



Ecotourism and Queensland National Parks

An Investigation of Supported Walks in National Parks: Issues and Recommendations.

August 2018

Author details:

Hahn, Laura; Bartrim, Graeme; Cooper, Susanne; Walter Demi-Rose

on behalf of the

National Parks Association of Queensland

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Context and history.....	4
Current Queensland context.....	6
Approach.....	7
Case study overview	7
Leading practices	9
Accommodation located adjacent to or near national parks, rather than within.....	9
Thorough, transparent impact assessment undertaken with maintenance of long term nature conservation values prioritised.....	9
Infrastructure is owned by government. The private operator provides a bond for risk and rehabilitation and a regular financial contribution for park management.....	10
Tracks and other infrastructure are minimal impact and thoughtfully designed to reflect ecological values, including slope, soil, vegetation type and habitat.....	11
Continual Ranger or guide presence.....	11
Mandatory orientation and authentic interpretation with reinforcement throughout walk focused on conservation, Indigenous values, minimal impact	11
User number cap based on ecological resilience.....	12
One-way route with controlled and staggered start	12
Experience and design tailored to natural values and local context	12
All waste removed	12
Monitoring of selected ecological indicators to determine impacts with subsequent corrective actions.....	12
Guidance for potential investment.....	13
Conclusion.....	16
References	18
Appendices.....	21
Appendix 1 - Background to Scenic Rim Trail Proposal in Main Range National Park.....	21
Appendix 2 –Case Studies	22
Bibbulmun Track, Western Australia	22
Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail, South Australia	24
Larapinta Trail, Northern Territory	26

Milford Track, New Zealand.....	27
Overland Track, Tasmania.....	30
Three Capes Track, Tasmania.....	32
West Coast Trail, Vancouver Island, Canada.....	35
Yuraygir Coastal Walk, NSW	36
Appendix 3–Evidenced Based Summary of Supported Multi-day Walks in National Parks	38

Introduction

Nature based, or ecotourism is a growing industry in Australia and worldwide, increasing interest in, and placing pressure on, national parks. The Queensland Government is considering 'opening up' national parks to new activities and private infrastructure in response to these demands. The Government also seeks to leverage potential economic outcomes for local and/or regional communities, tourism operators, and park management budgets. However, what is typically portrayed as a win-win for the environment and economy, raises complex issues around what is ecologically sustainable, who is responsible for ecological costs, and whether sections of national park (public land) should be effectively privatised. Genuine ecotourism such as authentic interpretive programs offers substantial opportunities for conservation and regional communities; however, the term ecotourism is increasingly extended to include more intensive activities such as commercial cabins, glamping, bungee jumping and zip lines.

This report summarises evidence-based research of supported multi-day walks in national parks in Australia and overseas to inform government policy on ecotourism in national parks. This research was undertaken in response to a proposal to develop private infrastructure (including commercial Ecologies) and associated support within Main Range National Park for a multi-day walk. The research identifies leading practices to complement the existing Queensland Government's ecotourism guiding principles to:

- Protect the public's rights;
- Maintain environmental impacts at an acceptable level; and
- Ensure the operator (not the government) bears any ecological costs.

Context and history

Ecotourism began as nature tourism from rediscovery of the natural world during the environmental movement in the 1970s. Ecotourism grew through recognition of tourism's impact on natural resources, particularly in protected areas, and the opportunities and threats presented by rising visitor numbers (Monteros 2002, Buckley 2012). Ecotourism is often promoted as a prime example of how pursuing environmental conservation and economic development can be achieved (Powell and Ham 2008, Higgins-Desbiolles 2011). However, ecotourism activities in national parks can undermine conservation values through disturbance, fragmentation, disease, weed spread, erosion, road kill, noise, inappropriate waste management and over-use.

Ecotourism under the IUCN is defined as "Environmentally responsible visiting of relatively unspoilt natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features - both past and present), that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations." National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ) recognises the IUCN's definition of ecotourism and supports activities consistent with this.

Ecotourism may be interpreted in many ways, but no single organisational or academic definition has become universally accepted (Honey 2008). This lack of single definition has resulted in conflicting types of ecotourism: genuine and façade (Honey 2008). Genuine ecotourism aims to meet visitor expectations and support local communities using natural resources without causing environmental harm. Genuine ecotourism also promotes respect for nature and support for conservation through education and an immersive experience (Powell and Ham 2008, Ajagunna et al

2014, McNicol and Reddie 2018). Façade ecotourism is used to badge inappropriate activities, a form of 'greenwashing' where marketing is the primary focus.

Ecotourists expect to experience a unique and spectacular landscape, to gain knowledge of the environment and heritage of that landscape, and to be serviced by facilities that are appropriate and minimize environmental damage (Khan 2003, Parks Canada 2007, Booth et al 2011). Ecotourism developers and operators place high importance on visitor experience. They also prioritize environmental management and design to ensure infrastructure causes no environmental harm however, typically concerns about the environment are secondary to access (McNicol and Rettie 2018).

Support for ecotourism comes from the perceived compatibility with environmental conservation and an ability to build public and political support for national parks. There are three general methods through which this can be achieved:

- Generating direct income from leases and commercial visitor access;
- Promoting and enabling regional and local economic benefits; and
- Raising awareness of environmental issues and values (Goodwin 1996, Monteros 2002).

Ecotourism in national parks requires close collaboration between the park authority and the operator. These partnerships are not always as beneficial as predicted when authority staff are insufficiently resourced for working with the private sector; and/or ecotourism provides lower than expected or unstable revenue (Thompson et al 2014, Spenceley et al 2017).

National park and other protected area conservation are becoming increasingly dependent on ecotourism funding and some argue that ecotourism is critical to the survival of protected areas (IUCN 2014). Increasing visitor numbers and partnerships or collaboration between national park authorities and the private sector (i.e. developer and operators) can gain long term support for national parks and conservation work (Leung et al 2014). However, "Diminishing public resources for environmental management" means national park authorities are forced to accept environmental trade-offs (Higgins-Desbiolles 2011 pg. 564). Commercial operators benefit, while mitigating the impacts of ecotourism activities becomes the responsibility of national park authorities (Buckley 2012).

Similarly, environmentally sensitive design, potential regional community benefits and other business procedures, such as waste management, can be used to justify activities unsuitable to the chosen location with high environmental impacts (Wight 1997, Higgins-Desbiolles 2011). Some believe that ecotourism has created little change within the tourism industry and that it has merely "adopted the language of environmental responsibility" (Higgins-Desbiolles 2011 pg. 555, Wall 1997). As such, there is a perceived need for more standards, policies and independent assessment of certification and businesses (Honey 2008).

Ecotourism policies and standards can also increase interest in and pressure on national parks. For example, The Queensland Eco and Sustainable Tourism policy (QuEST) and the Queensland Ecotourism Investment Opportunity, Implementation Framework (Queensland Government, date unknown) is incentivising operators to enter into thirty (30) year commercial agreements. In addition, the Queensland Ecotourism Implementation Framework is proponent driven. This approach fails to consider strategic priorities and alternate options for the wider national park estate. For example, Main Range National Park offers one of the few off-track, overnight national

park experiences within 2 hours of Brisbane and yet no alternatives to the Scenic Rim Trail proposal were considered or assessed.

The potential of ecotourism as a conservation benefit does not arise automatically but is determined by the expectations placed on developers and operators in national parks by policies, principles and best practices (Monteros 2002).

Generating long term regional economic benefits from ecotourism typically requires:

- Support for environmental conservation through partnerships;
- Increased visitor numbers and interpretation;
- Appropriate programs, structures (including fees); and
- Management systems (Monteros 2002, Powell and Ham 2008, Leung et al 2014).

Interpretation that is organised, thematic, engaging and relevant to a target audience is more likely to drive behavioural modifications (Ham 1992, Powell and Ham 2008) and encourage communities to value national parks.

Current Queensland context

Queensland has the lowest national parks percentage coverage of all the states and territories, and the largest proportional and absolute ecosystem protection gap. The National Parks Estate comprises only 5.6% of Queensland, or 8.2% including all protected areas (Queensland Government, 2018; this is far short of the 17% target of protected areas the Australia and Queensland governments committed to under the Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection's (now Department of Environment and Science) Queensland Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

Queensland's parks and forests attract millions of visitors each year. National parks receive more than 50 million visits from domestic travellers and about 8 million visits from international travellers per year. Direct spending by visitors is estimated at more than \$950 million per annum (adjusted for inflation), attributed exclusively to the existence of the national parks (Ballantyne, 2008). Visitors who include a visit to a national park in their holiday added \$4.43 billion to the state's economy in 2016 according to Tourism Research Australia, as documented in the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing's Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2016-2020.

Spicers Retreat (originally lodged by the Gainsdale Group) proposes to build a private ecotourism development in Main Range National Park. The Scenic Rim Trail Proposal, currently under assessment by the Commonwealth Government, is described in Appendix 1. This proposal is a current and relevant example of the demand for "luxury" accommodation in more "pristine" environments. The Scenic Rim Trail Proposal provides a practical case to discuss the costs and benefits of private infrastructure, and ecotourism more broadly, in national parks.

The proposal to construct private commercial ecolodges in the National Park is contentious for NPAQ and members of the public as public access rights are at the core of the national park ethos. Private infrastructure effectively privatises these sections of national park and can change the public's perception of the role of national parks. Private sector demands can also reprioritise management away from conservation activities in support of visitor services and commercial gain. For example, QPWS conducted a massive clean-up operation following Tropical Cyclone Debbie with

multiple teams and vessels to re-profile Whitehaven Beach so visitors could “spread out their towels on the beach and relax during high tides” (Queensland Government, 2017).

Approach

A series of case studies, drawn from notable supported¹ multi-day walks in Australia and overseas were identified and analysed to provide a robust and representative evidence base. Eight case studies were selected based on their perception of success. The case study research was confined to supported multi-day walks as they are relevant to the Queensland context.

