

APPENDIX 4 ACTIVITY SPECIFIC DISCUSSION

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>1. ABSEILING ROCK CLIMBING</p>	<p>Abseiling and rock climbing is undertaken in the escarpment areas of the greater Blue Mountains, on lands managed by Blue Mountains City Council, public land in the Greater Lithgow City Council area, National Parks and private land.</p> <p>These climbing cliffs comprise some of the most heavily used and most popular rock climbing areas in Australia. Bouldering is also becoming popular in areas adjoining the escarpments.</p> <p>Within the City of Blue Mountains, the majority of cliff recreation occurs on BMCC-managed land, with only a small portion (perhaps 10% or less) occurring on National Park and private land. The major proportion of rock climbing sites is located in Katoomba or on the Western escarpment, stretching from Medlow Bath to Mount Victoria.</p> <p>These lands are under consideration for management rationalisation in the Public Lands Rationalisation Project (see Section 2.2) and the long-term land tenure and management structure has yet to be determined.</p> <p>A number of the climbing and abseiling sites are in a degraded condition and this degradation is continuing to increase with growing participation in rock climbing and commercial and group activities.</p> <p>Several sites have been developed</p>	<p>For Blue Mountains City Council managed sites the following recommendations are made:</p> <p>1.1 COORDINATED MANAGEMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop cliff recreation and bouldering management strategies and actions in consultation with climbers and NPWS. <p>1.2 DETAILED SURVEY AND INVENTORY OF CLIMBING SITES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey condition and map group abseiling, climbing and bouldering sites. • Assess capability of sites to support climbing and abseiling using the process developed by Elanus Word and Image for BMCC in January 2004. Include assessment of suitability of access, parking and waste disposal including human waste disposal. Establish site use limits for management purposes. • Identify areas of concern for environmental or cultural protection. • Identify areas of user conflict. <p>1.3 MONITORING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify major impacted areas and establish monitoring points. • Re-survey annually the disturbances and impacts at each site, including re-photography of the photo-monitoring points established in this initial survey. <p>1.4 CONSULTATION AND LIAISON:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain open communication and dialogue throughout the management process with a representative consultative group of cliff recreation stakeholders, including commercial operators, recreational climbers and conservationists.



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<p>1. ABSEILING ROCK CLIMBING (CONT'D)</p>	<p>for commercial activities without authorisation or adequate visitor infrastructure, and demand exists for additional sites on both public and private land. Current commercial operations outside of the National Park have no formal approval. Existing land use policies and planning policies are inadequate to provide a decision-making framework.</p> <p>1A CLIFF RECREATION IN BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK</p> <p>Within the Blue Mountains National Park Plan of Management rock climbing is generally permitted but bolting of climbs is prohibited and the following areas have been closed to abseiling and climbing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Aboriginal sites; • The Jamison Valley cliff line, from Rocket Point to the Valley of Waters; • The Grose Valley cliff line, from the south side of Govetts Leap to Horseshoe Falls; • Any cliff line above a constructed walking track. • Additional areas closed to Abseiling are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenbrook Gorge; • All formal lookouts. 	<p>1.5 SHARED USE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the extent of shared use appropriate at sites. • Manage the promotion and presentation of each site to ensure compatibility with the identified preferred uses. • Passively discourage use of climbing trails by non climbers through limiting signage, inconspicuous trail entrances, and discouraging inclusion of trails in bushwalking guides and community maps. <p>1.6 MANAGING COMMERCIAL AND GROUP ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish approved sites for commercial and group use within adopted Community &/or Crown Land Plan/s of Management to guide site management. • Conduct management of commercial cliff recreation in consultation with commercial operator and recreational climber representatives. • Monitor use of sites and impacts and it may be necessary to limit group sizes and total use of sites to specified site limits. • Monitor the distribution of commercial cliff recreation opportunities between the identified sites, and between operators to ensure identified acceptable impacts are not exceeded. • Establish a commercial activity approvals system to manage and monitor site use, use levels, impacts, public safety and access issues and costs to maintain sites.



