

Off-Road Vehicle Areas in the Northern Agricultural Region of Western Australia

Feasibility Study

February 2015



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was commissioned by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) with funding from Coastwest as a response to community and environmental concerns about unmanaged off-road vehicle (ORV) use within the coastal zone of the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR) of Western Australia.

A workshop of stakeholders representing coastal local governments, state government, resident groups, user group and coastcare organisations was conducted in 2012 at which the following concerns were raised:

1. The growing use of ORVs in the region, often with little or no regard for the environment
2. Environmental impacts, including destruction of vegetation, disturbance of fauna and the associated negative effects
3. Damage to fences and other infrastructure; public nuisance including noise, loss of amenity in areas such as beaches; and public safety concerns
4. Legislation and licensing issues including unregistered vehicles being difficult to identify and confusion existing among riders as to what access entitlements come with Off-Road Vehicle registration
5. Local government capacity and resources, including costs of enforcement, potential litigation costs, and costs of developing and managing Off-Road Vehicle Area (ORVAs).

An outcome of the workshop was the recognition that a lack of more environmentally suitable and legal alternatives was impeding the management of the issue. Subsequently Coastwest funding was secured to explore the feasibility of establishing one or more areas of land within the NAR as a 'Permitted Area' under the Control of Vehicles (Off-Road Areas) Act 1978 – CV(OA)A — and developing that land as an Off Road Vehicle Area (ORVA).

This report sets out the findings of that process. The geographic scope of this study is the Northern Agricultural Region of Western Australia, broadly encompassing the coastline between Lancelin and Kalbarri, and incorporating the following city and shires:

Gingin	Dandaragan	Coorow	Carnamah
Irwin	City of Greater Geraldton	Chapman Valley	Northampton

The vehicle scope of the study was primarily non-road registered vehicles such as mini, motocross and quad bikes; however road registered trail bikes and road registered four wheel drives also form part of the user group.

The demographic scope of the study was primarily those riders who have not yet reached an age where they can obtain a road licence, and their parents. This group has no choice about where they can ride, and rely on the provision of legal options. The secondary scope was all other riders (of all ages and both genders) who choose to ride unregistered vehicles.

Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act

The current regulatory framework for off-road vehicle use is the Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act 1978 (CV(OA)A). This Act is administered by local government, operates primarily to regulate the use of non road registered vehicles, and provides for the distinction between Prohibited Areas and Permitted Areas.

The landowner or occupier retains legal liability and this has been a significant concern for local governments. Advice from the Local Government Insurance Scheme (LGIS) suggests that the the actual risk may be low, provided that a reasonable risk management strategy is in place. The Civil Liability Amendment Act 2003 is seen to provide important protection for all landowners hosting activities that have an 'obvious and inherent risk'. There have been no successful ORV-related claims since the Civil Liability Act was introduced.

The State Trail Bike Strategy (DSR, 2008) recommended the upgrading of existing ORVAs and the development of new ORVAs in regional areas to provide greater legal access in managed settings.

Rider Segments

There is a wide diversity of ORVs and the types of experiences sought by riders, who basically fit into three broad groups:

1. Riders and bikes *least* likely to be causing major issues:
 - Competition Motocross
 - Road Registered Trail / Enduro.

2. Riders causing some legal problems and liability issues, but not likely to be the cause of many resident complaints:
 - Family Groups
 - Quads and Side-by-Side Tourers
 - Considerate "Un-Uns" - Unregistered vehicle and/or unlicensed rider, but with an awareness of and respect for others.

3. Riders representing the real problem element:
 - No licence / no registration / no respect - They ignore the law and show no consideration to other people or the environment.

While these distinctions are important, a limitation to their usefulness is the numbers within each group cannot be quantified.

The primary riders likely to make use of gazetted ORVAs are Family Groups and Considerate “Un-Uns”.

An objective in creating an ORVA is to progressively convert as many as possible of the ‘No licence / no registration / no respect’ group into ‘Considerate “Un-Uns”’, and thus bring them in to the “responsible” group and out of the “anti-authority” group - by providing a legal option, and through education and enforcement.

What Riders are Seeking

In order to reduce problematic ORV use it is important to be able to provide *preferred* alternatives. An online survey was undertaken to gauge riders’ desires and preferences, and the responses from riders suggested the most important factors were: “Freedom, Bush, Exploring”, followed by “Time with family and friends”.

Less than 25 per cent of respondents who live in the NAR belong to a club, and over 90 per cent stated they usually ride with a family group.

Coastal trails, beach and sand dunes were the preferred riding terrain of NAR resident respondents. Only 5.7 per cent cited Motocross tracks as the preferred type or riding area.

Closeness to home was cited as the primary drawcard for their preferred riding area, followed by good scenery and good trails. The fact that an area was legal did not rate highly, suggesting that riders will continue to prioritise other factors over legality.

Only approximately a quarter of respondents rejected the idea of paying a \$25 per day fee to ride at a commercial ride park, suggesting that there may be future potential to develop pay-per-use facilities.

Current Legal Areas

Within the NAR coastal zone (between Lancelin and Kalbarri) there are five areas gazetted areas under the Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act. These are located at:

- Lancelin
- Ledge Point
- Cervantes
- Jurien
- Southgates.

Of these, only Lancelin and Ledge Point are operating as officially recognised and active ORVAs. Jurien Bay is leased to a motocross club and not publicly available.

The Geraldton Motocross Club operates a club circuit on land leased from the City of Greater Geraldton, and also has occasional access to land at Dongara and the Jurien Bay MX circuit. The Midwest Trail and Enduro Club runs events on public and private land.

One commercial ride park operates within the region – Murchison Offroad Adventures, a 300,000 acre 4WD and trail bike adventure park at Coolcalalaya Station. It offers hundreds of kilometres of trails with varying terrain and difficulty levels, plus camping and other activities, however the three-hour round trip time from Geraldton (including 110 kilometres of dirt road) dampens its appeal for other than multi-day trips.

Many of the beaches and coastal tracks along the coast are open and legally available for road registered vehicles and licenced drivers / riders. On-coming traffic is cited by riders as the major problem, with some calls for the development of a duplicate trail to enable a north-bound and south-bound route.

Current Problem Areas

Current 'hot-spot' problem areas were identified by way of stakeholder consultation and a community survey.

Stakeholders included representatives from the eight LGAs plus land management and conservation agencies. The online community survey was promoted via landcare agencies, community groups and local media. This attracted 40 responses¹ from which a list of 44 hot-spot areas was derived. Environmental damage, irresponsible behaviour and spoiling the enjoyment of other beach users were the primary concerns raised by respondents.

The survey confirmed that the issue is widespread along the coast, with hot-spots reported all along the coastline from Lancelin to Kalbarri, with obvious clusters around the more populated areas. The most commonly reported areas are located between south of Cape Burney and Coronation Beach – which is not surprising given the proximity to Geraldton, and the concentration of residential population and recreational activity in the City of Greater Geraldton catchment.

¹ Community Survey details are attached as Appendix A

ORVA Selection Criteria

It is important that in reviewing candidate areas for the establishment of a new ORVA or development of an existing one, the following criteria are considered:

For Land Managers	For Residents	For Riders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to contain the activity within the designated area ● Controlled (preferably single) point of entry ● Low conservation value. ● Ability to manage the activity within the designated area ● Durability of the terrain ● Ability to manage visitor risk ● Safe and legal access ● Land tenure ● Absence of zoning constraints (water catchment, conservation, disease risk, heritage etc) ● Low probability of conflict with other pre-existing recreational uses ● Willingness and affordability for the land manager to accommodate an ORVA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positioned away from residential areas ● Not creating nuisance and safety issues by riding overlapping onto residential streets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Terrain and features ● Reasonable proximity to home ● Ease of access for utes and cars with trailers ● Phone coverage for emergencies ● Facilities such as parking / unloading / viewing areas close to where riding occurs ● Safety for young riders including segregation from faster riders ● Adequate size to meet demand without overcrowding

ORVA Management

From the time of initial gazettals in 1979 to 2008 the prevailing view from the land managers responsible appeared to be that the only management requirement was to identify and gazette a parcel of land as a Permitted Area. The outcome of this thinking was that local governments did not allocate funding to develop or maintain these areas as recreational facilities.

The State Trail Bike Strategy challenged this approach, arguing that ORVAs should be treated as other recreational facilities and developed and maintained, and that this would achieve a better outcome for riders, for the environment and for the community. The success of the two ORVAs at Pinjar and York for example, which were developed in line with the State Trail Bike Strategy recommendations, supports this view.

This model of a developed and maintained facility was used as the basis for considering the feasibility of establishing ORVAs in the NAR, and in the assessment of each candidate site.

Funding

Funding may be available from multiple sources if multiple objectives can be identified. The following table sets out objectives, funding types and potential sources:

Objective	Funding Type/s	Funding Source/s
Protect coastal ecosystems by diverting a significant number of off-road vehicles to designated area	Capital / recurrent	Coastwest, DPaW Environmental, Royalties for Regions (Regional Grants Scheme)
Encourage participation in a family-oriented, physical outdoor activity	Capital	Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF)
Develop trails network for participant satisfaction and environmental protection	Capital	LotteryWest Trails Grant
Upgrade / improve recreational facility	Series of capital injections	DSR Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF), LotteryWest Trails Grant
Administer an ORVA	Recurrent, operational	Off-Road Vehicles Account

The State Trail Bike Strategy made several recommendations for ORV funding mechanisms², including the creation of an ORV Grant Scheme that can be accessed by local governments, local communities and off-road vehicle bodies. The State Government is yet to implement these recommendations.

² State Trail Bike Strategy, p232

Candidate Areas

The process identified the following areas of public land for consideration:

Area	Proposed by	Features	Initial Constraints	Status
Buller River mouth	Desktop research, on-site visit	Combination of pasture and coastal terrain, compatible land tenure	Several registered Aboriginal sites	Possible
Southgates	City of Greater Geraldton Local for Natural Areas	Current usage, current gazettal as ORVA [to be confirmed], mix of sand trails and dunes, proximity to Geraldton	All soft sand, many intersecting trails with poor sight lines (collision risk and difficult to mitigate), adjacent to private sand quarry	Possible
Wicherina	Riders	Formerly popular riding area, firm ground, away from coastal reserves (approx 40km inland)	Water Catchment Area (Dept of Water) – not a supported activity under Policy 13 and DoW has been immovable on this policy elsewhere. Could revisit if water status changes.	Rejected
Cape Burney (south of Greenough River mouth)	Desktop research, on-site visit	Current usage, combination of dunes and firm ground	High conservation issues, Conflict with non-motorised recreation (walk, mountain bike), not supported by South Greenough – Cape Burney Coastal Planning Strategy	Rejected
Leeman (south of air strip)	Desktop research	Current usage	Area encroaches on Beekeeper Nature Reserve boundary, <10Ha	Unlikely
Jurien Bay ORVA	Desktop research	Current gazettal as an ORVA, potential for Juniors	Leased to MX club, developed as a competition circuit, Go-Kart track sharing land	Limited

Of these sites, only Buller River mouth and Southgates were considered worthy of more detailed investigation, with Jurien Bay noted as being possible on a limited scale subject to lease obligations. The concept of one or more coastal trail routes for road registered vehicles should also be investigated further. None were identified as holding potential for development as ORVAs, primarily due to the need to access or cross private property.

Buller River mouth

The Buller River mouth was considered primarily because of the inherent logic of situating an ORVA within an industrial precinct buffer zone. The area has been used by riders for many years, in particular the southern dunes portion – which is accessible via coastal tracks from north of Drummonds Cove on land owned by the Mid West Ports Authority.

The 44 Ha of mainly pasture land north of Buller River lends itself to development as a built facility, with the prospect of a network of circuits and trails catering to different age groups and styles of riding. The slightly larger southern portion could be developed as a network of defined coastal tracks and a dunal area for more free-range riding.

In-principle conversations with the major land stakeholders – the Mid West Ports Authority, Shire of Chapman Valley and Landcorp – raised no obvious and insurmountable objections to the further consideration of the area.

Southgates

Southgates was identified by the community consultation undertaken for the City of Greater Geraldton's Natural Areas Local Laws report. It is in common use and is already gazetted as an ORVA, which means that there is no process to go through to endorse its use.

It appears that the area is still Unallocated Crown Land that has not been vested in the City of Greater Geraldton, although there is some doubt about the actual land tenure of this block. The gazetted ORVA appears to be only part of the lot itself and somewhat arbitrarily created. Spillage out to the west and north is inevitable without extensive fencing, and a network of informal trails has been created to the west of the ORVA.

There is no firm ground, which significantly diminishes the area's value for children and novices.

Based on the officially gazetted boundaries, the southern strip leading north to the dune area consists of only one trail, with soft sand and poor sight lines. The City of Greater Geraldton has expressed concerns about continuing use of this strip degrading the vegetation and creating further unstable dunes which may threaten both housing and vegetation communities to the east. The main riding area is in the centre of the gazetted area, with no easy access for utes or cars with trailers. This means riders would not be able to set up a riding 'base' near their cars – which is the preferred option for most riders.

Proximity to residential areas is also problematic, with the nearest residential property only 650m from the northern boundary.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Southgates ORVA:	Buller River mouth:	Jurien Bay:	Coastal Trails:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Greater Geraldton to develop an interim Master Plan for the Southgates ORVA, focussing on participant safety and environmental protection. It is anticipated that the Master Plan would include would include a baseline vegetation survey, recommendations for dealing with trail intersections, demarcation of the ORVA boundaries, risk and directional signage and visitor behaviour management. Access from Greenough River mouth or an alternative would need to be explored in order to address the environmental concerns. 2. Seek funding from Off-road Vehicles Account, Lotterywest or Coastwest to implement Southgates Interim Master Plan. 3. Rangers to direct off-road vehicles to this area when intercepting illegal riding elsewhere, but otherwise not promote the area enthusiastically. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate engagement with traditional landholders to conduct a detailed investigation of Aboriginal heritage registered sites within the Buller River mouth precinct and to discuss and negotiate the establishment of an ORVA at this location. 2. If Aboriginal heritage issues can be resolved, seek management agreement (conditional on funding) with Landcorp and Shire of Chapman Valley. 3. Establish funding options conditional on development of a Master Plan. 4. Seek funding from Off-road Vehicles Account to develop Buller River mouth Master Plan. The Master Plan will provide full scope of works and cost estimates, including full costing of all anticipated recurrent costs. 5. Seek funding for implementation of Buller River mouth Master Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shire of Dandaragan to review lease, licence and responsibility issues around Jurien ORVA. 2. Review potential for the MX circuit portion of this area to be modified to enable public access, particularly for junior riders. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further investigation of the potential to develop one or more coastal destination trails for road registered vehicles and licenced drivers / riders; ideally engaging four wheel drive clubs or associations. Consideration to be given to the concept of parallel trails to separate north- and south-bound traffic.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This report was commissioned by the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) with funding from Coastwest as a response to community and environmental concerns about unmanaged off-road vehicle (ORV) use within the coastal zone of the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR) of Western Australia.

The unmanaged use of off-road vehicles has had, and is having a significant impact on coastal ecosystems in the NAR.

In response to this impact, the issue, along with impacts from coastal camping and other associated activities was considered at a workshop held at Jurien Bay on 6 September 2012, which was attended by representatives from coastal local governments, the state government, resident groups, user groups and coastcare organisations.

The workshop identified a series of problems relating to ORV use – which were categorised under five broad headings:

General concerns

- ORV use is rapidly increasing in the region, (partly due to increased expendable income in WA and partly due to the lower pricing of ‘entry level’ quad and motorcycles)
- ORVs are increasing in power and diversity
- Opening of the Indian Ocean Drive has increased access by ORV users and coastal campers to the coast
- Many coastal campers also own ORVs, hence the problems are linked (e.g., Lucky Bay, Shire of Northampton)
- Restricting ORV use and coastal camping in one local government results in greater pressures placed on adjacent LGAs, hence a regional management approach would be beneficial
- Insufficient information is available to ORV users and coastal campers to enable them to plan their trips effectively.

Environmental damage

- Destruction of vegetation caused by indiscriminate ORV use, often with no regard for existing tracks
- Destruction of vegetation caused by illegal camping activities along the coast, through access, clearing of camp sites and collection of bush wood for camp fires

- Increasing wind and rain erosion resulting from vegetation destruction
- Disturbance of fauna, particularly shorebirds, by close proximity of ORVs and coastal campsites, and the excessive noise produced by many ORVs
- Decreasing coastal and riparian biodiversity resulting from vegetation loss and disturbance of fauna.

Damage to infrastructure and public nuisance

- Continuous and sometimes unrelenting damage to fences, gates and signs intended to restrict ORV and camping access to sensitive areas
- Loss of amenity resulting from excessive noise of many ORVs, affecting local residents and visitors seeking a peaceful holiday
- Considerable threat to public safety caused by ORVs, evidenced by increasing number of ORV related injuries and deaths within and outside of the region³.

Legislation/licensing

- ORV management hampered by the mixture of land tenures in the coastal zone, which is often a combination of local and state government administered land and Unallocated Crown Land (UCL). Local governments have no effective control on activities taking place on UCL
- Quad bikes can't be road registered, hence no capacity to identify vehicles
- Current Off-Road license plates cause considerable confusion among ORV users as they think it allows them to go anywhere off road
- LGIS Insurance Broking may provide insufficient cover for local governments in cases of ORV-related litigation
- Local governments are poorly resourced to defend ORV-related lawsuits, and even if a defence was successful, the cost of legal representation could be a significant drain on resources
- Local governments unwilling to establish and maintain designated ORV-use areas because of perceived litigation issues.