Research was conducted by NPAQ and included a review of international guidelines and grey literature, supplemented by consultation with park authorities, commercial operators and those with relevant experience. Information was collected on:

- Demand for supported multi-day walk ecotourism experiences;
- Revenue, cost (construction and maintenance) and profits;
- Ownership and management (governance and authority);
- Social and environmental impacts;
- Private sector involvement;
- Flow on benefits: visitor direct expenditure, to community, to national parks; and
- Community support or opposition.

Important common practices, innovative opportunities and lessons learned were identified through a workshop involving NPAQ staff and associates, many with personal and professional experience of multiday walks in national parks. A synthesis of the essential leading practices that could contribute to shaping government’s policy and strategic direction was developed.

Case study overview

Eight supported multi-day walks in national parks from across Australia and overseas (New Zealand and Canada) were reviewed. An overview of the case studies is provided in Table 1. The location of walks in Australia and New Zealand are shown on Figure 1.

¹ Accommodation or logistical assistance during the multi-day walk.

Figure 1 Location of researched multi-day walks



Table 1 Overview of studied multi-day walks

Walk /trek name	AUSTRALIA						NEW ZEALAND	CANADA
	Bibbulmun Track	Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail	Larapinta Track	Overland Track	Three Capes Track	Yuraygir Coastal Walk	Milford Track	West Coast Trail
Location	South-west Western Australia	Off the south Australian coast	Central Australia, Northern Territory	North West Tasmania	Tasman Peninsula, South east Tasmania	Northern New South Wales Coast, New South Wales	Fiordland region, South Island	Vancouver Island, British Columbia
National Park/s	22 NPs and other reserves	Flinders Chase	Tjoritja/West MacDonnell	Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair	Tasman	Yuraygir	Fiordland	Pacific Rim
Length	Up to 6 – 8 weeks	5 days	up to 20 days	6 days	4 days	4 days	4 days	5 – 8 days

Concise summaries of each case study are provided in Appendix 2. The case studies reveal recurring practices for supported multi-day walks in national parks including:

- approaches for management structure,
- interpretation material,
- waste management, and
- track and associated infrastructure design.

Recurring and unique approaches to supported multi day walks are summarised in Appendix 3. The case studies also identified innovative approaches which can be used to maximize benefits and tailor the experience to the environmental and local social context.

Leading practices

Accommodation located adjacent to or near national parks, rather than within NPAQ's strong recommendation is for low intensity accommodation near or adjacent to national parks. Good examples of existing multi-day walks with comfortable low intensity accommodation near or adjacent to national parks include the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk and Great Noosa Trail Walk² in Queensland; Kangaroo Island Wilderness Track, Yuraygir Coastal Walk, and Larapinta Trail are examples in other states and territories. Also, Girraween, Binna Burra³, Mount Barney and Carnarvon lodges are examples of comfortable relatively low intensity accommodation near national parks that enable multiday walking in national parks.

NPAQ recognises there is increasing demand for multi-day walks with accommodation in Queensland national parks. Supported multi-day walks enable young children and older adults who are unable to carry full packs as well as less experienced walkers to experience immersion in wilderness they might otherwise not access.

NPAQ appreciates that provision of limited, strategic, sensitive and controlled accommodation could expand the community that values and supports national parks, potentially leading to long term ecological benefits.

Thorough, transparent impact assessment undertaken with maintenance of long term nature conservation values prioritised.

Introduction of new infrastructure to a national park can fragment ecosystems and habitats; minor impacts deemed acceptable at the time can be the "thin edge of the wedge" to justify more significant and otherwise unacceptable impacts at a later time. For example, degradation of leased area over national park has been used to justify increased commercial activities or even proposing revocation of national park.

While primary and secondary impacts are usually assessed, ecological information is uncertain or even elusive and what is an acceptable impact is highly subjective.

Importantly, offsets must not be used to justify activities that are incompatible with the park's natural and cultural values. For example, a breeding and release program for native species likely

² A supported walk has been offered annually or biannually for several years.

³ Full disclosure, NPAQ holds shares in Binna Burra Lodge.

impacted by the development does not make introducing a commercial vehicle service to a World Heritage Area acceptable.

Transparency is essential during the impact assessment and approvals processes of significant infrastructure on national park tenure. At present, the Queensland Government's ecotourism principle of transparency has not yet translated to formal public scrutiny of the State assessment and approvals process. In addition to meaningful, not token, consultation, quality representation (including accurate and concise mapping) of all construction and operational impacts is essential to ensure the public can make an informed decision.

Introducing new threats (i.e. commercial infrastructure) in order to supplement management of a chronically underfunded and undersized National Parks Estate distracts from dealing with the underlying issue that national parks are not recognised or financially supported, commensurate with their economic contribution to the state. Like degradation, underfunding is used as a reason for increasing threats to the National Park Estate which is already under threat from weeds and feral pests, climate change and inappropriate visitor use.

Infrastructure is owned by government. The private operator provides a bond for risk and rehabilitation and a regular financial contribution for park management

Government has the responsibility for ensuring public land is managed in the public interest and is accountable for damage done to that land. The risks and costs of ecotourism are often externalised, and national parks authorities are left financially responsible (Monteros 2002). If accommodation is permitted, accommodation should be owned by the government and should be focused on providing access to and showcasing the natural environment. Where private operation may be advantageous to devolve non-core activities, it is therefore responsible and practical to require operators to supply a bond equal to the full costs of rectifying significant risks (e.g. weed management, removal of infrastructure, rehabilitation of vegetation).

The case studies present a mix of different operational models with accommodation facilities varying from government owned camping shelters to privately owned lodges. However, to ensure ecotourism operations are maintained in the public interest and do not infringe on the public right of access to enjoy national parks, all infrastructure should be government owned. While commercial accommodation is located on the Milford Track and Overland Track and is being developed on the Three Capes Track, NPAQ strongly oppose effective privatisation of sections of national parks as it is fundamentally inconsistent with the ethos of national parks.

Importantly, for national parks to retain their environmental and social value, authorities need to be able to hold operators responsible when monitoring reveals commercial visitor impacts are causing degradation (Spenceley et al 2017). The ability to monitor and hold operators responsible depends on the ability of the managing authorities to retain adequate resourcing and power. Specifically, authorities require sufficient influence and staff with the capacity to understand the tourism industry (Thompson et al 2014).

One of the main recognised benefits of ecotourism is its potential to generate funding for conservation (Goodwin 1996, Monteros 2002). Even when profits are generated, they do not necessarily support conservation and management activities in the same national park.

Regardless of how environmentally sensitive the design is or what mitigation practices are in place, ecotourism activities will have negative environmental impacts on national parks; typically, these

costs are externalized. If ecotourism operations are to have minimal environmental impact and result in the net benefits suggested in literature and by governments, ecosystem and other costs need to be internalized by the operator. Otherwise operators gain the benefits while costs become the government's responsibility (Monteros 2002). Our case study research suggests that mitigation and monitoring activities are too often left to underfunded and under resourced park management. Operators should be required to contribute towards park management and monitoring costs through their lease or contract (ideally a percentage of each year's maintenance costs, as the operator does for the Milford Track). Contributing to park management is a viable approach to internalizing some ecological costs.

Tracks and other infrastructure are minimal impact and thoughtfully designed to reflect ecological values, including slope, soil, vegetation type and habitat.

Properly designed and constructed tracks and other infrastructure can minimise long term management costs. Design must reflect the ecological values such as slope, soil type, vegetation type and habitat.

Continual Ranger or guide presence

Ranger or other official presence demonstrates care for the area, sets and reinforces expectations of low impact behaviours, and supports interpretive programs. A sense of authority and that a place is cared for reduces deliberate damage to park infrastructure (Gale 1984). The presence of a park ranger greatly enhances the impact of an interpretation strategy and the likelihood of compliance with waste policies. Rangers can be an authentic and credible information source as demonstrated by the positive feedback received for the nightly ranger talks on the Milford track (see Appendix 2). Rangers should be present at least at the first camp/s as well as periodically along the trail to provide authority, reinforce compliance, and enhance the interpretative program by providing personalised information about the area where possible.

Mandatory orientation and authentic interpretation with reinforcement throughout walk focused on conservation, Indigenous values, minimal impact

A mandatory orientation at the beginning of each walk is necessary to set the expectations of low impact behaviour and can showcase conservation and Indigenous values increasing the visitor's appreciation of the area and reducing deliberate damage.

Visitor interpretive strategies in national parks intend to fulfil three purposes:

- to control and encourage appropriate behaviour within the protected area;
- to build appreciation of the area's unique values and qualities; and
- to promote positive attitudes and behaviours beyond the national park experience.

Immersive wilderness experiences can change attitudes and behaviours. Ecotourism tours with a targeted interpretation strategy can significantly influence general environmental attitudes and support for national park resource management (Powell and Ham 2008). Guided multi-day walks are particularly suitable for influencing attitudes and behaviour because they are immersive, and the audience is captive (Powell and Ham 2008). Similarly, walkers of the Three Capes Track and Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail reportedly show an increased connection to the place and landscape.

Given the potential environmental and social impacts of walker presence, a compulsory orientation program can be effective in influencing visitors and should address safety, respect for natural and Indigenous values, and low impact behaviours.

User number cap based on ecological resilience

Walker presence is listed repeatedly as a threat to wildlife, particularly nesting birds, as described in many of the case studies summarised in Appendix 2. Controlling walker numbers is important for preserving the ecological integrity and maintaining the visitor experience. With conservation being the primary purpose of national parks, the number of visitors permitted (trail cap) should first be based on the sensitivity or ecological resilience of the area.

One-way route with controlled and staggered start

Further refinement of the trail cap may also be required to manage expectations of existing and likely users. Desire for solitude and wilderness adventure are major motivations of multi-day walkers and common elements of marketing campaigns (Booth et al 2011, DOC 2017). Trail capping, with uni-directional tracks and staggered starts can assist preserve the feeling of isolation in wilderness.