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<p>1. ABSEILING ROCK CLIMBING (CONT'D)</p>	<p>1B CLIFF RECREATION OUTSIDE THE NATIONAL PARK</p> <p>In Blue Mountains City Council managed areas and on much of the private land, recreational use is unmanaged and unregulated. Regulations for climbing areas are however common both in Australia and overseas. In some areas, prohibitions are in place on bolting climbing fixtures. In others, permission is required to install new climbs.</p> <p>Publication of new climbs through books, magazines and web sites encourages increasing access to existing and new climbs in the Blue Mountains.</p>	<p>1.7 MANAGING RECREATIONAL CLIMBING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct all management of recreational climbing in consultation with recreational climber and commercial operator representatives. • Promote (in consultation with climbers) a climbers' 'code of conduct' to encourage support for management actions and shared use practices, impact minimisation and restraint on areas used. • Discourage promotion of prohibited areas or sites with low carrying capacity in climbing guides and climbing associated media. • Permit the use of fixed protection by the climbing community except in areas where fixed protection is prohibited. Promote this information widely. • Monitor trends or changes in the use of bolts. • Promote information through the Sydney Rock Climbing Club, climbing clubs and gyms to increase environmental knowledge of new ascensionists and climbers. • Sponsor the development of a new ascensionist policy for the Blue Mountains (in consultation with climbers). Encourage adoption of this through all media publications and guides to climbing areas in the mountains. • Investigate the formation of a clearinghouse for new climbs to ensure new routes are not promoted without sufficient assessment of potential impacts of climbing use. <p>1.8 ONSITE CAMPING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourage onsite camping except in approved camping areas with adequate facilities. <p>1.9 SAFETY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where signage is used, provide a warning that safety will continue to be the primary responsibility of climbers or the group or commercial operating business identity. <p>1.10 PARTNERSHIPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships with the recreational climbing community and the commercial cliff recreation industry to fund and implement site



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<p>1. ABSEILING ROCK CLIMBING (CONT'D)</p>		<p>protection and management works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate appropriate cost recovery mechanisms in the commercial operator licensing system. • Encourage the involvement of climbers as volunteer labour for site management. • Encourage the revitalisation of Blue Mountains Cliffcare. • Seek funding support for site management from external sources. <p>1.11 PRIORITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map and broadly assess all climbing sites on public land managed by Blue Mountains City Council. • Identify areas with high aesthetic, environmental and cultural values or other recreational uses incompatible with climbing activity and adopt appropriate protection measures for these areas. • Identify broad carrying capacity of climbing sites and encourage appropriate levels of climbing use. • Amend LEP 1991 and the Better Living DCP to include assessment criteria for climbing and abseiling sites on private land. • Consult with climbing community on priority site actions identified in Blue Mountains Cliff Recreation Site Assessment (Elanus Word and Image, 2004). • Seek funding and implement priority actions as identified through consultation.
<p>2. BASE JUMPING</p>	<p>Base-jumping is prohibited in National Parks in NSW. It is a high risk activity that is not nature dependent, and is likely to be incompatible with public safety values of bushland available for public recreation. For this reason base-jumping is not considered appropriate on lands managed by BMCC.</p>	<p>Prohibit base jumping in natural areas managed by BMCC.</p>



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3. BIRD WATCHING, NATURE STUDY & WILDLIFE VIEWING	Bird watching, nature study and wildlife viewing are popular in the Blue Mountains. Commercial tours and club-organised activities are available. Access is generally available by constructed walking trails.	Council approval policies to consider bird watching, nature study and wildlife viewing as low impact nature based activities when conducted on existing approved facilities such as walking tracks.
4. BMX AND DIRT BIKE RIDING	For the purposes of this strategy this is not considered a nature based recreation activity.	For detailed recommendations refer to the Dirt Bike Strategy adopted by BMCC on 8 October 2002.
5. BOULDERING	<p>Bouldering is climbing on small rock formations without protection of a rope and was once considered practice for rock climbing. It is now a sport in itself, and is increasing in popularity in the mountains. Bouldering does not take climbers far from the ground, or from each other, and can be a very social activity. As such it can create high impact. Bouldering impacts concentrate around the rocks, in areas that may be used by few other users. Impacts can include trampling of vegetation, soil compaction leading to soil erosion, and unsightly use of chalk or chipping and gluing the rocks. Formation of a network of informal tracks to popular bouldering areas is common. In the Blue Mountains bouldering has had minimal impact to date.</p> <p>Boulderers are a diverse user group. Bouldering has a high participation of females, and has a youthful culture, as it is accessible for young people on small incomes. Outreach and education may be successful in influencing participants towards minimal impact behaviour.</p>	Management actions outlined for abseiling and rock climbing would also apply to bouldering.



