway / Collins Road	PDWSA Negotiate with DPAW/MRWA/Shire Manj. an area to be set aside to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure	DPAW Shire Manj. DoW	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services	Formal agreement from DPAW/Shire Manj. <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
Vasse Highway / Collins Road to Pemberton	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	PDWSA Proximity to Conservation Reserve – National Park & State Forest Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	WAGR Pemberton Tramway Company (leasee) DoW DPAW Shire Manj.	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA	Lease agreement/ licence with WAGR <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	'Enhancement' of existing goat track linking railway reserve with Brockman Street (avoiding need to follow railway reserve over Vasse Highway)	PDWSA Road reserve/ Shire reserve	Shire Manj. DoW	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA	Council approval <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Pemberton Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure in vicinity of Flora Park, Pemberton (toilet facilities located on Vasse Highway) <u>Note:</u> Apex Park might be considered as an alternative location for trailhead	PDWSA Negotiate with Shire Manj and key stakeholders (existing user groups/ local residents & community) the accommodation of bridle trail infrastructure in vicinity of Flora Park	Shire Manj Local residents DoW User groups Local community		Council approval <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
Vasse Highway / Collins Road to Northcliffe	Use of Collins Road & Rowney Road	PDWSA Conservation Reserve – State Forest Safety aspects	DPAW DoW Shire Manj.	Operational Policy 13 PDWSA Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Approval from DPAW <i>Ongoing dialogue with DoW</i>
	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	Conservation Reserve – National Park Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	WAGR DPAW Shire Manj.	Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Proposed Forest Management Plan 2014-2023	Lease agreement/licence with WAGR

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Road crossing points where railway line crosses Pemberton-Northcliffe Road (x2) and Wheatley Coast Road (x1)	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire Manj		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings
Northcliffe Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure at North Street car park, Northcliffe (toilet facilities located at Northcliffe Visitor Centre)	Negotiate with Shire Manj and key stakeholders (existing user groups/ local residents & community) the accommodation of bridle trail infrastructure at North Street car park	Shire Manj Local residents User groups Local community		Council approval
Northcliffe to Chesapeake Road / Bibbulmun Track	Access to railway reserve – maintenance/ access track	Permission required to utilise maintenance track adjacent to railway line	WAGR Shire Manj.		Lease agreement/licence with WAGR
	Crossing points/shared sections with Munda Biddi Trail & Bibbulmun Track	Potential trail user conflicts to be addressed through consultation and appropriate codes of conduct etc.	MBF BFT WAGR Shire Manj.		Agreement with MBF/BFT
	Road crossing point where railway line crosses Muirillup Road	Agreed treatments and any associated infrastructure required (warning signage etc.) to meet safety requirements	WAGR MRWA Shire Manj		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road crossings

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
	Use of Wheatley Coast Road / Windy Harbour Road	Conservation Reserve – proximity to State Forest Public highway – safety aspects	MRWA Shire Manj DPAW		Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use
	Use of Chesapeake Road	Conservation Reserve – National Park & State Forest MRWA Access Road (northern –most section only) – safety aspects	MRWA DPAW Shire Manj	Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012	Agreement with MRWA on safety aspects and required infrastructure associated with road use Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan
	Crossing Gardner River	Conservation Reserve – National Park & State Forest Negotiating Gardner River, particularly during periods of high water flows	DPAW Shire Manj. BTF		Specialist engineering advice required
Chesapeake Road / Bibbulmun	Establishment of rest stop infrastructure in vicinity of Chesapeake Road and crossing of Bibbulmun Track	Negotiate with DPAW/MRWA/Shire Manj./BFT an area to be set	DPAW BTF Shire Manj.	Policy Statement No.18 Recreation,	Formal agreement from DPAW

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Track Rest Stop		aside to accommodate bridle trail infrastructure		Tourism & Visitor Services Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012	
Chesapeake Road / Bibbulmun Track to Broke Inlet	Use of Chesapeake Road & Broke Inlet Road	Conservation Reserve – National Park – safety aspects	DPAW Shire Manj	Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012	Designation of bridle trail by DPAW and incorporation into relevant management plan
	Crossing points/shared sections with Bibbulmun Track	Potential trail user conflicts to be addressed through consultation and appropriate codes of conduct etc.	BTF DPAW Shire Manj.		Agreement with BFT
	Crossing Shannon River	Conservation Reserve – National Park Negotiating Shannon River, particularly during periods of high water flows	DPAW Shire Manj.		Specialist engineering advice required

Section of Trail	Trail Component	Key Issues to be addressed	Land Owner / Manager / Key Stakeholder / Other stakeholders	Key strategic policy / guidance	Required Outcome
Broke Inlet Trailhead	Establishment of trailhead infrastructure at Broke Inlet	Negotiate with DPAW and key stakeholders (existing user groups) the accommodation of bridle trail infrastructure at Broke Inlet	DPAW Shire Manj User groups Local community	Policy Statement No.18 Recreation, Tourism & Visitor Services Shannon & D'Entrecasteaux National Park Management Plan 2012	Formal agreement from DPAW
All sections of trail	Indigenous consultation	Consult with the Noongar people on all aspects of the bridle trail to reach a mutually acceptable proposal	Noongar DPAW Shire Manj. Shire B-G Shire Nan		Approval from Noongar people
	WA Bushfire Season	Manage risks associated with bushfires in line with Dept. of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)	DFES DPAW Shire Manj. MBT BTF		Approval from DFES

4. Bridle Trail Infrastructure

4.1 Horse Trail Infrastructure Guidelines - Peri Urban Precincts (HorseSA; 2010)

Horse SA's *Horse Trail Infrastructure – Guidelines for Peri Urban Precincts (2010)* provides useful information in relation to horse trail infrastructure requirements. Whilst the guide was written with peri urban environments in mind, much of the information is relevant to the environments and conditions that are likely to be encountered along the Bridgetown-Broke Inlet Bridle Trail. Trail infrastructure that will likely be required along this Bridle Trail includes:

- **Barriers/control points:** controlling access onto a trail, modifying speed or direction of users, often providing a barrier to unauthorised vehicular access.