Experience and design tailored to natural values and local context

To meet ecotourists' expectations, the design and experience should showcase and create an understanding of the unique or special natural features and their local context. This is reflected in the Queensland Government's ecotourism guiding principles which state that facilities should be compatible with the natural and cultural values of the site (Queensland Government, date unknown). Tailored experience can be achieved by collaborating with members of the local and Indigenous communities on design and interpretation. For example, the South Australian Government chose a local architect with national parks experience for the Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail resulting in acclaimed campsites themed and blended into the surrounding vegetation. The Canadian West Coast Trail guardians program creates job and skills building opportunities for the First Nation Peoples and resulted in more authentic and enjoyable interpretation presentations (Hunter 2015).

All waste removed

Care is taken by multi-day walk designers and operators to manage human waste possibly because of the potentially damaging impact it can have on the reputation of the walk (Roy. EA 2018). The zero/minimal waste concept, based on the Tasmanian walking companies 'leave no trace' principle, is reflected in many of the case studies. Examples of practices in accordance with this principle from the case studies include having visitors carry out the rubbish they produce and filtering wastewater which is helicoptered out twice yearly as described in Appendix 2 – Three Capes Track Study. Zero or minimal waste concepts and expected behaviours should be included in mandatory orientation then reinforced by Ranger presence at camps and periodically along trails.

Monitoring of selected ecological indicators to determine impacts with subsequent corrective actions

Impact monitoring, corrective action and the ability for the park authority to enforce operator compliance is an important aspect of controlling impact. Formal impact monitoring procedures were rare in Case Studies with track design and visitor caps relied upon to mitigate impacts (see Appendix 2). This approach conflicts with guidelines and standard practices within other industries. In the literature it is recognised that the opportunities and benefits of ecotourism cannot be fully understood until the impact to the protected areas are evaluated (IUCN 2014). The World

Commission on Protected Areas recommend that to ensure the tourism business is sustainable, measuring and monitoring should occur at all stages (Spenceley et al 2017).

When impacts are not being measured, the risks and costs associated with the tourism activities are not being internalized by operators. It is possible for some costs to be internalized by requiring operators to conduct maintenance or contribute to maintenance costs as described in Appendix 2 (Milford Track case study).

Adoption of these leading practices help gain local support and could place Queensland as an international leader.

Guidance for potential investment

Global demand is growing for quality, authentic experiences immersed in a unique, unspoilt and spectacular natural environment. Evidence from leading walks in Australia and overseas consistently indicates that the quality of the experience is key to attracting visitors in an increasingly discerning market. Potential walks can be located up to two or more hours' drive from a regional centre or capital city that often have the socio-economic characteristics of slow/declining population growth, low average incomes, and limited employment opportunities. Adopting leading practice has economic benefits, in addition to environmental outcomes. The two are closely and increasingly connected, with business advantages from designing and constructing quality facilities and infrastructure that reflect leading practice - not necessarily luxury. Benefits to the regional economy (typically in the \$millions per year) are proven and substantial – and may weather the cyclical Queensland tourism industry.

However, conducting activities in national parks is different to other tenure as public access rights are at the core of the national park ethos. NPAQ has identified material issues when considering investment in multi-day walks in national parks. Would-be investors must:

1. Support nature conservation as the primary purpose of national parks.
2. Comprehensively understand the impact assessment, approvals and governance processes, and the evolving requirements of the three levels of government.
3. Identify direct and indirect benefits to the local and regional economy from generating demand for a wide variety of services (e.g. guides, equipment, accommodation, food, gifts, transport).
 - Walks should be recognised in Regional Economic Development Strategies, reflecting the benefits from diversifying the regional economy, attracting a new cohort of visitors, encouraging current visitors to stay longer, and providing opportunities for Traditional Owners.
 - Local produce (food, wine, etc.) where practical and available is actively promoted in commercial walk accommodation, providing a new market for local agricultural producers.
4. Ensure costings reflect a realistic understanding of construction and maintenance challenges arising from difficult to access locations, and the particular constraints of working in National Parks.
5. Adopt leading practices and accept the responsibility of meeting long term biodiversity and risk management conditions.

Multi-day walk based ecotourism creates local and regional economic benefits. To maximize these benefits, it is recommended that local businesses and suppliers are used preferentially, and local people, particularly Indigenous Peoples, are actively involved. Accommodation is the major source of direct visitor expenditure (Hughes et al 2015) and economic benefits are maximised when accommodation is primarily provided by multiple local businesses outside national parks. Tracks with an entrance and exit point allow daily pick up and use of outside accommodation thereby better supporting the regional economy. Trade-offs are required between maximizing regional economic benefits, and meeting visitors' expectations of a world walk. There are also opportunities to align with Regional Economic Development Strategies. The close connection between high quality environmental outcomes and economic/business benefits is becoming increasingly clear.

Supported multi-day walks in national parks that are successful offer a unique and exceptional 'wilderness' (natural) experience as described in Appendix 2. To cover the high operational and construction costs the experience needs to be able to compete at an international standard. Uniquely beautiful vegetation and scenery is a major driver of international visits and is a motivation for walking a multi-day track. Therefore, the location of a multi-day walk needs to contain exceptional natural features (Booth et al 2011, Ecotourism Australia 2014). To enhance and reflect the unique and exceptional location; the infrastructure, interpretation and design needs to be well planned and of high quality.

Most of the studied multi-day walks were conceived with the aim of becoming a world-class iconic walk and are located in national parks with exceptional natural features, often World Heritage areas. This trend is reflected in other kinds of ecotourism and has resulted in proposals for activities which are inconsistent with national park conservation values (Higgins-Desbiolles 2011). Ecotourism does not necessarily need to be high profile to achieve the desired regional economic and other benefits. The Yuraygir Coastal walk used existing trails infrastructure to keep construction costs low yet has increased local employment, provided Indigenous opportunities and spread visitation more widely across the State without becoming an international destination.

Offered experiences should focus on natural and Indigenous values to be authentic; unique and innovative experiences alone are not enough. This means ideally the visitor should walk away with a genuine understanding of and appreciation for the values of the place. It has been noted that ecotourists expect to learn something about a place (Parks Canada Agency 2007, McNichol and Reddie 2017) and especially appreciate when it comes from a source of personal experience. For example, walkers of New Zealand's Milford track comment that the ranger talks and being able to converse with locals enriched the experience. To be successful, ecotourism ventures need to be supported by park authority staff and the Indigenous and local community.

Also, ensuring costings reflect a realistic understanding of construction and maintenance challenges arising from remote or difficult to access locations and the particular constraints of working in National Parks cannot be underestimated.

Construction and maintenance costs for multi-day walk infrastructure near national parks are typically high and variable, so often profits are not gained especially in the first few years of operation.

The case study findings were synthesized into a list of leading practices which aim to complement the Queensland government's guiding principles, as presented in *Queensland Ecotourism investment*

opportunities, implementation framework: Ecotourism Facilities on National Parks. It was determined that Government’s ecotourism principles alone lacked the rigour to maintain ecological values and national park authority. Points from the leading practices that digress from those of the Government are:

- infrastructure within national parks should be government owned;
- the visitor experience the operator offers needs to reflect/represent and allow the visitor to experience the genuine ecological and social value of the place; and
- the necessity of impact monitoring and corrective plans.

An overview of how the guiding principles relate to and, are complemented by leading practices is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Queensland Government principles for ecotourism in national parks and suggested complementary leading practices

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES	COMPLEMENTARY LEADING PRACTICES/GUIDEANCE FOR INVESTMENT	MULTI DAY WALK EXAMPLE
1. <i>Ecotourism facilities on national parks are located, designed and managed sensitively to ensure compatibility with the natural and cultural values of the national park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual Ranger or guide presence • Trail cap based on ecological resilience • One-way trail with controlled and staggered start • Tailored to ecological values and site context • Zero/minimal waste • Monitoring of selected ecological indicators to determine impacts with subsequent corrective actions 	KIWT/ MIL/OT/TCT MIL, TCT TCT/OT KIWT, TCT
2. Ecotourism facilities on national parks should offer unique or innovative visitor experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique, exceptional, natural experience 	TCT MIL, WCT, YUR
3. Diverse experiences and settings are promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique, exceptional, natural experience 	Most case studies
4. Facilities will provide for the public interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure owned by government. The private operator provides a bond for risk and rehabilitation and a regular financial contribution for park management (Public interest should be beyond economics)	KIWT/BIB/ TCT (prior to commercialisation)
5. Successful ecotourism operations are characterised by commercial operators who have commitment to environmental best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual Ranger or guide presence • Trail cap based on ecological resilience and visitor experience • Provides regional economic benefits • Provides revenue which goes back to the park • Support nature conservation as the primary purpose of national parks. 	MIL KIWT/ MIL/OT/TCT KIWT /BIB/TCT/YUR TCT/OT

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES	COMPLEMENTARY LEADING PRACTICES/GUIDEANCE FOR INVESTMENT	MULTI DAY WALK EXAMPLE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure costings reflect a realistic understanding of construction and maintenance challenges arising from difficult to access locations, and the particular constraints of working in National Parks. 	
6. The authorisation of ecotourism facilities will be consistent and transparent while protecting the intellectual property of the proponent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thorough, transparent impact assessment undertaken with maintenance of long term nature conservation values prioritised. 	
7. The type and duration of authorities granted will recognise the level of investment and rate of return on investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure owned by government. The private operator provides a bond for risk and rehabilitation and a regular financial contribution for park management 	KIWT/BIB/TCT
OT – Overland Track, TCT - Three Capes Track, KIWT – Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail, BIB – Bibbulmun Track, YUR – Yuraygir, MIL - Milford Track, LAR – Larapinta Track, UN WCPA Guidelines – World Commission on Protected Areas		

Conclusion

There is an opportunity to learn from past and current practice; to avoid impacts and their cost (many of which may not be immediately apparent); and to establish an effective regulation framework with clear policy, formal agreements and bonds that can be enforced.

