

Volunteer MTB Trail Maintenance Toolkit



Contents

Introduction	3	Attracting and Retaining Volunteers	14
How to use this toolkit	4	• Removing barriers to volunteering	14
Governance	5	• Advertising and communicating with volunteers	14
• What is the vision for the trail network?	5	• Making the volunteer experience enjoyable	15
• How are major decisions about the trail network made?	5	• Recognition	15
• How will the trail network be monitored and unplanned action taken?	5	OH&S and Managing Volunteers	16
• How is trail network risk managed?	6	• Planning and risk assessment	16
Land Ownership and Access	7	• Instructing volunteers at a maintenance session	16
• A few words on unsanctioned trails	7	• Managing the work environment	16
• Identifying and working with Landowners	7	• Record keeping and review	17
• Engaging with your Landowner, education and building support	7	Equipment	18
• Written management agreements	8	• Hand tools	18
• Basic components of agreements	8	• Machinery, chainsaws and other higher risk equipment	18
• Minimum requirements for agreements with AusCycling Clubs	9	• Procuring and storing equipment	19
Risk, Insurance and Trail	11	Fundraising and In-kind Support	20
• Risk management	11	• Pre-requisites for good management of funding	20
• Risk warnings and trailhead signage	11	• Donations, grants and sponsorship	20
Skills and Know-how	13	• Contributions from events	21
• References – Australian MTB Trail Guidelines	13	• Merchandise	22
• Maintenance training	13	Running a Dig Day - Key Steps for Success	23
• Engaging professional trail builders	13	• Planning	23
		• On the day	23
		• Afterwards - follow ups and reporting	23



Introduction

Australians have been riding mountain bikes since the early 1980s when purpose-built bikes became commercially available. In those early days, mountain bikes were ridden on existing tracks and trails around the country. Riders quickly began creating purpose-built mountain bike trails, sometimes with the permission of landowners and managers, and sometimes without. Participation was relatively low – the first national championships in 1984 attracted just 50 riders – and mountain biking was not well known outside of its small and passionate fanbase.

Mountain biking in Australia has rapidly evolved over the last four decades.

Mountain bikes have changed dramatically. Bikes now exist across a range of specialty niches that cater to different disciplines and styles of riding. Mountain bikes have become more capable with better suspension, and bigger wheels and tyres among other improvements that allow riders to tackle steeper and more rugged terrain.

The increasing availability of eMTB is allowing riders to go further than they could with leg power alone. This has made mountain biking more accessible to people with lower fitness, injuries or mobility limitations, as well as changing how riders use trail networks.

Adaptive mountain biking continues to grow, creating new opportunities for people with disabilities to ride on the trails.

Mountain bike trails have changed too. From the original hand-cut, rough and raw trails, many trails are now built using major earthworks, rock armouring, wood and other construction to create fantastic places to ride. Trails are designed to appeal to a variety of different riding styles and riders go out of their way to find the ones they like the most.

The people who ride mountain bikes have changed.

Once an activity dominated by young men, mountain biking is now enjoyed by people of all ages, genders and backgrounds, and is often enjoyed as a family activity. While estimates of participation vary, mountain biking has taken its place as a mainstream recreation enjoyed by a broad cross-section of the community.

The world surrounding mountain biking has changed as well.

In 1996 mountain biking became an Olympic discipline and a wide variety of mountain bike events are now broadcast to an international audience of millions. Mountain bike has also developed into several disciplines (variations) including Cross Country, Downhill and Enduro as the primary disciplines.

The growth of mountain biking in Australia has led to the creation of a substantial professional trail building sector. Governments at all levels, as well as private investors, have fuelled a wave of investment in new mountain bike trails often with the goal of boosting the local tourism sector.

Despite this investment and the regular announcement of new professionally-built trail networks across regional destinations, many if not most mountain bike trails in Australia are still built or maintained by volunteers. The continued reliance on volunteer labour to manage trails and keep them running safely is a major challenge for the mountain biking community, particularly in the face of rapid increases in usage and the impact of extreme weather events on trails.



How to use this toolkit

This document is intended to bring together some of the hard-earned wisdom and experience of Australia's many volunteer trail groups. It is for anyone who wants to contribute to the management and maintenance of their local trails. It is intended to help put volunteer maintenance on a sustainable footing so that volunteers can continue to contribute to the places we love to ride.

Most importantly, it contains a set of good practices and mandatory minimum standards for AusCycling-affiliated mountain bike Clubs that are engaged in trail maintenance. These requirements are designed to help protect Clubs and volunteers from legal risk, while allowing them to continue providing a valuable service to the local riding community.

Acknowledgement

This document was produced with the support of the Victorian Government through its Together More Active program.