Suitable barriers may include the use of bollards, posts or rocks. Barriers should not require a horse to step over an obstacle exceeding 35cm in height and should have no protruding sharp edges. A cavaletti (step-over) allows safe access for horse and rider and should preferably be 3m wide, with a step-over height of 30-35cm.

Control points should provide a hardened, horse-friendly surface.

- **Bridges:** single most expensive item to include on a trail and may need to service recreational trail users and other users, such as emergency service vehicles.

Careful consideration of construction materials is required, avoiding noisy materials and providing anti-slip surfacing. The colour and consistency of the surface of the trail should continue from the trail tread approaching the bridge, and over the bridge itself. Preferred widths are greater than 3.5m wide, with parapets.

- **Boardwalks:** a series of interconnected bridges positioned above ground height, enabling users to navigate over areas of sand, marshes or wetland. Horse trails rarely have boardwalks.

- **Hitching posts, Rails and Rings:** most likely to be required at trail heads, watering points and rest stops, including horse float parking sites.

A hitching ring is a heavy duty ring anchored firmly into another solid fixture, such as a wall. A hitching post is a single upright post, strong enough to at least withstand a 750kg horse pulling back. A hitching rail accommodates 2-4 horses and should be placed at least 6m away from any other trail infrastructure, including the trail itself, installed on a hardened surface.

- **Mounting blocks:** installed at trail heads, rest stops and gates where horse riders are required to dismount to open and close. Riders normally mount the horse on the left hand side (head facing forward) and require a clear area around the mounting block. Wheelchair accessible mounting ramps might be considered at trail heads.

One, two, or three step designs might be considered, dependent on budget, siting and materials selected. Individual step heights approx. 250mm, width greater than 500mm and depth greater than 250mm.

- **Watering Points:** Trail heads require an identified source for stock water. Troughs require regular inspection (preferably daily) cleaning and maintenance. Taps fitted with self-turning-off handles can be supplied by mains or watertank, which is regularly filled through access to a roof catchment.
- **Traffic Separation:** riding along roadsides should be avoided as far as possible. Horses under the control of a rider are permitted to travel either way on the verge or footpath with due care. Where unavoidable, the provision of a natural or artificial barrier between the horse rider and vehicles on the carriageway should be considered. Provision of sufficient space between carriageway and trail would be considered a natural barrier, as would vegetation and earth mounding. Loss of roadside verges (at bridges or on the crest of hills and bends) creates 'crush points', which need to be carefully considered in terms of trail user safety.
- **Road Crossings:** crossing points should be minimised as far as possible, and safety for all trail users can be improved by careful selection of crossing points. If room permits, the installation of a horse holding bay is preferable, creating an area where horses can be held at halt, prior to crossing a road. A Pegasus crossing could be installed where regular crossings over busy roads are anticipated.

Crossing points need to be well signed, with holding bays/bump rails (approx. 1.4m high) located on a firm, natural surface. Crossing points require maximum sightlines for oncoming traffic and need to be free of hazards (street furniture, poorly placed signage, obtrusive landscaping).

- **Signage:** signage requirements vary from trail to trail and specific requirements may be imposed by various land managers (signage plans/policies). Signage hierarchy:
 - Primary signage – Trail Heads
 - Secondary signage – directional markers
 - Tertiary signage – location specific (eg. 'Close the Gate')
 - Regulatory signage (eg. road signs)

Each land manager will have policies, specifications, application requirements and approval processes that must be complied with. All stakeholders (land managers, funding agencies, community groups) should review and approve all information contained on all signage.

- **Horse yards:** yards often hold horses for overnight stays and need to be well constructed
- **Trail Heads:** provide an entry point onto a trail network, and include signage (with key trail information), horse float parking, tie up rails, horse yards (potentially), stock water source, rider and other trail user facilities. Perimeter fencing with gates is preferred to provide an extra level of security.

Key considerations include trail head entry and exit points, vehicle turning circles, sightlines, and provision of sufficient parking numbers (including horse float parking). Consideration is also required for power availability, water (stock and human consumption), facilities for camping and BBQ areas and

any resultant implications for neighbouring land uses/properties and conservation/heritage areas.

4.2 Opportunities to share trail infrastructure

Wherever feasible, opportunities to make use of existing facilities along the Bridle Trail should be sought. This might include use of existing parking and toilet facilities at the Trail Towns of Nannup, Bridgetown, Manjimup, Pemberton and Northcliffe. Water sources at these locations should also be readily available.

Existing trail facilities along the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track should also be utilised, where these trails come within close proximity of the Bridle Trail.

Areas where these trails cross are:

- Nannup - Munda Biddi Trail
- Willow Springs - Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Manjimup – Munda Biddi Trail
- Pemberton (Flora Park) - Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Northcliffe – Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track
- Chesapeake Road (between Northcliffe and Broke Inlet) – Bibbulmun Track

4.2.1 Existing facilities in the Bridle Trail Towns & Broke Inlet

- Nannup: public toilets, water source and potential parking areas at Markino Tomas Bicentennial Park;
- Bridgetown: public toilets, water source and potential parking areas at Blackwood River Park;
- Manjimup: public toilets, water source and potential parking areas at Coronation Park;
- Pemberton: public toilets (Hospital Avenue), water source and potential parking areas at Flora Park; Pemberton Visitor Centre;
- Northcliffe: public toilets and water source at Northcliffe Visitor Centre; potential parking areas at North Street car park;
- Broke Inlet: potential parking areas.

4.2.2 Existing facilities along the Bibbulmun Track/ Munda Biddi Trail

- Willow Springs is identified as an 'access point', where the Track crosses Gold Gully Road, Warren Campsite (located in Warren State Forest) is located not too far from Collins Road (*one of the alignment options*). Opportunities to use this campsite for overnight stays should be further explored. There would be a need to use a short section of the Bibbulmun Track to access the campsite from the Bridle Trail;
- Northcliffe Information & Visitor Centre;
- Lake Maringup Campsite (located in D'Entrecasteaux National Park) is located a short distance from Chesapeake Road. Opportunities to use this

campsite for overnight stays should be further explored. There would be a need to use a section of the Bibbulmun Track to access the campsite from the Bridle Trail.