Ecotourism allowed in Queensland national parks needs to follow leading practice to prevent long term adverse impacts left to the Government’s responsibility. In addition, adoption of these leading practices could place Queensland as an international leader. There is a window of opportunity with significant investment in ecotourism likely in the next few years.

Case studies from across Australia and overseas provide evidence-based examples of approaches to established supported multi-day walks in national parks. They indicate that good design of trails and associated infrastructure combined with strong management and monitoring can avoid or minimise most impacts. Key learnings from these case studies are:

- Trail design should be tailored to ecological values and specifics of each site.
- Infrastructure should be Government owned and operated.
- Walker numbers should be capped based on ecological resilience.
- Trails should be one way with opportunity to control and stagger starts.
- There should be continual Ranger/ guide presence along walks
- High quality interpretation should be provided involving collaboration or direct engagement with local people.
- Mandatory orientation (focused on conservation, cultural values and minimal impact) should occur at trail commencement and be reinforced.
- All waste should be removed.

As the case studies were in operating phase we believe that to achieve best outcomes:

- Thorough and transparent impact assessment occurs for all proposals.
- Accommodation beyond basic camping should be provided beyond National Park boundaries.
- All developments should pay a bond to cover potential risks and rehabilitation need.
- Monitoring of biodiversity impacts and any required rectification should occur.

Such measures will support Queensland's National Parks so that conservation values are maintained both for their own right and for visitor pleasure in the long term.

References

Ajagunna. I, Pinnock. F and Kerr. R 2014, 'Wilderness tourism – alleviating poverty through empowering local people: A case of Bangor Ridge', *Worldwide hospitality and tourism themes*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp.229-243.

Ballantyne R et al (2008), *Valuing Tourism Spend Arising from Visitation to Queensland National Parks*, Sustainable Tourism CRC.

Booth. KL, Cessford. GR, McCool. SF and Espiner. SR 2011, Exploring visitor experiences, crowding perceptions and coping strategies on the Milford Track, New Zealand, *Science for conservation* 313, Department of Conservation, Wellington.

Buckley. R 2012, 'Sustainable Tourism: Research and Reality', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 528–546

CBD Secretariat 2017, *The Convention on Biological Diversity*, accessed 16 December 2017, <https://www.cbd.int/convention/>

Charters. T, Gall. J, Hamilton. G, Waltisbuih. W, Jones. P, Young. P et al 2016, Development Proposal and Environmental Management Plan: Scenic Rim Trail – Thornton Trailhead to Spicers Peak Nature Reserve, Consultancy report prepared for Scenic Rim Trail, Brisbane.

Ecotourism Australia 2014, *Ecotourism Australia – blueprint for a sustainable future*, Policy paper, Accessed 2 December 2017, <https://www.ecotourism.org.au/assets/Uploads/Policy-Paper-2014.pdf>

New Zealand department of Conservation (DOC) 2017, *Milford Track*, Accessed 11 December 2017, <http://www.doc.govt.nz/milfordtrack>.

Gale. F 1984, 'The protection of Aboriginal rock art from tourists at Ubirr, Kakadu National Park', In Sullivan. H (ed.) *Visitors to Aboriginal sites: access, control and management*, Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, Canberra, pp. 32 – 40.

Goodwin. H 1996, 'In pursuit of ecotourism', *Biodiversity and Conservation*, Vol. 5, pp. 277–291.

Ham. S 1992, *Environmental interpretation: a practical guide for people with big ideas and small budgets*, Golden, North American Press, Colorado.

Higgins-Desbiolles. F 2011, 'Death by a thousand cuts: governance and environmental trade-offs in ecotourism development at Kangaroo Island, South Australia', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 19, No. 4–5, pp. 553–570.

Honey. M, 2008, *Ecotourism and sustainable development (Second Edition): Who owns paradise?*, Island Press, Washington.

https://books.google.com.au/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Jw2hy_2E5nwC&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=history+of+ecotourism+when+luxury&ots=8qiVfRa8u7&sig=dJ8T8CTB2YypTZLLAfIcHQ625Q#v=onepage&q=history%20of%20ecotourism%20when%20luxury&f=false

Hughes. M, Smith. A and Tuffin. M 2015, Bibbulmun track user survey Report 2014 - 15: A report for the Bibbulmun Track Foundation and Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia, Murdoch University and Department of Parks and Wildlife, Murdoch.

Hunter. J 2015, 'West Coast Trail Guardians: First Nations blaze a path to reconciliation', *The Globe and Mail inc*, accessed 24 January 2018, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/west-coast-trail-guardians-blaze-a-path-to-reconciliation/article25050920/>

IUCN 2014, *Sustainable tourism in protected areas can be critical for their survival, says new IUCN report*, <https://www.iucn.org/content/sustainable-tourism-protected-areas-can-be-critical-their-survival-says-new-iucn-report> accessed 7 February 2018.

IUCN 2018, *Business and biodiversity, Our Work, Tourism*, accessed 7 February 2018, <https://www.iucn.org/theme/business-and-biodiversity/our-work/business-engagement-sector/tourism>

Khan. M 2003, 'ECOSERV: Ecotourists' Quality Expectations', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 109-124.

McNicol. B and Rettie. K 2018, 'Tourism operators' perspectives of environmental supply of guided tours in national parks', *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, Vol. 21, pp. 19–29.

Monteros. RL 2002, 'Evaluating ecotourism in natural protected areas of La Paz Bay, Baja California Sur, Me´xico: ecotourism or nature-based tourism?', *Biodiversity and Conservation*, Vol. 11, pp. 1539–1550.

National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ) 1982, *Scenic Rim submission*,

National Parks Association of Queensland (NPAQ) 2017, Main Range National Park ecotourism proposal update, Accessed 30 November 2017, <http://www.npaq.org.au/eventdetails/main-range-national-park-eco-tourism-proposal-update>

Parks Canada Agency 2007, *Commercial tours on the Icefield Parkway: Interviews with drivers and clients: A report prepared by the Parks Canada Agency*, Parks Canada Agency, Banff National Park.

Powell. RB and Ham. SH 2008, Can Ecotourism Interpretation Really Lead to Pro-Conservation Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour? Evidence from the Galapagos Islands, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 467 – 489.

Queensland Government 2017, *Whitehaven Beach Clean-Up Shows Queenslander Spirit*, Accessed 26 February 2018,

<http://www.publicnow.com/view/7594FF3CE6049AA0860DB58414DDC682B2B7943C?2017-05-11-03:31:12+01:00-xxx1715> .

Queensland Government (date unknown), Queensland Ecotourism investment opportunities, implementation framework: Ecotourism Facilities on National Parks.

Queensland Government (2018). Protected Areas Estate Statistics as at 27 April 2018.

Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR) 2017, *Queensland Eco and Sustainable Tourism Fact Sheet*, accessed 4 December 2017,

<https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/tourism/quest/pdf/quest-fact-sheet.pdf>

Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR) 2017a, *Gondwana Rainforests of Australia*, accessed 16 December 2017, <https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/world-heritage->

[areas/gondwana_rainforests_of_australia.html?_ga=2.43426725.1622111698.1513387921-481723634.1513387921](https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/parks/main-range-national-park)

Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR) 2017b, Main Range National Park, accessed 16 December 2017, <https://findapark.npsr.qld.gov.au/parks/main-range>

Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing, 2016, *Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2016-2020*. <https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/tourism/pdf/final-qld-ecotourism-plan.pdf>

Roy. EA 2018, 'World's finest walk': New Zealand's Milford Track being spoiled by tourist hordes', *The Guardian*, accessed 5 February 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/22/worlds-finest-walk-new-zealands-milford-track-spoilt-tourists> accessed 5 February 2018.

Spenceley, A, Snyman, S and Eagles, PFJ 2017, *Guidelines for tourism partnerships and concessions for protected areas: Generating sustainable revenues for conservation and development*, Report to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and IUCN, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Tourism and Protected Areas Specialist Group.

Spicers 2017, *About us*, accessed 16 December 2017, <http://www.scenicrimtrail.com/about-us/>

Thompson, A., Massyn, P. J., Pendry, J., Pastorelli, J. 2014, *Tourism concessions in protected natural areas: Guidelines for managers*, United Nations Development Program, accessed 25 January 2018, http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/ecosystems_and_biodiversity/tourism-concessions-in-protected-natural-areas.html

Wight, P.A. (1997). Ecotourism accommodation spectrum: Does supply match the demand? *Tourism Management*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 209–220.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Background to Scenic Rim Trail Proposal in Main Range National Park

Main Range National Park, about 110km south-west of Brisbane, forms part of the Scenic Rim mountain arc of South East Queensland and is part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area (NPSR 2017). This area is world heritage listed because it preserves ongoing geological processes and examples of evolutionary history (NPSR 2017). It also contains some of the last remnants of Ancient temperate Rain- and Beech-forests, which are biodiversity hotspots containing more bird, frog, snake and marsupial species than anywhere else in Australia including many rare or endangered species and ancient lifeforms (NPSR 2017a). Main Range itself is valued for the range of topography, altitude and the rich basalt soils which create a diversity of plant and animal communities. Main Range is an important refuge for endangered species such as Hastings River mouse, Richmond Birdwing Butterfly and Fleay's Barred frogs (NPSR 2017). Visitors to the park value the rugged and challenging landscape with spectacular lookouts, shaded valleys and a variety of bushwalking and camping options. Parts of the park have been recognised by local people as having national value since 1909 (NPSR 2017).

A walking track serviced by lodges and guest houses was part of the original proposal (1947) for the series of reserves known as the Scenic Rim (NPAQ 1981). Since at least 1977 significant conflict has been observed between facility/service orientated and more simple/rustic/primitive forms of hiking (NPAQ 1981). It has been suggested that the facility orientated style be in areas zoned high use and the latter in lesser used areas.