³ This appears to be anecdotal, as no statistical evidence was presented or cited at the workshop.

Local/State Government Resources

- ORVs represent a high-risk activity hence the continuous threat of litigation
- Ongoing maintenance costs of infrastructure damaged by ORV users and coastal campers
- Considerable costs associated with establishing and maintaining designated ORV- use areas
- Some LGA councillors do not believe that ORV use in their shire represents a problem, hence do not see the need to direct resources towards managing the issue
- DPaW staff blockade roads into DPaW managed lands, e.g. Wedge Point, to prevent entry of ORVs.

Workshop participants agreed that the lack of more environmentally-suitable and legal alternatives was impeding the management of the issue. Coastwest funding was subsequently secured to explore the feasibility of establishing one or more areas of land within the NAR as a 'Permitted Area' under the Control of Vehicles (Off-Road Areas) Act 1978 – CV(OA)A – and developing that land as an Off Road Vehicle Area (ORVA).

This report sets out the findings of that process.

PROJECT SCOPE

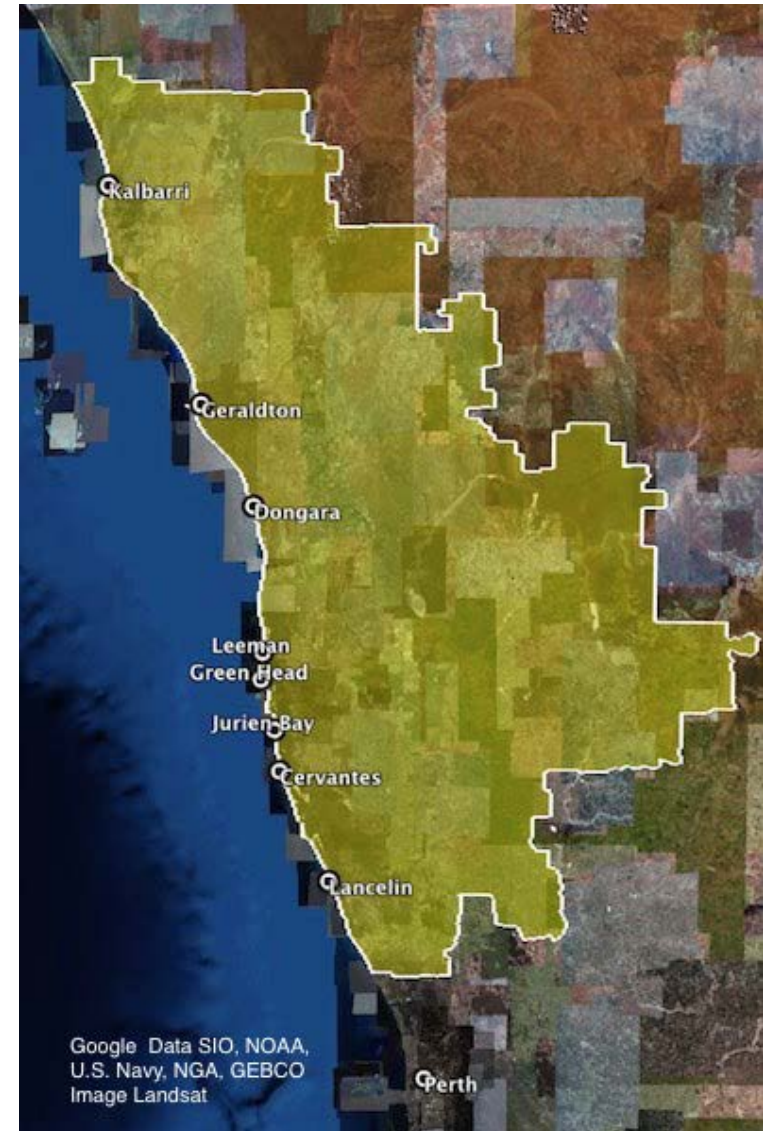
The geographic scope of this study is the Northern Agricultural Region of Western Australia, broadly encompassing the coastline between Lancelin and Kalbarri and incorporating the following city and shires:

- Gingin
- Dandaragan
- Coorow
- Carnamah
- Irwin
- City of Greater Geraldton
- Chapman Valley
- Northampton.

The vehicle scope of the study was primarily non-road registered vehicles such as mini, motocross and quad bikes, however road registered trail bikes and road registered four wheel drives also form part of the user group for whom a properly developed off-road vehicle area can provide an alternative to recreational riding and driving in natural areas.

The demographic scope of the study was primarily those riders who have not yet reached an age where they can obtain a road licence, and their parents. This group has no choice about where they can ride, and rely on the provision of legal options. The secondary scope was all other riders (of all ages and both genders) who choose to ride unregistered vehicles.

Stakeholder input for this project came from two workshops held at Green Head and Jurien Bay; two on-line surveys (community groups and riders); and a series of individual meetings and phone interviews. The survey results are included as Appendix A and B.



THE CONTROL OF VEHICLES (OFF-ROAD AREAS) ACT 1978

The current regulatory framework for off-road vehicle use dates back to the mid 1970s. The Japanese motorcycle manufacturers were becoming the dominant force in the motorcycle industry and a new category of motorcycles – trail and mini bikes – was emerging. These machines were relatively inexpensive, easy to operate and could go just about anywhere. Unfortunately this go-anywhere characteristic began to cause problems for land managers and the environment.

The concerns over unrestricted access prompted a call for regulation – and a distinction between places where people could be legally allowed to ride these vehicles and places where riding should not be allowed.

This idea evolved into the Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act 1978 (CV(OA)A), which introduced the concept of Prohibited and Permitted Areas. Permitted Areas were areas of public land on which it would be legal to ride and drive off-road vehicles without those vehicles or their riders needing to be licenced for the road. The Act also confirmed that unregistered vehicles could be ridden or driven on private land with the consent of the landowner.

Eight initial Permitted Areas were established in WA in 1979⁴ with five of those subsequently de-gazetted, either because of the need to re-purpose the land for residential development or for other reasons such as concerns over management or liability. The location of the initial permitted areas suggests that the main, (perhaps only), selection criteria at the time was the low to non-existent conservation value of the land.

Permitted areas currently exist in:

Perth - Medina, Gnangara, Pinjar, Chidlow*
York
Lancelin and Ledge Point
Cervantes

Jurien Bay*
Geraldton (Southgates)
Carnarvon
Karratha - Millars Road, Millstream Road

Tom Price
Port Hedland

* Leased to MX Clubs and not publicly available

Of these areas, only York and Pinjar have been developed as recreational facilities. Karratha has commissioned a development and management plan for the Millars Road area, but the remainder have simply been made available in their natural state. Some – including Cervantes, Southgates and Millstream Road in Karratha – are not even currently recognised or promoted as gazetted areas.

⁴ Government Gazette 19 October 1979 pages 3283-84

Gazettal Process

New ORVAs can be proposed by the relevant Local Government Authority or any other interested party. An Advisory Committee to the Minister for Local Government reviews the application, conducts a public enquiry process to establish community sentiment for the project and then makes a recommendation to the Minister. Typical information sought by the Advisory Committee includes:

1. Description of the land
2. Proposed management details for the site, including signage and safety provisions
3. Required restrictions and justifications
4. Access available to site
5. Environmental factors, including proximity of houses
6. General noise level details for the area
7. Terrain type
8. Service utilities likely to be affected
9. Objections to the proposal
10. Facilities currently on site
11. Whether the council has sought insurance for the area.

Shire Responsibility

The responsibility for management of ORVAs is the subject of some debate. The CV(OA)A is clear that local government is to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act within its district, including but not limited to the areas gazetted as ORVAs (Section 5(1)), however the Act does not specify the extent to which ORVAs should be actively managed. This leaves the Occupiers Liability Act to resolve questions of duty of care, and some councils have questioned their required role in cases where an ORVA has been established on land not controlled by the council, e.g., Unallocated Crown Land.

Management – Facilities

Ignoring Chidlow and Jurien Bay, which are leased to motocross clubs and therefore not publicly accessible, most of the ORVAs have no built facilities and are not actively managed. The Pinjar and York sites have been developed with constructed circuits, segregated areas for junior and senior riders, and parking / unloading facilities. York has a shaded picnic area and bench, rudimentary toilet, and a barbecue. Lancelin has a defined parking area but the nature of the terrain does not lend itself to trail or circuit development. Medina has a cleared parking area but nothing else. No other ORVAs have any form of developed facilities.

Management – Visitor Behaviour

Patrols to monitor and guide visitor behaviour are virtually non-existent. Lancelin has the most active patrolling regime, but needs it because of the large number of visitors and high consequence risks associated with the area. Pinjar and York tend to be informally self-managed by riders and particularly parents of junior riders who visit. The local York ranger currently lives across the road from the ORVA and is actively involved, driven largely by personal interest. Other ORVAs may receive occasional visits from the local ranger but these tend to focus more on enforcement against people riding outside the ORVA.

Vehicle Registration

Vehicles registered under the CV(OA)A do not need to be inspected and only require a basic level of roadworthiness. Owners currently pay a \$6 annual fee (plus an additional one-time \$6 plate fee). No insurance cover is provided. Receipts from registration fees are directed to a special purpose account called the “Off-Road Vehicles Account” which can be drawn upon for the administration of the Act with the approval of the Minister for Local Government.

The Department of Transport administers the registration process on behalf of the Department of Local Government. Compliance is low, and riders are generally confused about what this registration allows. Little to no value is currently seen in gaining registration due to the lack of ORVAs and the poor state of most of those that do exist.

Rider Licencing

Riders do not need to hold a licence, and the minimum age is eight years. (In practice this is generally left to the discretion of parents and not enforced).

Occupier’s Liability

A concern commonly expressed by local government authorities is the risk of litigation in the event of an accident and the potential impact on public liability insurance. The Civil Liabilities Amendment Act 2003 puts the onus on participants where an activity has ‘inherent and obvious risks’. Provided an appropriate risk warning is provided (which can be as simple as a prominent sign), and provided the landowner has not been recklessly negligent towards the safety of participants, the risk of successful claim for injury against a council is low.

The local government pooled insurance provider has confirmed that recreation assets are not assessed individually, so having an ORVA will not automatically impact on insurance contributions. A council’s claims history and associated legal costs are taken into account, averaged over the preceding four years. There have been no successful claims against a council since the Civil Liabilities Amendment Act 2003 legislation was enacted. The most recent case, in which the Shire of Gingin was initially held partially liable for an injury at Lancelin, related to an incident which occurred prior to 2003. (The case was overturned on appeal⁵).

⁵ Supreme Court of Western Australia Court of Appeal - Martin CJ, McLure and Miller JJA - 25 May 2009 - [2009] WASCA 92

Other States

Western Australia is not alone in making legal provision for the riding of unregistered vehicles by unlicensed riders on public lands. New South Wales has similarly constructed legislation, but it is currently only applied in one location – Stockton Beach.

The Future of ORVAs

The Western Australian State Trail Bike Strategy identified the potential for ORVAs to make a larger contribution to the management of the activity, recommending that the existing ORVAs be redeveloped with planned facility design and that additional regional ORVAs be created.⁶ This current study is consistent with those recommendations. Work on the Pinjar ORVA has been funded by Lottery West and DPAW as a pilot to show how ORVAs can be managed to achieve successful outcomes.

⁶ State Trail Bike Strategy 2008, Recommendations 2.021, 2.023

RIDER SEGMENTS

Not all trail bikes (or riders) are the same. To fully understand the issues and non-issues it is useful to distinguish between different types of riders, bikes and riding experiences sought. Broadly, riders fit into one of the three following groups:

1. Riders and bikes *least* likely to be causing major issues are:

Competition Motocross – These riders can be any age, although they typically are either children supported by their parents or under 40s. They enjoy competitive racing on formed motocross circuits. They are likely to be a member of a club, wear all the protective gear, and trailer their bikes or quads to and from the circuit.

Road Registered Trail / Enduro – These riders hold motorcycle licences, so they are over 17 years of age and often considerably older. Their motivation tends to be exploration, and to ride longer distances on trails that lead somewhere. They are unlikely to want to ride closer to town.

2. Riders causing some legal problems and liability issues, but not likely to be the cause of many resident complaints:

Family Groups – It is not possible to hold a motorcycle licence until 17 years of age, so no junior rider is able to ride legally on public roads, no matter how quiet the road may be. Additionally, the smaller motorcycles that are suitable for younger or smaller riders are not road registerable. This means that no matter how ‘responsibly’ a family group is riding, if there are kids or quads involved they cannot be riding legally on public land (with the exception of inside a gazetted Off-road Vehicle Area).

Quads and Side-by-Side Tourers – Used for destination riding similar to enduro motorcycles. These types of vehicles are not road registerable, so even if under the control of licenced riders / drivers they cannot legally be on public land. This is a large and growing segment in the USA where vehicle laws often allow these vehicles on public roads, but it is an untapped market in Australia. Despite this, a growing number of people are buying these types of vehicles and heading off to explore.

Considerate “Un-Uns” – Unregistered vehicle and / or unlicenced rider, but with an awareness of and respect for others. This segment will ride through established trails and on paths adjacent to roads in order to ‘commute’ to their riding areas, but will do so with a view of not attracting undue attention.

3. Riders representing the real problem element:

No licence / no registration / no respect – This final group is the one that causes the most angst. Not only are they ignoring the law, but they also show no consideration to other people or the environment. They ride the loudest bikes or quads (and ride them loudly everywhere). They

are the group most likely to be travelling at speeds on beaches, vegetated dunes, footpaths and cycleways, are least likely to be wearing helmets, and least likely to stop when called upon to do so by a Ranger.

While these distinctions are important, a limitation to their usefulness is that the numbers within each group can not be quantified.

The primary riders likely to make use of gazetted ORVAs are Family Groups and Considerate “Un-Uns”.

An objective in creating an ORVA is to progressively convert as many as possible of the ‘No licence / no registration / no respect’ group into ‘Considerate “Un-Uns”’, and thus bring them in to the “responsible” group and out of the “anti-authority” group – by providing a legal option, and through education and enforcement.

WHAT RIDERS ARE SEEKING

The genesis of this study was the realisation that in order to reduce problematic ORV use it was important to be able to provide preferred alternatives. Clearly such a strategy will be easier to implement and more successful if the alternatives preferred by land managers are also acceptable to the riders. Logically, the greater that preferred alternatives align with the desires of riders, the greater will be their prospects of success.

An online survey was undertaken to gauge riders' desires and preferences. The full results are included as Appendix B, however in summary:

By far the largest response to the question: What do you like about trail or quad bike riding? was "Freedom, Bush, Exploring" (66 per cent). The second largest response was "Time with family and friends." (39.4 per cent)

These freedom and social aspects rated much more highly than the "Fun, thrill, excitement" (24.5 per cent) or "Challenge, test and skills" (5.3 per cent) that are more typically associated with competition riding or riding on challenging circuits.

Less than 25 per cent of respondents who live in the NAR belong to a club. It is suggested that the structure around clubs and events may be at odds with the desire for freedom and exploration, and the ability to be able to ride as a family unit. Of respondents who live in the NAR, over 90 per cent stated they usually ride with a family group.

Coastal trails (46 per cent), beach (23 per cent) and sand dunes (11.4 per cent) were the preferred riding terrain of NAR resident respondents. Only 5.7 per cent cited Motocross tracks as the preferred type or riding area.

Closeness to home was cited as the primary drawcard for their preferred riding area (75 per cent) followed by good scenery (66.9 per cent) and good trails (63.9 per cent). Next came "maybe not legal, but I don't get hassled" (47.2 per cent). By contrast, the fact that an area was legal did not rate nearly as highly (8.3 per cent). This suggests that riders will continue to prioritise other factors over legality, reinforcing the notion that to be an effective attractant of riders, an ORVA must provide a sense of freedom and exploration; be family friendly; provide a mix of trail lengths and styles; and have reasonable accessibility and proximity. When asked whether they would ride at a commercial ride park that cost \$25 per day, only 27.6 per cent of NAR resident riders said 'No', suggesting that there is potential in the future to develop pay-per-use facilities.

CURRENT LEGAL AREAS IN THE NAR

ORVAs

Within the NAR coastal zone (between Lancelin and Kalbarri) there are five areas gazetted areas under the Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act. These are located at:

- Lancelin
- Ledge Point
- Cervantes
- Jurien
- Southgates.

Following is a brief summary of each area:

Lancelin

Lancelin is one of only two areas in the region operating as officially recognised and endorsed ORVAs (the other is Ledge Point). The Lancelin ORVA is approximately 400Ha in size, with open dunes atop a limestone base. It is the only ORVA open to all types and sizes of bikes, quads, buggies and four wheel drives and it is not uncommon to see V8 powered sand buggies travelling at high speed in the same vicinity as children on mini bikes. Despite this, less than 9 per cent of injuries recorded by Silver Chain in 2006 were from collision with other vehicles⁷. The open style of riding and natural jumps are enjoyed by many riders, leading to the area being popular and sometimes crowded, especially in summer/autumn (Australia Day and Easter in particular). Razorback dunes pose a particular danger for riders, and have been the cause of several fatalities and many serious injuries (34 per cent of recorded injuries in 2006). Gingin Shire manages the area but is stretched to provide sufficient resources. As a tourism destination, Lancelin benefits from the ORVA, with a business survey conducted in 2007 indicating an economic contribution to Lancelin exceeding \$1 million per annum. Against this, however, must be factored the direct costs to the council of managing the area.