- Further investigations as part of the next stage of the project will be required to establish the viability of utilising any of the existing facilities along the Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail, and also any DPAW campgrounds.

4.3 Indicative Infrastructure Requirements

The following section identifies anticipated bridle trail infrastructure, together with an indication of potential costs. All costs identified would be subject to further detailed investigations and informed by the findings of the next stage of the project.

4.3.1 Trail Heads

Provided at each of the Trail towns.

Bridgetown: use existing public toilets, water supply and assume sufficient areas available for vehicle/float parking and horse yard.

New infrastructure required may include:

- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation
- Upgrade of car park surfacing (and ensure sufficient space for turning circle of vehicle and float)

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000

Nannup: use existing public toilets, water supply and assume sufficient areas available for vehicle/float parking and horse yard.

New infrastructure required may include:

- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation
- Upgrade of car park surfacing (and ensure sufficient space for turning circle of vehicle and float)

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000



Manjimup: use existing public toilets, water supply and assume sufficient areas available for vehicle/float parking and horse yard at/in vicinity of Coronation Park.

New infrastructure required may include:

- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000

Pemberton: use existing public toilets, water supply and assume sufficient areas available for vehicle/float parking and horse yard at Flora Park.

New infrastructure required may include:

- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation
- Upgrade of car park surfacing (and ensure sufficient space for turning circle of vehicle and float)

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000

Northcliffe: use existing public toilets, water supply and assume sufficient areas available for vehicle/float parking and horse yard at North Street car park.

New infrastructure required may include:

- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000

Broke Inlet:

New infrastructure required may include:

- Public toilets (ideally – closest toilets currently available located on South Western Highway – approx.8km away))
- Water supply
- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no.horse yard
- 1no trail head signage/interpretation
- Car parking area with sufficient space for turning circle of vehicle and float

Indicative cost: \$25,000-50,000

4.3.2 Rest Stops

Provided at Yornup, Collins Road & Chesapeake Road

Yornup:

New infrastructure required may include:

- Water supply
- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no directional signage (including distances to next Trail Head)
- 1no. shelter

Indicative cost: \$25,000

Collins Road:

New infrastructure required may include:

- Water supply
- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough

- 
- 1no directional signage (including distances to next Trail Head)
 - 1no. shelter

Indicative cost: \$25,000

Chesapeake Road:

New infrastructure required may include:

- Water supply
- 1no mounting block
- 1no. hitching rail (suitable for up to 5no. horses)
- 1no trough
- 1no directional signage (including distances to next Trail Head)
- 1no. shelter

Indicative cost: \$25,000

4.3.3 Other

Bridges

Potentially required at Gardner River and Shannon River.

Requirements and costs would be subject to further detailed investigations.

Signage

Waymarkers along the Bridle Trail: allow for 1/1km, located primarily at major road crossings and sections that are difficult to navigate (additional signage provided at Trail Heads & Rest Stops). Allow for 175no. Waymarkers.

Indicative cost: \$35,000

Old Stock Route Interpretation signage at key points along the Trail: allow for 5no to mark locations in close proximity to the historic stock routes:

Indicative cost: \$25,000

Traffic Separation – Natural/artificial

Potentially required for short sections along Brockman Highway and Vasse Highway (if preferred alternatives are not possible)

Requirements and costs would be subject to further detailed investigations.



Barriers/control points:

Specific requirements will need to be assessed on the ground.

Requirements and costs would be subject to further detailed investigations.

Road Crossings

Significant road crossing are located at:

- Nannup (crossing Vasse Highway)
- Bridgetown (crossing Brockman Highway)
- Pemberton (crossing Vasse Highway)
- New infrastructure requirements might include:
 - Highways signage (warning vehicular users about the presence of horses)
 - Additional trail signage (warning trail users)
 - Horse holding bays (both sides of the road) – allow for 6no.
 - Vegetation clearance (to establish appropriate visibility)

Requirements and costs would be subject to further detailed investigations

5. Links onto a Regional Bridle Trail Network

There are a number of bridle trail development projects currently being undertaken in the South West region of Western Australia. Whilst these projects are at varying stages of development they potentially offer significant opportunities to establish strategic links between individual trails, thereby establishing an integrated bridle trail network across the region.

Significant bridle trail projects within the South West region include:

- **Augusta-Busselton Rail Trail Development Plan**

Current proposals for this project include the provision for horse riding along a short section (approximately 10km) of the overall route, with the potential for increasing access to further sections of the trail, subject to the successful implementation and operation of the first section. Various cited environmental constraints have restricted access to the trail for horse riding activities leading to the development of a Bridle Trail Master Plan for the Shire (see project below).

- **Shire of Augusta Margaret River Bridle Trail Master Plan**

This project involved determining the feasibility of establishing a formalised network of bridle trails across the Shire through the identification of existing trails suitable for horse riding, plus the identification of new trails. The report will be available for public comment in February and is due to be completed in March 2014.

- **Nannup to Scott Coast Trail Feasibility Study**

Funding has recently been secured (early 2014) to investigate the feasibility of developing a bridle trail from Nannup to the Scott Coast. The project was identified in the Shire of Nannup Cultural Plan and will consider route development and mapping, interpretive material locations and risk management issues.

- **Boyup Brook to Coast Long Distance Bridle Trail**

Identified as a potential project during the extensive regional community consultation process conducted as part of the Trails Master Plan for the Warren Blackwood Region (June 2011).

Alongside the Bridgetown to Broke Inlet bridle trail project, these projects form the basis of an 'aspirational' strategic bridle trail network for the south west region of Western Australia, as illustrated on Map 6 (refer Appendix 1).

In addition to these projects ATHRA is currently developing the WA Horse Trails Strategy and Horse Trails Audit Project, which should be available towards the end of 2014. This document will provide a strategy for the development of sustainable horse trails in Western Australia with the intention of promoting discussion and policy development for responsible horse access to state operated land.



Stated objectives of the Strategy are:

1. Achieve a network of high quality, environmentally sustainable horse trails in WA;
2. Readily accessible horse trails with adequate facilities;
3. Safe and enjoyable trail riding experiences.