Governance

Governance is one of the most overlooked, yet important, aspects of managing a mountain bike trail network. At its most basic, governance is simply the system by which a trail network is managed. It includes: the entities involved (e.g. the Landowner or manager and the mountain bike Club or trail group); the process by which decisions about the trail network are made and work is undertaken; and any documents that record these relationships and decisions (e.g. leases, licences/permits and MOUs; strategies and plans; reports, maintenance records and logs).

While trail management can begin as a casual and informal arrangement, it is important to work towards formalising governance as it provides the foundation for sustainable, well-managed trails, avoids or addresses potential problems, and allows for future growth and development of the network.

Regardless of the specific documents you use to formalize your governance, they should cover the following topics.

What is the vision for the trail network?

Ideally, governance documents should set out a shared vision for the trail network. This might be incorporated into a lease or licence agreement, but more often it forms a separate strategy that has shared buy-in from the Landowner, the Club and the users.

A strategy should consider the type of trail network that currently exists and the ambitions of the relevant parties in developing the network. For example: Are the trails intended to be a tourism drawcard? To support local mountain bike riding? To host small or large events? To provide riding opportunities for all abilities, or focus on beginners and intermediate riders?

Will the trails be designed for gravity riders doing shuttle laps? Or cross-country and trail riders exploring under their own power?

A strategy should create a vision for the future of the trail network over a period of at least five or ten years, which can then be reflected in annual plans and maintenance schedules.

A strategy should be consistent with any restrictions on land use, including environmental and heritage issues, co-existing with other user groups, and supported by the community and relevant governments.

How are major decisions about the trail network made?

What type of decisions does the Landowner or manager want to make themselves and what decisions can be delegated to the Club or trail group?

For example, governance documents might identify that the Club or trail group can undertake any maintenance of existing trails including renovating or adding minor trail features, but that any realignment of trails or construction of new trails must be agreed by the Landowner.

Alternatively, the Landowner may request that the Club creates a schedule of work for the upcoming year that sets out the planned activities including maintenance and new construction. Only urgent rectification work to maintain trail safety may be allowable outside of this schedule of works.

How will the trail network be monitored and unplanned action taken?

Critical to maintaining a safe trail network is the ability to rapidly identify problems and take action to address them. Governance documents should establish a mechanism for issues to be reported by users such as storm damage, fallen trees or other faults. This function could be managed by the Landowner or the Club but should be responsive and allow for quick management action including closing affected trails, communicating



updates to trail users, organising urgent maintenance work, and approving affected trails for reopening.

Reporting and management of unplanned works can make use of a dedicated technology platform (e.g. Trailforks, Trail Vision) or more basic options (e.g. email and social media, spreadsheets). Whatever option you choose, the preferred contact method should be clearly advertised to trail users and reports should be captured in a system that allows for easy management and record-keeping.

How is trail network risk managed?

As mountain biking has developed, the management of risk has become increasingly important to ensure continued access to trail networks and promote the safety of all users. Governance arrangements for a trail network should specifically consider risk management, including who is responsible for each risk and how it is to be managed.

Risk is likely to be covered in the foundational governance documents for a trail network – the lease, licence or MOU under which the trails are managed – but a separate risk management document may also be warranted.

As a general guide, a mountain bike Club is responsible for its activities at the trail network which may include hosting racing and social events, conducting juniors' programs and coaching clinics, and conducting trail maintenance.

It is common for Landowners or managers to request indemnification from a Club for any risk that may arise from a trail network. Clubs may offer indemnification for their activities but should not accept broad responsibility for the public using the trail network (further information on page 9).

Should you have any questions about your governance documents, including leases, licences/ permits or MOUs, please contact AusCycling at facilities@auscycling.org.au.



Land Ownership and Access

Developing a constructive relationship with your Landowner or manager is a critical step in establishing sustainable trail maintenance. Ultimately, it is the Landowner that is responsible for the trail network and bears the risk for anything that happens on their land. Securing permission for trail maintenance and ensuring the Landowner is comfortable with your activities is vital.

A few words on unsanctioned trails

In the early years of mountain biking in Australia, few trails were built with the explicit permission of the Landowner. Trails were often 'unsanctioned' and the relatively small number of people riding them meant they were often easy for Landowners to ignore.

Mountain biking is now one of Australia's most popular recreational activities with around half a million people getting on a mountain bike each year. Some governments and Landowners have seen the tremendous value of mountain biking, approved existing trails and invested tens of millions of dollars in new 'sanctioned' trails over the last decade.

Unfortunately, in many cases we are still dealing with the legacy of mountain biking's unsanctioned heritage. Some well-established and popular trail networks that are on public land remain unsanctioned and Landowners and managers take a variety of approaches ranging from neglect to actively closing trails.