Ledge Point

The Ledge Point ORVA is a small site (12.5 Ha) just south of Lancelin. It consists of one main loop circuit of approximately 1.3km in sandy coastal scrub. There are no facilities on the site.

⁷ Lancelin Off-Road Injuries Final Report 2006, Department of Health Wheatbelt Public Health Unit

Jurien Bay

The Jurien ORVA was gazetted in September 1988⁸, although the area had been used for riding for some years prior. It has since been split, with part of the lot developed and licensed as a competition motocross circuit. The land was leased to the Jurien Bay MX club, however the circuit was licensed, for event days only, by the Geraldton MX Club. The lease expired in 2014 and has not been renewed. A go-kart racing circuit has also been developed within the boundaries of the ORVA and is in active use. The MX circuit and go-kart track currently preclude the open public use of the area, however if the MX circuit was modified, the area could have limited potential for public use.

Cervantes

The Cervantes ORVA was gazetted in September 1988⁹. Little is known about this area, other than that it is under 20Ha in size, appears to have had little recent use, and is located either partially or wholly within the Southern Beekeepers Nature Reserve. The encroachment on the Nature Reserve, its small size, and poor terrain renders it unsuitable for further consideration.

Southgates

The Southgates ORVA is an area of UCL (of approximately 114 Ha) located north of the Greenough River mouth. It was gazetted as a Permitted Area in July 1999¹⁰ but appears not to have ever been officially recognised or developed as a motorised recreation facility. It consists of sand tracks leading to a dunal area. The northern boundary abuts a privately owned property used as a sand quarry. There is no boundary fence, so riders spill into this property or access it directly from Southgates Beach Road.

The Southgates area was nominated as a potential ORVA in the City of Geraldton's "Natural Areas Local Laws" report and is considered in further detail in this report as a candidate area.

Clubs

Geraldton MX Club

The Geraldton MX club operates three facilities – in Geraldton, Dongara and Jurien Bay. The Geraldton circuit is on land sub-leased from the City of Greater Geraldton (expiring in 2019). The Dongara property is privately owned by a motorcycle enthusiast, and the Jurien Bay circuit is part of a gazetted ORVA leased by the Jurien Bay MX Club from the Shire of Dandaragan. On each of the three properties are competition-grade motocross circuits, licenced under Motorcycling

⁸ Government Gazette 16 September 1988 p3725

⁹ IBID

¹⁰ Government Gazette 28 July 1989 p2349

Australia rules. While the primary purpose of these circuits is competitive motocross racing, the Geraldton and Jurien Bay circuits are also available for private practice and non-competitive riding. However the strict licensing conditions required by Motorcycling Australia impose several constraints. At least one first-aid certified official must be on duty for any private practice session; adults and children are not permitted to ride together; and the competition-level jumps make the circuits potentially dangerous for inexperienced riders. Access is restricted to club members who pay an annual fee of \$190, plus \$300 for a Motorcycling WA Licence (or \$105 for a recreational licence).

Midwest Trail and Enduro Club

The Midwest Trail and Enduro Club runs competitive enduros and non-competitive trail rides on a mix of private and public lands. While the competitive side of the club's activities has been successful, attempts by the group to engage recreational riders in structured events have not taken off. Quad bike riders in particular have been difficult to entice.

The two clubs provide an important service to a segment of the local riding population, but the fact that problem riding still exists in the NAR highlights the limited impact of clubs. The Riders' Survey conducted for this study provides an insight into this.

Commercial Ride Parks

Another legal option for riders are commercial ride parks. These are privately operated facilities where an investment in facilities, supervision, maintenance and insurance is covered by a daily admission price.

Commercial ride parks typically don't have the same rules and restrictions as competitive circuits and can offer a less structured experience that often includes camping.

Murchison Offroad Adventures

Murchison Offroad Adventures is a 300,000 acre 4WD and trail bike adventure park at Coolcalalaya Station, a pastoral lease property set on the banks of the Murchison River. It offers hundreds of kilometres of trails with varying terrain and difficulty levels, plus camping and other activities.

A round trip from Geraldton is three hours of driving, including 110 kilometres of dirt road. As such it is practical only as a full-day or weekend activity and should satisfy the desires of riders for freedom, exploration and family socialising.

Despite the apparent appeal, only 1 out of 77 respondents to the rider survey cited a commercial ride park as a place they had ridden. The distance would be a limiting factor, as would cost, but it may be that better promotion of this facility (by the Murchison Offroad owners and by rangers while intercepting illegal riders) would encourage a greater use by locals.

Coastal Trails and Beaches - Road Registered Vehicles

Many of the beaches and coastal tracks are open and legally available for road registered vehicles and licenced drivers / riders. Lancelin to Cervantes and return is a popular one-day ride, and Lancelin to Jurien Bay and return is a popular two-day ride for Perth-based riders¹¹. Drummonds Cove to Horrocks, Cape Burney to Flat Rocks were mentioned by riders who live within the NAR.

On-coming traffic is cited by riders as the major problem, with some calls for the development of a duplicate trail to enable a north-bound and south-bound route.

¹¹ Personal interviews with members of the Crusty Quinns trail bike riding group

CURRENT PROBLEM AREAS

Identifying and exploring current problem areas can build an understanding of where riders are currently going, the type of riding they are seeking and the nature of the problems they are causing.

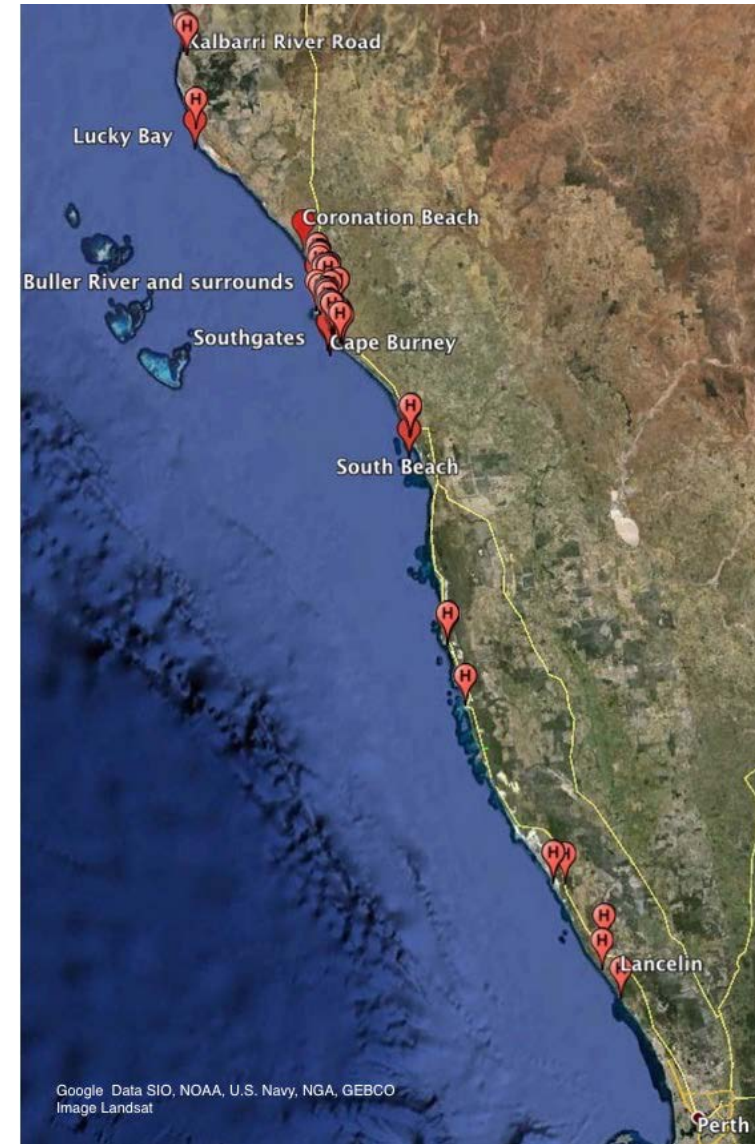
Current 'hot-spot' problem areas were identified by way of stakeholder consultation and a community survey.

Stakeholders included representatives from the eight LGAs, plus land management and conservation agencies. This provided insight from the perspective of the people who are tasked with responding to the issues. A common theme raised was the lack of ranger resources available to monitor and manage such large tracts of coastline. Rangers also expressed frustration at the lack of legal alternatives to which they could direct riders, most keenly felt when dealing with family groups or parents with children.

The online community survey was promoted via landcare agencies, community groups and local media and attracted 40 responses¹² from which a list of 44 hot-spot areas was derived. Environmental damage, irresponsible behaviour and spoiling the enjoyment of other beach users were the primary concerns raised by respondents. Over 60 per cent claimed to have lodged a complaint at some stage, but of those less than 20 per cent felt that the issue had been resolved.

The survey confirmed that the issue is widespread along the coast, with hot-spots reported all along the coastline from Lancelin to Kalbarri, tending to cluster around the more populated areas. The most commonly reported areas are located between south of Cape Burney and Coronation Beach – which is not surprising given the proximity to Geraldton, and the concentration of residential population and recreational activity in the City of Greater Geraldton catchment.

¹² Community Survey details are attached as Appendix A



THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

If a lasting solution is to be found it is important to more clearly define the problem(s) needing resolution. The workshops and consultations identified the following range of problems:

1. Environmental damage

De-stabilising and displacing sand and soil – an unavoidable consequence of all traffic, but exacerbated by aggressive riding of high-powered vehicles. Can lead to serious erosion problems.

Compressing and displacing vegetation – would not be a significant problem if everyone stuck to riding / driving on formed tracks and trails.

Creating new trails – some riders and drivers will go off-track to avoid an obstacle such as a wet area, fallen tree or soft or rocky section, or for the challenge of a hill. Over time this trail braiding can have catastrophic impacts on vegetation. Without constant supervision or immovable physical barriers it is virtually impossible to prevent this from occurring.

Littering – including attracting feral animals via discarded food scraps.

Fire risk – Off - road riding of trail bikes can heighten fire risk, as there is potential for sparks or hot exhaust pipes on a fallen motorcycle to ignite flammable forest fuels under certain circumstances.

2. Social nuisance

Noise – a common complaint from people who live near areas where ORV use occurs is noise pollution which affects the tranquility of the coastal environment. Modern motorcycles have much improved noise suppression, however some riders modify their exhausts to gain a power advantage. Anecdotally, this tends to be more prevalent with quad bikes.

Dust – can be a problem, particularly where riding in close proximity to residential or picnic areas. Considerate riders can minimise dust by reducing speed, however not all riders are considerate.

Disturbance – the impact that one type of recreator has on others. This can include any of the above as well as excessive perceived speed, where the perception of danger (whether real or not) can impact on other beach or trail users.

3. Safety

Participant safety – an obvious concern of land managers, notwithstanding the legal protection afforded by legislation such as the Civil Liabilities Amendment Act 2003.

Non-participant safety – a greater concern, given that a non-riding beachgoer can have an expectation that the land manager will take reasonable steps to provide a safe environment or at the least, adequate warnings of dangers beyond those to be expected at a beach setting (e.g., sharks, rips, stingers, etc)

4. Cost

Management –

Management resources – including engagement with riders and complainants

Material resources – engineering signage; fencing and barricades; and education materials

Prosecution and monitoring resources - enforcement costs and associated program evaluation.

Remediation – the cost of repairing damage that has not been prevented by other means, whether that cost is expended or just understood. For example, a City of Geraldton snapshot study indicated a coastline repair cost of \$6 million just for a section of the coastal reserve¹³.

Liability – can be seen as a cost in two ways. The first is the risk of insurance premium increases as the result of successful litigation and the inability of a local government to demonstrate effective management of the risk. The other is the time and expense involved in dealing with complaints whether or not they move to litigation and even if a lawsuit against the council is not successful.

¹³ Source: Comment from Robyn Nicholas CGG - NACC Workshop January 20, 2015

ORVA SELECTION CRITERIA

Establishing a suitable location for a new ORVA requires the alignment of the objectives of riders, land managers (particularly local government) and residents. While there are no firmly established and quantified criteria, there are some important considerations that can guide an assessment of the suitability of an area.

For Land Managers

- Ability to contain the activity within the designated area. Ideally, no common boundaries with conservation areas or areas where riding could spill out and become a nuisance. Fencing is an expensive option to install and maintain, and may represent a safety risk to riders, so the need for fencing should be avoided or minimised if possible.
- Controlled (preferably single) point of entry. This ensures that visitors have the opportunity to see risk warning signage that is required for the area and helps prevent the mixing of cars and bikes. This does not necessarily preclude emergency escape routes in case of fire or management access.
- Low conservation value.
- Ability to manage the activity within the designated area. For example, a forested area is easier to manage by developing a network of trails for riders to follow. A dunal area is harder to manage because it is impossible to stop riders from riding wherever they please.
- Durability of the terrain. Unvegetated dunes are durable because they are wind-refreshed. Coastal vegetation, Wandoo woodlands or swampy areas are not as durable – as degradation can be long-lasting or permanent. Flat areas are more durable than hilly areas.
- Ability to manage visitor risk – both for participants, non participants (i.e., family, spectators) and the public. This can mean identifying and removing user-created structures, designing trails rather than accepting a free-for-all, and separating incompatible riding styles.
- Safe and legal access. Ideally an ORVA should be located to discourage illegal riding to and from. Isolation from residential suburbs helps encourage riders to trailer their bikes to the area.
- Land tenure – the legal rights to use the land, including the willingness of the land owner to participate.
- Absence of constraints such as Water Source Protection Area zoning, Disease Risk Area, Conservation Reserves, Aboriginal heritage, etc.
- Low probability of conflict with other pre-existing recreational uses
- Willingness and affordability for the land manager to accommodate an ORVA.

For Residents

- Positioned away from residential areas. There is no hard and fast rule about distance, as there are several factors that influence how sound is carried. Objections to the establishment of a new ORVA may come from many miles away, and like any development application the objections of landowners must be balanced against the greater public good. Complaints or objections from landowners living within a 1 kilometre radius are likely to be given considerable weight in the public consultation phase.
- Not creating nuisance and safety issues by riding overlapping onto residential streets.

For Riders

- Terrain and features that are similar to (or preferably superior to) the experiences they are currently enjoying (whether legally or illegally) in surrounding natural areas.
- Reasonable proximity to home. Travel distance tolerated will depend on quality of riding experience offered.
- Ease of access for utes and cars with trailers. Ideally sealed road access to parking / unloading areas.
- Phone coverage for emergencies
- Facilities such as parking / unloading areas close to where riding occurs, shaded viewing areas for parents, basic toilets
- Safety for young riders – segregation from older / faster riders, visibility for parents, age- and experience-appropriate trails and circuits
- Adequate size to meet demand without overcrowding.

ORVA MANAGEMENT

As stated earlier, the CV(OA)A is silent on the extent to which ORVAs need to be actively managed by the responsible LGA.

From the time of initial gazettals in 1979 to 2008 the prevailing view appeared to be that the only management requirement was to identify and gazette a parcel of land as a Permitted Area.

There are at least three factors that contributed to this view:

1. An assumption that riders neither desired nor needed any infrastructure or development in such an area.
2. A concern that any modifications to the natural landscape could be interpreted as an 'introduced hazard', affecting the proximity of responsibility and increasing the duty of care (and hence risk of litigation) under the Occupiers Liability Act.
3. A reluctance to classify ORVAs as recreation facilities. They were seen purely as a partial solution to a problem, not a facility catering to a growing outdoor recreational preference and were therefore not considered when setting recreational budget allocations and priorities. Indeed it took until 2009 for trail bike riding to be recognised as a legitimate trails activity in the State Trails Strategy.¹⁴

The outcome of this thinking was that LGAs did not allocate funding to these areas and took no interest in them.

The State Trail Bike Strategy challenged each of these assumptions, and the evidence from the two 'developed' ORVAs at Pinjar and York supported an alternative paradigm.

1. Riders will be drawn to an area that has been planned and developed. Planned separation of junior, novice and experienced riders is of particular appeal to parents. One-way trail systems, blocked-off intersections and a sense of order gives riders a feeling of relative safety. Encouraging families progressively discourages loutish behaviour. Riders do appreciate and respect the facilities that have been provided for them. Attracting riders to a developed ORVA achieves the objectives by drawing them away from less suitable riding areas.
2. Modifications to the natural environment may increase duty of care, and impose on the landowner an obligation to ensure no 'introduced hazards', however this must be taken on balance with the concept of 'reckless disregard for safety' which could be levelled at a landowner who knew of hazards existing in the natural state of the land, was aware of reasonable steps that could be taken to reduce risk, but failed to act on that knowledge. As an example, DPaW identified the multiple intersections in rows of pine forest as a risk of the area in its natural state, and mitigated this by designing and constructing a network of one-way trails.

¹⁴ State Trails Strategy, 2009. Department of Sport & Recreation

3. The State Trails Strategy identifies motorised recreation as a legitimate trails activity, alongside hiking and mountain bike riding. It is an increasingly popular family pastime that has demonstrable social and physical benefits and land managers such as DPaW are now looking for more opportunities to support the activity in a managed way.

For the above reasons, in considering the feasibility of establishing ORVAs in the NAR it is important to be thinking in terms of a developed facility.

Other key issues to consider include the *level* of facilities and management that should be provided.