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<p>6.</p> <p>CAMPING AND DAY USE PICNIC AREAS</p>	<p>A range of car based camping, and walk in camping areas are available within the greater Blue Mountains region in Developed and Natural settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only major car based camping area managed by NPWS is located in Euroka Reserve, near Glenbrook. This area has parking, toilets, barbeques, walking tracks and interpretive facilities. • Council manages two commercial camping areas in Developed Settings, at Katoomba Falls and Blackheath. • Council manages day use and camping areas in Mount York, Old Ford Reserve and Quota Reserve in Megalong Valley and Mount Wilson at Cathedral Reserve and Cathedral of Ferns Walk. These areas are generally run down with inadequate toilets, no delineated parking and poor amenities. There is little regulation or supervision of these areas, and no fees are charged for their use. • Basic camping facilities are provided at a number of walk-in campsites., and self-reliant overnight camping occurs at many popular locations associated with wilderness or remote walking routes. • Developed setting day use areas are mainly provided in Glenbrook area, Jamison Valley escarpment from Wentworth Falls to Katoomba, the Grose Valley Escarpment at Blackheath and at Mount York. In many areas these facilities are located between NPWS and BMCC land, and are cooperatively managed and maintained. • Informal camping detracts from day use areas and visitor attractions in areas such as Mount York and Mount Piddington. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review use of existing Council managed day use and camping areas in Natural and Developed Settings. Consider upgrade of existing day use and camping areas within standards for Natural Settings to better provide for increasing usage. • Provide environmentally sound toilets located away from watercourses where appropriate to the setting. • Locate camping areas out of view from day use, lookouts and picnic areas to reduce conflict between the different users. • Clearly contain designated camping areas and parking areas. • Examine measures to reduce impacts at camping areas such as limits on numbers of sites, containment of camping and cars, site rotation, and camping permits. • Negotiate joint agency maintenance agreement/s for road/trail and picnic facility interface between National Park and Council managed areas.



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7. CAVING	Caving opportunities are available in adjoining Local Government areas at Kanangra-Boyd National Park and Jenolan Caves.	Not Applicable
8. CANOEING, KAYAKING AND BOATING	Boating is generally undertaken in adjoining Local Government areas on water bodies such as Lake Lyell. Low key boating is undertaken in Blue Mountains City in areas such as Wentworth Falls Lake. Some impact results from this use.	Impact from boating should be monitored and landing areas located as needed to reduce environmental and social impacts. Requests for commercial or group use need to be assessed according to social, environmental impact and carrying capacity of the water body.
9. CANYONING	Canyoning opportunities are available in the National Parks, and also Crown lands in adjoining local government areas. Established canyons and access paths have been damaged with the increasing popularity of canyoning. Social crowding is also an issue at popular canyons. Restrictions have been placed upon commercial and group use of canyons to manage these impacts.	Not Applicable in Council managed areas
10. CYCLING: MOUNTAIN, CROSS COUNTRY, DOWNHILL, FREE RIDING	Mountain biking is growing in popularity as an individual and competitive sport. Rapid improvements in bike technology have increased the accessibility of the sport to people with a wider range of abilities, and have also made areas with difficult terrain more accessible. Different forms of riding have emerged as separate sports and include cross-country, downhill, stunt and free riding Dirt bike riding is also popular in the mountains and many informal courses have been constructed in bushland close to urban areas in the mountains.	Considerations for improved mountain biking provision are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support representations to Western Sydney LGAs and state government agencies for better provision of mountain biking opportunities for Western Sydney to relieve pressure on natural areas of the mountains. • Continue consultation with cyclists and other land management agencies to identify additional area/s for provision of cycling opportunities to serve local riders and those from wider Sydney. • Review BMCC tracks in use for potential approval as shared tracks, and encourage NPWS to follow a similar process.



