

Tasmania's Nature Based Tourism Program

January 2001



Natural
Heritage
Trust
*Helping Communities
Helping Australia*



R F A
Regional Forest Agreements



Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania

DEPARTMENT of PRIMARY INDUSTRIES,
WATER and ENVIRONMENT



OBJECTIVES:

The protection and presentation of Tasmania's key natural and cultural areas to provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy, understand and appreciate the need to conserve these representative natural and cultural areas.

OUTCOMES:

- Stimulating investment and business opportunities in the private sector, particularly in nature based and adventure tourism, but also in services industries.
- At least 10 full time equivalent jobs for every \$1 million invested during construction phase.
- Generation of employment in rural areas and areas of present high unemployment.
- Protect environment and limit environmental damage as well as educate users on how to enjoy natural areas in a sustainable way.

Tasmania has a wealth of easily accessible natural areas that are becoming increasingly popular with visitors, both Tasmanian and those from interstate and overseas. The promotion of Tasmania to attract tourist visitors to the state is focussed on our wilderness and natural environment. The Parks and Wildlife Service is the lead agency for the Nature Based Tourism Program, a program to improve and increase the range of opportunities for visitors to enjoy, appreciate and learn about Tasmania's parks and reserves, to provide projects that are the base for sustainable nature based tourism and to provide partnership opportunities with local communities based on quality nature based tourism opportunities.

Some of the **works** under this program include new visitor centres at Mt Field and Freycinet, improved facilities at Hastings Caves, improved access and facilities at Narawntapu National Park and developing a network of walking tracks on the Tasman Peninsula to form the Tasman Coastal Track. Other projects that offer sustainable nature based tourism opportunities will be progressively added to the program.

Funding for the various works under the program has been made available from a variety of Local, State and Federal sources. These include but are not limited to the Natural Heritage Trust (\$7.695M), the Regional Forest Agreement (\$3M), the State Government's Capital Investment Program (\$1.573M), Local Government and the Department of Housing and Regional Development.

Projects making up the majority of the current program are **overseen** by a Steering Committee including representatives from the Parks and Wildlife Service, Tourism Tasmania,

Forestry Tasmania, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Environment Australia and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources.

The first project to be completed under the program, the development of a Visitor Interpretation Centre and completion of the extensive wetlands boardwalks at Tamar Island, was opened in November 2000. All works under the program will be completed for use and enjoyment by visitors by **2002**.

Projects funded under the program





Geoffrey Lea

Tamar Island Visitor Centre

BUDGET – \$520,000

Tamar Island sits on the Tamar River just North of Launceston. A new Visitor Interpretation Centre has been constructed and was opened in November 2000. The centre, combined with a newly constructed section of the board walk that traverses the adjacent wetlands, provides opportunities to view and interpret a broad range of wetlands flora and fauna, and signs of the river's maritime cultural history. The centre has been funded from a combination of Local, State and Commonwealth Government sources.

MILESTONES:

- The Visitor Centre was opened in November 2000.

Mt Field Visitor Centre

BUDGET – \$2,300,000

Mt Field is one of Tasmania's most loved and oldest National Parks. This project will improve visitor facilities through:

- The construction of a new Visitor Centre housing interpretation, a café/shop, offices and an education room.
- The construction of a new car park, internal roads, picnic area and the provision of site services and landscaping.
- The construction of a new workshop at the Old Farm site within the park.
- The design and construction of a children's playground using works specifically designed and created by local Tasmanian artists.

The Natural Heritage Trust and the State Government's Capital Investment Program are the key funding sources for this project.

MILESTONES:

- The Visitor Centre, with the café and shop, opened in late December 2000.
- With construction, site works and the playground progressing, the entire project should be completed by April 2001.



Sue Halmes

Tasmanian Walking Tracks Strategy

BUDGET – \$2,200,000

This comprehensive project covers a range of works on tracks that are strategically located around Tasmania in areas managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania and Local Governments. It includes works and interpretative signs for tracks that were identified in the Tasmanian Walking Tracks Strategy as being the '60 Great Short Walks' in the State and offer some of the best of Tasmania's walking opportunities. Other activities funded under this project include:

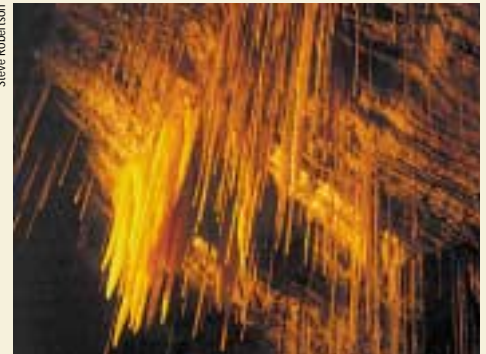
- Completing an inventory of all walking tracks managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Tasmania.
- Employing an Adopt-A-Track co-ordinator to support community volunteer work on the maintenance of walking tracks around the State.
- Interpretation elements including brochures and the design and installation of Great Short Walk signs.
- A photoshoot at 22 walking locations around the State. These quality photos will be utilised in brochures and publicity for the 60 Great Short Walks.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- The first brochure advising visitors of 30 of the 60 Great Short Walks available was launched in December 2000.
- Approximately one third of all walks will be completed each year with signs being progressively installed. The project expects to be completed by June 2002.