Criteria that drive this decision include:

- How important is this area in drawing riders away from problem areas?
- What styles of riding and types of riders are being targeted?
- How many riders could be expected to use the area?
- What are the ground conditions? For example sandy conditions are not suitable for young riders on small-wheeled bikes. At Pinjar clay trails over a limestone base were created to provide a sustainable and satisfying surface for young and novice riders)
- Is there riding interest in the natural terrain profile (e.g., Lancelin) or does all riding interest need to be created?
- Does the land manager have the resources necessary to manage and maintain the facility (assuming that budget can be found)?
- What is a reasonable risk management strategy (including inspection frequency) for the proposed ORVA?
- What are the likely impacts from riders spilling from the ORVA into surrounding areas?

The answers to the above questions will help determine the necessary capital and recurring budget that needs to be sought in order to create ORVAs that are successful in providing the experience sought by riders, successful in reducing illegal or problem riding in the target region, and sustainable in both environmental and financial terms.

The above criteria will be considered in the context of each of the identified candidate areas.

FINANCING

It is a primary assumption that an ORVA will only be considered feasible if it can be shown to be both environmentally and economically sustainable. That means sourcing funding for the development of the ORVA *and* the ongoing management and maintenance costs.

Put bluntly, there is no point continuing to explore the finer points of an area's potential if there is not a reasonable prospect of sourcing the necessary capital and recurrent operational funding.

Funding may be available from multiple sources if multiple objectives can be identified. The following table sets out objectives, funding types and potential sources:

Objective	Funding Type/s	Funding Source/s
Protect coastal ecosystems by diverting a significant number of off-road vehicles to designated area	Capital / recurrent	Coastwest, DPaW Environmental, Royalties for Regions (Regional Grants Scheme)
Encourage participation in a family-oriented, physical outdoor activity	Capital	Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF)
Develop trails network for participant satisfaction and environmental protection	Capital	LotteryWest Trails Grant
Upgrade / improve recreational facility	Series of capital injections	DSR Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF), LotteryWest Trails Grant
Administer an ORVA	Recurrent, operational	Off-Road Vehicles Account

The State Trail Bike Strategy made several recommendations for ORV funding mechanisms¹⁵, including the creation of an ORV Grant Scheme that can be accessed by local governments, local communities and off-road vehicle bodies. The State Government is yet to implement these recommendations.

¹⁵ State Trail Bike Strategy, p232

ORVA CANDIDATE AREAS

Land managers and riders were invited to propose areas that they believed might hold promise as potential ORVAs.

The City of Greater Geraldton suggested an area that had been identified in their recent Natural Areas Local Laws project, which had itself been the subject of extensive community and rider consultation. This area is the parcel of Unallocated Crown Land (UCL) known as Southgates.

No other proposals were received from stakeholders or riders. The lack of response is symptomatic of the difficulty in locating sites that meet all the criteria as potential areas, and the 'not-in-my-backyard' attitude that tends to prevail.

Extensive desktop analysis was undertaken using Google Earth supplemented by the Landgate SLIP 'Locate' layer, which provides property boundaries and some address details. Constraints such as National Parks and Nature Reserves, Drinking Water Source Protection Areas and residential proximity were considered, and areas falling within these boundaries were excluded from further consideration.

Further consultation with local riders identified several areas and coastal trails, however these were either already excluded due to tenure constraints or were located on or required access through private property.

On-site visits of potential areas and current problem areas provided a first-hand perspective of the issues and opportunities.

The process identified the following areas of public land for consideration:

Area	Proposed by	Features	Initial Constraints	Status
Buller River mouth	Desktop research, on-site visit	Combination of pasture and coastal terrain, compatible land tenure	Several registered Aboriginal sites	Possible
Southgates	City of Greater Geraldton Local for Natural Areas	Current usage, current gazettal as ORVA [to be confirmed], mix of sand trails and dunes, proximity to Geraldton	All soft sand, many intersecting trails with poor sight lines (collision risk and difficult to mitigate), adjacent to private sand quarry	Possible
Wicherina	Riders	Formerly popular riding area, firm ground, away from coastal reserves (approx 40km inland)	Water Catchment Area (Dept of Water) – not a supported activity under Policy 13 and DoW has been immovable on this policy elsewhere. Could revisit if water status changes.	Rejected
Cape Burney (south of Greenough River mouth)	Desktop research, on-site visit	Current usage, combination of dunes and firm ground	High conservation issues, Conflict with non-motorised recreation (walk, mountain bike), not supported by South Greenough – Cape Burney Coastal Planning Strategy	Rejected
Leeman (south of air strip)	Desktop research	Current usage	Area encroaches on Beekeeper Nature Reserve boundary, <10Ha	Unlikely
Jurien Bay ORVA	Desktop research	Current gazettal as an ORVA, potential for Juniors	Leased to MX club, developed as a competition circuit, Go-Kart track sharing land	Limited

Of these sites, only Buller River mouth and Southgates were considered worthy of more detailed investigation, with Jurien Bay noted as being possible on a limited scale subject to lease obligations.

The concept of one or more coastal trail routes for road registered vehicles should also be investigated further. None were identified as holding potential for development as ORVAs, primarily due to the need to access or cross private property.

Candidate 1: Buller River mouth

Location	Buller River mouth, Oakajee – Lot 1 North Coastal Hwy Folio Vol 2229 Folio 461 and 462
Description	Two parcels of land acquired by Landcorp as buffer for the proposed Oakajee industrial precinct. One to the immediate north of Buller River mouth and one to the immediate south.
LGA	Shire of Chapman Valley
Tenure	Freehold – Owned by Landcorp. Zoned for recreational day use.
Approx Area	Area 1 (north) approx 44Ha Area 2 (south) approx 56Ha
Terrain	Area 1 - predominantly cleared pasture Area 2 - approx 55 per cent coastal vegetation, 45 per cent dunes
Access	Area 1 is accessed via 1.6km private dirt road off North West Coastal Highway 140m north of the Buller River bridge. The intersection of this road and North West Coastal Highway may need to be upgraded or relocated to meet Main Roads WA requirements and this cost would need to be factored in to both development and maintenance costs. There is no current direct access to Area 2, however creation of formal access to Area 1 will facilitate access to both. Informal access would also be likely via coastal tracks from Drummonds Cove.
Phone Coverage	Good
Facilities	None. Area 1 includes a house (currently tenanted) which could be used as a caretaker residence or other purpose, at least until development of the industrial precinct commences. Fuel (Gull 440) is just over 5km away.
Preclusions	Seven Aboriginal heritage sites listed within the two identified areas. Land immediately east and south east of Area 2 is zoned for future urban development.
Potential	Develop Area 1 as a family-friendly trail and mild MX circuit zone Develop Area 2 as a series of defined coastal tracks and dunal system. Permit beach access and riding to a line extending westwards from the northern boundary of Area 1 and to a line extending westwards from the southern boundary of Area 2.

Narrative:

The Buller River mouth was considered primarily because of the inherent logic of situating an ORVA within an industrial precinct buffer zone. The area has been used by riders for many years, in particular the southern dunes portion – which is accessible via coastal tracks from north of Drummonds Cove on land owned by the Mid West Ports Authority.

In-principle conversations with the major land stakeholders – the Mid West Ports Authority, Shire of Chapman Valley and Landcorp – raised no obvious and insurmountable objections to the further consideration of the area. The concept of locating an ORVA in this area was also canvassed at the working group meeting on 20 January 2015. No objections were raised at the meeting or subsequently that would prevent the continuing exploration of this site's feasibility.

The 44Ha of mainly pasture land north of Buller River lends itself to development as a built facility, with the prospect of a network of circuits and trails catering to different age groups and styles of riding.

The northern property is currently tenanted, but this is believed to be on a short-term basis. Being within the industrial zone buffer area, the land has been deemed not suitable for habitation which would preclude overnight accommodation or ongoing residential tenancy once the precinct development commences.

The slightly larger southern portion could be developed as a network of defined coastal tracks and a dunal area for more free-range riding.

Stakeholder Agreement

LandCorp have indicated an in-principle interest in exploring the use of the land for this purpose, with the primary stipulations being:

1. Landcorp would not be required to contribute funding,
2. Landcorp would not have any role in managing the facility,
3. Landcorp would need to be satisfied that it is adequately indemnified or otherwise protected against any liability under the Occupiers' Liability Act.

The Shire of Chapman Valley raised the significant issues of resourcing and management responsibilities that would need to be addressed to progress the exploration of this site. The Shire firmly expressed the view that it would only support the development of an ORVA in this area if it could be guaranteed of the necessary funding to cover:

1. All initial planning and development costs



Area A (North) viewed from the Access Road

2. All future resourcing, maintenance and management costs, appropriately indexed and quarantined
3. Associated costs such as depreciation costs and road maintenance
4. Any additional insurance costs arising.

In addition, the Shire of Chapman Valley indicated a strong reluctance to assume the indemnity provisions required by Landcorp, however it expressed a willingness to explore management models with Landcorp and the Mid West Ports Authority whereby the local government was engaged to manage a facility owned by Landcorp or another state government agency or department.

The Shire's preferred position is for Landcorp to retain ultimate ownership and responsibility, and to contract the Shire to manage the facility on its behalf. The Shire would want to retain the right to withdraw from the management of the facility in the event that funding was removed or reduced.

It was beyond the scope of this project to broker a deal between the stakeholders, nor was it within the scope of this project to seek and secure the requisite funding. The feasibility moves forward on the basis that these pre-conditions are noted and would need to be addressed if the project is to progress in this area.

That said, it is possible to provide some rationale for limited optimism. Here, in principle, is how those pre-conditions might be met:

As landowner, Landcorp currently assumes all Occupiers' Liability risks and owes a duty of care to anyone entering the land. Landcorp currently spends money on mitigating that risk, by erecting signage, fencing-off access and modifying landscape features that are deemed to be a visitor risk. A recent example is the re-contouring of steep banks in the bowl area. The Mid West Ports Authority also spends money on risk mitigation, as much of the current access to Buller River occurs along the coastal reserve under its management.

Management of recreation activities or sites is not Landcorp's core business, so the benefit to Landcorp in making the land available is to transfer that responsibility and associated costs to another land manager. That benefit can only be realised if Landcorp's three pre-conditions are met, although it might be the case that a small amount of funding might be negotiated, providing that it represents a substantial reduction in what Landcorp would otherwise be spending on risk management.

With a population of only 1,214 people¹⁶, the Shire of Chapman Valley cannot be expected to foot the bill for a facility that will draw the vast majority of its patronage from outside the Shire. And a specific fear of the Shire, based on too many precedents in local government, is that while external funding may be found for initial development, the Shire will then be expected to pay for management and maintenance into the future. The identification of less obvious costs, such as the increased frequency of road maintenance and the depreciation of any physical assets, is also a legitimate concern. Similarly, it would be an unfair burden on the ratepayers of the Shire if the introduction of an ORVA to the Shire's recreation inventory caused an increase in overall insurance costs.

¹⁶ ABS 3218.0 2013

To realistically expect the Shire's enthusiastic support for the project (and anything less would compromise the success of the project), the Shire must be able to see some ability for full cost recovery, and preferably a net benefit.

Logically, this benefit would be in the form of additional resources, funded for the ORVA but not exclusively used within the ORVA. The employment of a dedicated Coastal Ranger, for example, would provide the Shire with a regular presence to manage the ORVA while having time that can be allocated for coastal management duties further up the coast, with the possible option of a shared arrangement with the adjacent City of Greater Geraldton and Northampton Shire, which share common coastal management issues, as do Landcorp and the Mid West Ports Authority in relation to land under their control.

As for liability, informal advice provided by LGIS for similar ORVA-related projects suggests that the existence of an ORVA should have no automatic impact on a local government's pooled insurance bill, provided that basic risk management plans are in place. Contribution levels could be impacted by claims history.

Where a risk management plan is a pre-condition of acceptable insurability under the LGIS pooled scheme and / or Landcorp's insurance scheme, then both the Shire of Chapman Valley and Landcorp as ultimate lessor should feel adequately protected.

On the basis of the above, and notwithstanding the negotiations that would be required, and assuming the necessary funding can be sourced, we would conclude that it is feasible to reach a position that would satisfy both Landcorp as landowner and the Shire of Chapman Valley as land manager and administrator of the CV(OA)A.

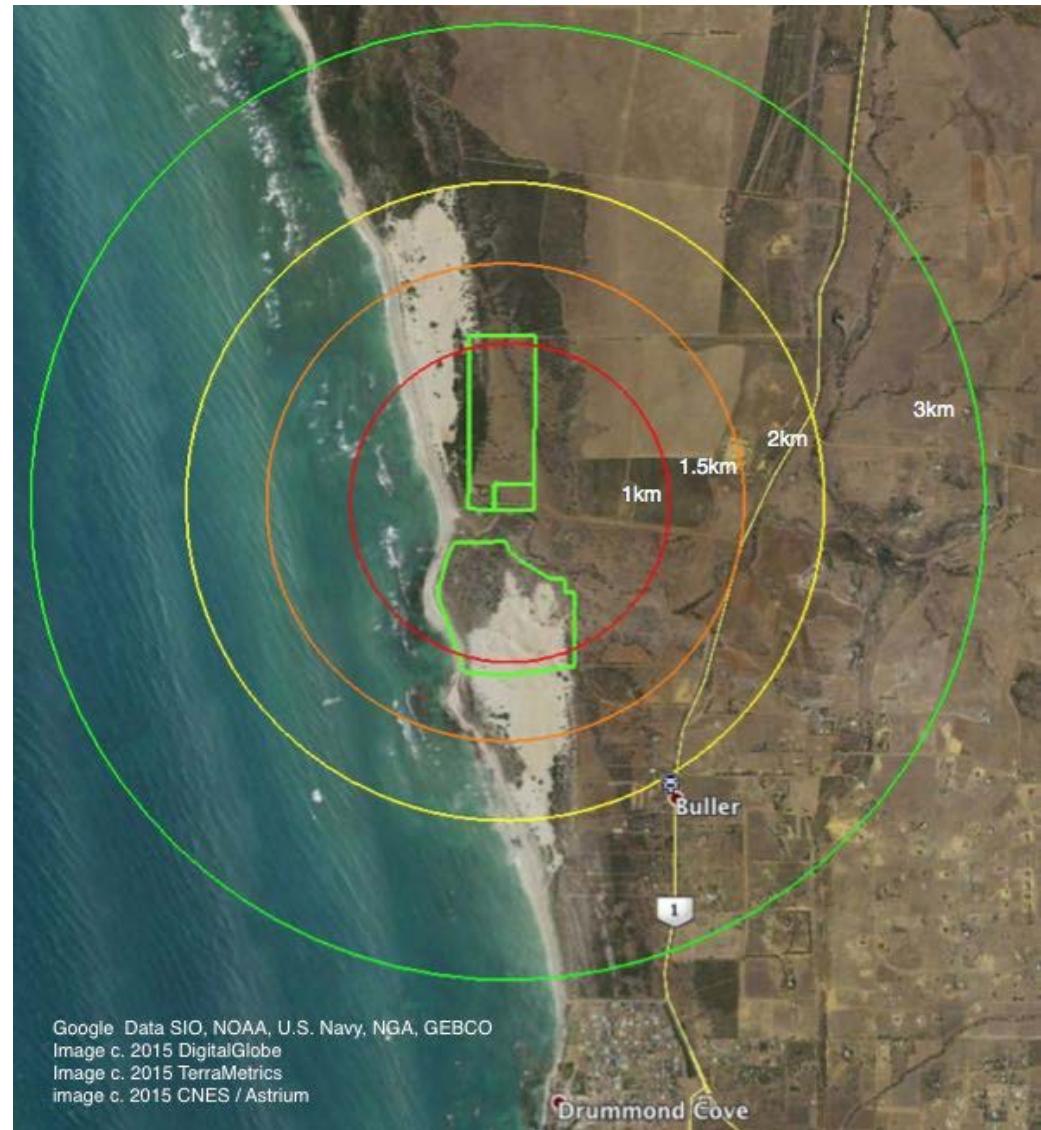
That leaves the question of how this area could be funded. It is acknowledged that the vast majority of visitors to the ORVA would come from outside the Shire of Chapman Valley, with most coming from the City of Greater Geraldton. The City of Greater Geraldton could therefore be expected to make a contribution either in cash or in kind. The majority of the establishment costs would need to be sourced through funding providers such as the Mid West Development Commission, Lotterywest, Department of Sport & Recreation and other parties based on the environmental preservation and active participation objectives outlined earlier.

In accordance with the State Trail Bike Strategy recommendations, the State Government should be a key contributor through the Off-Road Vehicle Account for both capital and recurrent operational costs.

If an agreement in principle can be reached between the above primary stakeholders, other stakeholders including the local community would be consulted as part of the ORVA gazettal process.



Buller River mouth area showing position relative to NW Coastal Hwy.



Buller River mouth area showing buffer distances from centre.

Candidate 2: Southgates

Location	11939 GREENOUGH RIVER RD, CAPE BURNEY
Description	Land to the immediate north of the Greenough River Road car park, extending approx 2.7km north. Irregular shaped boundary, with first 850 metres (heading north) being a strip only 90m wide, then widening to 700m in the dunes. Beyond the northern unfenced, unmarked boundary is private property (2453 Brand Hwy Cape Burney) sand quarry
LGA	City of Greater Geraldton
Tenure	Unallocated Crown Land. Gazetted as an Off Road Vehicle Area in July 1989.
Approx Area	114Ha
Terrain	Approx 15 per cent coastal vegetation, 85 per cent dunes
Access	Direct access is via the car park north of Greenough River Road. Current usage of this area includes private sand quarry north of the gazetted area, access via Southgates Beach Road.
Phone Coverage	Good
Facilities	None. Greenough River Road car park provides approx 2,700sqm of parking, but shared by all Greenough River mouth visitors.
Preclusions	No Aboriginal heritage sites listed within area
Potential	Identified as the only possible Motorised Recreation Zone in the City of Geraldton's Local Laws for Natural Areas community consultation.