While we recognise the desire of riders to create their own great places to ride, particularly where they do not have any sanctioned trails nearby, AusCycling does not support trail building or maintenance without the permission from the relevant Landowner.

The foundation of sustainable trail maintenance is a healthy and productive relationship between the Landowner and the Club or trail group. Building and maintaining trails without permission is unsustainable, risky for the Club and its members, and can be an obstacle to negotiating permission for sanctioned trails.

While the path to formal recognition for some of our favourite trails is frustratingly slow, AusCycling will continue to advocate for mountain biking to be an accepted and valued activity on public land and for Clubs who wish to have a role in maintaining their local trails.

AusCycling Clubs must not conduct maintenance on trails where they do not have the written permission of Landowners.

Identifying and working with Landowners

A first step in securing permission for trail maintenance is to identify the type of land and the Landowner or manager for your trails. Some common examples are listed below. Often trails cross multiple estates and you may need to engage with multiple different organisations.

To determine specific land boundaries, you may need to consult your jurisdiction's land cadastre – a spatial data service that identifies the ownership of individual parcels of land – which can easily be found with an internet search.

Engaging with your Landowner, education and building support

Many Landowners do not have a good understanding of mountain biking. Their views towards mountain biking may be neutral or they may have negative and ignorant connotations of mountain biking being high-risk, environmentally destructive and/or anti-social.

One of your early tasks in engaging with a Landowner may be educating them on mountain biking and creating a positive impression of the mountain biking community. It may be important for you to address specific issues with your engagement.



For example:

- Poor trail building techniques and building in sensitive areas can reinforce the view among some Landowners that mountain biking harms environmental and heritage values.
- The image of mountain biking as a risky sport, often reinforced by media and advertising that focuses on extreme riding, can lead Landowners to conclude that it is too dangerous for public land.

AusCycling may be able to support you in this task with evidence, data and advice on advocacy (for example, [AusCycling's Club Advocacy Toolkit](#) sets out how to build a coalition of support).

Written management agreements

It is important that any agreement with a Landowner for you to conduct trail maintenance is recorded in writing. Written agreements (and the process of negotiating them) promote a clear and mutual understanding of which land and trails are included, what activities are allowed, and the respective responsibilities of each party.

Written agreements can take a variety of forms – some common examples include:

Lease	Leases are contracts for the exclusive use of a property. Leases transfer a significant amount of risk onto the lessee and should not be used for trail maintenance unless the mountain bike Club can control the site and limit public access to the site outside of Club activities.
Licence	Permission (often non-exclusive) to access land for a specific purpose. This is the most common type of agreement to cover trail maintenance work.
Forestry user licence	Many forestry corporations will have a scheme to authorize non-forestry, recreational uses of their estate.
Local government permit	Local government authorities may issue a permit for activity in a park or reserve. This may include scheduled trail care activities, or ad-hoc activity such as post-weather trail assessments.

Park care agreement	Established under a state or territory's park care or land care framework, these agreements will likely have standard clauses and not much room for bespoke arrangements.
MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)	Usually not legally binding, MOUs are a way of recording the general principles that underpin a trail management arrangement.

Basic components of agreements

AusCycling does not have a preference for the type of agreement you enter with your Landowner, but they likely will have a preference. Regardless of the form of the agreement, it should cover some fundamental topics:

- The parties. Who does the agreement apply to? This is likely to be the Landowner and the Club but might also include other people or groups. The agreement should list the person in each party who has responsibility for the agreement and their contact details.
- The term. When does the agreement expire or is it ongoing?
- The area. What land does the agreement apply to? Including a clear map can be useful.
- The activity. What activities are authorised by the agreement? What activities are explicitly excluded?
- Disputes and termination. How will the parties deal with disputes under the agreement? Can either party terminate the agreement and, if so, what notice needs to be given?

Agreements between AusCycling-affiliated mountain bike Clubs and Landowners for trail maintenance (including renewals) must be approved by AusCycling prior to being executed. Failure to secure AusCycling approval may impact on insurance coverage for the Club. Please contact AusCycling at facilities@auscycling.org.au.



Minimum requirements for agreements with AusCycling Clubs

For AusCycling-affiliated mountain bike Clubs, the following are mandatory requirements for any agreement to conduct trail maintenance activities:

Indemnities and releases

Managing risk is often a major concern of Landowners, particularly for an activity like mountain biking which is perceived as higher risk than many other outdoor activities. Landowners will often ask a Club to indemnify it for risks associated with the agreement and to hold public liability insurance to cover that risk.

Clubs must not accept an agreement that includes an unlimited and unilateral indemnity for the Landowner. It is not appropriate for a Club to accept complete responsibility for use of mountain bike trails, particularly when those trails are available to the public on a 24/7 basis.

