



Friday 8th February 2013

Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management announces ‘Epic’ Mountain Bike Trail project

Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management has announced an exciting new project for the region, with the construction of a mountain bike trail that 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.

The Mt Buller Mt Stirling IMBA EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project involves the construction of a 40.39km trail that will offer visitors to the region a long distance, cross-country descending ride, providing stunning views across the Victorian High Country. The proposed trail crosses terrain within the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resorts (managed by Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management), Mansfield State Forest (managed by DSE) and the Mt Russell Education Area (managed by Parks Victoria).

The EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project builds on the success of Mt Buller’s comprehensive network of mountain bike trails, which has steadily been developed over the past six years and has seen the Resort become a premier mountain biking destination. This commitment to developing quality mountain bike trails has led to Mt Buller recently being crowned Australia’s first IMBA Ride Center, meaning the Resort joins a select group of mountain biking destinations around the world that represent IMBA’s Model Trail recognition for large-scale mountain bike facilities that offer something for every rider. If EPIC status is attained for the Mt Buller Mt Stirling EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project, 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.

T-QUAL Strategic Tourism Investment Grants aim to benefit the tourism industry by providing targeted investment of up to \$1 million (+ GST) for nationally significant, innovative projects.

The Australian Alps is one of 13 National Landscapes across Australia sharing in \$1 million funding under the *Australia’s National Landscapes* Strategic Tourism Investment Grant. The Commonwealth’s funding contribution of \$125,000 (+GST) for the EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project has been matched by \$125,000 (+GST) from Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management.

The *Australia’s National Landscapes* program is a partnership between Parks Australia and Tourism Australia that aims to achieve conservation, social and economic outcomes for Australia and its regions via the promotion of iconic nature based tourism experiences to the global *Experience Seeker* tourism market. The EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project was identified as a priority project in the 2010 Australian Alps National Landscapes Tourism Strategy.

Speaking at the launch of the EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project in Melbourne last night, Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management Chief Executive Officer, John Huber, said the construction of this new trail would benefit the region and provide a boost to tourism.



Australian Government
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Energy and Tourism



“The EPIC Mountain Bike Trail project will present another quality cycle tourism drawcard for the Mansfield-Mt Buller region, and will complement the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail experience and the purpose-built singletrack mountain biking product currently offered at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

“This iconic trail will showcase the stunning landscape of the High Country, embrace the local environment and provide a world-class backcountry ride experience that will be unlike anything else in Australia. It is very exciting to be involved in such a project and we are grateful of the assistance provided by the Australian Government through T-QUAL Strategic Tourism Investment Grants and the *Australia’s National Landscapes* program.”

IMBA Australia’s National Director, Nick Bowman, said Mt Buller is leading the way in mountain bike trail development. “The team at Mt Buller is showing great drive and determination to get this trail on the ground. It is fantastic that Resort Management is successfully pushing the boundaries of what can be provided for mountain bike riders in Australia. They are indeed setting a new standard in Australia trail network development.”

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

For further information on *Australia’s National Landscapes* program visit:

- http://www.tourism.australia.com/en-au/marketing/5651_national-landscapes-program.aspx
- <http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/national-landscapes/index.html>

Media contact:

Gillian Dobson
Marketing & Communications Assistant Manager
Mt Buller Mt Stirling Resort Management
T: 03 5777 6077
M: 0429 776 185
E: gillian.dobson@mtbuller.com.au

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