Narrative:

Southgates was identified during the community consultation undertaken for the City of Greater Geraldton's Natural Areas Local Laws report. It is in common use and is already gazetted as an ORVA, which means that there is no process to go through to endorse its use.

It appears that the area is still Unallocated Crown Land that has not been vested in the City of Greater Geraldton, although there is some doubt about the actual land tenure of this block. A Land Titles order dated 10/6/2010 designates the purpose of the entire parcel of land for the purpose of 'Foreshore reserve, dune stabilisation and a subdivisional development including the provision of services (such as power, water, roads, sewerage) and land for residential purposes.'¹⁷

The boundaries are unclear. The gazetted ORVA appears to be only part of the lot itself and somewhat arbitrarily created. Encroachment to the west and north is inevitable without extensive fencing and a network of informal trails has been created to the west of the ORVA.

There is no firm ground, which significantly diminishes the area's value for children and novices.

Based on the officially gazetted boundaries, the southern strip leading north to the dune area consists of only one trail, with soft sand and poor sight lines. If this single trail is to be used for access to and from the dune area there is a high collision risk. Many intersecting trails lead out of the ORVA, increasing the prospect of further encroachment and increasing the risk of collisions. The City of Greater Geraldton has expressed concerns about the continuing use of this strip – degrading the vegetation and creating further unstable dunes which may threaten both housing and vegetation communities to the east. There are additional concerns about creating an 'ORV highway' which could lead to greater vehicle access and further degradation on the south side of Greenough River.

The main riding area is in the centre of the gazetted area, with no easy access for utes or cars with trailers. This means riders would not be able to set up a riding 'base' near their cars which is the preferred option for most riders.

Proximity to residential areas is also problematic, with the nearest residential property only 650m from the northern boundary.

¹⁷ Record of Certificate of Crown Land Title 11939/DP220020



Southgates area showing position relative to NW Coastal Hwy.



Southgates area showing buffer distances from centre.

Candidate Checklist

CRITERIA	BULLER RIVER	SOUTHGATES
LAND MANAGERS		
Ability to contain the activity within the designated area.	Area 1 (north) – Good Area 1 (south) – Not practical, but Drummonds Cove is a hard boundary	Not practical within the gazetted area boundaries, but Greenough River Road and Southgates Road are hard boundaries
Controlled (preferably single) point of entry.	Area 1 – Yes Area 2 – Yes, but can also access via coastal tracks (outside ORVA) from Drummonds Cove	Yes, via Greenough River Road, however access also possible (traversing private property) from Southgates beach Rd
Low conservation value.	Area 1 – Yes – Industrial buffer on cleared pasture land Area 2 – Somewhat – some coastal vegetation and dunes	Yes – gazetted area already majority dunes, however there is some concern about dune migration towards Brand Highway
Ability to manage the activity within the designated area	Area 1 – Yes – constructed trails and circuits Area 2 – Partially via signed tracks and fencing	Partially via signed tracks
Durability of the terrain	Area 1 – Yes Area 2 – Partial	Partial
Ability to manage visitor risk – both for participants, non participants (i.e., family, spectators) and the public	Area 1 – Good Area 2 – Partial	Partial
Safe and legal access.	Good	Poor – due to proximity to residential areas
Land tenure	In-principle support of landowner	Already gazetted, but ownership and management authority unclear
Absence of constraints such as Water Source Protection Area zoning, Disease Risk Area, Conservation Reserves, aboriginal heritage etc	Seven Aboriginal heritage sites registered. Will require further investigation. No other known constraints and industrial buffer provides long term availability	No known constraints but area probably contains evidence of early Aboriginal occupation
Low probability of conflict with other pre-existing recreational uses	No competing uses in Area 1 or 2, however potential contention around Buller River mouth itself	No competing uses in gazetted area

RESIDENTS		
Positioned away from residential areas.	No residential properties within 1.5km radius (from centre of ORVA). Closest residence from any point of boundary: 720m. Note that this may alter in time, with land adjacent to Area 2 zoned for future urbanisation.	No residential properties within 1.5km of radius (from centre of ORVA). Closest residence from any point of boundary: 650m
Not creating nuisance and safety issues by riding spilling out into residential streets.	Good	Poor – riders already accessing via Wandina and Southgates Beach Rd
RIDERS		
Terrain and features that are similar to (or preferably superior to) the experiences they are currently enjoying	Area 1 – Good conditions for children and novices Area 2 – Good mix of coastal tracks and dunes	Sand trails and dunes only
Reasonable proximity to home.	Good	Good
Ease of access for utes and cars with trailers.	Good, if access road formalised	Good
Phone coverage for emergencies	Good	Good
Facilities such as parking / unloading areas, shaded viewing areas for parents, basic toilets	Good potential to develop facilities, particularly Area 1	Poor – access to main riding area is via soft sand track
Safety for young riders – segregation from older / faster riders, visibility for parents, age- and experience-appropriate trails and circuits	Area 1 – Excellent Area 2 – Poor	Poor
Adequate size to meet demand without overcrowding	Area 1 – Good (developed trails have greater capacity) Area 2 – Moderate	Moderate

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the two candidate sites, the Buller River mouth site has the greatest potential to be developed into a sustainable and effective ORVA, subject to Aboriginal heritage issues, management responsibility and funding issues being resolved.

Southgates has less long-term potential, however it is an option that can be utilised immediately because of its current gazettal status.

The recommendations are:

Southgates ORVA:

1. City of Greater Geraldton to develop an interim Master Plan for the Southgates ORVA, focussing on participant safety and environmental protection. It is anticipated that the Master Plan would include a baseline vegetation survey, recommendations for dealing with trail intersections, demarcation of the ORVA boundaries, risk and directional signage and visitor behaviour management. Access from Greenough River mouth or an alternative would need to be explored in order to address the environmental concerns.
2. Seek funding from Off-road Vehicles Account, Lotterywest or Coastwest to implement Southgates Interim Master Plan.
3. Rangers to direct off-road vehicles to this area when intercepting illegal riding elsewhere, but otherwise not promote the area enthusiastically.

Buller River mouth:

4. Initiate engagement with traditional landholders to conduct a detailed investigation of Aboriginal heritage registered sites within the Buller River mouth precinct and to discuss and negotiate the establishment of an ORVA at this location.
5. If Aboriginal heritage issues can be resolved, seek management agreement (conditional on funding) with Landcorp and Shire of Chapman Valley.
6. Establish funding options conditional on development of a Master Plan.
7. Seek funding from Off-road Vehicles Account to develop Buller River mouth Master Plan. The Master Plan should provide a baseline vegetation survey, a full scope of works, and cost estimates including full costing of all anticipated recurrent costs.
8. Seek funding for implementation of Buller River mouth Master Plan.

Jurien Bay:

9. Shire of Dandaragan to review lease, licence and responsibility issues around Jurien ORVA.
10. Review potential for the MX circuit portion of this area to be modified to enable public access, particularly for junior riders.

Coastal Trails:

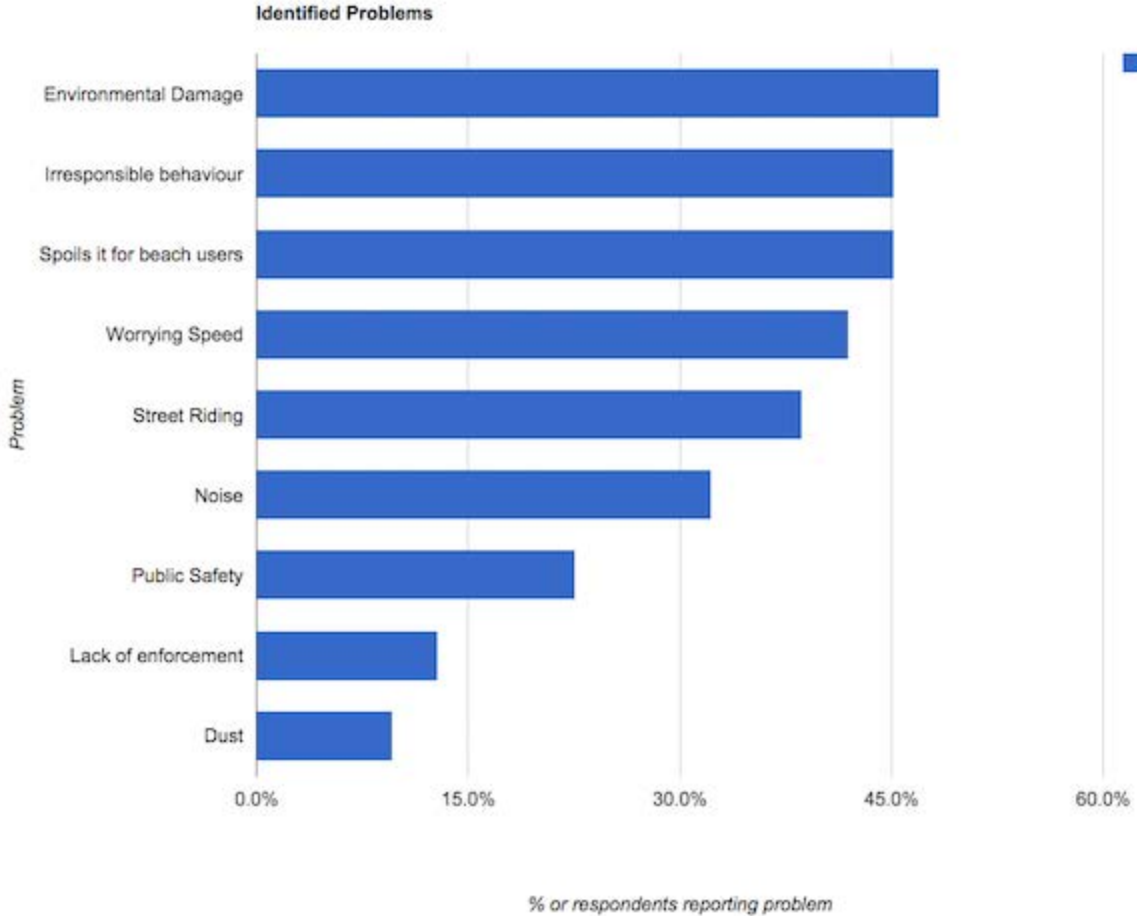
11. Further investigation of the potential to develop one or more coastal destination trails for road registered vehicles and licenced drivers / riders, ideally engaging four wheel drive clubs or associations. Consideration to be given to the concept of parallel trails to separate north- and south-bound traffic.

APPENDIX A - COMMUNITY SURVEY

List of community organisations invited to contribute:	List of media contacted and notified via Media Release:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Birdlife Australia - Midwest ● Cervantes Prog Assoc ● Dongara Tidy Towns Sustainability Committee ● Drummonds CC (Geraldton) ● Drummonds Prog Assoc (Geraldton) ● Friends of Bluff Point (Geraldton) ● Friends of Lancelin Coast ● Friends of Moore River Estuary ● Green Head CC ● Guilderton Community Association ● Horrocks Progress Assoc ● Jurien Bay Herbarium ● Jurien Bay Men's Shed ● Jurien Bay Prog Assoc ● Ledge Pt CC ● Leeman CC ● Lower Moore River Working Group ● Port Gregory Caravan Pk ● Pt Moore CC (Geraldton) ● Sunset Beach CC (Geraldton) ● Kwelena Mambakort Wedge Island Aboriginal Corporation ● LG Community Development Officers in Northampton, Greater Geraldton, Irwin, Coorow, Dandaragan and Gingin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Geraldton Guardian ● Coastal Courier ● Countryman ● Dongara Local Rag ● Eneabba News ● Gingin Community News ● Jurien Bay Craytales ● Kalannie Kapers ● Kalbarri Town Talk ● Magpie Squawk ● Mid West Times ● Mingenew Matters ● Moore River News ● Morawa Community Scene ● Northampton Community News ● Pinnacles Newspaper ● PJ Bush Telegraph ● Redgum Reports ● Sandpaper ● Snag Island News ● The Totally Locally ● Valley Vibes ● Central Midlands & Coast Advocate ● Farmweekly

Survey Questions and Responses

Question 1: What (if any) problems have you encountered with trail / quad bikes and / or riders?

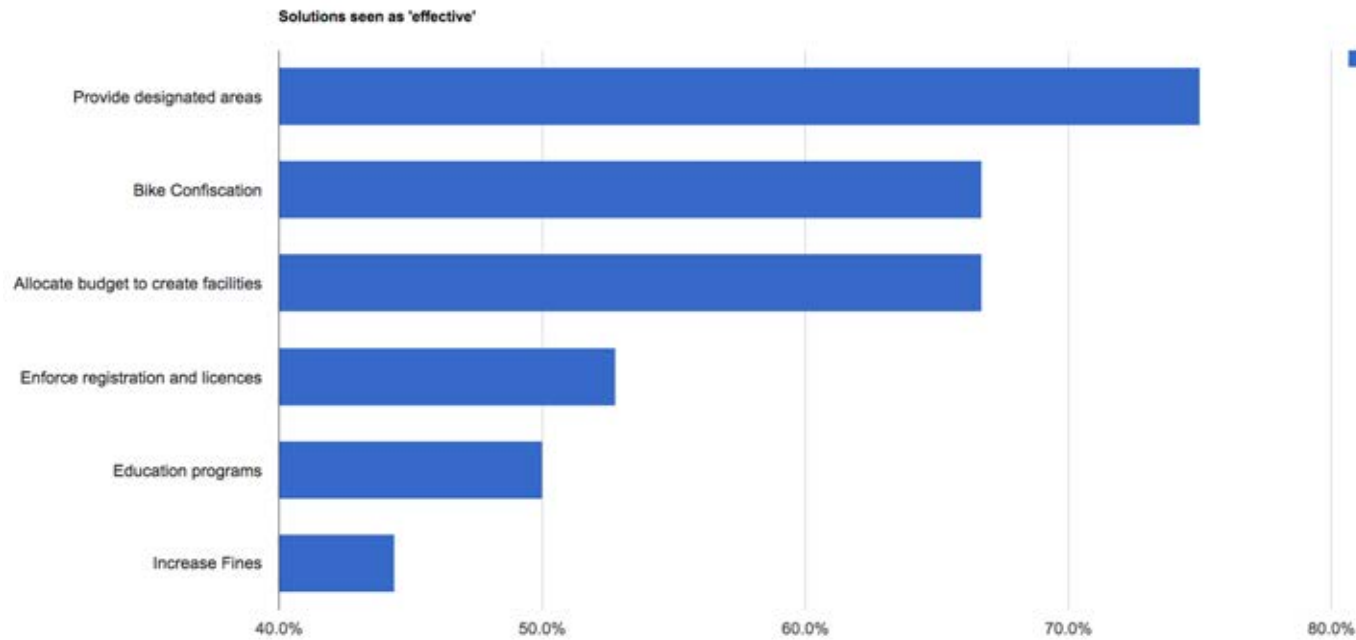


n = 34

Identified Hot Spot Areas:

Northampton	Kalbarri River Road	Jacques Point	Witecarra	Lucky Bay		
Chapman Valley	Coronation Beach	Buller River				
Greater Geraldton	Whitehall Rd	Wave Crest Circle	Drummond Cove beach	Batten Hall to Drummonds Cove	Glenfield Beach	Sunset Beach
	Waggrakine	Chapman River	Pages Beach, Point Moore	Deepdale	Separation Point	Taroola Beach
	Barrett Drive	Glendinning Dog Beach	Wandina Beach	Southgates area	Greenough River Mouth	Cape Burney
	Greenough River trail (near Company Rd)	Company Road	African Reef Boulevarde	West Bank Estate		
Irwin	Pt Denison Dunes	White Tops Reserve	South Beach			
Coorow	Green Head behind sewage pond					
Dandaragan	Turquoise Way Walk	South Bay Beach				
Gingin	Bootoo St / Beacon Rd	Gingin Rd	Old Ledge Point Rd	Blackbutt Grove	Coastline 300m south of Moore River	

Q14: How effective do you think these possible solutions would be?



n = 36

APPENDIX B: RIDER SURVEY

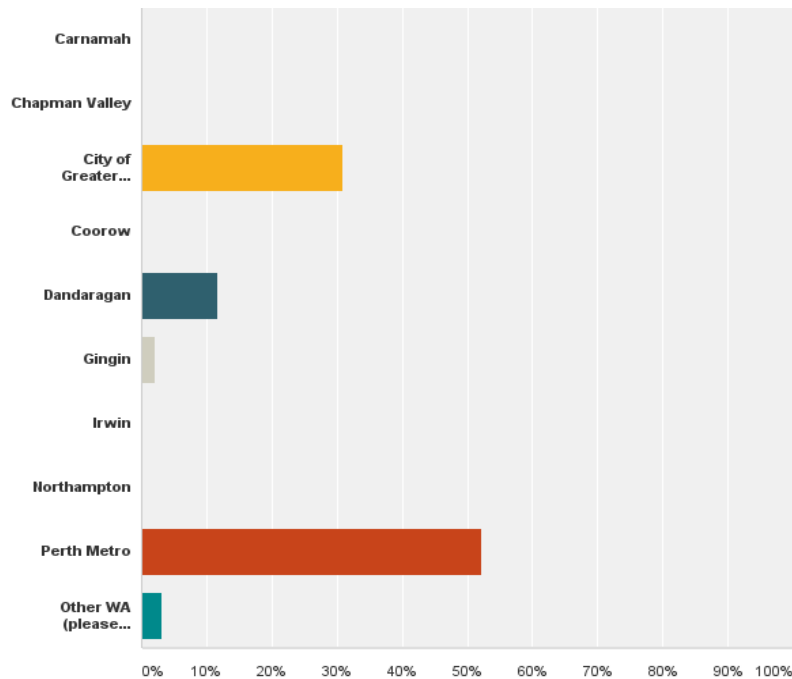
Riders Survey

An online survey was undertaken from May 12 to August 11 in order to better understand the current trail bike riding behaviours in the study area, along with rider needs and identification of potential ride areas.