Running concurrently and in support of this Strategy is a State-wide Bridle Trail Audit; bridle trails across WA are currently being audited with the audit findings used to inform the needs analysis component of the forthcoming Horse Trails Strategy.

6. Marketing the Bridle Trail

6.1 Guidelines

Trails SA's Sustainable Recreational Trails Guidelines offers the following advice for promoting and marketing a trail:

To attract Bridle Trail users from further afield (eg tourists):

- Develop a promotional brochure/guide/map;
- Distribute promotional material to all major visitor information centres in the region, clubs, groups and other relevant activity associations;
- Local media press releases and stories in outdoor magazines/newsletters;
- Ensure trail head locations are clearly identified on relevant maps;
- Organise an event to attract the attention of state-wide publications;
- Promote the trail as an integral part of the regional visitor experience, advertised in local accommodation outlets and those agencies promoting visitation to the area.

To encourage Bridle Trail users from the local area:

- Deliver a copy of the promotional brochure to all households within a comfortable distance of the Bridle Trail;
- Ensure brochure is widely distributed to local relevant retail outlets;
- Prepare periodic press releases for local papers;
- Organise an annual event and publicise through local papers and radio;
- Form a 'Friends of' group and undertake maintenance activities and fun rides.

6.2 Indicative Costings

- Develop a marketing plan - \$10,000 to \$15,000
- Signage design - \$5,000 to \$10,000
- Detailed mapping - \$8,000 to \$10,000 per map

7. Funding

An essential component of a successful trail is the sourcing of appropriate levels of funding for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the trail.

Utilising a staged approach to delivering the trail will assist in reducing levels of funding required at any one time. Stages might include feasibility study and concept design stages plus the staged construction of various sections of the trail. A project which can demonstrate a strong component of environmental rehabilitation is also likely to attract funding from a much wider range of agencies.

Applications for grants will likely initially focus on various State Government Departments, however, assistance may also be available from local Council, and local community and user groups.

This section identifies potential external funding sources available through state and federal government programs that could be utilised in the implementation of the bridle trail. The status of these funding programs are continually changing and updated to respond to such issues as shifts in community participation rates and the continual evolution of the industry more widely.

At the date of publication of the Feasibility Study current programs include:

Lotterywest

These grants are available to not-for-profit organisations and local government authorities and support various types of trails such as walking, cycling, horse riding and paddling routes. Projects likely to attract funding include those that:



- are identified in relevant local/regional/State-wide trails master plans;
- involve the development of multi-use trails;
- consider the needs of trail users through consultation and planning;
- involve community in trail management, upkeep and promotion;
- gain agreement of relevant stakeholders;
- meet regional and sustainable strategies for trail promotion;
- have good project planning;
- include sound trail management, maintenance and sustainability credentials; and
- promote active involvement of Indigenous people and communities.

T-Qual Federal Funding

T-QUAL Grants is a competitive merit-based grants program aimed at stimulating sustainable economic growth in the Australian tourism industry. By providing matched funding to large and small-scale tourism projects, the program aims to increase Australia's supply of quality tourism products and experiences.



Australian Government
**Department of Resources,
Energy and Tourism**

Two types of funding are available:

- **Tourism Quality Projects** of up to \$100,000 (plus GST) for smaller scale projects;
- **Strategic Tourism Investment Grants** of up to \$1 million (plus GST) to fund a small number of larger scale projects to support Indigenous tourism and/or economic development and/or tourism employment.



Tourism Western Australia – Regional Events Scheme (RES)

The RES is an annual funding round administered by Tourism WA, through its Eventscorp division. The scheme is designed to assist with the development of events as tourist attractions within regional Western Australia. Application criteria stipulate that events must:

- Bring additional tourism income to regional communities by increasing visitor expenditure in the host community (economic impact);
- Involve and inspire the local community (social benefits); and
- Attract media coverage that will help to raise the profile of the region as a tourist destination (media impact).

Funding requests must be between \$5,000 and \$50,000. Lower amounts than what is requested may be rewarded and any request for more than \$20,000 must be accompanied by a three year strategic plan. Multiple year funding is available.

Trusts and Foundations



There are numerous trusts and foundations established in Australia and a number provide funding for projects such as this. Often they are established by large corporations. Refer www.philanthropy.org.au.

Information on alternative grants which might be considered can be found at:

www.grantslink.gov.au

www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/spgrants.htm

Regional Grants Scheme

The Regional Grants Scheme is an initiative of Royalties for Regions that aims to improve economic and community infrastructure and services in regional Western Australia. Funding is available to assist the development of infrastructure, services and community projects.

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.drd.wa.gov.au/grantandfunding/regional/Pages/default.aspx>

8. Conclusions & Next Steps

The feasibility assessment process conducted through this study has shown that the development of a long distance bridle trail connecting the town of Bridgetown with Broke Inlet on the south coast is feasible, provided that a number of key issues are resolved and significant external funding is sourced to contribute towards the next stage of investigation and the initial construction of the trail.

The key issue that needs to be addressed is securing access to land to develop the trail, which will involve ongoing discussions with key stakeholders such as the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Department of Water, and the Western Australian Government Railway.