Spicers Retreat, Hotels and Lodges Pty Ltd is the corporation who own and operate Spicers and Peppers retreats. These retreats are luxurious resorts or lodges and associated tourism infrastructure in places with visually spectacular natural environments (Spicers 2017). Spicers Retreat (application transferred from Gainsdale) proposes to upgrade the existing Scenic Rim trail in Main Range National park and turn it into a Spicers resort style ecotourism development by constructing eco camps, bushwalking and mountain bike tracks. (Charters et al 2016, NPAQ 2017). Spicers Retreat expect this development to benefit the tourism industry through diversification of tourism in the region; improving accessibility to attractions and lifting the standards of tourism innovation and best practise (Charters et al 2016).

Through a partnership with the university of Queensland in the form of the Hidden Vale wildlife facility Gainsdale has the capacity to conduct a breeding and release program for native species (some endemic) which would likely be negatively impacted by the proposed ecotourism development (Charters et al 2016). The Hidden Vale wildlife facility is located on a joint cattle grazing property and nature refuge near the Spicers Hidden Vale retreat, within a scenic rim wildlife corridor. It is a non-commercial enterprise with the purpose of developing, researching, implementing and teaching techniques for breeding and releasing wildlife (Charters et al 2016). There is the potential for monitoring programs within Main Range National Park and those associated with the ecotourism venture to link with research at the facility. The potential reintroduction of the Eastern Bristle bird to Cunningham's Gap can be seen as compensation for the environmental damage which would be caused by the development.

Appendix 2 –Case Studies

Bibbulmun Track, Western Australia

<p>WALK OVERVIEW</p>	<p>The Bibbulmun track stretches 1000km between Kalamunda (outskirts of Perth) and Albany (both in South west Western Australia) passing through over ten towns; 22 NPs (and other reserves) and many environments including karri and tingle forests, mist-shrouded valleys, over giant granite boulders and coastal heathlands. Opened in 1979. The track offers a range of experiences from gentle walk to multi-week adventure.</p> <p>Walking the entire track would take six to eight weeks. Accommodation is available in track towns, with tourism operators and within government campsites. Camping is required in more isolated sections where towns cannot be reached within a day’s walk. Vehicle access at designated points only with no campsites being vehicle accessible.</p> <p>The trail is managed through partnership between the Bibbulmun Track foundation (BTF) and Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) - Recreation and Trails Unit.</p> <p>The track features, boardwalks, lookouts, footbridges, 49 camp sites and shelters, 3 group campsites plus boot cleaning stations and erosion management infrastructure.</p>
<p>THE BUSINESS CASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need, demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # days • # visitors/year (actual and cap) • Characteristics (track type/difficulty) • Values of NP (WHA?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk inspired by an avid bushwalker, not company or government • Aims to be one of the world’s great long distance walking tracks • During the late 1980s walkers estimated at between 5,000 and 10,000 per year; most 1-3 days. Risen to 302,960 visit days per year by 2015. • Average overnight walk 5.6 days; 1 in 7 walk for week or more • Annual direct user expenditure estimated at \$13.1 Million • Surveys estimate that >97% of visitors are satisfied with experience • The track caters to walkers of different experience levels. Multiple entrance points and levels of isolation. • BTF partners with tourism operators, trekking companies and local businesses to offer a range of package deals and guided tours (4 - 9 day, variable comfort/support), and events (licence through PWS) • NP and reserve values (which track allows people to visit) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southwest Australia: biodiversity hotspot - Stunning coastline between Walpole and Mount Manypeaks - Heritage places still used by Noongar (Indigenous People) - Albany coast regions uniquely high level of endemism including: 19 wetlands of regional significance and one of the highest flora collection densities in the south-west of WA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 70% overnight walkers use local business accommodation (caravan park, motel, hostel etc) at some point during their walk. • Visitors believe the track promotes community pride, physical and mental health, and creates access to scenic natural areas

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community Trails Program (below) • Businesses see economic gains from the track, some become corporate members with BTF (includes promotion of their activities and allows hikers to find services along the track).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Building a better Bibbulmun” project (1996) the Federal Department of Housing and Regional Development granted \$1.38 million • Construction of campsites and shelters kept low as Ministry of Justice provided prison inmates as labour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTF makes money from: sale of maps, books, guidebooks (PWS created), clothing, gifts and souvenirs; public and business memberships; donations; sponsorship; grants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PWS is primarily responsible for management and maintenance as the land manager. BTF is recognised as the prime contact for public and community-based involvement, including the volunteer maintenance program (PWS financed). BTF seeks grants for track maintenance and upgrades, works mostly undertaken by PWS or contracted out. • Track maintained by 6 parks and wildlife service districts, coordinated through department’s Recreation and Trails Unit. • BTF supports parks and wildlife service through Mine sponsored Eyes on the Ground Maintenance Program: volunteers supply most equipment. • Upgrades and major repairs prioritised by visitor risk and level of use. (reduced volunteer maintenance in remote areas). • Over 4 years PWS spend \$2.3 million on maintenance and upgrades, including regular ranger checks and major upgrades. • Recently BTF provided \$100,000 towards a new bridge, raised from their own fundraising activities.
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTF have staff; 408 active volunteers, and an office operating five days a week all year round. Allowing administration of 50-60 events per year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts • Biological and to park values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparatively low (2.5% depth) total erosion (Denmark to Albany section) as track design aligns to landscape contours & maintenance features occur on slopes (PWA currently working towards realigning south coast sections) • Threat - Clearing wetland fringe vegetation (during track construction) • Spread of dieback through mud on boots or vehicle tyres
<p>PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BFT has ten official sponsors: 2 mining and processing companies; 6 concessionaries offering walker supporting services; a 1st aide trainer and a resource consulting company. • Lotterywest: trails grants program community initiated project • Mining sponsorship (influenced mining attraction recommendations?), where the mining impacts the track regular realignments and shifting of campsites generally required.

<p>FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Community Trails Program: encouraging diversity of cultures to visit NPs, creating positive perceptions of the 'bush'.
<p>CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of changes to legislation being made to accommodate this development has been found. Change may be required if a user charge was to be implemented. Introduction likely cause a reduction in volunteer contribution, memberships, donations and sponsorship.
<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How managed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During construction (1980s) there was ongoing conflict with other land uses (i.e. forestry operations, mining, water catchment, vehicles and roads. Track now buffered regarding forestry but mining still an illegal activity (4WD and pig hunters) sometimes an issue. The track is mainly used by WA residents. Community (i.e. track towns, walkers, WA residents) support through: Volunteering, by becoming BTF members and making donations.

Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail, South Australia

<p>WALK OVERVIEW</p>	<p>Kangaroo Island is located off the South Australian coast, accessible by a 25 min plane flight or a longer ferry trip. The five-day, 62 km walk traverse's spectacular coastal cliffs, and a diversity of ecosystems. Managed by National Parks SA, it has a fee of \$161 pp to do the trail. It has 4 custom-designed campsites.</p> <p>The start and finish of each day's walk is accessible by vehicle, enabling the option of daily drop-off and pick-ups, plus overnight accommodation in commercial lodgings.</p> <p>The walk is not overly physically challenging, making it widely accessible. It opened in October 2016.</p> <p>Lonely Planet has already listed the walk as no 3 on its 2017 new destination list globally. It is located in one of Australia's biodiversity hotspots.</p>
<p>THE BUSINESS CASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need, demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The walk was not designed as a sudden, one-off idea, but evolved as a consistent recommendation from State and regional ecotourism and economic development strategies over the past 5 years. 20% of visitors come to KI for 1 day. Need a reason to keep them longer. Walker cap: 12 independent; 36 commercial, 48 guided per day (96) Offers the mix of isolation, adventure, personal challenge with unique and authentic experiences with wildlife accessible to many people. The trail was intended to be a world-standard, iconic walk. Trail run and managed by State Govt, but the private sector encouraged to take the experience to a new level. KI shares many socio-economic characteristics with other agricultural regions that are 3+ hours drive from a major city. These are: slow/declining population growth; low average incomes; limited employment opportunities; agriculture the most significant industry; seasonal tourism making it difficult to sustain businesses year-round; high freight costs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and other benefits to the region 	<p>Studies have shown that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KI National Parks contribute \$53 million to the State economy, and support 360 jobs. • KIWT Predicted to add \$4.4 million annually to the Island economy by 2020 and attract an additional 45 jobs. Flow-on benefits for a range of related businesses realised: seasonality of tourism problem reduced • One-year discount rate for the local community to walk the trail. • Local businesses targeted to be involved and for flow-on benefits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs 	<p>\$5 million (SA govt) + \$500k from Federal Govt</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost: independent \$161 per person (includes parking, park entry etc) • Revenue from walker fees goes to servicing trail: staff, operating costs maintenance • Track can be self-sustaining, requiring no government funding, in 5 – 7 yrs if enough surplus revenue is accumulated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low - 1FTE staff member • mainly vegetation management, little done to surface
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 officers (new positions at wilderness lodge) manage the trail: Trail Manager and Operations Officer • After construction managed by small DEWNR team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts 	<p>Very few at recent trail inspection 1 year from opening issues are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No flora or fauna disturbance. Ongoing check for any wildlife feeding • 1-2 small, minor spots of erosion • Phytophthora spread risk – ongoing watch. Preventative measures in place • Maintenance of safe, potable water supply in campgrounds. <p>Construction stages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize impact to native vegetation: trails specialist designed and conducted training and monitoring; alignment, trail construction contract prescribe requirement to minimize environmental impact • Constructed by workmen on foot and digger on tracks, used fire servicing trails, no roads built • Fauna impact: fauna specialist provided advice; KI Echidna and white bellied sea eagles of special interest, • Campsite construction: designed by local architect with history working in parks; contractor provided comprehensive management plan; tight restrictions on movement with walkways to ensure minimal disturbance • Enviro monitoring consists of site comparison over time via photos: no impacts yet recorded.
<p>PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017 the SA State government issued an EOI inviting the private sector to invest in exclusive, eco-sensitive overnight accommodation options for trail walkers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many existing accommodation facilities are gearing up to cater for trail walkers. See case study below • Serious investor planning “glamping” facilities along trail
FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely self-reliant entity so no money goes back into NPs which provide the tourism its attraction • Induction and restricted access create feeling that visitors are guest in the NPs: may create positive perspective of NPs and lead to appropriate behaviour in future
CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor amendments to park Management Plans to enable the development of small scale, ecologically sensitive accommodation within minor development zones. • Explanation of strategies to ensure the trail and its use are compatible with park management objectives.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How managed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No local community opposition. • NP staff found it a challenge to comprehend a different ecotourism model. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerned about trail route encroachment on raptor breeding zones and that resources insufficient to cover additional maintenance. - Managed by providing information + extensive involvement in location and design decisions of campground, trail location etc. transition plan developed with staff, active participation in various planning and implementation committees.