A total of 95 responses were received. The survey was self-selecting, so it does not represent a statistical cross-section of riders in the area.

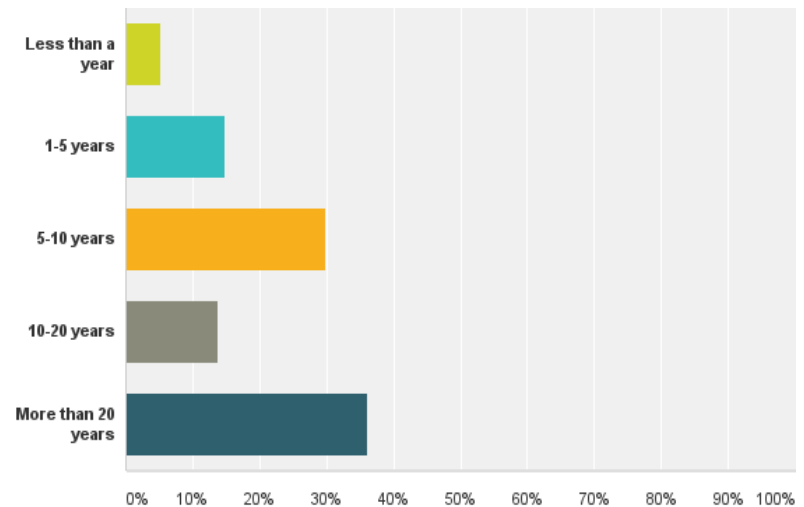
In which Shire / City do you live?

The respondents were not representative of all locations involved in this study with the majority of responses coming from riders who live in Perth metro (52 per cent) and Geraldton (31 per cent) and no responses from Carnamah, Chapman Valley, Coorow or Northampton. (Q1)



How long have you been riding?

The respondents were very experienced riders with the majority riding for more than 20 years (36 per cent) and 80 per cent riding for more than 5 years. Q6 showed that 51 per cent class themselves as intermediate riders and 38 per cent as advanced. (Q2)

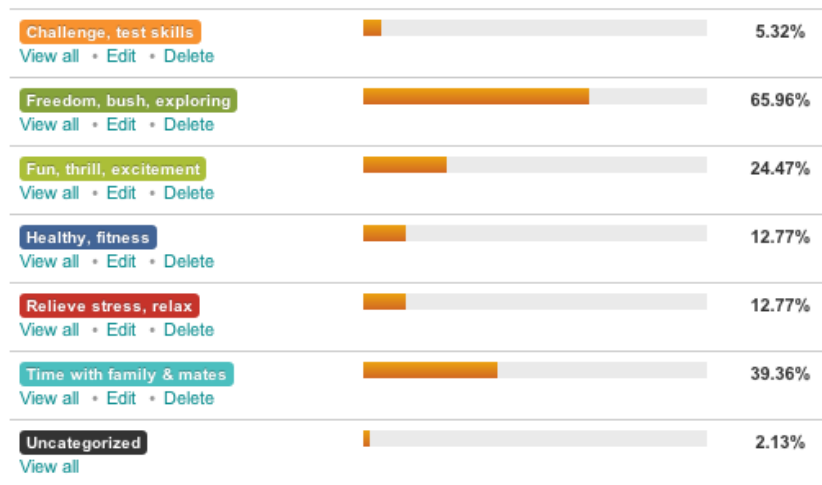


Riders Survey

Why Ride?

What do you like about trail or quad bike riding?

This was an open-ended question that has been analysed to show that 66 per cent of respondents used the words “freedom”, “outdoors” and “exploring”. 39 per cent like the time spent with family and friends. 12 per cent of riders rode for health and fitness factors; and another 12 per cent saw riding as a way to reduce stress and relax. (Q3)



Below is a selection of responses:

“that free feeling when you feel at peace and away from your problems. also socialising and seeing our land up close and personal”

“Relieves stress, helps you cope and clear your mind riding is freedom”

“The challenge, the camaraderie with fellow riders, the changing nature of the trails in different seasons, the freedom, the great outdoors, the thrill as your 450 hooks up in some loamy ground, and while you're out there blasting around, the cares and worries of life and stress of work wash away.”

“The freedom to explore the bush with a few mates, the challenge of improving skills on increasing difficulty of terrain, and the peace and quiet when you escape from the denser population of the cities and suburbs”

“The thrill of riding, camaraderie with fellow riders, exploring remote areas, discovering our great country and new places, fun way to keep fit and build strength. It's great fun”

“good recreational fun for the whole family. Good way to explore the area. Minimal risk if wearing protective gear unlike rock fishing, football, rugby. It also doesn't generate the violence that occurs at football matches.”

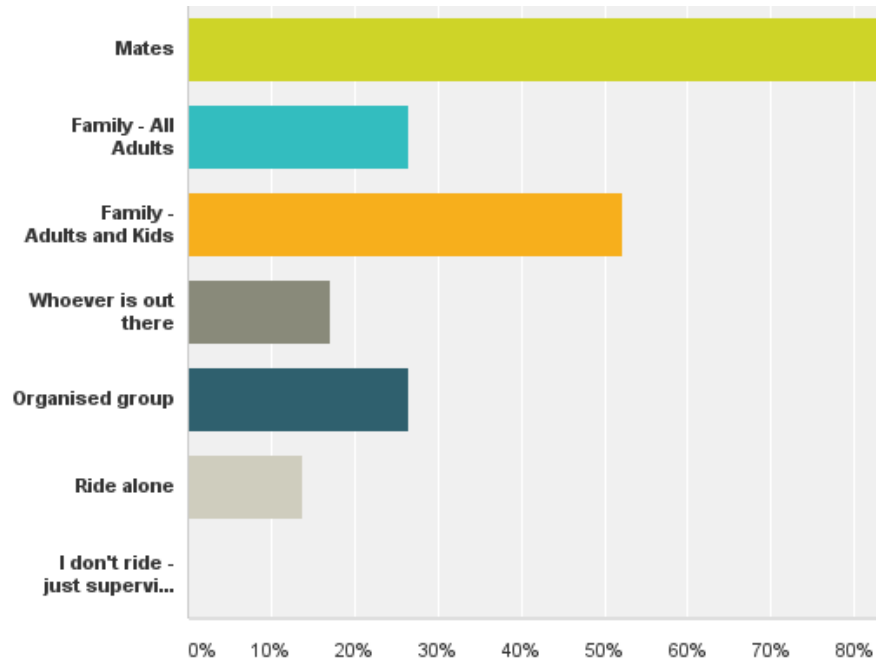
“Involving friends and family in something that doesn't involve sitting around inside eating and drinking and living an unhealthy lifestyle.”

Riders Survey

Your Riding

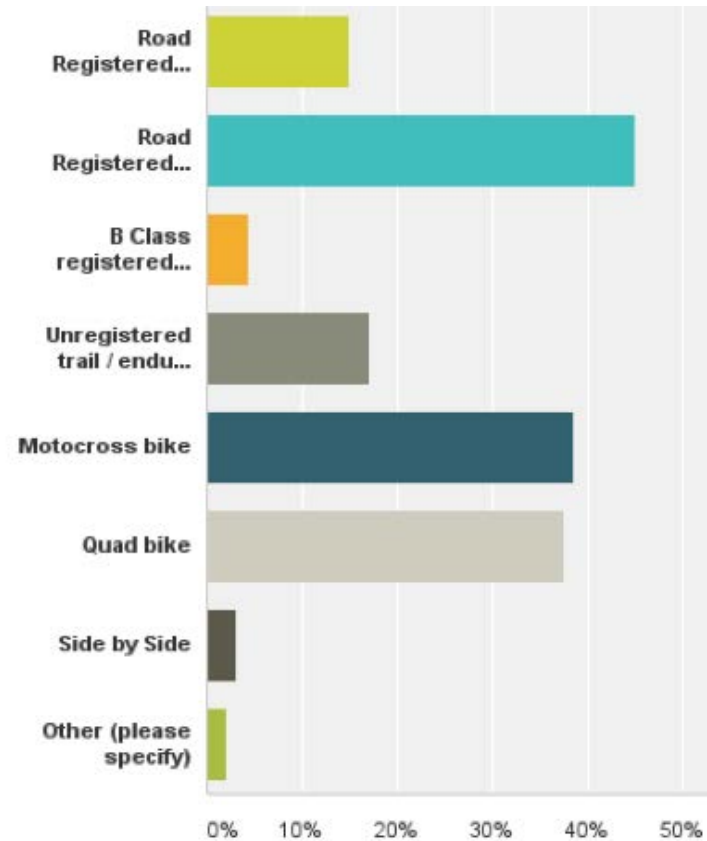
Who do you usually ride with?

83 per cent ride with mates and 79 per cent ride with family. (Q4)



What sort of bike do you ride?

60 per cent ride a road registered bike (adventure or trail/enduro), 38 per cent ride a MX bike and 37 per cent ride a quad. (Q7)



Riders Survey

What sort of riding do you prefer? (Q5)

	Never	Sometimes	Often
Long distance adventure bike riding	4.60% 4	51.72% 45	43.68% 38
Leisurely trail riding	5.68% 5	35.23% 31	59.09% 52
Aggressive trail riding	16.05% 13	41.98% 34	41.98% 34
Beach or dune riding	13.10% 11	44.05% 37	42.86% 36
Free riding	14.86% 11	33.78% 25	51.35% 38
MX circuit riding	44.12% 30	41.18% 28	14.71% 10
MX racing	62.90% 39	20.97% 13	16.13% 10

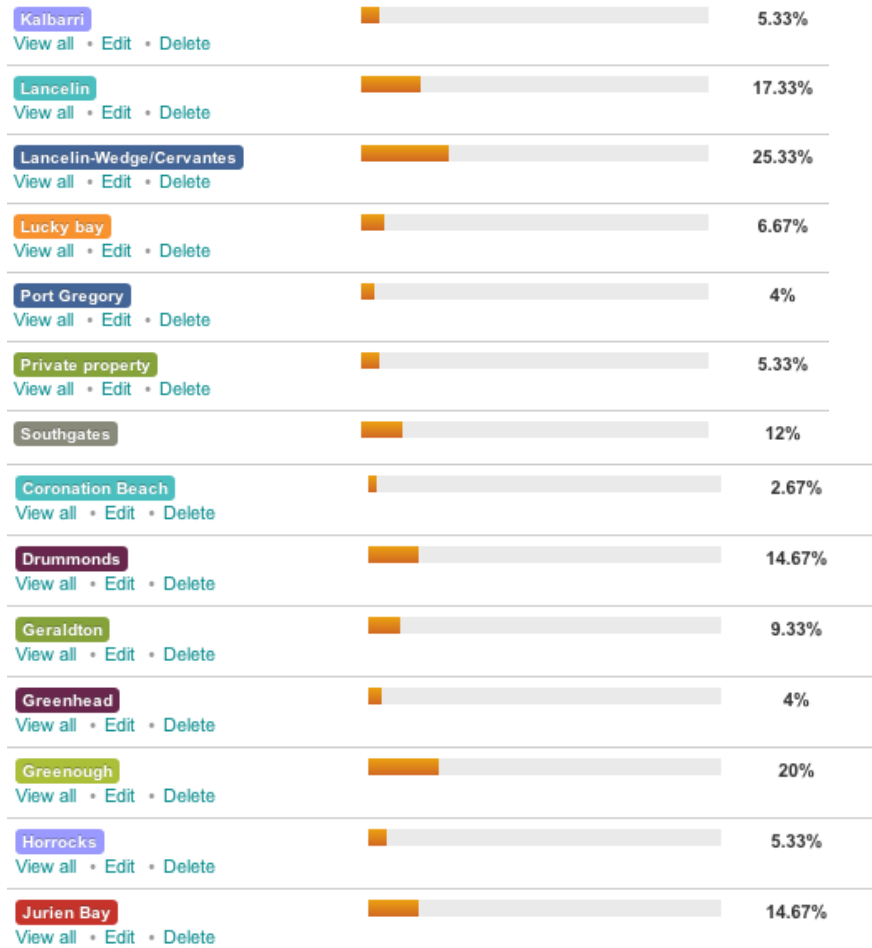
What type of riding is it? (Q9)

Answer Choices	Responses
Beach	13.92%
Sand dunes	16.46%
Coastal Track	45.57%
Destination trail (Point A to Point B)	6.33%
Loop trail (starts and ends in the same place)	10.13%
MX Circuit	2.53%
Club based Ride Park	0.00%
Commercial Ride Park	1.27%
Private Property	3.80%

Riders Survey

Where do you ride?

The locations mentioned most were Lancelin, Wedge, Cervantes, Jurien Bay, and Drummonds. (Q8)

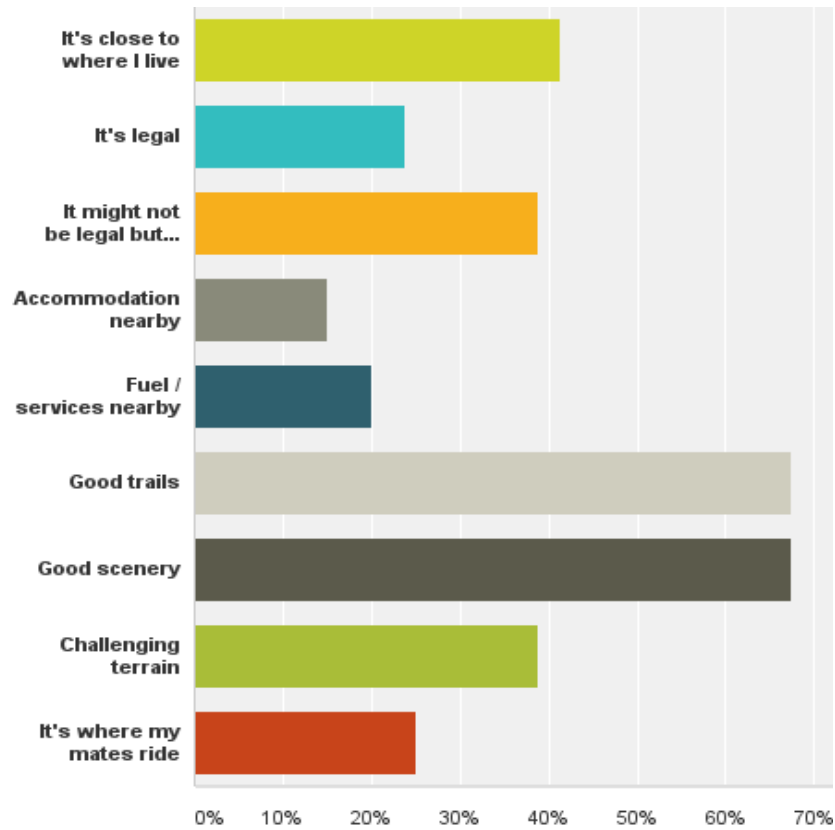


This question was asked multiple times to fully gather all main riding areas and these were collated to show the number of times mentioned:

Lancelin-Wedge-Cervantes	21	Greenough	17
Drummonds	14	Jurien Bay	14
Lancelin	14	Southgate	12
Geraldton	11	Private Property	9
Lucky Bay	7	Kalbarri	6
Port Gregory	6	Horrocks	5
Greenhead	3	Coronation beach	2

Riders Survey

Why do you ride there? (Q10)



What do you like most and least like about this area?

Area	Likes	Dislikes / Opportunity for improvement
Lancelin-Wedge -Cervantes track	Isolated and challenging Chance to ride beach and sand Open trails and cooler in summer than riding inland – sea breeze Camping, away from Lancelin crowds Safer for kids	Not legal Risk of collisions – need a one-way track with loops Bikes and 4WDs on same track, mixed vehicle use and collision danger
Greenough	Fun and challenging Good tracks Nothing in particular, just somewhere to go Sand, terrain, diverse coast line Uncrowded, freedom	Too many rangers, unfriendly rangers Not allowed to ride there – need to make it legal Risk of collisions as uncontrolled
Drummonds	Dunes and coastal scenery Challenging, large sand whoops Uncrowded Good spot to take the kids	Not sure if it's legal? Rangers! Tracks worn out, needs maintenance Narrow tracks so collision danger Rubbish
Jurien Bay	Lots of room to ride Don't get bored Safe area to teach family Good flowing tracks Access to food, fuel	Not sure where to ride without getting into trouble Not legal – would prefer not to risk fines but have limited options 4WDs Risk of collisions

Riders Survey

Lancelin ORV Area

46 per cent of respondents had ridden in the designated ORV areas at Lancelin or Ledge Point. When asked what they liked about riding there – 47 per cent said that it was legal, didn't get hassled, don't get fined, whilst 19 per cent liked the dunes, sand and terrain, and a further 14 per cent liked that it was close to services such as shops, pub and medical centre.