Clubs should pursue one of three approaches detailed below in order of priority. If a Landowner does not agree to one of these options, Clubs should contact AusCycling for further advice.

RED FLAGS

Unlimited or broadly drafted indemnity clause.

First preference – include a unilateral indemnity and release in favour of the Club. The following clauses provide a model.

1. *The Landowner releases and indemnifies the Club against any Claim or Loss arising from any personal injury or death occurring in, on or in relation to the Land (whether during or after the term) except to the extent caused or contributed to by a negligent act or omission of the Club.*
2. *In this clause:*
 - a. *Claim includes any action, claim, demand, proceeding, order, judgment, loss, damage, liability, cost or expense (including legal expense).*

- b. *Loss means any loss, damage, cost, liability, charges or expense and includes penalties, fines and interest.*

Second preference – do not include any indemnity / release in either direction, with each party remaining responsible for its own liability.

Remove all indemnities and releases from the Licence.

Third preference – include mutual limited indemnities / releases for both the Club and the Landowner.

The following clauses provide a model.

1. *The Club releases and indemnifies the Landowner against any Claim or Loss arising from any personal injury or death occurring from permitted use of the mountain bike trails on the Land, where caused by the negligent act or default of the Club, except to the extent the Claim or Loss is caused or contributed to by the Landowner. The Landowner must mitigate any Loss it suffers or may suffer or incur.*
2. *The Landowner releases and indemnifies the Club against any Claim or Loss arising from any personal injury or death occurring in, on or in relation to the Land (whether during or after the term) except to the extent caused or contributed to by a negligent act or omission of the Club.*
3. *In this clause:*
 - a. *Claim includes any action, claim, demand, proceeding, order, judgment, loss, damage, liability, cost or expense (including legal expense).*
 - b. *Loss means any loss, damage, cost, liability, charges or expense and includes penalties, fines and interest.*

Clubs should not agree to provide a unilateral indemnity to the Landowner. In the event a Landowner insists on a unilateral indemnity, please contact AusCycling for further advice at facilities@auscycling.org.au.



Scope of work

The agreement should specify the scope of maintenance work that the Club is authorised to undertake and the role of the Landowner in overseeing that work. As a general principle, agreements should not allow Landowners to abrogate responsibility for activities on their land and should maintain a clear role for Landowners in overseeing, approving and managing mountain bike trails.

Specific issues that should be considered in a scope of work include:

- Control of the site – Clubs must not take responsibility for controlling mountain bike trails where there is public access and no effective method of limiting who can use the trails.
- Emergency and incident reporting – Clubs must not accept responsibility for emergency response or reporting incidents except for where these are directly related to Club activities.
- Trail inspection and reporting of faults – Clubs must not agree to provide trail inspection outside of agreed trail maintenance activities. Faults should be reported to the Landowner in the first instance, with the Club responding to maintenance tasks as required by the Landowner.

Planning and decision-making

The agreement should reference a broader planning framework to guide the use, maintenance and further development of the trail network. It should reference any overarching legislative or planning considerations – e.g. environmental controls, plans of management – and specific mountain biking strategies and plans – e.g. trail master plans.

The agreement should also provide for a maintenance plan to be created and approved by the Landowner to guide the Club's activities.

RED FLAGS

No oversight or approval of trail maintenance planning by the Landowner.

The agreement should specify who is able to make decisions about the agreement and management of the trail network. Some minor decisions may be delegated to the Club; however the Landowner must maintain a central role in approving maintenance plans and the development of the trail network.

RED FLAGS

Landowner abrogating all responsibility for trails on their land and leaving it exclusively for Clubs to make all decisions.

Reporting, auditing and review

The agreement should include regular reporting by the Club to the Landowner on its maintenance activities to a level that allows the Landowner to oversee the work and be assured that relevant standards and requirements are being met. Reporting should include details of planned and unplanned maintenance, including the amount and location of any work completed and any issues that have arisen during that work.

Landowners must include regular inspection and auditing requirements in their oversight of trail maintenance work conducted by Clubs.

A regular review of the agreement should be scheduled with the Landowner to ensure it is achieving the desired maintenance outcomes for the trails.

Other considerations

Other issues that you may wish to include in your agreement with a Landowner include:

- What support will the Landowner provide for trail maintenance activities? Support may be in-kind (e.g. support from employees, use of tools or equipment) or financial.
- What rights does the Club have to exploit commercial assets linked to the trail network? For example, can the Club seek sponsors and sell naming rights for the trail network or individual trails?
- How will event hosts that use the mountain bike trails contribute to their maintenance? For example, an event host may pay a per-rider fee towards trail maintenance to compensate for the impact of its event on the trails.



