

PROPOSALS

for

SHORT WALKS

considered suitable for development for
general public use

in the

OTWAY NATIONAL PARK & OTWAY FOREST PARK AREA

Prepared by the

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OTWAY SHORT WALKS PROPOSALS

mostly in the area south of the main Otway Range between Lorne and Apollo Bay.

Prepared for Parks Victoria by the Otway Ranges Walking Track Association,

Short Walks suitable for development for the general public

Lower Cumberland River-Great Ocean Road

1. Lower Cumberland River – Castle Rock Circuit: (2 – 3 hour loop walk)

This walk starts and finishes at the Great Ocean Rd. bridge over the Cumberland River, and initially follows the central driveway through the Cumberland River Camping Reserve continuing via the track up the valley and a river crossing, to Jebb's Pool. Upstream of the pool the river is again crossed back to the south bank, which is followed on the existing track for a few hundred metres to a third stream crossing reached after about 2km. walking. The track then climbs in NNW to the Garvey track. Turning sharp right for 30m., a track is followed which heads off the Garvey track initially E then SE then S to reach Castle Rock after a further 1.8km. From the viewpoint there is an impressive view to the Cumberland river mouth from 250m. above the camping reserve. The route then descends in an ESE direction before switching back W as it descends to the Great Ocean Road.

Features: a pleasant walk up the picturesque lower Cumberland Valley, with 3 river crossings, the view from Castle Rock and from the lower latter section of the route of the ocean – all make this an outstanding short walk, much needed as a feature for visitors to this locality.

Status: The route is fully tracked apart from the section between Castle Rock and the Great Ocean Road, which has been surveyed but not marked. Concreted stepping stones would ideally be needed at the river crossings, and 2 staircases at the ocean end of the descent.

Upper Cumberland – Curtis Track

Map: Mt. Cowley, 7620-1-4, 1;25000

2. Allambee Beek Falls circuit: (2 – 3 hour circuit walk)

This walk follows the Curtis Track SE from the Benwerrin-Mt. Sabine Rd. to the start of the loop walk at 463254, from which point the route passes SSE through regrowth forest before descending in a westerly direction to cross the upper Cumberland River 100m. downstream from Allambee Beek Falls. South of the falls it ascends to the Trans-Otway Walk turn-off then descends westwards to cross the stream again 200m. above the falls. The route then heads NNE up the valley of the northern tributary stream to Staircase Falls, after which it climbs E out of the valley and heads NE back to the Curtis Track. If the Curtis Track is upgraded for 2WD access and a carpark made at 458258, the Allambee Beek Falls circuit could be comfortably walked in 2 hours.

Features: some fine forest in the valley with tall eucalypts, fern glades, and some beech myrtles in the valley; Allambee Beek Falls- a fine fan shaped waterfall dropping 15m. into a mini-amphitheatre; and Staircase Falls, a small tiered 9m. waterfall.

Status: the circuit has been fully surveyed as a marked route, and has been used by bushwalkers for several years, but requires upgrading to become a permanent track suitable for the public. Stepping stones would be advisable at the 2 creek crossings. Upgrading of the Curtis Road and provision of a carpark would permit closer access for 2WD vehicles.

Upper Wye River – Kennett Road

Map: Mt. Cowley, 7620-1-4, 1;25000

3. Wye Falls lookout walk. (1 - 1½ hour return walk)

The route would leave the Kennett Rd. at 443222 heading ESE to a lookout to be built above the west side of the Wye Gorge opposite Wye Falls, a walking distance of about 1km.

Features a spectacular view of all 3 drops of Wye Falls that has only rarely been seen by bushwalkers not averse to 'bushbashing' through untracked forest.

Status: totally unsurveyed. A short access road, carpark, foot-track and a viewing platform would be required.

Carisbrook Valley – Grey River Road

Map: Kennett River, 7620-1-3, 1:25 000, topographic map.

4. Grey River Rd. – Carisbrook Mill walk. (3½ hr. circuit-return walk)

This walk leaves the west side of the Grey River Rd. at grid ref. 428191, descends to a bend on the Carisbrook Creek at 426189 which is crossed to the south side just 50m. upstream. The route follows the south side of the stream for about 100m. before joining an old tramway route about 400m. west of the crossing and about 100m. south of the creek. This leads directly to the old Carisbrook millsite which remains as a patch of lawn in the forest, fringed by hydrangeas and large ivy-clad pinus insignia trees. The return route back to the Grey River Rd. descends NE to the creek which is crossed and follows the north side of the stream back to the creek crossing at 426189. The original track is then climbed back to the Grey River Rd.