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>10.</p> <p>CYCLING: MOUNTAIN, CROSS COUNTRY, DOWNHILL, FREE RIDING (CONT'D)</p>	<p>The lack of adequate provision for off road riding within the metropolitan area has increased pressure of use on hinterland areas such as the Blue Mountains.</p> <p>A number of the areas currently in use by mountain bikers are unauthorised and within natural bushland. Use of these areas has developed informally through word of mouth and email.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey riders of local tracks to identify place of residence, riding preferences, and knowledge of “soft riding” practices. • Target education programs on minimal impact riding practices for mountain bike enthusiasts, especially through schools. <p>A priority of the Nature Based Recreation Strategy is to identify means to address demand for planned facilities for bike riding, in a way that will minimise unauthorised use of natural areas.</p>
<p>10.1.</p> <p>CROSS-COUNTRY</p>	<p>There are around 40 main tracks in use for Cross-country Mountain biking in the Blue Mountains on a range of roads and tracks. These include public roads, management trails, cycle tracks, shared tracks, informal use of walking tracks and unplanned tracks. These generally follow ridgelines emanating from built up areas. They range in difficulty from those suitable for general family rides through to those with extreme terrain and difficult surfaces and requiring high levels of skill and fitness.</p> <p>Not all of the tracks in use are specifically approved for mountain bike usage, and a number have locked gates and signage to discourage use by bikes. The majority of tracks lie within the National Parks but BMCC also manages a number of tracks, or track heads that lead to tracks in National Parks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public roads include Hat Hill Road and Rutland Road in Blackheath and are generally paved or well-maintained gravel roads with low vehicle traffic levels and reasonable sight lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review construction and improve maintenance programs for cycle tracks paying special attention to effective drainage on tracks. • Develop volunteer assistance for maintenance of tracks. • Seek funding to improve maintenance and signage of bike tracks. • Promote approved riding opportunities to riders <p>BIKE PARK PROVISION</p> <p>Provision of a challenging bike park would meet many needs for access to riding and training within the mountains, and adjoining metropolitan areas. A multiple use bike park could be designed to cater to technical riding, bike jumps and downhill riding. Such a park could be provided as a partnership between State Government, regional local governments and the recreational community. Clubs such as Western Sydney Mountain Bike Club are actively investigating sites and funding for provision for downhill and other extreme riding for riders from Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.</p> <p>Location of a suitable site is an important first step.</p> <p>Essential criteria for bike park provision would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major range in altitude across the site, for example a 200 to 300 metres drop; • Accessibility for vehicle shuttle or return loop path to top of course; • Rocky terrain resistant to erosion • Accessibility from public transport and • Adequate parking provision.



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10.1. CROSS-COUNTRY (CONT'D)	<p>These are suitable for less experienced riders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two categories of Public Access Vehicle Roads: Developed setting and Natural setting. Often these roads are narrow with poor sight lines, and have high potential for conflict with vehicles. • Management Trails: these have a lesser maintenance level and will often have drainage humps and fallen timber or other hazards on the tracks. Again there is potential for vehicle conflict. These are generally only suitable for experienced riders. • Designated Cycle Tracks such as Woodford Oaks Track. These have less potential for vehicle conflict and are generally single-track and suitable for more experienced riders. • Shared Tracks: these are available for non-vehicular use such as walking and cycling. They are wider than single track and have reasonable sight lines. • Walking Tracks: NPWS and Council policy do not permit cycles on walking tracks. Some tracks have potential for shared use and could be assessed for suitability as shared tracks in order to provide access to tracks from each town across the mountains. • Informal tracks: these are unplanned tracks constructed by cyclists and not necessarily sited or constructed to sustain regular use. Cycle use of these tracks is not permitted within Blue Mountains City. • Yellomundee Regional Park has special provision for cross-country riding and events, and NPWS manage this area in consultation with Western Sydney Mountain Bike Club. • Iconic trails attract many riders from overseas and around Australia. These include Glen Raphael Drive on Narrow Neck, The Anderson Fire Trail and the Oaks Fire Trail. 	



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10.2. DOWNHILL	<p>There is strong demand for downhill racing but little provision within the Blue Mountains and the greater Sydney metropolitan area. Representatives of Western Sydney Mountain Biking Club have been investigating options for a course in the Western Sydney region for some time with no success to date. Lithgow Mountain Biking Club is seeking to develop a course in the Lithgow area.</p> <p>Manly Dam is one of few approved areas in Sydney. Megalong Heritage Farm has an approved private course that is used for events. The other approved downhill tracks in the Blue Mountains region were located in Yellomundee Regional Park, managed by NPWS; and at Hassans Walls, in the Lithgow Council area. Both of these have been closed over the past two years.</p> <p>There are a number of unapproved downhill tracks and circuits that have been constructed in natural areas throughout the City. These range from major tracks such as near Old Bathurst Road, Glenbrook and off Mount Riverview, through to local tracks built in bushland adjoining townships and used by youth from adjoining residential areas. Withdrawal of approved riding opportunities has placed increased pressure of use on these areas.</p> <p>Generally these tracks have been constructed in natural bushland areas of high value, and have the potential for major detrimental impact on these areas. The sandstone soils of the mountains are particularly fragile, and downhill tracks erode quickly from both bike use and the action of water. Construction methods used to date have shown little success in arresting this erosion on downhill tracks, and the resulting heavily rutted tracks are often abandoned after relatively short period of time.</p>	See above recommendation for cross country and bike park provision