Risk, Insurance and Trail Maintenance

Risk management

When your Club undertakes trail maintenance, you're not just improving the riding experience — you're also taking on responsibilities that can carry legal risks. Understanding these risks helps protect your Club, your volunteers, and the future of your trail network.

When a Club or its volunteers maintain trails, they may owe a duty of care to riders who use those trails. This means you must take reasonable steps to ensure the trails are safe — or at least that the risks are clearly understood and managed. The law doesn't expect trails to be perfect, but it does expect that dangerous conditions aren't ignored or made worse by your work.

In order to reduce the risk in performing trail maintenance, Clubs should follow the guidance in this toolkit and, in particular:

1. Ensure you have a written agreement to perform trail maintenance
2. Stick to the scope of your agreement and not perform activities outside of that scope
3. Use trail head signage that includes a risk warning (see next section)
4. Regularly inspect trails and report known hazards to the Landowner
5. Practice good OH&S and volunteer management
6. Report any incidents involving the Club or Club members to the Landowner and AusCycling

Risk warnings and trailhead signage

Mountain biking, like many outdoor activities, comes with inherent risk. Even on well-designed and maintained trails, riders can fall or hit obstacles leading to injury.

A risk warning is a clear statement that informs riders of the inherent risk of an activity, that they're undertaking the activity at their own risk, and that the other party is not liable for injuries resulting from ordinary performance of that activity.

In trail maintenance, risk warnings help to protect the Club or Landowner, especially when the risks are obvious or well known (like jumps, rocks, steep descents etc). It is important to note that a risk warning does not remove the duty of care owed by a Club to trail users or the potential for litigation where a Club has been negligent in its trail maintenance activities.

Use of a risk warning is good practice for all trail managers and is mandatory for AusCycling-affiliated Clubs who have a role in trail maintenance.

Clubs must post the following risk warning on signage at the entrance/s to any trail network they manage. State specific text is available at Attachment E.

Acceptance of risk

The mountain bike trails on this land (Trails) are managed by *[insert full legal name of club]* (ABN *[insert]*) (Club) as affiliated with AusCycling Limited (ABN 70 644 149 351) (AC).

Voluntary participation

You acknowledge, agree and understand that your participation in any activity using the Trails, and your use of the Trails is or will be:

1. entirely voluntary in nature and at your own risk;
2. for recreational or competitive purposes;
3. associated with significant risk of personal injury;
4. carried out in a proper and orderly manner; and
5. in accordance with the permitted use of the Land.

Risk warning

You acknowledge, agree and understand that:

1. the types of activities undertaken at or using the Trails that carry significant risk of personal injury include (but are not limited to):
 - a. mountain bike riding;
 - b. cycling;
 - c. running;
 - d. walking; and
2. during your participation in any activity at or using the Trails, certain risks or dangers may occur that can include (but are not limited to):
 - a. physical exertion you are not accustomed to;
 - b. all kinds of bodily injuries and diseases;
 - c. environmental hazards including loose surfaces, rocks, roots, trees, foliage, boulders, eroded or cracked surfaces, ditches, crevices, uneven surfaces, mud, puddles or pooled or running water and other trail features;
 - d. encountering animals or fauna;
 - e. extremes of weather and temperature that may involve sudden and unexpected change;
 - f. risks arising from or connected to the prevailing conditions, including that:
 - i. mountain bike riding and cycling can and will be affected by the weather which may change without warning;
 - ii. there is often an element of the "luck of the prevailing conditions" when undertaking mountain bike riding and cycling over which the Club and AC (or any of them) have no control; and
 - iii. possibility of accident or illness requiring assistance of medical services; and
3. warning has been given to you about the risk of suffering personal injury or death arising from or in connection with your participation in activities at, and your use of, the Trails; and
4. the assumption of risk and warning in this section constitutes a 'risk warning' in respect of all activities at or using the Trails in accordance with and for the purposes of relevant legislation.



Skills and Know-how

References – Australian MTB Trail Guidelines

The *Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines* is the principal reference for trail building and maintenance in Australia and was developed out of a combination of other domestic and international resources. The Guidelines are available as a free resource on the AusCycling webpage and Clubs, trail groups and Landowners are encouraged to make use of them.

Maintenance training

Building the skill level of key personnel and leadership within the Club is an important part of sustainable trail maintenance. An effective method of building skills is for a Club to host a training course delivered by an experienced trail educator.

CASE STUDY

In 2024–25 AusCycling, with support from the Victorian Government, partnered with Blue Sky Trails to deliver a series of five workshops across Victoria. Hosted by local mountain bike clubs in Surf Coast, Bendigo, Lysterfield, Beechworth and Bairnsdale, the workshops brought together more than 70 participants from 15 clubs and six land management agencies including Parks Victoria and DEECA. The sessions combined on-trail maintenance demonstrations with facilitated discussions on governance, approvals, funding, and best practice trail management.