Features: magnificent valley forest, a beautiful clean gently-flowing stream, and the historic millsite. A relatively easy walk suitable for the not-so-fit.

Status: surveyed, except for the return route from the millsite to the lower creek crossing..

Alternative access to the Carisbrook Mill and this Carisbrook loop walk could be gained from Henry's Road at grid ref. 411187 and descending NE down the existing walking track to the old millsite.

Sunnyside Road – Sabine Falls Walks

Map: Skene's Creek, 7620-4-2, 1:25 000 topographic map.

Background:

Sabine Falls is the largest and most impressive waterfall complex in the Otway State Forest area. The main falls consist of 3 waterfalls one on top of the other, plunging a total of about 130m. into a magnificent heavily forested valley in pristine state with giant blackwoods and eucalypts and lush fern growth. There are 2 other impressive waterfalls in the gully above the main falls on the upper Smythe Creek. The upper west branch also contains waterfalls that have hardly been explored. The obvious potential of the Sabine Falls area to be managed as a scenic area has been recognised in the 1992 Otway Forest Management Plan which recommended it be given high management priority for development of tourism facilities.. All these walks commence from the Sabine Falls carpark on the west side of Sunnyside Rd. at map ref.393203.

5. Sunnyside Rd. – Sabine Falls (2 – 3 hour return/circuit walk)

The existing track is followed in a westerly direction from the Sabine Falls carpark via the old millsite, and 2 stream crossings to the viewing platform in the valley, a walking distance of about 2½ km. and a vertical descent of 250m. The return walk can be made via a 4WD track that turns eastwards from the top of the main descent section of the track and follows the western border of a blue gum plantation.

Alternatively, a new circuit walk from the viewing platform could be created via the existing track that ascends in a southerly direction to a ridge south of the falls at which a huge old gum tree provides a focus of Interest. From here, a new the track (yet to be surveyed) would ascend NW through native forest back to the main track returning to Sunnyside Rd. just south of the carpark.

Features: Sabine Falls and the magnificent pristine valley of the upper Smythe Creek.

Status: The main track to Sabine Falls lookout is fully established and of good standard, The old track to the ridge to the south of the lookout needs minimal reclearing work, but a new return track, ascending through the native forest south and west of the plantation land will need to be established to create a circuit walk to make the walk more appealing and to lessen the steepness of the climb out of the valley.

Upper Wild Dog Valley Walks

Background: *the upper Wild Dog valley is another outstanding forest wilderness with scenic values highly valued by the local community and well-suited for tourism development.*

Map: Skene's Creek. 7620-4-2, 1:25000 topographic map.

6. Upper Wild Dog Valley circuit. (5 – 6 hour circuit walk)

This walk begins at the Skene's Creek - Forrest Rd. at grid ref. 356188, about 700m. south of Haines Junction, and follows an old logging road, with an optional deviation to the old Sharp's No.1 millsite, to the ridge above 'Teahouse Junction', the confluence of the 2 main upper branches of Wild Dog Creek. From this creek junction the route follows the creek downstream to Wild Dog Falls at map ref. 332176, then ascends NNE then NNW up a ridge-top logging track almost to Sharp's No.3 millsite. From here, a new

route is followed in a generally east direction around the south side of the main Otway Range south of the Turton's Track, turning south again just west of Haines Junction to reach the start of the walk.

Features: the magnificent, deep, heavily-forested upper valley of Wild Dog Creek, Wild Dog Falls, and a pleasant forest walk along the main Otway ridge south of the Olangelah Reserve (Colac's water supply catchment).

Status: this route has been completely surveyed and marked with the exception of the section east of Sharp's No.3 millsite to the Skene's Creek – Forrest Rd. Some track-building would be required to improve access to the floor of the valley below Wild Dog Falls in order to upgrade the route for general use.

7. Wild Dog Falls walk.

(3-4 hour return walk)

This walk provides the shortest approach to Wild Dog Falls. It starts at the Turton's Track gate of the Wild Dog Track and proceeds uphill for about 250m. before turning E into the ridge-top forest, reaching Sharp's No.3 millsite after another 200m. An old logging track is then followed east then south then SSW for a total of about 2km. to reach a staircase that aids the descent to Wild Dog Falls.

Features: Wild Dog Falls and the creek and deep valley a little downstream, the forest experience en route. This route has been often used for guided walks by the ORWTA, which have proved very popular with visitors.