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<p>10.3.</p> <p>FREE RIDING, STUNT RIDING</p>	<p>Free riding and stunt riding have been developing in popularity since the late 1990s and have resulted in construction of a number of unauthorised tracks in natural areas, with rickety wooden jumps and structures.</p> <p>A number of illegal small free riding courses have been established within bushland reserves managed by Council throughout the mountains. These have relied upon natural hazards together with timber boardwalks and bridges. No formal provision has been made for this sport in the region.</p>	<p>It is not considered that stunt riding and free riding are appropriate in the natural areas of the Blue Mountains.</p>
<p>10.4.</p> <p>PROVISION: RAIL TRAIL</p>	<p>There is potential for development of a "Trail adjoining the Rail" in the upper mountains to provide an alternative route for cycling between towns. This would have high Tourism destination appeal. Investigation of the options for such a trail is recommended.</p>	<p>Undertake feasibility review of a bicycle "Trail adjoining the Rail" through the upper mountains.</p>
<p>11.</p> <p>DANCE PARTIES</p>	<p>Dance parties are a regular occurrence in forests of northern NSW and Queensland. Generally they are unapproved events notified through email and word of mouth.</p>	<p>Dance parties in bushland areas should demonstrate minimal environmental and social impact, and would require development approval.</p>



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<p>12.</p> <p>DOG WALKING (ON LEASH)</p>	<p>Dogs are prohibited from National Parks but exercising dogs is a popular use of many Council managed walking tracks adjoining residential areas or with parking available.</p> <p>There are generally few issues of conflict of use on low use walking track but in high use areas such as Centennial Glen this should be monitored. Dogs may pose a threat to fauna, and this should also be monitored and access restricted to areas of high habitat significance.</p> <p>Management consideration is needed to encourage responsible disposal of dog faeces, and to indicate areas dogs are permitted. Signage at track heads and tenure boundaries should provide information on access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include information on permitted dog access on signage at track heads. • Monitor compatibility of dog access with other users at high use sites such as Centennial Glen, Blackheath. • Prohibit dog access to areas of high habitat value that is likely to be threatened by dogs.
<p>13.</p> <p>FILMING</p>	<p>BMCC has an existing policy on filming. This policy needs to ensure activities that are portrayed are appropriate and sustainable activities in the World Heritage context.</p>	<p>If nature based recreation is to be filmed the activity should be permissible within the location of filming, and the appropriate activity code of conduct should be followed.</p>



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<p>14. FISHING</p>	<p>A variety of opportunities are available for recreational fishing in waterways of the greater Blue Mountains. The waterways range from lakes and large dams such as Lake Lyell and Lake Wallace, to the Warragamba catchment with fast running mountain streams such as Duckmaloi, Cox and Kowmung Rivers. Warragamba Dam is totally closed to fishing and public access, and an exclusion zone surrounds the dam to 3 km.</p> <p>A recreational fishing license from NSW Fisheries is required to fish in any waters of NSW, and regulations apply. Native fish and trout are protected in various locations and during spawning season. In the City of Blue Mountains, Wentworth Lake is stocked annually by NSW Fisheries with trout fingerlings. Glenbrook Lagoon has previously been stocked but in recent years this has ceased due to concerns about the water quality of the Lagoon. Concerns have been raised regarding the potential impacts from exotic fish such as trout to protected species in this catchment.</p> <p>At least one commercial fishing operator conducts fishing tours in the region, on public and private property.</p> <p>Continued recreational fishing is dependent upon retention of high water quality and suitable habitat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That BMCC continue to monitor water quality within natural waterways of the city, and enforce environmental regulations to maintain habitat and water quality. • That BMCC continue to liaise with NSW Fisheries to encourage responsible stocking of non-native fish within waterways of the city. • That applications to BMCC for commercial and group fishing licenses be considered in relation to the environmental and social impact on the site, and the wider catchment implications.



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15. 2WD VEHICLE TOURING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Sight seeing 	
16. HANG GLIDING AND OTHER NON POWERED AIRCRAFT	<p>Blue Mountains Hang Gliding Club operates from hang gliding launch facilities at Mount Blackheath. Gliders land in the Kanimbla Valley below. The launch pads adjoin the Council managed picnic area. On occasions there is insufficient parking for the numbers participating. The toilets at this site have been closed, and there are problems with waste disposal at the site. Conflict with other users such as sightseers and picnickers can also occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not considered appropriate to provide elsewhere for this activity. Expansion of use of the site may require development approval, and provision of support facilities. • Management measures are required to address peak use at the Mount Blackheath site. The user group should undertake ongoing maintenance of the launch facilities and the wider amenity area as a condition of use of the site. • See Picnicking
17. HUNTING	<p>Hunting is not available on public managed land within Blue Mountains City.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
18. NATURE STUDY	<p>See Birdwatching, Nature study and Wildlife Viewing</p>	
19. ORIENTEERING AND ROGAINING	<p>Competitive orienteering and rogaining events are not a regular activity on public land managed by Blue Mountains City Council.</p>	<p>Applications for these activities should be considered on their merits with special attention paid to potential conflict of uses and environmental impacts.</p>