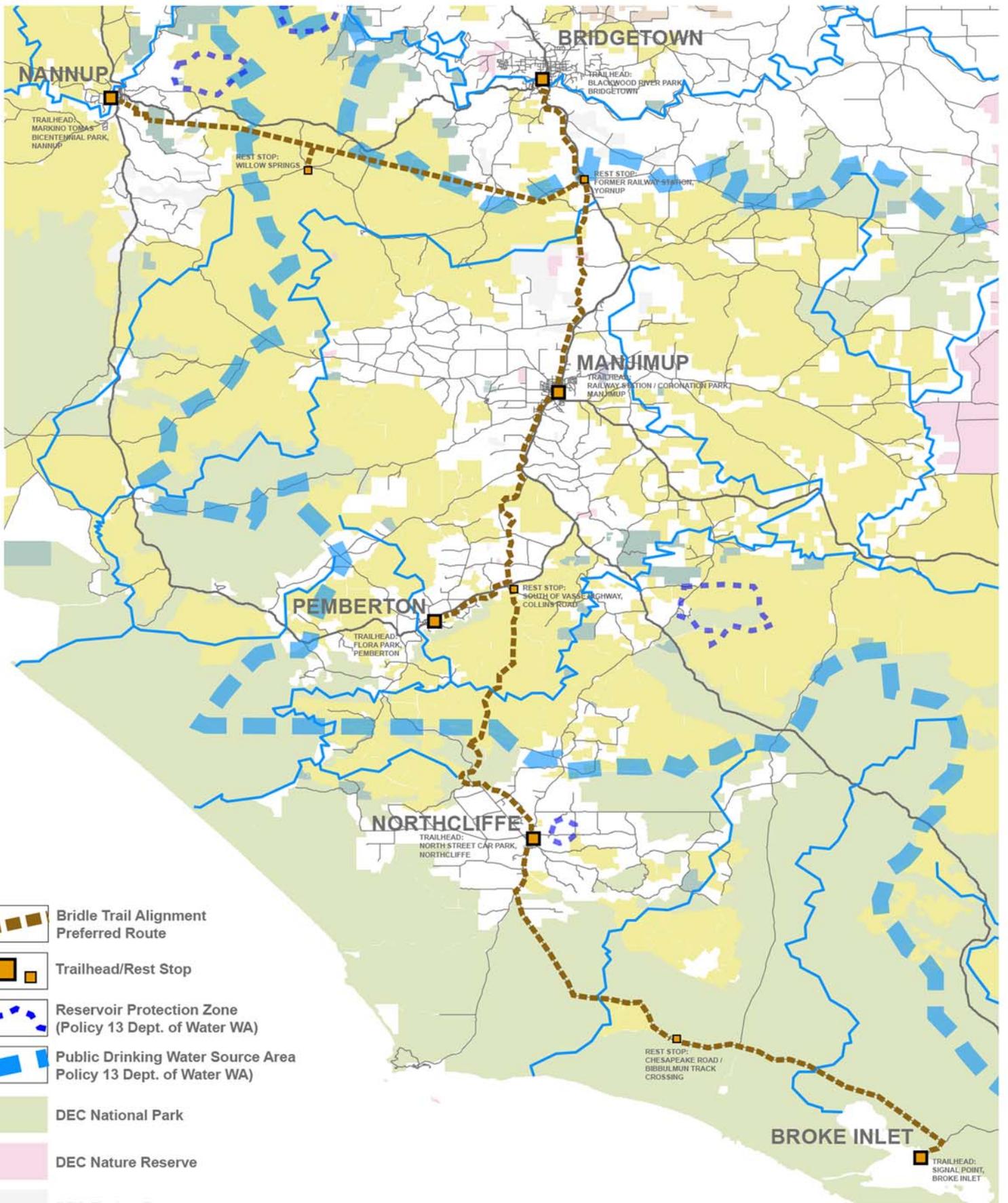
The next stage of the project will include the following components:

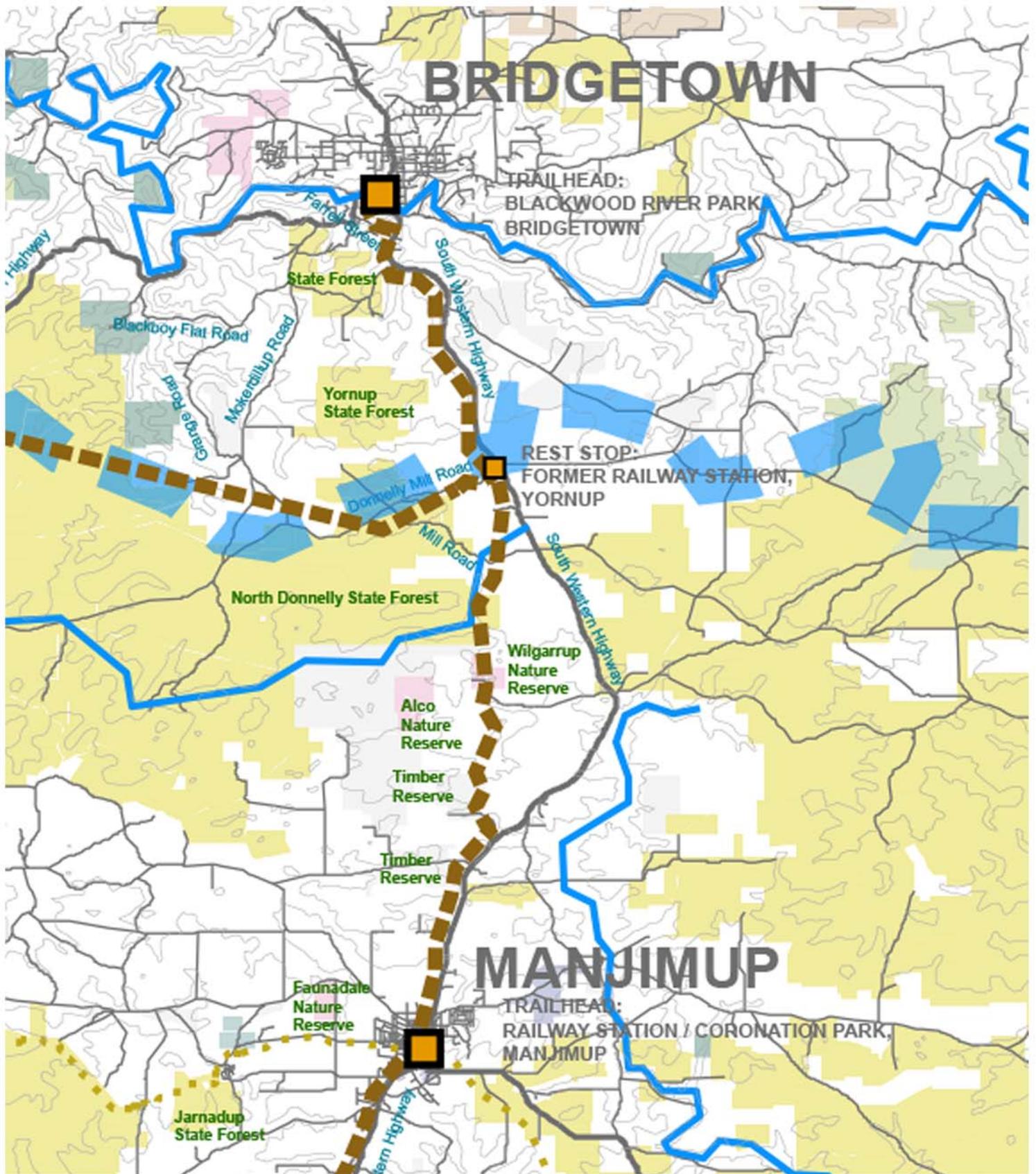
- Negotiations with land owners/managers
- GPS mapping of the trail alignment
- Determination of specific infrastructure requirements
- Facilitating flora and fauna surveys
- Hygiene Management Plan
- Traffic assessments
- Consultation with the Noongar people
- Development of codes of conduct for trail users
- Establishing bushfire protocols/strategies