These workshops highlighted both the strengths of Victoria's MTB sector, including engaged volunteers, productive club–land manager partnerships, and high trail quality, as well as ongoing challenges like unsanctioned trails, complex approval processes, and volunteer fatigue.

Importantly, the program provided a structured forum for dialogue, giving land managers a clearer picture of club capacity and needs, while equipping clubs with tools and knowledge to align more effectively with agency requirements. The result was a stronger foundation for collaboration and a model of support that can be replicated elsewhere to improve trail governance and management outcomes across the state.

Training courses typically include a classroom session that focuses on governance, planning issues and theory, along with practical sessions on the trails to demonstrate key trail maintenance tasks. It is often worthwhile to include Landowners in the classroom sessions to build their skills and understanding of mountain biking.

Training costs can be supported with funding from local or state government, sponsorship or Club fundraising.

Engaging professional trail builders

Some trail maintenance tasks exceed the ability of volunteers to complete. This may be due to the technical challenge of the task, such as building a new trail or a significant new trail feature. Alternatively, a trail maintenance task may be too large or require heavy machinery and therefore be beyond a Club's capacity or insurance coverage to complete. In these cases, engaging a professional trail builder to work on the trails is a worthwhile activity.

Professional trail builders also have an important role to play in supporting auditing and oversight of the trail network. Landowners should also be encouraged to access professional advice to ensure they can execute their responsibilities to manage trails on their land.

Clubs must not hold themselves out to be professional trail builders or conduct activities that should be undertaken by professionals.



Attracting and Retaining Volunteers

The success of a volunteer trail management group will be largely dependent on its ability to attract and retain a volunteer workforce.

Volunteering across Australia is on the decline, with fewer Australians volunteering in sport and community organisations than in previous years. Clubs and other trail volunteer groups could benefit from some of the resources developed by the Australian Sports Commission in its [Volunteer Resource Hub](#).

There are several important factors in maximising the success of your volunteer recruitment.

Removing barriers to volunteering

As an overarching principle, you should try to make volunteering as easy as possible. Any obstacles people encounter in trying to volunteer make it much less likely that they will attend or continue with your trail group.

The need to minimize obstacles must often be weighed against the need to conduct effective volunteer management and promote good OH&S practices. For example, you should have a robust sign-on process to ensure you know who is on site for each work session. However, you can make use of QR codes, online registration, or even a simple sign-on sheet to make this as easy as possible.

Advertising and communicating with volunteers

Clear communication with your prospective volunteers is important. Your group should have a basic communications strategy that identifies your audience, key messages and methods of communication.

Clubs should consider the lessons in [AusCycling's Club Media Toolkit](#) and how they can be used to support volunteer trail maintenance. For example, your key audiences and messages might include:

Primary audience - existing and prospective volunteers

- Trail maintenance is satisfying and a worthwhile way to contribute to the local riding scene
- Everyone can help - no prior experience is necessary and there is a job suitable for everyone
- You can give a little or a lot of time – no commitments or RSVPs are needed, just turn up when you can and stay as long as you like

Secondary audience - trail users

- Trails are maintained by volunteers
- You can support them by volunteering or giving a few dollars to the trail fund

Secondary audience - Landowners and governments stakeholders

- Volunteer maintenance is an important part of keeping mountain bike trails safe and in good condition
- Mountain bike Clubs and trail groups provide community connection and social opportunities
- Volunteers can't (and shouldn't) do everything and trail groups need support from Landowners and/or local governments

You can deliver your messages through a variety of channels, such as:

- **Social media** – consider whether you want to have a separate set of social media accounts only for trail maintenance or integrate trail maintenance into your existing Club accounts
- **Direct communications** – email, WhatsApp – you can start building a communications list by asking people to provide their contact details when they sign-in to a maintenance session
- **Trailhead communications** – post something on your trailhead noticeboard and make sure people out riding know what you have coming up
- **Posters** distributed through your local networks – bike shops, Clubs, cafes and shops



Some important points in communicating with volunteers:

- Given plenty of notice of trail maintenance days to allow volunteers to plan ahead and ensure they are available to attend.
- Be clear about what you are asking volunteers to do – what work is going to be done, when the work will start and finish.
- Include some context about why that work is important and how it fits within the broader trail strategy (e.g. we are focusing on improving drainage so that our trails remain rideable after heavy rain and the need for ongoing maintenance is reduced).

Making the volunteer experience enjoyable

To ensure volunteers continue to come back and contribute to your trail management, it is important to make their volunteering as enjoyable as possible.

Don't waste their time. Be prepared and ready to get on with the work as soon as people turn up. Be ready with a plan for the day's work and instructions on who should get started with what tasks.