Larapinta Trail, Northern Territory

WALK OVERVIEW	<p>The Larapinta Trail is located largely within the boundaries of the West McDonnell Ranges National Park in the Northern Territory. It starts at the Alice Springs Telegraph station and crosses the range to end at the Summit of Mt Sounder. The Trail is 223km in length and runs along the spine of the West MacDonnell Ranges and through a diversity of ecosystems.</p> <p>The trail is divided into twelve sections with each one taking one or two days to complete. Each section is accessible by 4WD, enabling the option of daily drop-off and pick-ups. The difficulty of each section varies, and the trail has appropriate facilities for each visitor experience.</p> <p>The trail is becoming increasingly popular and has been dubbed by Australian Geographic as “one of the world’s best long-distance arid-zone walks”.</p>
THE BUSINESS CASE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need, demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the purposes of Larapinta Trail was to enhance the attraction of Alice Springs as a destination as well as a transit town and to enhance the appeal of the town itself.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an estimated economic gain of \$8- \$10m/annum from trail operations • 1,600 commercial and 1,600 independent trekkers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is estimated that construction contracts and basics facilities would have cost \$2m dollars.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no park entry fee; revenue is generated through the attainment of a fee for the use of certain campsites along the trail.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual maintenance and operational costs are more than \$100,000 dollars per annum.
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition of the Trail in several sections is degraded. Without effective management increasing numbers of walkers could contribute to further deterioration. • Major visitor nodes are most impacted by tourists
<p>PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About half of the walkers that hike the Larapinta trail do so with the assistance of private tour operators. • There are also commercial tour operators offering transfer and food drop services.
<p>FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Larapinta Trail represents one of the most promoted experiences of the Park. Thus, the trail is a major attraction for the National Park and the surrounding area. This has economic benefits for the area.
<p>CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in popularity of the track has led to the need to revise some of the strategies within that strategy
<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How managed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC

Milford Track, New Zealand

<p>WALK OVERVIEW</p>	<p>The Milford track traverses 36.5km (4 days) of Ancient temperate rainforest and alpine communities through Fiordland National Park (South West New Zealand World Heritage Area). It is one of nine 'Great walks' managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). During tramping season (November to May, when peaks not covered in snow) the track may only be walked in one direction and booking costs are higher as more services are provided. Three DOC run, communal huts (no camping allowed) containing bunks, tables and solar lighting are located along the track. During tramping season rangers are stationed there to give talks and provide assistance; running water and flush toilets are available.</p> <p>Milford track is located approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes from Queenstown. Glade Wharf at Lake Te Anau and Milford Sound (starting points) are accessible only via boat. Cars can be parked 27km from Glade Wharf with bus services leaving daily. Milford track is considered an introductory tramping track of intermediate difficulty.</p>
<p>THE BUSINESS CASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need, demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MT pioneered, began guiding tourists, by explorer Quintin Mackinnon 1888 • Most stringent visitor management of all NZ walking tracks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 360 people on track on any day, Max 90 people at start each day: 40 independent and 50 guided /day, 26 – 34 guided day walks - Visitor cap to preserve visitor experience: remoteness, minimize number of encounters on track (keep at acceptable number)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ~14,000 walk track each year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2007/08 season: 8458 visitors, 8% New Zealanders - Came for mix of reasons: iconic status, uniqueness and beauty of landscape, socialising and sharing experience, solitude • 650,000 visitors to Fiordland NP (2005) • Average 450,000 just viewing Mitre Peak and Milford sound (2017) • Region receives 1.2 Million visitors/yr (2011) • 10% of visitors stayed longer in region because of NP, 12% of visitors would not have come to NZ if not for NP • World Heritage area valued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As the most intact representation of Gondwana flora - tectonic, climatic, and glacial processes that have shaped the earth • Fiordland NP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uniquely (to NZ) unmodified rugged coastline - southern hemisphere coniferous trees (uncommon in NZ) - rare and regionally endemic sub-alpine plant species - Many examples of indigenous and European cultural heritage - National stronghold for beech mistletoe, sand tussock, tufted hair grass - Only inland breeding site for mottled petrel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of NPs in region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1600 jobs; \$196m output; \$78m value-added income; \$55M household income (2005) • Fiordland NP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides 155 direct jobs - Visitor spend of \$57Million generating further \$35Million expenditure - Concession product / business by commercial operators generates \$51Million per yr + \$13Million flow on effects - Commercial tour operator employment generated 280 direct jobs, \$17million value add /yr including \$9Million household income • Tourism employed 60% of Fiordland region’s workforce in 2003 • Town of Te Anau dependant on tourism, especially concession based • Operators believe without Milford track and tourism activities visitors would not come and the town would not be what it is • Links between tourism operators and local businesses contributed to service and facility improvement (Ta Anau) • Employment keeps people in towns which attracts public services such as schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No definitive construction phase: occurred through capital works, upgrades and maintenance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered only 'Great Walk' in NZ to be making profit • Hut booking: \$70 /night in season (total \$210); \$15 /night off season (total \$45); backcountry hut pass \$122 /yr • Revenue goes into Department of Conservation budget and portion budgeted for track (profits not necessarily going back into NP) • Guided walk from \$1850 for 5day/6night (1 night Milford Sound post walk)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies greatly from year to year depending on storm season damage • Mainly by rangers - big projects are contracted out • Ultimate Hikes pays for half the costs (specified in original contract) • Must meet 'Great Walks' track standards • Maintenance done by rangers staying in huts
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hut rangers: light track maintenance, nightly interpretation talks • Maintenance crew: 3-4 staff, clearing track and maintenance for 1-3wks before season
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts • Biological and to park values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No official monitoring: only anecdotal and in areas where damage likely • Promotion as 'world's finest track' with words such as journey, wander and admire creates unrealistic expectations which mean experience can disappoint experienced walkers • Crowding is a social impact of the tracks popularity • DOC educates visitors and manages visitor growth to avoid unacceptable impacts • Visitor management aims to ensure natural characteristics, historic features and iconic wilderness status is retained, and work with commercial operators to encourage visitor appreciation of park values • Increasing tourism numbers bring pressure for additional visitor opportunities and facilities
<p>PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of 2011, 89 businesses operated within the park offering a range of activities including: guided walks, transportation, equipment rental, unguided packages • Commercial accommodation within park along MT (Walking tour companies have own lodges) • Real Journeys (family business since 1950s) operates most of the commercial activities in NP.
<p>FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial operators (concessionaries) can play an important role in introducing visitors to tramping, NPs and their values. This introduction can shape how visitors perceive NPs and affect their behaviour towards them. • Hut rangers take seriously their role in introducing people to NPs, tramping and back country hiking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive feedback that visitors feel they have learned a lot and enjoyed the genuineness of the presenter and the experience
<p>CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial exclusive access rights by Ultimate Hikes was against walking rights of access laws

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rights restored when parks department brought in independent hiking (late 1970s)
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How managed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic visitors spend more money in this region than international MT has social significance with New Zealanders, they culturally identify with MT and they are proud of its reputation internationally. Insignificant number of people see cost as restriction to doing the walk (loss of their right of access)