Appendices

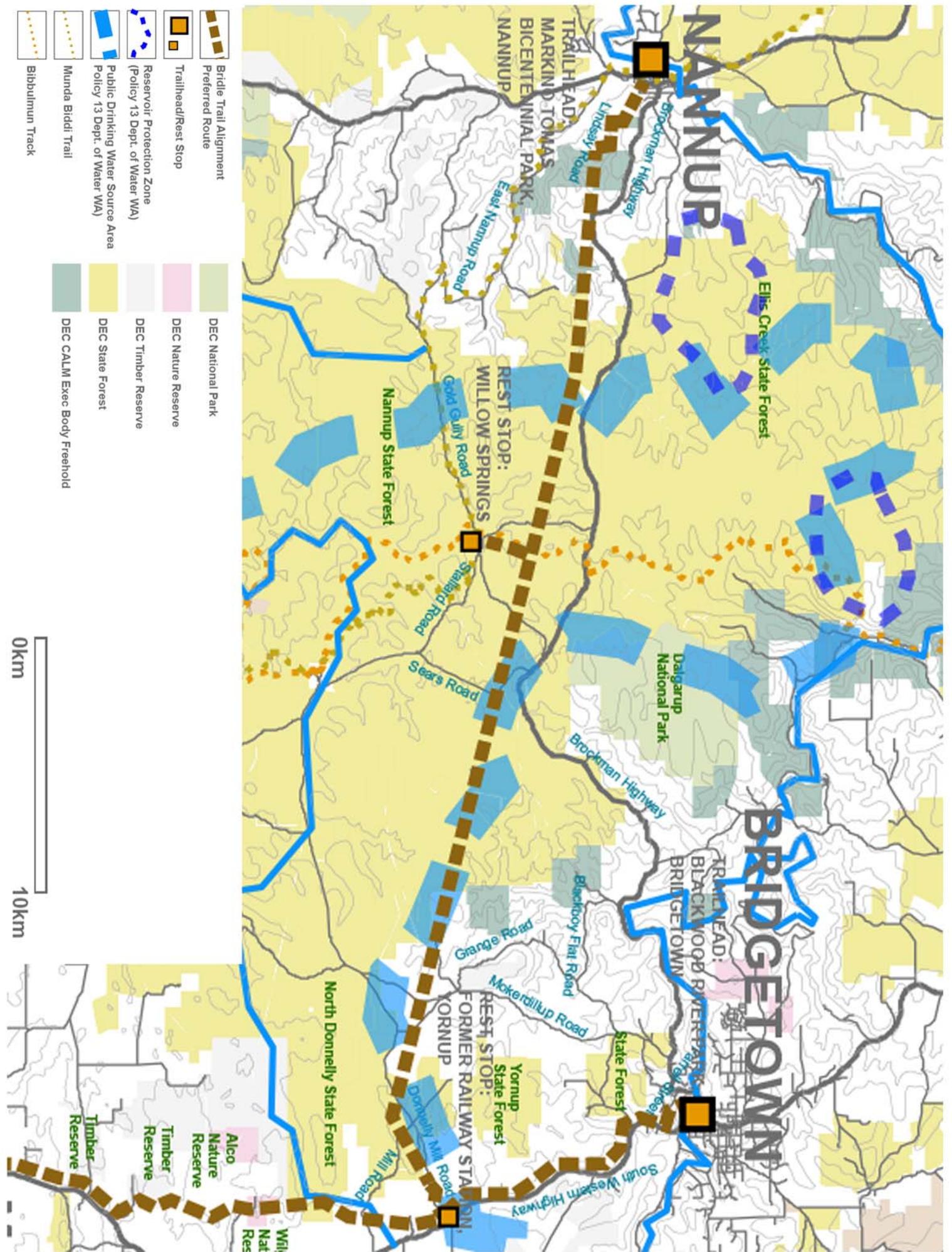
Appendix 1: Mapping





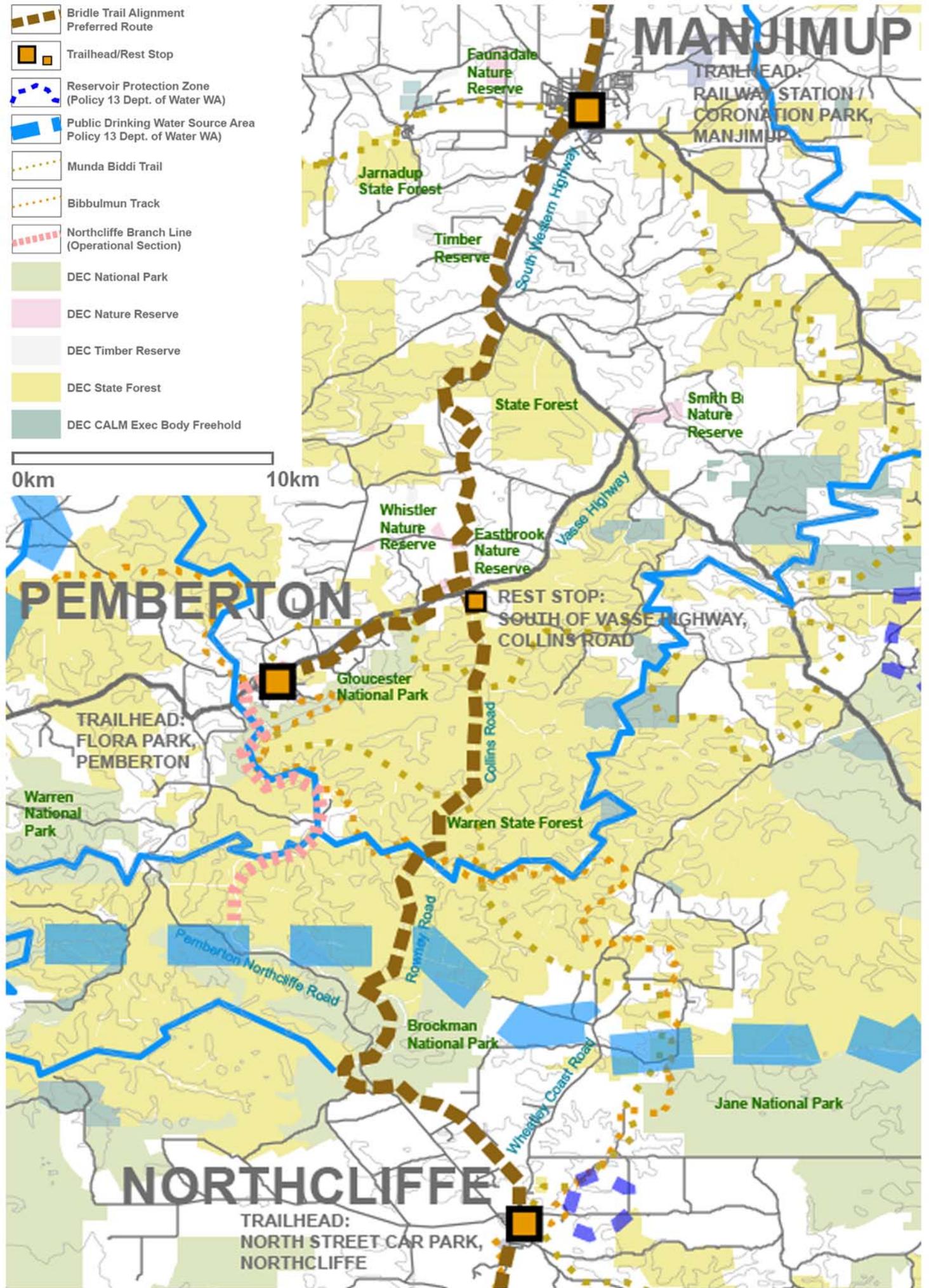
- | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Bridle Trail Alignment Preferred Route |  | DEC National Park |
|  | Trailhead/Rest Stop |  | DEC Nature Reserve |
|  | Reservoir Protection Zone (Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA) |  | DEC Timber Reserve |
|  | Public Drinking Water Source Area (Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA) |  | DEC State Forest |
|  | Munda Biddi Trail |  | DEC CALM Exec Body Freehold |
|  | Bibbulmun Track | | |