Status: fully marked. This walk has been used by bushwalking clubs for several years. However, some track-building would be required to improve access to the floor of the valley below Wild Dog Falls in order to upgrade the route for general use.

8. Upper Wild Dog Valley Walk.

(3-4 hour through walk)

This walk begins at the Skene's Creek - Forrest Rd. at grid ref. 356188, about 700m. south of Haines Junction, and follows an old logging road, with an optional deviation to the old Sharp's No.1 millsite, to the ridge above 'Teahouse Junction', the confluence of the 2 main upper branches of Wild Dog Creek. From this creek junction the route follows the creek downstream to Wild Dog Falls at map ref. 332176, then ascends NNE then NNW up a ridge-top logging track to Sharp's No.3 millsite. From the old millsite a short walk 150m. west to the Wild Dog Track and about 400m.northwards down the Wild Dog Track to the Turton's Track completes the walk.

Status: fully marked. This walk has been used by bushwalking clubs for several years. However, some track-building would be required in the floor of the valley above Wild Dog Falls in order to upgrade the route for general use.

Apollo Bay Coastal Views Walk

Map: Skene's Creek 7620-4-2, and Apollo Bay 7620-3-1 1:25000 topographic maps.

9. Crows Nest to Apollo Bay.

(2 – 3hour direct walk)

This walk commences with vehicle transport of walkers from Apollo Bay via Tuxion Road to Crows Nest Lookout at 306098. Walkers then walk downhill back from Crows Nest (elevation 350m.) via farm lanes initially in a WSW direction for 1.5km., then south for 2 km. before heading ESE for a further 3km. via Piggery Lane back to the start in Apollo Bay.

Features: a downhill walk through farmland with impressive coastal views most of the way.

Status: this walk has already been in use as a guided walk. With the addition of signage, one or 2 styles, and a little track upgrading, it could be made suitable for unguided short walks by visitors to Apollo Bay.

Apollo Bay - Lower East Barham Valley – High View Walk

Map: Skene's Creek 7620-4-2, and Apollo Bay 7620-3-1 1:25000 topographic maps.

10. Lower Barham – Coastal Views walk.

(5-6 hour direct walk)

This walk begins at the north end of the Barham Valley Rd. at 'Willow Bryn', and follows the public track to Marriner's Falls. From the junction of Falls Creek and the East Barham River, the route follows the East Barham River upstream for about 1km., including 3 river crossings, before climbing out of the valley in a ENE direction for about 600m. The route then swings back in a SSW direction climbing slowly along the border of the state forest up to the ridge north of Crow's Nest, before descending into Apollo Bay via laneways between farms and Piggery Lane.

Features: a picturesque walk up the East Barham valley, Marriner's Falls, fine views of the coast and forested valleys from the hill-tops north of Crow's Nest.

Status: the route of the lower east Barham loop walk has been fully marked and has been used with success for guided walks on many occasions. It could be readily upgraded to the status of a permanent route and would provide a popular short walk in the Apollo Bay area. Several crossings of the East Barham stream would be the main infrastructure requirement.

Lavers Hill – Melba Gully

Map: Wangerrip 7520-1-3, 1:25000 topographic map

11. **Askew Falls** is an attractive 15 metre free-falling waterfall on the upper Joanna River about 2 km. south of Melba Gully State Park. It is located at grid reference 052118. Access is currently only via private land on the west side of the Blue Joanna Rd. with the land owner's permission. Creating a foot-track to Askew Falls from Melba Gully would add to the attractions of the Melba Gully State Park.

Status: No survey work for this proposal has yet been done. (*return walk of approx. 3 hr.*)

North of the Otway range:

Lavers Hill

(Map: Lavers Hill, 7520-1-2, 1:25000 topographic map)

12. **South Chapple Creek waterfalls.** (*return walk of approx. ½ hour*)

There are several waterfalls on the upper South Chapple Creek, just north of Lavers Hill. The uppermost fall is a most attractive freefall of about 12m. and is commonly accessed by local people via an old contour track that is found on the north side of the Lavers Hill-Cobden Road 1km. north of the Lavers Hill Post Office on the Great Ocean Rd. This track leads to the upper fall in a north-east direction, the distance being only 200 metres. There are 2 other waterfalls a short distance downstream.

Status: very little work would be required to upgrade the existing track to a standard suitable for public use.

12. **Glasgow Falls.** (Map: Wangerrip 7520-1-3, 1:25000 topographic map) (*1½ hr. return walk*)

Glasgow Falls is an attractive waterfall that drops about 10 metres on the north branch of Chapple Creek at grid reference 059193, only about 200m. west of the Morris Track.