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>20.</p> <p>HORSE RIDING: ENDURANCE, AND TRAIL RIDING</p>	<p>There has been a reduction in available land for horse riding in the Blue Mountains area due to urban development and imposition of more stringent environmental controls. A number of local commercial horse riding establishments have closed or moved west to Lithgow or Oberon Local Government Areas in recent years.</p> <p>In natural areas horse riding is generally restricted to access roads and approved trails. Horse riding is permitted on public access roads throughout National Parks. Horse riding is prohibited in Wilderness Areas and Schedule 1 and 2 of Warragamba Special Area. A number of important horse riding trails are located in the greater Blue Mountains. The Bicentennial or National Horse Trail, from Cooktown to Healesville, passes through Rydal and Jenolan Caves area to the west of Blue Mountains City.</p> <p>Specific bridle trails are located within the National Parks in areas such as Rileys Mountain near Mulgoa. Dedicated horse trails are located in Yellow Rock Road area of Winmalee. BMCC reserves in Megalong Valley and Sun Valley are used mainly for equestrian sports, including pony club use. Riding for the Disabled (Blue Mountains) operate from a Council reserve in Blaxland. They have limited access to trails for riding. A commercial operator uses Crown Reserves in Megalong Valley for trail riding.</p> <p>Private lands in Shipley and the Megalong Valley and in the Lithgow and Oberon area cater for commercial horse riding, and adjust horses for Blue Mountains residents.</p> <p>There are problems with erosion of trails and creation of multiple trails in high use areas such as Crown Reserves in Megalong.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess suitability and capability of Megalong Crown Reserve for horse riding use. Map and assess condition of existing trail network, and prepare plan to maintain, restore, upgrade, close as necessary to provide a sustainable trail network. • Review use of Megalong Crown Reserve considering public access for recreational riding as well as commercial use. • Prepare necessary approvals for appropriate horse riding on Megalong Crown Reserve. • Map existing bridle trails and assess potential for provision of a bridle trail network in Megalong Valley for local recreational riding. • Provide signage and maintenance to horse trail systems in Megalong Valley, the Lower Mountains and other approved horse trails. • Monitor impacts of horse riding and take appropriate management action to address continued degradation. • Promote minimal impact horse riding code to riders and through clubs and commercial establishments.



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20. HORSE RIDING: ENDURANCE, AND TRAIL RIDING (CONT'D)	The sandstone soils of the Blue Mountains are very susceptible to erosion, and horses are considered to have a higher impact than walking or bicycle use. There is a need to provide clear signage on areas where horse riding is permitted. On public horse riding trails construction methods used, and continued maintenance to drainage are critical to reduce impacts from use. These trails should be regularly inspected and maintained to minimise erosion, or closed and restored if degraded beyond repair.	
21. PHOTOGRAPHY	Amateur nature photography is generally a low impact activity. See Filming for commercial photography and filming recommendations.	Minimal impact codes of behaviour should be promoted to residents and visitors.
22. PICNICKING	Picnicking is usually associated with vehicle access routes, cleared park areas and lookouts. Shelters are provided by BMCC for this purpose at a number of lookouts and camping areas, especially in the upper mountains and the MOUNTAINS. NPWS also provides picnic areas throughout the National Parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of picnic areas is recommended. Provision of improved facilities should be considered where intensity of use exceeds the capacity of the site. • Sites for consideration of additional or improved facilities include Old Ford Reserve in the Megalong Valley, Waterfall Reserve and at Mount Blackheath Lookout where conflict occurs between picnickers and hang gliding club use.
23. QUAD BIKING AND TRAIL BIKING		See Trail bikes and 4WD Touring and Training.



