

FORREST MOUNTAIN BIKE REVITALISATION PROJECT UPDATE (STAGE ONE)

7/09/22

The Forrest Mountain Bike (MTB) Revitalisation Project (Stage One) is funded by \$250,000 from Colac Otway Shire Council and \$2.07 million from the Victorian Government through the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Regional Development Victoria (RDV).

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVIC) and the Colac Otway Shire Council are delivering the project, which is revitalising the network with new trail experiences and upgrades.

TRAILS CONSTRUCTION

The largest component of the Forrest MTB Revitalisation Project (Stage One) is an upgrade of existing trails and construction of new trails within the southern trails network.

The new Barwon Flow & Jump Trails:

The 5 new trails, (1 ascending and 4 descending), have all been cut and benched by construction contractors Dirt Art. Surfacing work on these new trails has commenced and 10% of the work has been completed.

Once surfaced, the trail will need to bed-in before they can be opened.

The new Red Carpet extension and the Forrest Loop upgrade:

As noted in the previous update, the Red Carpet Extension, will be cut once the weather conditions improves. This 800 metre black diamond (jump flow trail) will branch off lower Red Carpet.

The minor upgrades to the Forrest Loop are scheduled to commence in late September.

The remaining upgrades & new trails within the southern network:

Trails 5 and 6 are still closed as wet conditions have made it difficult for Distinctive Trail Developments to finalise the trails.

Dirt Art have cut the new Roller-coaster extension and 745 metres of this alignment has now been benched. This trail will be surfaced (capped) prior to opening.

Works on the Roller-coaster commenced on the 3 August. Dirt Art will be reversing the current Roller Coaster alignment to create a safer and overall better (Green Circle) experience. Switch backs will be added in and out of the creek area and a high quality descending alignment will take riders (from the current ascending part of the trail) back to the trailhead.



Early reports are that although the reworked Roller-coaster trail is a green run the new alignments look like a lot of fun and once finalised the trail will be the perfect skills progression opportunity for beginner riders who have been cutting their teeth at the new skills park.

Construction of the Forrest Southern Trailhead Skills Park.

In December 2021, the tender process for the design and construction contract for the skills park was awarded to Velosolutions Australia.

In massive milestone for the project, the planning permit for the Trailhead and Skill Park was issued on the 19 August. Works on the Skills Park are scheduled to start on 26 September 2022, with three new exciting elements being built:

- A large asphalt pump track (example image below)
- Two jumps lines catering for both advanced and novice riders
- A set of skills courses with three levels of difficulty



As well as upgrading the skills park, the Forrest MTB Southern Trailhead precinct will get a significant upgrade.

As part of the upgrade 5 medium sized trees and 10 small trees will be removed from the site. The felled trees will be reused on site for seating and any unused materials will be taken to fire wood collection area for community use. The heads of the trees will be mulched to use on the garden beds on site. This work is due to commence on 9 September 2022.

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Cultural Heritage Inspections:

Eastern Maar Aboriginal Cooperation (EMAC) have been conducting bi weekly inspections of the new trail alignments with the project team.

This is an important process to make sure any cultural artefacts are identified and recorded as new site cuts are completed. Eleven new artefacts and one scar tree have been recorded during construction so far.

When will the new trails open?

Sorry still no new news here. The project team understands there's a lot of anticipation around the opening date of the trails, however, at this stage an opening date has not been set. The challenging weather has made it difficult for contractors to progress quickly and while we all want to see the trails reopen soon; the project team and contractors want to make sure the trails are delivered to the highest standard possible.

TRAIL CLOSURES

To this stage trail, closures have been limited with only trails 4, 5 and 6 being fully closed.

As works at the trailhead are about to start onsite closures will be in place at the southern trailhead. It is expected that the trailhead will be closed for 10 to 12 weeks. As far as possible, alternative parking solutions will be provided. The project team is aiming to deliver this project by December 2022.

Contractors are carting in materials to other areas of the southern network, however, the decision has been made to only apply rolling closures when safety issues arise. Please note, this project will only create closures within the southern network. Every trail within the Yaugher network is open and Yaugher loamy soil makes it perfect place for year round riding!

We want to thank the community and riders for their patience while trails construction is occurring and remind everyone to observe and compile with all closure notices. This is especially the case for the new trails, as walking on, or, attempting to ride new trails will cause significant damage and impact when the trails can be opened.

STAY IN TOUCH

Further updates will be provided about projects, timelines, engagement opportunities and the opening of new mountain bike trails, as information becomes available.

To keep up to date with progress of the Forrest MTB Revitalisation Project please contact Adrian Healey on the contact details below, or complete the **+SUBSCRIBE** section on the project website to sign-up for regular updates.

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