Status: no route has been surveyed, but the ease of the terrain and the short distance should create few problems in building a track suitable for use by the public. Upgrading of the Morris Track from Lavers Hill for all weather 4WD or 2WD use would also be necessary to make Glasgow Falls a tourist attraction. Further upgrading of the Junction Track and the linking section of the Mackenzie Track would make a fine circuit drive for visitors. Glasgow Falls could initially be a highlight for four-wheel drive visitors and roads later upgraded to two wheel drive standard. Restricting clearfelling operations in the visible vicinity of the planned tourist route would also be desirable if the tourist potential of Glasgow Falls is to be fully realised.

Further east:

Pennyroyal area

(Map: Boonah, 7621-2-2, 1:25000 topographic map).

13. **Acquil Creek waterfall circuit, Pennyroyal.** (*5 hour circuit walk*)

5 waterfalls have been identified in the Acquil Creek valley. This stream flows into Pennyroyal Creek near the end of the Pennyroyal Valley Rd. Upgrading of the existing foot track to Pennyroyal Falls (at grid ref. 524385), establishing a new trail up the valley above those falls to the uppermost waterfalls, returning via the valley of the west branch, would create a circuit walk most appealing to visitors to the Pennyroyal Valley. The flourishing farmstay accommodation industry of the area would benefit from this added attraction.

Status: Above Pennyroyal Falls, the new circuit walk would have to be surveyed and developed. Downstream from the falls, the existing track needs upgrading, and access into the valley from the Pennyroyal Valley Road via private land clarified and established. This short walk proposal has strong support in the local community of the Pennyroyal valley.

Addendum : March 2006**Completion of Existing Walk into Circuit Walk****14. Alandale Walk to Phantom and Henderson Falls (near Lorne). *3 hour circuit walk***

The existing walk from the Alandale Carpark via Phantom Falls, The Canyon, Won Wondah Falls, and Henderson Falls, requires walkers to return to the start by walking back down the Alandale Rd. for a distance of about 2km. This is not very satisfactory, as walkers must share the road with vehicle traffic and the dust created in dry weather by cars. The road walking spoils the experience of an otherwise excellent short walk. This proposal is for a return track to be made down the south side of the Henderson Creek valley, downstream from Won Wondah Falls to the Alandale Carpark, so completing a circuit walk that avoids or minimizes road walking.

Status: the proposed new route has not yet been explored or surveyed. It is purely a good idea for improving an existing public walk.

Two-Day Walks

Scope exists in the Otway National Park for 2-day walks suitable for weekend walkers. The following are 2 proposals starting or terminating at Apollo Bay and near Lorne.

15. Sunnyside Road to Apollo Bay via Sabine Falls, Wild Dog Falls and Marriner's Falls.

This walk would commence at the Sunnyside Rd. Picnic Area and proceeds via Sabine Falls, Upper Sabine Falls, Gorgeous Falls, Mousetrap Falls to Haines Junction, then descends into the upper Wild Dog valley via old tramway and logging tracks to the creek junction called 'Tea House Junction', from where it follows the Wild Dog Creek downstream to Wild Dog Falls. The climb out of the valley follows an old snig track northwards to Sharpe's No. 3 millsite. The walk then turns south down the Wild Dog Ridge to the Wild Dog Saddle, then descends in a westerly direction into the East Barham valley to Marriner's Falls and the Barham Valley Road at Willow Brae. Road transport would convey walkers from there into Apollo Bay.

An alternative route from the Wild Dog Saddle to Apollo Bay via the Highview Walk would allow spectacular coastal views from the hills above the town, and would avoid the need for transport.

A suitable halfway campsite exists just above Tea House Junction.

Status: This walk has been fully surveyed and walked. It follows existing tracks for over 80% of its route.

16. Wye Road to the Great Ocean Road via Allambee Beek Falls, Galliebarinda Falls, and Brunswick Falls.

This walk commences at the Wye Road opposite Mud Road, and crosses the south tributary creek of the Cumberland River before descending to the Cumberland River at Allambee Beek Falls. The route then ascends to the Curtis Track which is followed to the Cumberland River at the Curtis Crossing. The river is then followed downstream via Galliebarinda Falls and Brunswick Falls, from where an old logging track ascends to the Cumberland Track. This provides a descending route to the coast at the Cumberland River Camping Reserve.

Suitable campsites exist at the Curtis Crossing area and near Brunswick Falls.

Status: This walk has been fully surveyed and walked. It follows existing tracks for over 80% of its route.