When asked what could be improved about Lancelin and Ledge Point ORV areas, the following were suggested:

- Safety improvements, seen as a "free for all"
 - Area separation – separating cars, fast/jumping riders and slower/children, sandboarding, tourists
 - one-direction route
 - crowd control, reduce numbers
 - management and control
- Noise control
- Increase the size and extend into surrounding areas with different terrain
- Improved amenities i.e., camping, toilets, shelters, picnic tables, bins, water, more and better parking and unloading area
- Signage and rider education about the area.

The main reason that respondents don't ride at Lancelin or Ledge Point is because it is too far away – indicating that people won't travel more than a couple of hours for a ride.

The majority of the other responses were that it was too dangerous with multiple types of users, too crowded, uncontrolled, changing dunes, and "idiot" riders. (Q26-29)

"Designated parking area and designated area for tourists for sandboarding and walking up dunes, seems unorganized and a little chaotic"

"Lancelin needs a sort of area separation system. That keeps the cars, fast/jumping riders, and slower/children riders separated to make it safe. I will not take children there because of amount of people using the area."

"Riding in the dunes at Lancelin is a health hazard. The flow and direction of many riders is totally haphazard. The riding area should be entirely removed from the parking lot and set behind the first row of dunes. There should be a complete separation of walkers and sand boarders. But quad riders and free stylets have no respect"

"It's too far away for a quick ride

It's not practical to go there for a 2 hour ride. It's too far in the dunes.

Too dangerous Unlicensed bikes Too many meatheads Don't like riding my trail bike in with quads and side by sides, beach buggies Too constrained, can't follow trails for any distance"

"The dunes at Lancelin are risky with all the blind crests and a lot of freestyle guys go there for big jumps so you never know who might be coming over a dune the other way. A one-way system and some signage might help with that."

"It's too crowded and dangerous for beginners (my wife and children)"

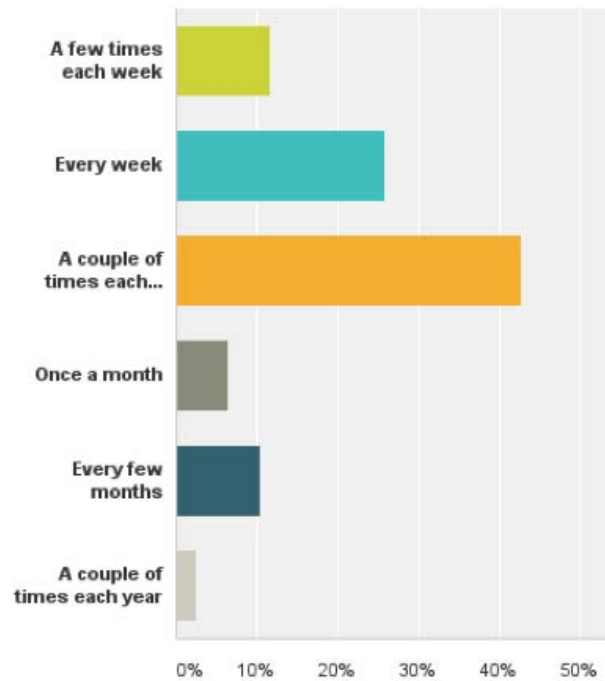
"VERY dangerous as it is completely uncontrolled"

"Because they are over crowded due to there being no other areas & I don't feel safe. It is also a long way just to ride"

Riders Survey

How Often Do You Ride?

The majority (43 per cent) ride a couple of times a month, 26 per cent ride every week and 12 per cent ride a few times a week. (Q30)



How long do you ride for?

50 per cent of respondents ride for half a day, 34 per cent ride all weekend and 32 per cent ride all day. (Q31:)

Club Membership?

79 per cent indicated that they do not belong to a riding club. (Q35)

What is the typical composition of riders and bikes amongst the people you ride with?

Most respondents were all adults either on a mix of bikes and quads or all on registered trail bikes. However adults and kids riding together is also common. (Q32)

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Adults on road registered trail bikes	37.70% 23	11.48% 7	19.67% 12	31.15% 19
Adults on a mix of registered and unregistered bikes	40.00% 22	20.00% 11	25.45% 14	14.55% 8
Adults on a mix of bikes and quads	32.14% 18	35.71% 20	19.64% 11	12.50% 7
Adults on quads only	60.78% 31	17.65% 9	11.76% 6	9.80% 5
Adults and kids, bikes only	40.38% 21	23.08% 12	28.85% 15	7.69% 4
Adults and kids, mix of bikes and quads	40.74% 22	20.37% 11	22.22% 12	16.67% 9
Adults and kids, quads only	63.27% 31	16.33% 8	12.24% 6	8.16% 4

How do you usually get to the riding area?

84 per cent trailer their bike to where they ride, with 75 per cent having their own trailer showing further investment in the activity. (Q33)

80 per cent either never ride on sealed roads, or less than 5 per cent is on sealed roads. (Q34)

Riders Survey

Trail Riding Issues

What are your biggest concerns about trail bike riding?

This question was filtered metro area vs regional. The same top seven concerns were given except that country riders were less concerned about safety and more concerned about irresponsible riders.

Metro riders were more concerned about trails being closed and the poor quality of designated areas. (Q36)

	No concern	Some concern	Major concern
Environmental impact	15.07% 11	61.64% 45	23.29% 17
Noisy bikes annoying residents	16.44% 12	52.05% 38	31.51% 23
Safety	2.74% 2	26.03% 19	71.23% 52
Lack of designated areas	1.37% 1	16.44% 12	82.19% 60
Lack of facilities at ORV areas	27.40% 20	27.40% 20	45.21% 33
Lack of facilities for kids	19.18% 14	35.62% 26	45.21% 33
Tracks not properly maintained	31.51% 23	43.84% 32	24.66% 18
Trails being closed	13.70% 10	19.18% 14	67.12% 49
Bike registration	32.88% 24	39.73% 29	27.40% 20
Irresponsible riders	1.37% 1	32.88% 24	65.75% 48
Conflict between track users - eg cycles, horses	21.92% 16	46.58% 34	31.51% 23
Risk of being fined	10.96% 8	42.47% 31	46.58% 34
Poor quality of designated ORV areas	12.33% 9	45.21% 33	42.47% 31

Riders Survey

What effect, if any, do you think trail/quad biking riding has on the land, the environment?

Most riders acknowledged that riding can impact the environment but most felt this was lessened to “little effect” if the riding was on dedicated trails or managed ORV areas.

Most riders responded that major impact was caused if riding off-trail or causing dune erosion. A number of respondents felt that the effect was less than other impacts such as sub-division bulldozers, rubbish dumping, four wheel drives. (Q37)

Have you ever been stopped by a ranger or fined in the area between Lancelin and Kalbarri?

38 per cent responded yes. Half of these indicated that they were stopped but just talked, were warned or did not see it as a negative experience. (Q38)

“Could be little if areas are properly organised. If the powers that be put as much effort into stopping the people doing the wrong thing as opposed to checking bikes etc. The impact would be lowered by removing the offending people.”

“not much if on existing tracks, also most areas are bulldozed when subdivided for housing, including pine plantations and minning areas”

“No long term negative effects. If noted that when a trail is not used frequently, vegetation will grow bringing the environment back normal.”

“Big impact on vegetation. That’s why need trails and designated areas”

“Wreckless riders definitely damage the land but if they had a good range of options it might be reduced a lot”

“heaps in Geraldton as there is no designated areas to ride and idiots make their own tracks”

“At the moment I believe the environment suffers badly due to over use of a very limited number of areas being used by a large number of riders. More riding areas would equate to less riders on the ground in each area therefore reducing the impact.”

“If done responsibly, on designated tracks, then minimal impact will be felt. When tracks are not maintained and facilities are not provided then unfortunately it is the environment that comes off second best.”

“Bit shocked to realise ORV area had an opening time. Ranger was polite. Happy days”

“You are doing the wrong thing a warning is just that so it’s not their fault they are only making a living too”

“Was stopped by a friendly Ranger north of Lancelin riding area along Shooting range fence. Was told not to ride where we were and to go back to designated riding area.”

“As soon as he realized we were all registered no problem and the ranger was very polite.”

Riders Survey

The other half expressed anger, disappointment or saw it as an unfair or negative experience.

“Just warned but was very annoyed cos we had kids and it's the perfect place for them to ride where they can't get themselves into much trouble”

“Angry because he chased me and cut me off and nearly ran me off my bike because he was making sure I was riding in the area and I was”

“I was a bit shocked (understanding they are doing their job's) how ever I wasn't going around and vandalising, doing, drugs, being a hoon or bashing people (not that I would) but riding with family for my birthday and not harming anyone around us (no houses near by so no loud noises)”

“angry we had no where to go”

“absolutely ridiculous,we had registered bikes,road legal”

“Disappointed that there where people in the area in vehicles being dangerous & we were not being inconsiderate or dangerous yet we get in trouble”

Riders Survey

Future Options

Please tell us what you think of the following options:

Overall riders were most interested in a signed one-way loop 30-60 kms in length however this differed in regional areas where a dedicated motorcycle park was most popular.

A practice MX circuit and trails in a defined area were popular by country respondents but not metro.

Of least interest were trail bikes being restricted to 4WD tracks or a network of unmarked trails in a defined area. (Q39)

	No interest	Would use occasionally	Would use frequently	Would use constantly
A network of unmarked trails within a defined area	11.94% 8	44.78% 30	22.39% 15	20.90% 14
A network of signed, one-way trails within a defined area 2	4.41% 3	29.41% 20	36.76% 25	29.41% 20
A practice MX circuit and trails within a defined area	22.06% 15	26.47% 18	25.00% 17	26.47% 18
A signed, one-way loop trail of between 30 and 60km 1	2.94% 2	26.47% 18	33.82% 23	36.76% 25
One or more beaches where Off Road Vehicle use is allowed 2	10.29% 7	26.47% 18	25.00% 17	38.24% 26
An open dune area (like Lancelin)	25.00% 17	27.94% 19	17.65% 12	29.41% 20
A point-to-point trail 3	7.46% 5	28.36% 19	40.30% 27	23.88% 16
A dedicated offroad motorcycle park 3	8.96% 6	29.85% 20	26.87% 18	34.33% 23
Trailbikes restricted to 4WD tracks	27.94% 19	36.76% 25	19.12% 13	16.18% 11

Riders Survey

If provision was made for more riding in your area, ideally what would you like to see?

Riders specified ORV areas that are family friendly, and managed and maintained as of most interest. (Q40)

One-way trails and enduro type trails were requested.

And many riders specifically mentioned trail bike versions of the Bibbulmun and Munda Biddi tracks:

“Trail riding areas with some family areas at start or finish to create a friendly environment that will encourage more people to do the right thing.”

“a large enough area where riders can ride with out the hassles or rangers and also different terrain for different skill levels in the one area”

“Family friendly areas such as pinar , motocross tracks and endurance trails.”

“More areas similar to Lancelin and the South west motocross park for weekends away to help with the increase in Perth population for safe riding areas for families and also hard core fast riders.....maybe a freestyle park”

“A place that is maintained and is not just left to turn into a boggy ruined mess”

“Open areas as well as bush areas with one way tracks marked that can be changed”

“Designated trails signed and possibly one way for kids safety”

“Tight, one way single track/enduro loops, showcasing the great area.”

“ Something similar to the Munda Biddi trail but one way and for motorbikes.”

“A signed, one-way loop trail of between 30 and 60km might be ok once or twice. But the real deal would be a network of interconnecting trails with some destinations along the way (just like the Bibbulmun or Munda Biddi trails)”

“Designated trails with one way traffic much like the Bibulmun walking track.”

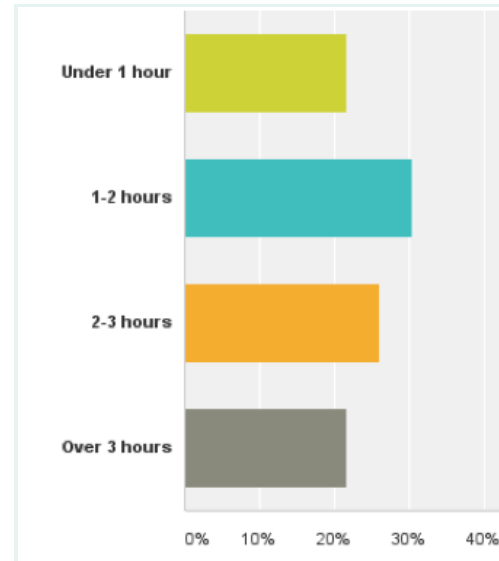
“Lots of bike-only singletrack (too tight for 4WDs) loops weaving into the bush with some easy and some challenging terrain options. ”

“Longish loops (40 or 50 ks) through bush areas. Parallel, two way, point to point trails. eg A system of trails where I could ride one section between towns this weekend, and another next weekend. Or take a week off and ride the entire length of the trail.”

Riders Survey

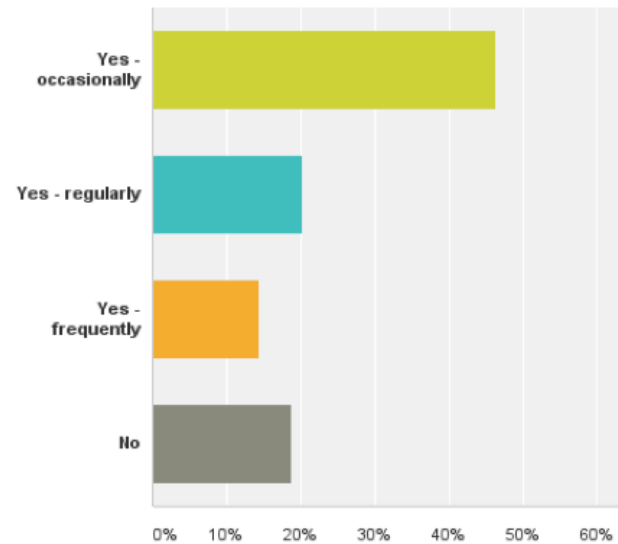
How far are you likely to travel to get to a quality riding facility (trail, circuit, area or park)?

Most riders are willing to travel 1-3 hours to get to a quality facility. Regional riders were far more likely to travel less with 45 per cent saying less than an hour and another 28 per cent 1-2 hours. (Q41)



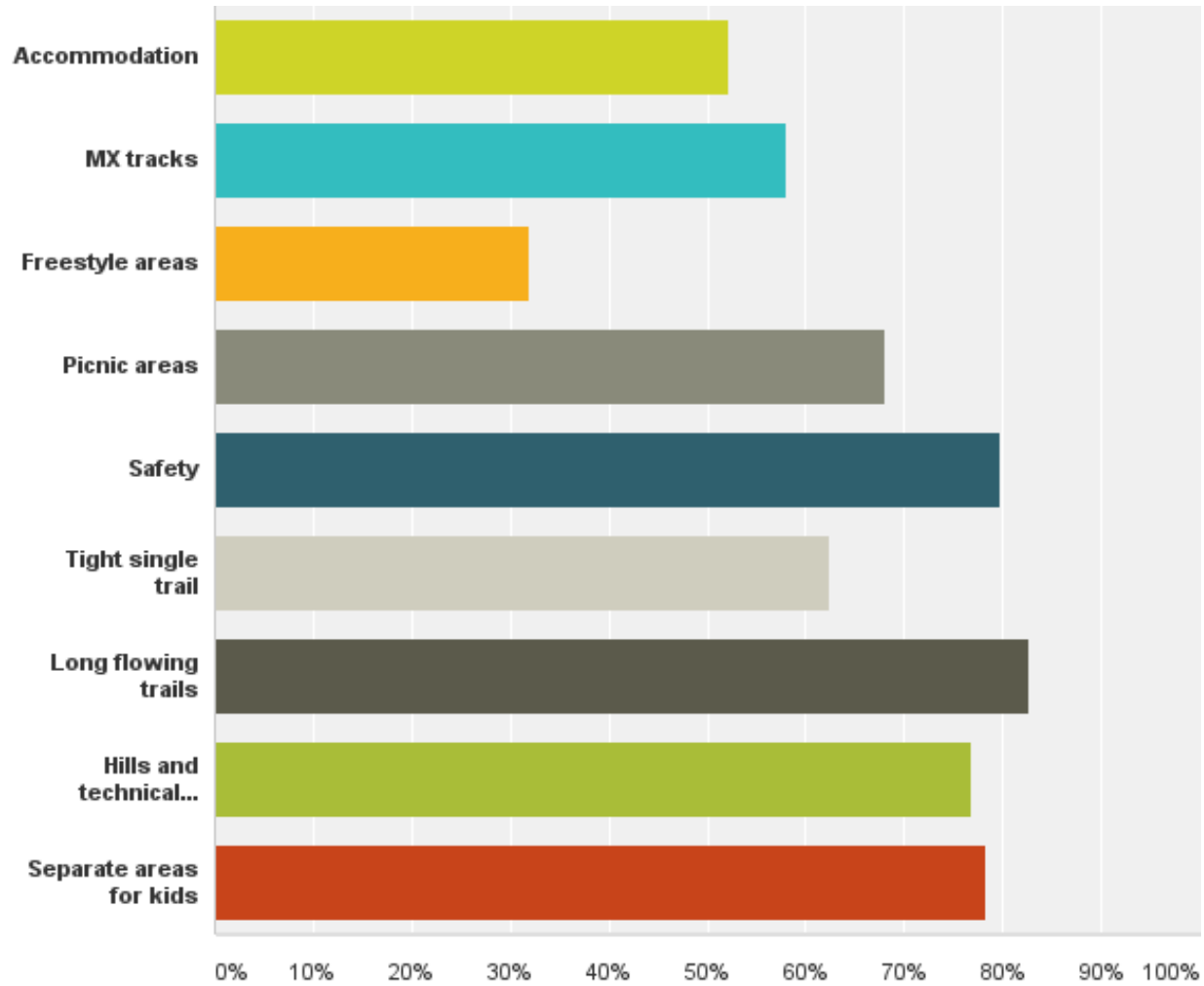
If there was a commercial Trail or Quad Bike Riding area/farm/ranch that cost \$25 per day per rider – would you be likely to use it?