Overland Track, Tasmania

WALK OVERVIEW	<p>The Overland Track (OT) in Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, Tasmania is typically hiked over 6 days 5 nights. The hike can be completed independently or commercially guided. Booking compulsory during October – May and costs \$200. In addition, each person needs to pay for a Tasmanian National Parks pass which can vary (e.g. daily pass per vehicle \$24 or \$16.50 per person without vehicle). If hiking independently there are several huts and camping sites along the track (separate from commercial huts).</p>								
THE BUSINESS CASE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need, demand 	<p>The number of visitors hiking overland track through booking system:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2013-2014</th> <th>2014-2015</th> <th>2015-2016</th> <th>2016-2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8000</td> <td>8000</td> <td>9000</td> <td>9000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of 60 walkers per day can leave from Cradle Mountain. 34 Independent walkers, 13 group members and 13 with TWC. Track visitors – max 21,900 /year; 4,745 in government huts. Combination of track surfaces: duckboard, planking, cordwood, natural forest floor or other natural surfaces Modest level of fitness, well defined wide tracks, easy to moderate terrain, in slightly modified environments. The Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park is within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural ecosystems with habitat for unique, ancient or threatened flora /fauna, including: rainforest, and buttongrass moorland Endemic Tasmanian devils, green rosellas and black currawong. Significant geological features formed by glacial erosion of valleys and mountains including Cradle Mountain, Barn Bluff and Crater Lake. Geological, flora and fauna links to Gondwana. Archaeological features from Aboriginal (35,000YO) and non-Aboriginal heritage. complex mosaic of vegetation, and numerous water bodies. One of Australia’s best long walks showcasing the natural, cultural, historic and scenic values of the WHA. 	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	8000	8000	9000	9000
2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017						
8000	8000	9000	9000						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote natural environments helping the tourism industry grow in Tasmania and Australia. Visitor numbers to Cradle mountain have continued to increase from 2013-2014: 182,000 to 2016-2017: 252,000. 								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in accommodation services, transport services for walkers, and commercial walking-based companies since 1997. • Direct and indirect tourism expenditure from OT \$16.36 million (2012-13). • PWS employ a total of 42.8 full time staff equivalent in the State (2014). • Overland track and supporting tourism businesses provide 85 full time equivalent jobs in the State (estimated). • Historically uses casual and seasonal construction / maintenance workers. • Visitors/hikers use regional businesses, due to area's isolation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations funded by booking / walker fees, commercial licenses/leases and merchandise. • \$1,247,551 of income (2013 – 14, \$1.1 million 2015-16). • 100% of revenue invested back into track management (25% spent on permanent staff and 75% on seasonal rangers, projects /renovations, track works, cleaning supplies and toilet waste removal). \$1.1 million on infrastructure upgrades, hut maintenance and helipad upgrades (2015-16). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2007-2009 revenue did not keep pace with the rate of deterioration (trend reversed by 2012 & 2015).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance costs • Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating costs include: booking system & administration costs, hut heating, staff transport, production of information packs, communication and IT infrastructure, and interpretation signage. • The Tasmanian Walking Company (TWC), see below, contributes over \$100,000 annually to the maintenance of infrastructure within the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park.
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and Wildlife Service employ 10 staff (4.5 full time) on track (2014). • TWC employs 34 casual and 3 full time employees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts • Biological and to park values • How managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline surveys: weeds occurred prior to construction. All machinery and materials are certified as 'low risk' for weed and disease contamination, given wash down procedures/certificates. • Annual surveys of weeds: no new weeds enter park (compliance). • Spread of soil pathogen <i>Phytophthora cinnamomi</i> - ongoing watch. Preventive measures: walker education / boot washdown stations. Compliance – avoid spread to non- infested areas the park/ track. • Main on-going impacts: track/campsite degradation/erosion/expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management involves track hardening and upgrading • Narrowed management focus (loss of funding and management capacity 2000-04) causing some areas and tracks to be neglected • Funding for minimum waste signage declined since 2000. • Booking departure/walker management system operating since 2005. <p><u>Tasmanian Walking Company</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact design and non-polluting operation practices:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “leave no trace” principle. Rubbish - physically removed off site. Wastewater separated through grease traps and sand filters then removed twice yearly by helicopter - Self-composting, water free batching toilets minimize wastewater - Water supply via rainwater tanks to avoid take from waterways. • Advanced eco certification with EcoTourism Australia (EA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - operator to be up-to-date - standards/procedures/products/operations - requires environmental management plan with checks - Audited within 12 months of certification then every 3 years.
PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TWC (only private organisation within park with guided hiking and private huts) Typical - 6 days and 5 night and Winter - 8 days and 7 nights.
FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All revenue to be put back into NP
CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None identified
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasmanian bushwalking community opposed plans to regulate visitor numbers “to limit environmental impacts and reduce unplanned track formation” (TWWHA Management Plans 1992 – 1999). • Greens have opposed TWC proposal for another hut at Lake Rodway.

Three Capes Track, Tasmania

WALK OVERVIEW	<p>The Three Capes Track (TCT) is located in the Tasman National Park and World Heritage-listed Port Arthur Historic Site in Tasmania. TCT includes the Tasman peninsula exploring the Maingon Bay, Munro Bight and Fortescue Bay. The track is 4 days/3 nights with a compulsory cruise to track entrance. The walk costs \$495 including entry to the Port Arthur historic site, car parking, secure lockers, cruise (Port Arthur to starting point), 3 nights self-catered “Luxury” on track cabins, and bus transfer from Fortescue Bay to Port Arthur. It is an easy to moderate hike on a combination of track surfaces including natural forest floor, stone, gravel, duckboard and planking.</p> <p>There is one TCT independent overnight trip to Cape Pillar from Fortescue Bay (29km, only 1 campsite for 6 tents + rainwater tank). Little promotion of independent walkers. A commercial operator is about to commence a supported walk with separate, purpose-built lodges.</p>												
THE BUSINESS CASE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need, demand 	<p>The total number of visitors registered through the TCT booking system:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>2015-2016 (Opened in December)</td> <td>2016-2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5,000</td> <td>12,000</td> </tr> </table> <p>Track numbers are capped at 48 per day with an annual total of 17,520.</p> <p>The Tasman National Park visitor numbers are indicated below:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>2013-2014</td> <td>2014-2015</td> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>2016-2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>138,000</td> <td>141,000</td> <td>163,000</td> <td>191,000</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys (state government market research 2005-2006): 46% of Tasmanian visitors undertook a bushwalk of some kind, 45% of which visited the Tasman Peninsula. 	2015-2016 (Opened in December)	2016-2017	5,000	12,000	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	138,000	141,000	163,000	191,000
2015-2016 (Opened in December)	2016-2017												
5,000	12,000												
2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017										
138,000	141,000	163,000	191,000										

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional tour operators have seen strong demand for multi-day hikes (5-6 days). Natural landscapes and environment are main driver of international visitors. Majority of walkers (58%) from mainland Australia, 6% from Tasmania and 35% from overseas. First 2000 hikers (2015): 81% mainland, 13% Tasmanians, 6% overseas. Readily accessible from Hobart, likely to leave after hike and not spend money on other businesses in the region. Weather permits business to be sustained year-round. Promoted as “luxury” so accommodation may not meet expectations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TCT estimated to provide Tas with \$18.6 million in visitor expenditure per year. TCT provides 35 direct new jobs to region. Temporary employment business suppliers during construction. Over 200 Tas businesses involved; 93% spent in Tas. (Tourism Minister Richard Colbeck) Local guiding companies Pennicott Wilderness Journeys (PWJ) and the Tasmania Walking Company (TWC) employ and train local staff and purchase goods and services from local suppliers wherever possible. (Regional economic benefit less than anticipated.) Increase (almost 70%) in overnight hiking tourists attributed to track.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$31.3 million of government funding: First two stages \$23.5 million dollars and stage three: \$7.8 million (State \$4 million and Federal \$3.8 million).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue obtained from fees via the booking/departure management system, commercial operator payments and information packs. Feasibility study predicted the three-year revenue projection should exceed operational expenses. Surplus revenue will be put back into the development and maintenance of the Tasman National Park.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhead expenses remained much the same over the projected 3 years. Feasibility studies predict repairs & maintenance costs rise each year and revenue alone may not cover operating costs thus the TCT may become an expense to State government & PWS rather than a profitable business
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 permanent staff Peak season: additional track rangers, track workers, and reception officers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts Biological and to park values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial impacts: potential for the degradation of the park; impact on rare or threatened species through land clearing and weed introduction (construction phase, track and hut locations). Preventive measures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> baseline surveys (seasonal) identified where populations may occur and possible resultant track/hut realignment independent consultant (Ecotas) identified suitable areas that support no ecologically significant flora/fauna/vegetation types.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread of soil pathogen <i>Phytophthora cinnamomi</i> (highly significant fungus) • Baseline field surveys (Ecotas 2011) pathogen presence • Preventive measures included: tracks to avoid wet/muddy areas; walker education and installation of washdown stations (not drain into <i>Phytophthora</i> free areas); equipment and machinery protocols to prevent spread of weeds. • Track construction and presence of walkers may impact the fauna in the surrounding area (e.g. coastal nesting birds). • Surveys of penguin and mutton bird rookeries, and eagle and owl nesting sites ensure walking tracks are far enough away to prevent disturbance. • On-going impacts regarding track and campsite erosion, expansions and other forms of deterioration. Management will involve hardening and upgrading of track. • PWJ and TWC achieved advanced eco certification with EcoTourism Australia (EA).
PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PWJ (operating over 18 years) provides six sea and land-based experiences. • Operates compulsory cruise that delivers walkers to start of track • TWC (operating over 30 years) provides guided walks across many Tasmanian national parks. TWC is currently constructing commercial lodges for the guided Three Capes Lodge Walk.
FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All revenue to be put back into the Tasman National Park (Overland track model). • PWJ contributed \$160,000 to Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service coastal conservation projects. • \$100,00 to eradication feral cats from the Tasman Island (2010); significant number of breeding seabirds have escaped predation • \$60,000 to start eradicating rats from Big Green Island. • TWC may donate \$100,000 annually to maintenance as done for the overland track.
CHANGES TO LEGISLATION, POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes known
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greens opposed TCT (2012). • Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) initially opposed - “Keep the Capes Wild” campaign. TNPA commented in Feb 2008 on the Draft 2008 Tasman National Park Management Plan: inconsistent with conservation objectives of park; ‘overnight nodes’ larger than any overnight facility in NP; additional impacts; insufficient rainwater tanks leading to use of creek water; spread of <i>Phytophthora</i>; whether keeping the track mud free is achievable; impacts on current walking opportunities (user equity); lack of demonstrated economic benefits to the Tasman Peninsula. TNPA proposed further development of Tasman Coastal Trail to use existing trails, services and minimise environment degradation. Multiple media releases included alleging that projected revenue misrepresents benefits of TCT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How managed? 	