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24. RUNNING (CROSS COUNTRY)	Cross-country running may be appropriate on approved trails capable of sustaining the use. However organised group use of heritage walking tracks for running events would not be an appropriate use.	Generally cross-country running would not be considered a nature based recreation activity, unless confined to existing trails.
25. SIGHT SEEING	<p>Provision of adequate visitor infrastructure is necessary to support the commercial bus tour industry, as well as sight seeing by private vehicle. Tour operators need options to structure packages to suit the time, levels of physical ability, and specialised interests of groups. Adequate areas are needed to view scenic vistas, areas of heritage interest and experience recreation of the Blue Mountains.</p> <p>It is important to provide high quality visitor infrastructure such as parking, toilets, adequate turning circles and recreation destinations suitable for large groups use. Echo Point is an example of such provision.</p> <p>Aerial sightseeing by plane and helicopter can be intrusive on recreation in natural areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication and cooperation of the RTA and NPWS, BMCC and BMTA is important to provide scenic circuit drives and visitor destinations with appropriate signage, roadside viewing areas and associated visitor information. • Council's roadside signage policy, practices and forward strategy need to maintain currency. • BMCC should encourage NPWS liaison with the flight industry, local airports and the Civil Aviation Authority to restrict flights over natural areas of the Blue Mountains, especially wilderness areas and to minimise impact of aircraft use in natural areas.
26. SURVIVAL SKILLS	Training in survival skills are considered to generally have minimal impact on natural areas.	Low impact organised training in survival skills would generally be permitted on BMCC managed public lands subject to an approved license for commercial/ group use.
27. SWIMMING	There are a small number of natural swimming areas in the Blue Mountains, generally associated with day use and camping areas. Many pools used by early residents of the mountains have since filled with sediment and are no longer available for swimming. In other areas the	A management strategy is required for water bodies used for primary or secondary contact recreation. This should seek to provide adequate water quality to meet the community demand for water-based recreation at a particular site. Risk management should consider short term and long-term management actions as follows:



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>27.</p> <p>SWIMMING</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p>	<p>water quality is considered unfit for primary contact water activities such as swimming and canyoning.</p> <p>Maintenance of water quality is essential to maintain continued access to safe swimming areas. Storm water must be of high quality before entering natural watercourses. Priority should remain on pollution prevention, catchment of sediment and treatment of storm water in urban areas.</p> <p>BMCC tests the recreational water quality of the major sites, for primary or secondary contact. Those tested are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenbrook Lagoon; • Wentworth Falls Lake; • Old Ford Reserve; and • Jelly Bean Pool in Blue Mountains National Park. Other pools in the park such as Ingar, and Empress Canyon are not tested. <p>Important outcomes to be provided are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of recreational water quality for primary contact water-based recreational activities such as swimming and non-traditional activities such as canyoning. • Retention of water quality for secondary contact recreation (e.g. paddling, wading, boating and fishing) and other recreation (e.g. scenic appreciation, picnicking and walking). • Prevention of overcrowding of the limited areas available for swimming in freshwater. • (NB: This water-testing program has in the past been reported to DIPNR who have coordinated Nepean Catchment recreational swimming quality testing results. The DIPNR work has recently been discontinued, and Council is to review the water-testing program.) 	<p>Short to mid term actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate signage using a signage assessment process (e.g. Statewide Mutual 1999) • Active discouragement of activities not recommended • Prominent signage of entry/access routes; and • Provision of management advice through different media to users on the suitability for various recreation activities. <p>Long term/strategic actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remedial action to reduce or minimise sub-catchment impacts, e.g. stormwater management strategies, building works impact reduction, urban runoff control, human and animal waste control; • Participation in a multi-agency working group to standardise signage and response measures so that consistency occurs amongst managers in response to recreational water quality monitoring; • Adoption of appropriate environmental indicators and measures to evaluate the state of sites in sub-catchments and assist in measurement of catchment health; and • Ensure appropriate funding for long-term site management responses such as remedial works both on-site and at a sub-catchment level, as required.



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>28.</p> <p>TRAIL BIKES AND 4WD TOURING AND TRAINING</p>	<p>There is rapidly increasing ownership of off road bikes and 4wds throughout the nation. Many owners live in urban areas and seek opportunities for recreational off road riding in adjoining hinterlands such as the Blue Mountains. There are however limited opportunities for 4wd and trail bike use off road in the City of Blue Mountains.</p> <p>4wds and registered trail bikes are restricted to the use of public roads within Blue Mountains City and management trails in Blue Mountains National Park. NSW Forestry Service permits 4wds and registered trail bike use of fire trails in the Newnes and Lithgow areas. Provision for 4wd touring and training within the greater Blue Mountains region is largely in the Oberon and Lithgow areas on NSW Forestry trails.</p> <p>Roads within the Blue Mountains National Park are generally maintained to allow access to facilities such as picnic and camping areas and walking tracks, and for emergency access. They may also be used for vehicle touring, cycling and horse riding.</p> <p>The erodible nature of the sandstone soils and the associated high maintenance costs for the extensive public vehicle access routes result in differing standards of road maintenance throughout the natural areas. High use of approved roads can result in dangerous situations, and conflict between users.</p> <p>Roads to developed settings are generally well maintained to a 2wd standard. Other roads in the natural settings are maintained to a lesser</p>	<p>BMCC should coordinate with NSW Police, and state agencies to encourage responsible off road driving practices through media, advertisements and with sale of motorised recreational vehicles.</p> <p>In September 2001 BMCC placed “a blanket restriction upon the use of reserves managed by Blue Mountains City Council by motorised vehicles until and unless more comprehensive assessments, coordinated with the management of the National Park and incorporating adequate community consultation, can demonstrate whether and where such restrictions will be lifted and how access will be managed in such discrete areas as may be determined.”</p> <p>Investigations undertaken for this NBR Strategy have reinforced the need for continuation of this policy.</p>