46 per cent of respondents would use this occasionally with 35 per cent using it regularly or frequently. 19 per cent would not use it at all. Metro riders were more likely to use occasionally (53 per cent) and less likely to not use at all (13 per cent). 28 per cent of regional riders say they would not use such a facility. (Q42)



Riders Survey

Q43: What would you want such a park to have?



Riders Survey

What could the shire/council/state government do for you as a rider? (Q44)

Provide for areas to safely ride for myself and my children.

Give Rangers more power to remove the idiots that threaten the sustainability of the sport

allow more areas for use

As this survey is suggesting open up more areas for riding and allow trails to be used that run across private land with approval being easy to obtain acknowledge that I am not a hoon, rather someone who enjoys off road riding as a positive healthy activity, and understands that I would vote for someone who understands this. Start charging users to use dedicated off road areas that have facilities. Use a sticker system. Cheap stickers for vehicles with off road registration and slightly more expensive ones for non registered vehicles. Sell the stickers at petrol stations, leading into the riding areas. If you get stopped without a sticker, its a small fine like a parking ticket (or the ranger sells the person an even more expensive sticker) stickers have a 45 day access period

As above provide good areas for all to go to

Provide more legal riding areas. Larger enough for the growing population of the sport.

Relax and let us ride

Open more bush legalise more places so that everyone isn't going to the same place and running into each other!

let us have a designated area to ride so we are not having to do it illegally and also if it is a designated area known to the community riders and vehicles would be more aware of each other and it would be safer because people would slow down knowing that the area is an off road area

Plan ahead before this issue gets bigger than it needs to be. The cost of living is now driving families to camping 4wding riding options for holiday getaways rather than resorts ect. More children should be encouraged to ride at a young age and therefore learn to ride responsibly.

Put some of the tax money they take from the off road industry and put to good use for the off road industry

Make lots of trails all around Western Australia

Make a quick decision for a change

Nice maintained trail land

Make a more welcoming environment for riders.

Let us to have good time

Stop banning all the tracks !

Nothing because they can't even pick rubbish up :/

let us ride on the beaches

Ban the sale of Bikes/ quads that loud and cause excessive noise pollution

Police the unruly element instead of restricting access.

Give us some places to ride

Stop fining people for riding, no one is getting hurt.

Make an area close to Geraldton

Allow an off road area in the local area

Embrace the economic and community opportunities that trail bike / quad bike riders can bring.

provide a quality venue for my activity

support access for competitive organized events on land that is available and not leave it all to private parts to supply land.

make the areas

Give us somewhere legal to ride

every other sport have ovals courts stadiums, orv have nothing. local /state

governments pull your fingers out and get with the times !!!

Open more trail riding areas

Crack down on young irresponsible unlicensed hoon riders on MX bikes with shit for brains who damage and ruin the riding trails, reputation for the rest of us who may be members of the police, the medical profession etc

remove water catchment restrictions and open up vast areas to explore and enjoy

acknowledge that trail riding exists and is a popular activity, remove "blanket" exclusions based on a small minority of "hooligans"

Acknowledge our existence

Provide some sort of "maintained" facilities that I can use safely. It's been done for pretty much every other sport, but not off road riders. The easiest thing to do would be to hand over the Munda Biddi trail to dirt bikes so it got some use.

open up the land to give the young something to do with their family and friends

Riders Survey

Ok, don't get me started. Here's a list, in no particular order:

State Government

COMMIT FUNDS to the State Trail Bike Strategy (STBS)

LICENSE all bikes at point of sale. Use the money to fund the STBS initially then provide ongoing funds to support development and maintenance of riding areas. Free up areas of land where trail riders can ride responsibly. We're not talking about more bloody pine plantations or old rubbish tips. We want decent trails to ride over some distance, just like hikers and mountain bikers have. We want hills, gullies, flat areas, flowing trails, single track and the occasional beach track or 4WD track would be OK too.

Produce a range of smaller number plates for off road vehicles and trail bikes, made from polycarbonate which is durable. And don't charge an arm or a leg for them!

I know this is the Federal Government responsibility but there should be no GST charged on personal protective equipment for rider safety. They might lose a bit of tax revenue but think of the healthcare savings if injuries are avoided or mitigated through riders having more incentive to buy and wear safety gear.

Shires

Apart from a few notable exceptions like York, Shires do very little for trail bikes and just wish the problem would go away. Their main claim to fame is funding rangers to pursue trail bikes, amongst their other duties. Why don't Shires that have good trails (like any along the Darling scarp) make some effort to set aside areas or trails for people to ride? The State Government should compel them to, and support them with funds to manage the trails.

Just let us ride and camp in more places..

Put some of the taxes they make out of the huge amount that is spent on this sport. If I bought my kids a pair of footy boots the shire would build a football oval.

Recognize there is a very real need and plan for the different user groups

More designated areas and stop blaming motorbikes for damaging the environment when it is then sold off and bulldozed and completely destroyed to line the pockets of landcorp and big developers

Work with trail riders and clubs

Make it legal to trail ride for off road licensed bikes

Designate more riding areas across the state that allow unregistered bikes.

There are no road-registerable bikes available that are small enough for the kids/wives to ride so use of these bikes in most current areas is prohibited under current rules, despite the fact that these bikes are smaller, lighter, quieter and ridden more slowly than the registered bikes that are permitted.

better places to ride

Open up more areas, Support responsible riders.

Give us a safe area to legally ride with our children

Allow us to ride in more areas and not close off track etc for use

Design designated riding areas therefore keeping trail bike riders out of the suburbs and off the roads

Ensure. Trails are monitored and kept clean and fines are laid upon those disrespecting it

Provide legal areas to ride

Provide facilities such as in question 30.

open trails the same as they have done with muta bindi

supply of a area, w.c. blocks, picnic areas , instuction for new riders

Riders Survey

Do you have any other comments on the topic of securing and improving trail bike riding opportunities in Western Australia? (Q45)

Sometimes the further the riding areas are the more responsible dedicated to sport riders you would attract.

Keep it simple please and costs lowmore people allowed will return \$\$ over time

Compared to other states we are well ahead in a number of area's thanks to the efforts of the RTRA. Keep up the good work. Lets get some more area around lancelin opened up, even if it comes at a user pay/. I would pay for a sticker for my bike to camp and ride north of lancelin

Keep this moving as it is a worth while investment. Look at skate parks, there was none when I was young and now all the kids are hanging out at good set up skate parks and not hanging around shopping centres. This will be the same with bikes...give them good spots to go and they will use them not only to ride but also socialise

This needs to be done to secure the safety of riders. The sport is only getting larger,with that comes more people on fewer trails.increasing the likely hood of severe injury

Jurien Bay would be the best place as we have a lot of different tarain to learn on in the same place instead of going other places to ride

Include 4wding in considerations

Stop the Greens from ruining a great healthy lifestyle

I believe that the local government should make a bigger effort for places for us to ride.

Make it happen

As it is a competitive environment people not look for safe but want to test they capacity in performance. The only way to make safe is to provide large areas so rides can preed avoiding to cause accident to other rides that all want is a nice ride along the beach.

It is really not a discussion than can be had via a brief survey, it's complex. there needs to be a live survey of riders.

Let me ride and drive please

safety is the largest concern here and having designated one way tracks trails and areas would be hugely beneficial.

Exciting news that there would be more places to ride. where can I help?

Some adverts about the positive family impact that riding has and lessen the focus on the "Agro MX, Crusty Demons , in your face attitude " of the reckless tattooed scum that the public think we are..

The good work that the RTRA does should be noticed by local and state government

As much as I applaud this initiative, it is a long distance from the Perth metro area and as such I think it wont get used as much as it should/could be.

would give parents and familys quality time spent

We all like different riding areas and ride for different reasons. Everyone needs to be catered for.

as above acknowledge that licensed riders with registered bikes contribute to the State's taxes and and overall economy and need to be factored into future planning with the view to overall safety for all recreational groups.

no matter where you go there will always be vandalism,theft,littering etc

Off Road motorcycling is one of the largest sports in the world , just like skate parks designated areas will decrease incidents and injuries as well as stopping riding in illegal areas and national parks

A lot of riders have to clean up there act in regards to looking after rideing areas I think it is a joke that the State Government can at the drop of a hat spend over a million dollars on baiting hooks to catch a few sharks, and yet give bugger all to support other causes such as the State Trail Bike Strategy which has been starved of funds and left to languish indefinitely, despite supposedly having bi-partisan support from MP's of all persuasions.

There is a serious lack of information out there about where you can and can't ride... There needs to be a interactive online map showing where you can and can't ride.. People will use it and stick to it.. The problem is people just don't know where you can or can't ride..

I would like to see dedicated trails for licensed riders on licensed motorcycles who are responsible. A safe but free trail network from Perth to Albany.

yes we do need areas , bike riders will not just go away , so we need to address this a.s.a.p. i have been riding since i was 10 , now 55years , and still enjoy it

Riders Survey

Try to infiltrate local council - elect councillors under the age of 30. The traditional shire councillors only care about providing services to the oldies. This is recipe for financial ruin and no future growth. Providing for other sectors including trail bike riders and families can attract and retain rate payers to the shire.

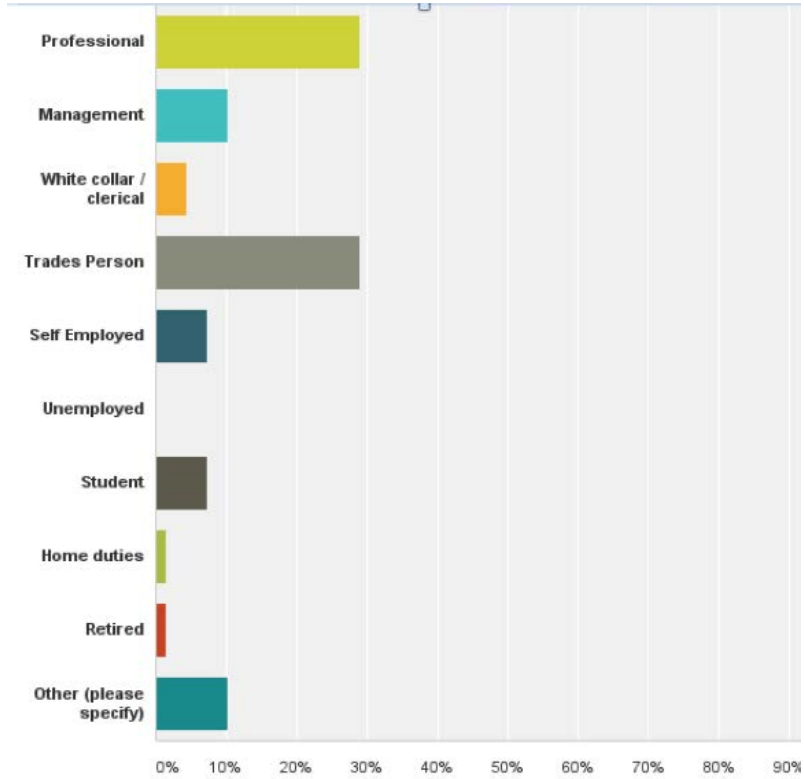
do it. orv riders and drivers are sick to death of being bad guys for tearing up the place but no wonder as the state/local government forgot us.

Try get clubs/associations and people involved in setting up areas working bees. More off road parks private or council operated areas like the eastern state have Something needs to be done for safety reasons

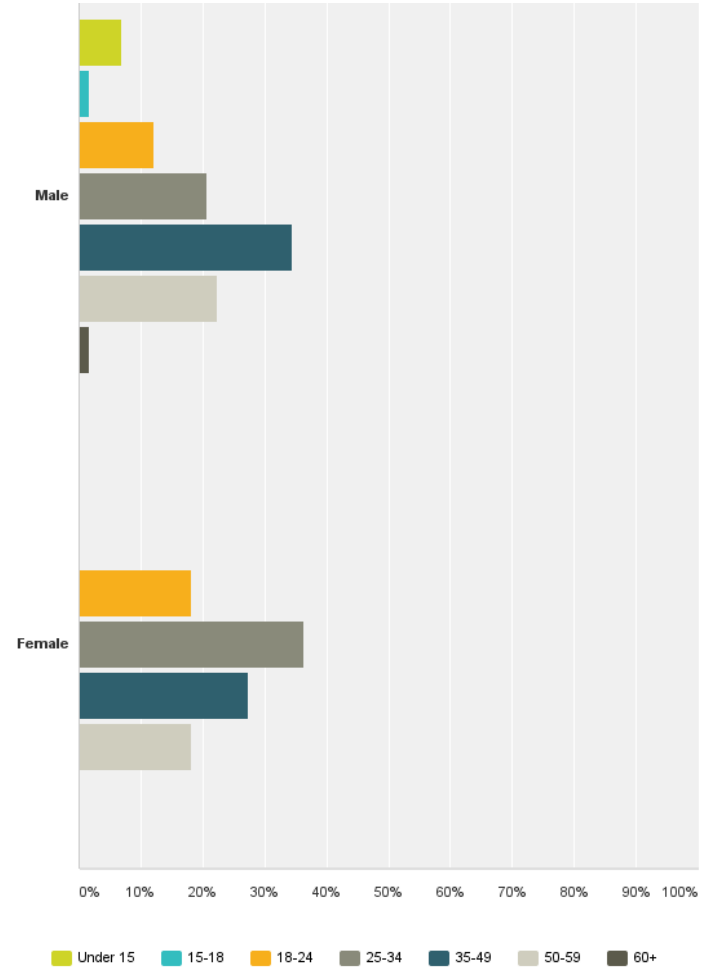
Riders Survey

Demographics

What best describes your occupation? (Q45)

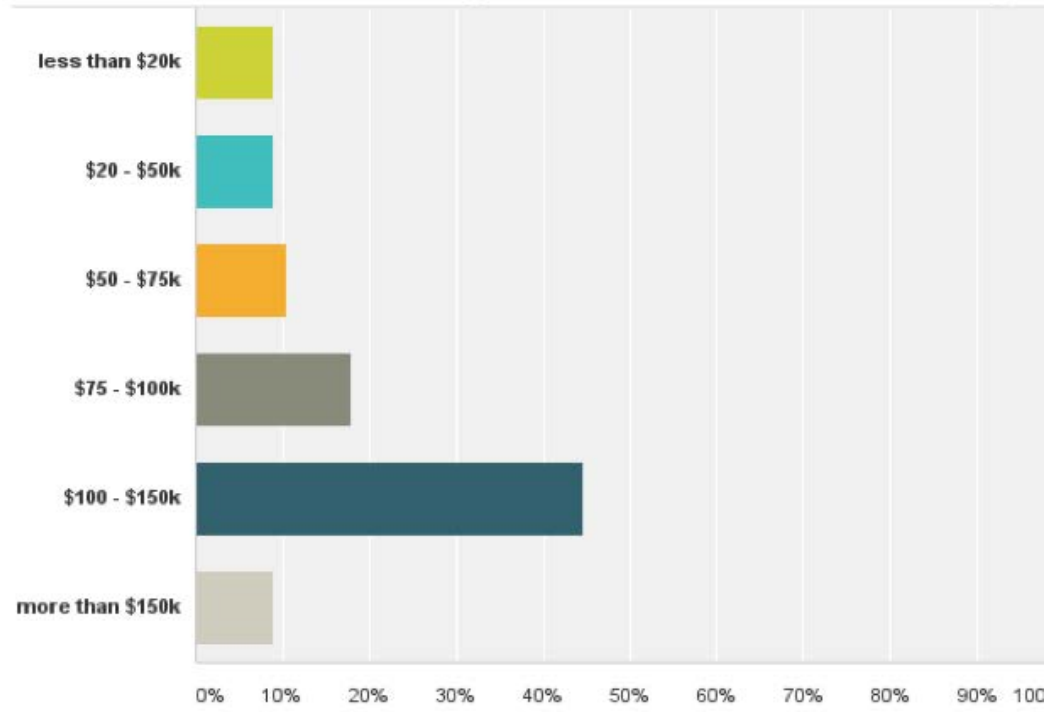


What age and gender are you? (Q46)



Riders Survey

Please indicate your annual income range. (Q48)



APPENDIX C: REVISION HISTORY

Version #	Release Date	Comments
0.1	30/01/2015	Initial draft
0.2	16/02/2015	Incorporated comments from NACC, Shire of Chapman Valley
0.3	18/02/2015	Incorporated comments from City of Greater Geraldton, added section on Ledge Point, added Executive Summary
1.0	05/03/2015	Incorporated final feedback from NACC, formatting