Try to set a variety of tasks that need to be completed, which mix more difficult or boring work (e.g. clearing out drainage) with more creative or exciting jobs (e.g. rebuilding a berm). Finishing each maintenance day with an opportunity to ride a newly restored trail or feature is always appreciated.

Don't ignore the social aspect of volunteering. Making new friends is a powerful way to keep volunteers coming back. Put some effort into welcoming new volunteers

and pairing them with experienced workers to ensure they have support on their first day.

Providing some basic supplies – water, sunscreen and/or insect repellent – will go a long way to making your volunteers more comfortable.

Catering is also a popular incentive to boost volunteer attendance – an army (or trail crew) marches on its stomach! Snacks and refreshments can be purchased or sourced through sponsor agreements and are an easy way to demonstrate your appreciation for volunteer labour and sustain all that hard work.

Recognition

Celebrating the efforts of volunteers is another important strategy to ensure your trail maintenance days remain popular.

Your communications strategy should include regular recognition of the role of volunteers in trail management. You should give a shout-out to your volunteer group as a whole, as well as periodically identify individuals for specific achievements (e.g. milestones in the number of times someone has volunteered or a notable job that was completed). Make sure you share stories and photos of your volunteers in action.

You can trial other methods of celebrating volunteering. A few options could include – a volunteer of the year award, free entry for volunteers into Club events, an end of season thank-you barbeque, discounts or free merchandise from sponsors, or a special piece of apparel or bike equipment that recognises and publicly identifies long-serving volunteers.



OH&S and Managing Volunteers

Planning and risk assessment

It is important you plan your trail maintenance session in advance. Define who is responsible for leading the session and who is the primary safety contact. You should develop a simple activity plan covering:

- Location, date, time
- Task overview (e.g. drainage clearing, refreshing a berm)
- Number and type of volunteers expected

Based on this information, you should conduct a risk assessment for the session. Identify hazards present at the site such as:

- The use of hand tools (e.g. swinging mattocks)
- Uneven terrain, tree roots
- Weather (e.g. heatstroke, storms)
- Allergies or fauna (e.g. bees, snakes)

Assess the likelihood and impact of each of these risks and decide on control measures to minimise them.

Some examples might include:

- What PPE should be required for volunteers (gloves, sturdy shoes, hats)?
- What induction, training and instruction should be provided to volunteers?
- What oversight and support should volunteers have? Pair up volunteers with a buddy. If you have a big enough group, you may need several supervisors to direct work.
- How will the use of tools be managed?

Use the basic Risk Assessment Template at Attachment C.

Instructing volunteers at a maintenance session

Before work begins, brief all participants on the work that you are going to do and the important behaviours you will use to stay safe. Your briefing should include:

- Sign-on requirements for the maintenance session
- An activity plan and safety procedures – what tasks volunteers can and can't do
- Who volunteers should ask for direction on their work
- Checking volunteers have required PPE and discuss tool handling
- Managing relevant environmental factors – hydration and nutrition, managing wet, cold or hot weather
- The location of first aid and any designated first aider
- What to do in the event of an emergency

Tip: Use the two-page trail maintenance summary at Attachment D to make sure your briefing covers all the important points.

Managing the work environment

While working, you should consider the safety element of any task or environment you encounter. Some important considerations might include:

- Using the right tools and equipment for the job
- Inspect tools before use to ensure they are in good working order. Clean tools after use and maintain them regularly.
- Limit the use of power tools (e.g. brush cutters) to people with appropriate training and experience, and ensure they are using the correct PPE.
- Use clear rules for spacing and movement while working (e.g. 2-metre tool clearance zone).

Managing the work environment

- Monitor conditions and look for any unexpected hazards (e.g. slippery trails, overheating, sharp objects)
- Adjust your plans as needed - don't push on if continuing work would be unsafe
- Provide water, rest breaks and shaded areas
- Watch for signs of fatigue or dehydration



Record keeping and review

While we want to keep administrative work to a minimum, it is important to keep records of your trail maintenance. In particular, you should record the following information:

- Attendance and hours worked via the sign-on process
- A description of the work that was undertaken, including photos of before and after the work was completed
- Copies of any specific risk assessments that were conducted
- Copies of any incident reports from the maintenance session

It is also valuable to discuss the session with other Club leaders and reflect on what went well and what could be improved for future sessions.



Equipment

Hand tools

A range of hand tools are commonly used for trail maintenance. You should assemble a selection of hand tools to outfit your trail volunteers. Choose durable, commercial grade tools that can handle rocky soils, roots and heavy use.

Avoid asking volunteers to bring domestic tools from home—cheap gear is not suited to heavy duty use, leading to breakages which slow the job and create safety risks.