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>28.</p> <p>TRAIL BIKES AND 4WD TOURING AND TRAINING</p> <p>(CONT'D)</p>	<p>standard, consistent with their levels of use.</p> <p>Vehicle access to Wilderness Areas is limited to points on the boundary, and within Restricted Areas is available only to McMahons Lookout.</p> <p>There are also 275 km of vehicle trails that are maintained by NPWS, BMCC and other authorities for management purposes only, which are not available for public vehicle access.</p> <p>Unauthorised use of Council reserves, and Crown lands throughout the city has continued despite coordinated enforcement of Council regulations by NSW Police and BMCC Rangers.</p> <p>This is a national problem, which organisations such as Tread Lightly are tackling. Higher resources may be required to place physical boundaries on natural areas as well as to promote responsible use of off road recreational vehicles.</p>	
<p>29.</p> <p>WALKING TRACKS AND LOOKOUTS</p>	<p>There are over 300 historic walking tracks within the greater Blue Mountains. These walking tracks allow users to access outstanding natural environments of the Blue Mountains. These tracks are a major part of the regions tourism infrastructure, attracting large numbers of domestic and international visitors to the mountains each year. Their origins include Aboriginal footpads, miners and timber getters tracks, surveyor's routes, early roads and purpose built recreational tracks.</p> <p>The walking tracks are generally narrow single tracks that are steep with many steps. They travel through a wide variety of vegetation types and landscape types and have frequent scenic lookouts. (cont'd over)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with development and implementation of the joint agency Blue Mountains Regional Walking Track Management Strategy. • Develop a maintenance agreement for the road/ trail and picnic facility interface between BMCC and NPWS lands.



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
<p>29. WALKING TRACKS AND LOOKOUTS (CONT'D)</p>	<p>35 Blue Mountains walking track networks have been assessed as having State Heritage Significance. The tracks cross a number of land tenures including National Park, Crown Land, Community and private land, and are managed by a variety of agencies and private companies or individuals.</p> <p>Many tracks are in poor repair as a result of age and use, the rugged terrain, the highly erodible soils, poor track location or construction, and/ or lack of adequate maintenance funds. The fragile sandstone soils and the effects of water exacerbate track deterioration. Some tracks need major reconstruction. Many historic tracks are overgrown and need assessment to determine their future status. There is a general lack of information and directional signage on tracks for users' information and assistance. On popular tracks increasing usage is detracting from the recreation experience through crowding, pollution, and visible effects of trampling and erosion on the tracks.</p> <p>Funding is very short for capital works and for maintenance of walking tracks. BMCC, NPWS and Lands Department are currently developing a walking track management strategy in order to better maintain, and promote the historic walking track fabric. Guidelines for construction and maintenance, risk management and signage have been developed to date.</p> <p>A classification system has also been agreed between the agencies and the 300 odd tracks have been assessed against the Australian Standards for Walking Tracks, AS 2156.1-2001. This Classification and Signage standard outlines 6 Classes of walking track (Class 1 being the highest standard and Class 6 being the most primitive.)</p>	



ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION
29. WALKING TRACKS AND LOOKOUTS (CONT'D)	<p>Assessment of the tracks has shown that there are only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x class 1 • 3 x class 2; and • 15 x class 3 tracks in the mountains. <p>The majority of tracks lie within classes 4 to 6, which reflects the steep gradient of the tracks due to the terrain, and the general lack of management intervention such as safety, directional signage and infrastructure on the tracks and track heads.</p> <p>Many of the class 4, 5 and 6 tracks are of regional or local recreation significance. Management of these is divided between NPWS, BMCC, Lands Department, the Jenolan Caves Trust and private lands such as the Hydro Majestic Hotel.</p> <p>Each agency is preparing an inventory of tracks they manage and assessing the condition of the tracks. The next stage of the walking track management strategy will be to prepare guidelines for coordinated interpretation and visitor information. This will include a grading of tracks for promotion purposes.</p> <p>Specific issues surround the interface between Council managed areas and commencement of tracks and lookouts in the National Park. The walking track guidelines will assist consistency in management of these areas, but a formal maintenance agreement outlining responsibilities would assist best presentation of these areas. Agreements have been made for this purpose in the past, but these require updating to cover recent changes of land tenures and transfer of land to the National Park.</p>	