Steve Robertson



Hastings Reserve

BUDGET – \$1,590,000

The Hastings Caves State Reserve offers visitors the chance to relax in the warm waters of a thermal pool in the heart of the forest and experience exploring the unique Hastings Cave (Karst) system. The Hastings Reserve project will improve the visitor's experience of natural Karst systems through:

- The construction of a new Visitor Centre with modern catering and visitor reception facilities.
- Revised car parking arrangements and improvements in the area of the Thermal Pool.
- Rehabilitation, safety railing and lighting works within the Newdegate Cave.
- Uniquely placed Interpretation works, including displays and signage incorporating themes distinctive to the Hastings experience.

The Natural Heritage Trust and the State Government's Capital Investment Program are the key funding sources for this project.

MILESTONES:

- Construction and site works were completed in late December 2000.
- The entire project should be completed by May 2001.

East Coast Interpretation Centre

BUDGET – \$1,500,000

Funded from the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA), the project involves the construction of an Interpretation Centre located within the Freycinet National Park to provide visitors to this icon site a clear orientation point for the East Coast region. The focus of the East Coast Interpretation Centre will be to provide visitor information, and interpretation of the natural and cultural features of the East Coast in order to enhance visitors' enjoyment and understanding of this unique area.

This project is working in tandem with the Natural Heritage Trust funded Freycinet campground and day use facilities project.

MILESTONES:

- Construction of the centre will start in 2001 and is expected to be completed in late 2001.



Geoffrey Lea



Geoffrey Lea



Annette Murphy

Tasman Coastal Track

BUDGET – \$525,000

This project is aimed at upgrading specific walking tracks within the new Tasman National Park that will eventually combine to make the Tasman Coastal Track, one of the 8 Great Bushwalks in Tasmania. Works will include:

- Upgraded walking tracks, including Tasmans Arch to Fortescue Bay and the Cape Pillar Circuit, including Cape Hauy.
- Improved interpretative and directional signage.
- Brochures to raise awareness of the Tasman National Park and available walks.
- Ongoing program of visitor monitoring and usage.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- Planning for all walking track upgrades to be completed by June 2001 and initial trackwork commenced in November 2000.
- The project is expected to be completed by June 2002.

Steve Robertson



Great Western Tiers

BUDGET – \$1,500,000

Under the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) the Commonwealth Government has provided Tasmania \$1.5 million for nature based and heritage tourism in the Great Western Tiers region. The funds are being used to develop an integrated network of projects, including:

- Enhancement of King Solomons Cave Karst experience.
- Improvements to Alum Cliffs walk.
- Facilities at White Water Reserve, Mersey River.
- Devil Education Research Centre.
- Display of 'YARNS' artworks in silk.
- A sculpture trail.
- Aboriginal tourism project.
- Co-ordinated signage, marketing and branding for the region.

MILESTONES:

- Planning for the network of projects was completed by the end of 2000, with implementation expected throughout 2001.



Steve Johnson

Annette Murphy

Narawntapu National Park

BUDGET – \$1,300,000

The Narawntapu National Park project is focussed on improving the potential of this park for the presentation of wildlife. Improving the visitor experience of the natural environment at Narawntapu will involve:

- Bitumen sealing of Bakers Beach access road to the National Park and upgrading of the park's internal road system. The Latrobe Council will also maintain the internal roads within the park for at least a 10-year period.
- Upgrading of camping and day visitor facilities at Bakers Beach.
- Developing wildlife viewing facilities with the introduction of a pilot wildlife feeding station named the 'Devil Restaurant'.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- Initial road works commenced in November 2000. The project is expected to be completed by June 2002.



Annette Murphy



Annette Murphy



Steve Robertson

Redevelopment of Freycinet National Park campground and day use facilities

BUDGET – \$1,150,000

Work at Freycinet will include the development of easy access short walks, improvements to day use facilities and refinements to the locally popular coastal camping opportunities.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- On site works will commence in 2001 and the project is expected to be completed in 2002.

North West Coast Project: Rocky Cape

BUDGET – \$345,000

Rocky Cape National Park experienced a major fire in 1998 that destroyed much existing infrastructure within the Park. This program is focussed on replacing and improving that visitor infrastructure. The work will include installation of directional signage, the upgrading and resurfacing of some walking tracks, the protection and interpretation of Aboriginal sites and the installation of viewing platforms at North and South Caves, with interpretation signage of the themes of Aboriginal occupation, heathlands and fire.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- The project is expected to be completed by December 2001.

North West Coast Project: The Nut

BUDGET – \$300,000

The Nut is a popular icon in the State's North West. This project will see the following works completed:

- Sealing of the car park.
- Implementation of a weed management strategy through the Stanley Peninsula Land & Coast Care Group.
- Track works on the Summit Track.
- Development of interpretation.

The Natural Heritage Trust is the key funding source for this project.

MILESTONES:

- The carpark work was completed in October 2000.
- The project is expected to be completed by June 2001.

Annette Murphy



David Edgar



Nature based tourism projects