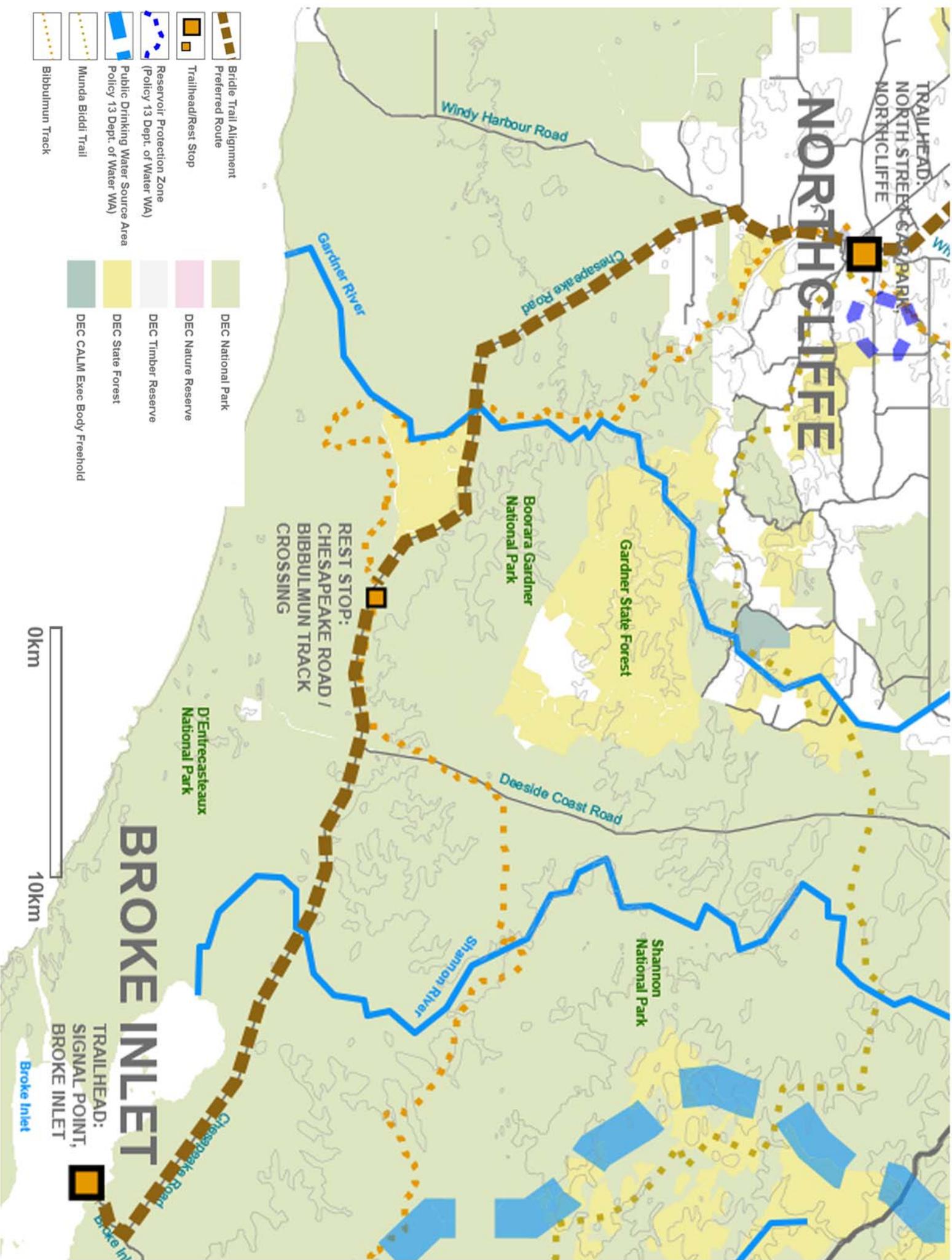
0km 10km



-  Bridle Trail Alignment Preferred Route
-  Trailhead/Rest Stop
-  Reservoir Protection Zone (Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA)
-  Public Drinking Water Source Area Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA
-  Munda Biddi Trail
-  Bibbulmun Track
-  Northcliffe Branch Line (Operational Section)
-  DEC National Park
-  DEC Nature Reserve
-  DEC Timber Reserve
-  DEC State Forest
-  DEC CALM Exec Body Freehold

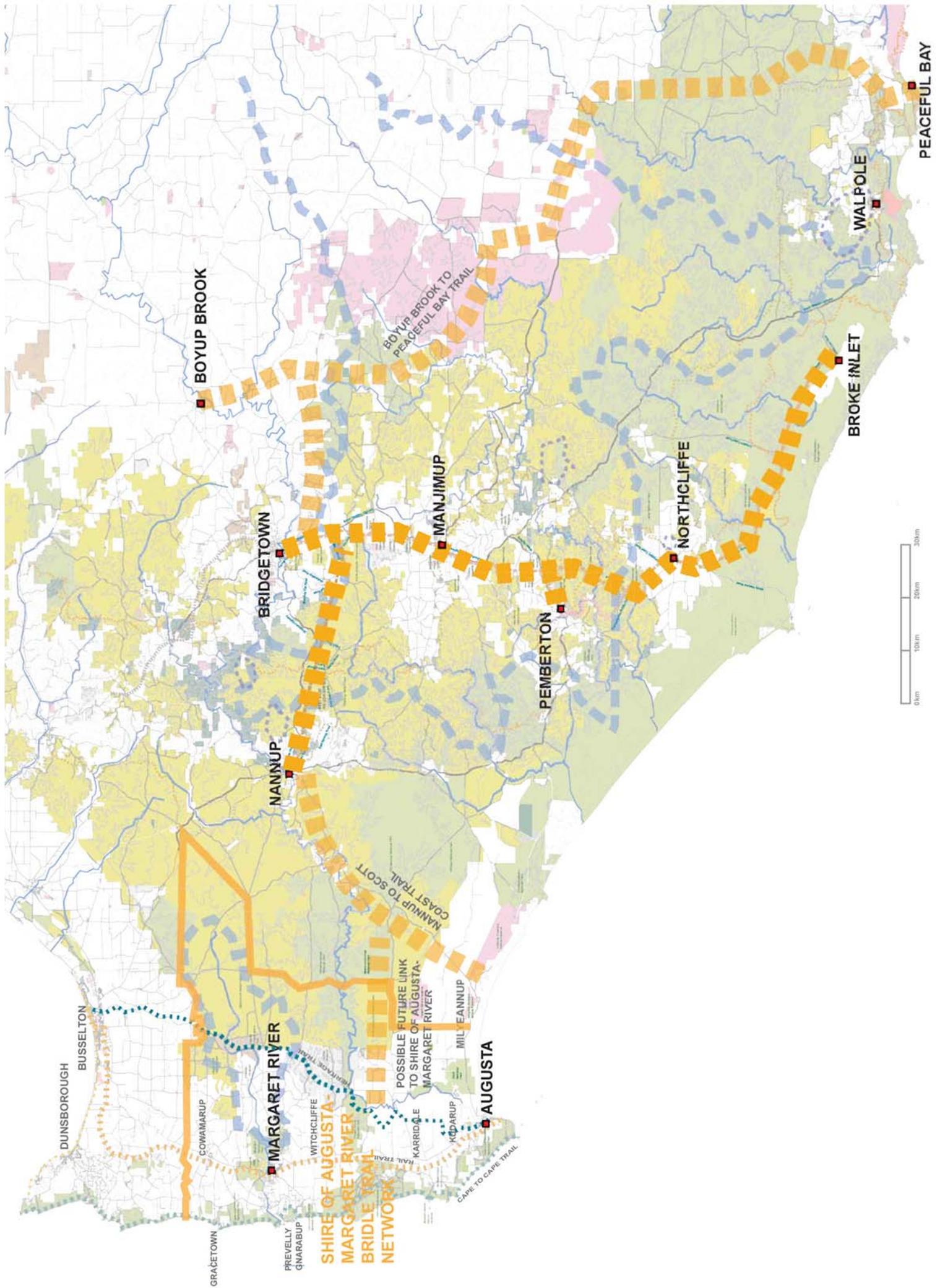
0km 10km





- Bridle Trail Alignment
- Preferred Route
- Trailhead/Rest Stop
- Reservoir Protection Zone (Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA)
- Public Drinking Water Source Area (Policy 13 Dept. of Water WA)
- Munda Biddi Trail
- Bibbulmun Track
- DEC National Park
- DEC Nature Reserve
- DEC Timber Reserve
- DEC State Forest
- DEC CALM Exec Body Freehold

PROJECT: BRIDGETOWN TO BROKE INLET BRIDLE TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY
 MAP 5: NORTHCLIFFE TO BROKE INLET



PROJECT: BRIDGETOWN TO BROKE INLET BRIDLE TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY
 MAP 6: ASPIRATIONAL STRATEGIC BRIDLE TRAIL NETWORK