

Friday 13th December 2013

First dirt turned on Mt Buller's 'Epic' Mountain Bike Trail Project

Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resort Management has announced the beginning of construction on what is set to become Australia's first International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) EPIC mountain bike trail. The project is a partnership between the Australian Alps National Landscape Committee Inc, Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management and the Australian Government through the T-QUAL Strategic Tourism Investment Grants program.

Designed and constructed by Glen Jacobs and his team at World Trail, the 40.39km trail will offer visitors to the region a long distance, cross-country descending ride on terrain within the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resorts (managed by the Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management), Mansfield State Forest (managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment), and the Mt Russell Education Area (managed by Parks Victoria).

Upon completion next summer, IMBA will undertake an assessment of the trail and if EPIC status is attained, it will be one of the few trails outside of North America to receive this endorsement, meaning that it is recognised as a world-class trail that offers an iconic, diverse and high-quality backcountry ride experience.

"While Resort Management has already invested over \$1 million into the development of a dedicated mountain bike network at Mt Buller, we understand the importance of continually evolving our offering to maintain our position as a market leader," said Amber Gardner, Director of Marketing, Sales and Business Development for the Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management. "The launch our Epic trail project in summer 2014/15 will truly solidify Mt Buller's role as the premier mountain bike park in the State, delivering significant tourism benefits to the Mansfield-Mt Buller region."

To date, the project has received \$125,000 in federal funding through T-QUAL Strategic Tourism Investment Grants, and \$375,000 in state funding through Regional Development Victoria. Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management has contributed \$225,000 and the Mansfield Shire Council a further \$25,000.

Mt Buller is Australia's first and only accredited IMBA Ride Center, recognised as offering world-class mountain bike facilities for all levels of riders. This iconic mountain bike park features over 100km of cross country trails including 40km of dedicated singletrack; Australia's best cross country trail (Stonefly); two skills parks; the country's first flow-down trail (Copperhead); Australia's first modular pump track; and the only chairlift accessible downhill course in the State.

For further information on Mt Buller's comprehensive network of trails, visit mtbuller.com.au.

For further information on Australia's National Landscapes, visit <http://www.tourism.australia.com/campaigns/national-landscapes.aspx>

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