West Coast Trail, Vancouver Island, Canada

<p>WALK OVERVIEW</p>	<p>The West Coast Trail (WCT) is located in the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR), on Vancouver Island, Canada. The WCT evolved from ancestral trails used by First Nations for trade and travel and lifesaving trails (for shipwrecked mariners) in the area. Traversing beaches and coastal cliffs, the trail offers views of lighthouses and shipwrecks. The 75km trail typically takes visitors between 5-8 days to complete.</p> <p>The trail has 3 unique entry/exit points, Pachena Bay (north), Gordon River (south) and Ditinaht (mid-point). Boardwalks, ladders, bridges, cable cars, outhouses and camping areas are found along the WCT.</p> <p>To hike the WCT, visitors are required to purchase a permit and attend an orientation session highlighting backcountry etiquette. The hike’s operational period runs from May 1st to September 30th with a limit of 75 hikers per day and a maximum group size of 10 people. The hike is suited for experienced hikers as the terrain is rugged, uneven and slippery when wet.</p>
<p>THE BUSINESS CASE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need/Demand 	<p>In 1990, there were 8461 hikers on WCT. In 2007, this dropped to 4273 hikers, after the implementation of a cap of 60 people per day to maintain ecological integrity of the environment. Recently, the trail cap has been raised to 75. It now attracts approximately 8000 visitors.</p> <p>For the hikers, the WCT offers an adventurous, challenging outdoor experience as well as authentic cultural experience.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic and other Benefits to the region 	<p>The main benefit of the WCT is the increase in tourism it attracts, which leads to an increase in revenue for the PRNPR.</p> <p>Opportunity for people of Ditidaht First Nations to preserve and disseminate culture through West Coast Guardians program: involved in maintenance, patrol, orientation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of Construction 	<p>N/A as the trail developed from lifesaving trails and ancestral trails used by the First Nations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income 	<p>The PRNPR uses the revenue towards the operating costs of the park, including maintenance, rescue services and information services. The revenue includes:</p> <p>Per Trip Per Person: \$127.50 CAD Reservation Per Person: \$24.50 CAD</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance Costs 	<p>A rough estimate of 1 million CAD a year in maintenance for infrastructure.</p> <p>Maintained by Parcs Canada</p>
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff at Trail Head – 6 • Trail crew – 3 • First Nations Guardians – 3 (1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts 	<p>There are 42 species at risk recognized in the PRNPR.</p> <p>Monitoring studies have shown that the ecological integrity of the terrestrial environment is stable, and the marine environment varies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically, the marine environments were damaged due to logging, but stream restoration has restored salmon habitats. • Subtidal ecosystems show a decline of biodiversity. • Intertidal ecosystems show an increased proliferation of invasive species <p>The PRNPR attempts to mitigate impact of the hikers by providing an orientation session, which focuses on teaching back country etiquette to attempt to instil</p>

	these environmental values. This includes leaving behind zero waste, as well as ensuring proper sanitary etiquette.
PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT	<p>The Ditidaht First Nations offer accommodations at Tsuquadra Point at an additional cost. They provide a 4-person comfortable tent, with wood floors and a stove.</p> <p>Additionally, many private companies offer guided tours at a marked-up price including; Ecosummer, Coastal Bliss, Sea to Sky Expeditions etc. These tours generally cost \$1500-\$2500 CAD and provide transportation to trail head, food, hiking equipment and more.</p>
CHANGES TO LEGESLATION POLICY	In 1995, an access agreement was reached with Ditidaht First Nation to address access across five Ditidaht reserves along the WCT.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION	<p>The Pacific Rim National Park Reserve was the first park established on the West Coast of Canada in 1970 and caused opposition/concern from the seven First Nations whose land the park surrounded. The National Park attempts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the First Nations in the area • Ensure opportunities for active involvement of First Nations • Protect cultural resources in accordance with Culture Resource Management Policy • Hold public forums with First Nations • Supports community initiatives with First Nations

Yuraygir Coastal Walk, NSW

WALK OVERVIEW	<p>The 4-day Yuraygir coastal walk traverses secluded bays, headlands, rivers and creeks in the Yuraygir National Park, located on the northern NSW coast. The walk from Angourie to Red Rock is an easy walk accessible to most people of average fitness. As it passes through some small, quaint coastal villages (Minnie Water, Angourie, Woolli, Red Rock, Brooms Head), 1 and 2 day walks are also popular, as the villages offer a range of accommodation options at various stages along the walk. Yuraygir NP surrounds, but does not include, these coastal villages. Thus, services, goods and transport points are accessible at various locations along the walk. It is easy to drive to convenient start and finish points each day. The walk extends along the longest protected area of coastline in NSW, resulting in a remote and unpopulated ambience.</p>
THE BUSINESS CASE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need, demand • The local Tourism group was proactive in seeing the value of a 4 day walk along the coast. Most of the trail was already in place through existing short walks; what was lacking was the ‘packaging’ of the separate trails into a 4 day walk and constructing some boardwalks and signage. • The walk is not well promoted; it is not widely known. Thus, commercial investment and activity is low to date. • A local (Tony O’Brien) with extensive knowledge of NPs and the area set up a small business – ‘Yuraygir Walking Experiences’ (YWE) - to showcase the area and its natural values. To date it is the only business based in the area conducting guided walks. Self-guided options are available. The 4 day guided walk with all accommodation costs \$1,225 pp. • Demand has steadily risen with little marketing. There are now many 2 day walk groups, as well as school groups. • National Park covers diversity of habitats rich in bird species

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal way to record visitor numbers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future demand 	<p>Demand is likely to increase substantially due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall global demand for authentic experience in natural environments, that also offer some adventure. High demand for this is coupled with comfortable accommodation (hot showers etc) and good food, wine etc. The mix seems to be natural landscapes and experiences with comfort. Major highway upgrade makes it more accessible from Brisbane Ballina-Byron airport upgrade improves accessibility from Sydney and Melbourne. The region is increasingly accessible to major capital cities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and other benefits to the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yuraygir Walking Experiences (YWE) caters for around 160 walkers p.a. Many of these would stay 5+ nights in accommodation based in local villages, with obvious flow-on benefits to local businesses. YWE employs 3 people part-time. Under employment in the region is high. Many people seek additional work to supplement their existing part time jobs. Local Indigenous group is actively involved, giving talks to groups of walkers, plus contracted to install signage and boardwalks. Opportunities to explore the park (beyond car accessible tourist nodes).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction costs 	<p>\$50,000: signposting, boardwalks, brochures, website (trail infrastructure already largely in place). Existing trail and campgrounds infrastructure used</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income 	<p>No fee is charged by NP NSW to do the walk. NP entry fee \$8 per vehicle per day</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance costs 	<p>Low. Generally, it is thought the NP needs more maintenance – weeds are a problem and could potentially detract from the visitor experience.</p>
<p>ONGOING MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing etc 	<p>Supporting service supplied only by private sector businesses, so no additional NP staff are required.</p> <p>YWE – 3 part time employees</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts 	<p>Little tern colonies threatened by continual disturbance of walkers</p>
<p>PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT</p>	<p>The NSW Government has recently offered incentives to commercial operators in various National Parks. The YWE secured a grant to purchase kayaks. The aim is to diversify experiences offered in NP's – in this case a 'kayaking 'trail'.</p> <p>YWE is a private business</p>
<p>FLOW ON BENEFITS TO THE NATIONAL PARK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially spread visitor impact and take pressure of tourist nodes More 'eyes on the ground' to report washed up turtles, illegal camping, cars where they should not be etc. Having tourism gives reason to apply for more funding for other activities such as interpretation and weeds management
<p>COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION</p>	<p>No local community opposition.</p> <p>Solid local support, especially with the locally based company using local accommodation and offering local employment.</p>

The National Parks Association and authors wish to thank Tyler Hood, Shannon O'Neill and Megan Adams for contributions to some case studies.

Appendix 3–Evidenced Based Summary of Supported Multi-day Walks in National Parks

Table A1 Evidence based summary of approaches to supported multi-day walks in national parks

	What works?	Specific Example
WALK OVERVIEW	Unique, diverse, one way	Most case studies
THE BUSINESS CASE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need, demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # days # visitors/year (actual and cap) Characteristics (track type/difficulty) 	Driven by the State 3-5 day walks very popular Easy to moderate difficulty (Suitable for the inexperienced and uninitiated) Link to physical/mental health Cap on visitors on ecological integrity (and visitor experience) Government must be business savvy Access not exclusive	KIWT/TCT KIWT/ TCT/ MIL/ YUR /LAR Most case studies MIL KIWT/ MIL/OT/TCT/LAR/WCT WCPA guidelines BIB/YUR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic and other benefits to the region 	Significant contribution to management of National Park that can be perversely restructured Active collaboration with local Indigenous communities Promote local businesses and use their services and goods wherever possible Local community should share in profits	WCT/ WCPA guidelines /YUR WCT KIWT/BIB/TCT/YUR/LAR UNDP guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction costs 	State/Federal Government funded - not from National Parks budget	KIWT (\$5.5M)/TCT (\$23M)/ BIB renovation (\$1.38M)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income 	Mix of track fees, sales, visitor expenditure	All case studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance costs 	Long term allocated funding to prevent track being run down	OT (recently)
ONGOING MANAGEMENT Staffing etc	Park management and guide visitors Additional staff for peak season Volunteers Accommodation and trekking companies provide some maintenance staff	TCT/WCT TCT/ MIL/WCT BIB KIWT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts Biological and to park values 	Park rangers at entrance and accommodation Interpretation beyond signage Avoid new roads/fly out waste Photo monitoring	TCT/MIL TCT/KIWT/WCT KIWT / TCT/ OT KIWT

PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT	Private operation of publicly owned infrastructure Potential for Partnerships Ensure operators are co-responsible and factor costs (environmental and social impacts) into decision making (e.g. Make payment towards maintenance costs)	KIWT/BIB/TCT (prior to commercialisation) BIB/ UNDP guidelines MIL
FLOW-ON BENEFITS TO NATIONAL PARKS	Revenue to NP Interpretation /education encourages right behaviour (etiquette/hygiene) and positive perceptions of environment and NPs	TCT/OT BIB/WCT
COMMUNITY SUPPORT/OPPOSITION	Local community involvement: Use of local architects /Indigenous groups or experts for interpretive material	KIWT/TCT/YUR/WCT
OT – Overland Track, TCT - Three Capes Track, KIWT – Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail, BIB – Bibbulmun Track, MIL - Milford Track, YUR – Yuraygir, LAR – Larapinta Track, WCT – West Coast Trail, UNDP – United Nations Development Programme, UN WCPA Guidelines – World Commission on Protected Areas		