Common hand tools and equipment you should consider include:

- **Rakes** (landscape/fire rakes) – for shaping backslope and nicks, cleaning drains, spreading material.
- **Shovels & spades** – long-handled round and square mouth for moving spoil and rock; trenching shovels for drains.
- **Trail tools** (McLeod, Pulaski/combination tools, rogue hoes/mattocks) – for shaping tread, backslope and bench.
- **Picks/hoes** – for breaking compacted ground, prying rocks and roots.
- **Rock bars & slings** – for safe rock placement and armouring.
- **Loppers & hand saws** – for light vegetation trimming (not chainsaws).
- **Buckets, tarps & wheelbarrows** – moving gravel/aggregate or organics.
- **Compaction** – hand tampers (plate compactors are contractor-only; see “High-risk equipment”).
- **Mark-out** – flagging tape, pin flags and spray marker.

Machinery, chainsaws and other higher risk equipment

Volunteer trail work is overwhelmingly **hand-tool first**. Use of high-risk machinery and equipment should be limited to only where it is needed and used either by appropriately qualified club members, representatives of the landowner, or by contractors. If in doubt, don't use them.

Type	Primary Use	Notes
Chainsaws	Clearing fallen trees	Club volunteers must not use chainsaws unless they are formally qualified, and inducted and specifically authorised by the Landowner for the task. Where possible, landowner crews or insured contractors are preferred for chainsaw work.
Excavators, bobcats, tracked dumpers and the like	Digging, moving earth and building dirt	Club volunteers are not to use heavy machinery for trail work. Any works involving heavy or powered plant should be completed by the Landowner or licensed contractors under their permits, insurances and environmental controls.
Brush cutters	Clearing trail	Subject to Landowner permission, use is limited to qualified operators only, with eye/ear protection, long sleeves, long pants and boots. Keep a 5-meter exclusion zone around the user.



Type	Primary Use	Notes
Motorised wheel-barrows	Moving dirt and building	Subject to Landowner permission and only used where terrain is suitable by an experienced operator. No passengers are to ride in motorised wheelbarrows. Obey load limits, move at walking pace only, designate uphill/downhill routes and turning bays, and use a spotter where sightlines are poor.

Minimum controls whenever any machinery or powered tool is authorised by the Landowner:

- Written approval from the Landowner for the specific task.
- Risk assessment covering machinery use, including area of operation, exclusion zones, fuel spill and fire risk, and emergency response and first aid.
- Competency and supervision including named operators, qualifications and direct supervision of the work.
- Required PPE as specified by the manufacturer/Landowner (e.g. chainsaw chaps, face shield, hearing protection) and first-aid on site.

Procuring and storing equipment

When selecting equipment, take the approach of “buy once, buy right”. Choose commercial -grade tools with replaceable handles and blades (if appropriate). Using a standard model throughout your trail maintenance makes maintenance, asset management and getting spare parts simpler.

Consider bundling your equipment in “kits” i.e. pre-pack sets for drainage, trail repair, rock work and vegetation so leaders can grab and go. Include relevant PPE such as gloves and safety glasses.

Equipment can be procured using a variety of approaches including:

- Using club budgets with revenue raised from memberships, event entries and general sponsorship.
- Grants for specific equipment purchases. Check with local, state and federal agencies plus charity groups that distribute funding.
- Sponsorships of general trail maintenance or specific trails. Sponsors could contribute cash or in-kind support if they are a tool/PPE supplier (at the least you should look for a discount on purchases). Further information on sponsorships is in the next section.
- Cash and in-kind contributions from Landowners.
- Donations from the community, including from other mountain bikers through an appeal for support.

Maintain an asset register to keep track of your gear.

A basic asset register can be created using a spreadsheet and might include the following details: item name, category, unique identification number or serial number, storage location, condition, purchase date and cost, and any restrictions on use. You might also include maintenance schedules, warranty information and expected life span.

Tools and equipment are often targeted by thieves, so make sure you take precautions against them going missing. Write your club’s name prominently on tools and equipment using indelible marker or an engraver.

Store tools securely:

- On site storage could include a shipping container or shed, but note that remote sites give thieves plenty of opportunity to break in.
- If suitable on-site storage isn’t secure, you might consider using a lockable trailer that can be easily moved into a garage or stored at someone’s house.
- Consider specific storage requirements for high value equipment and insurance.

TIP

Many hand tools are brown – the same colour as the ground! To avoid accidentally leaving tools on site after a maintenance session, spray paint part of the tool with fluoro paint so it stands out.



Fundraising and In-kind Support

In addition to volunteer labour, you are likely to need funding to fulfil your trail maintenance task. Funding can be used to pay for tools, raw materials and other resources, catering and benefits for volunteers, or assistance from professional trail builders where it is needed.

Pre-requisites for good management of funding

You should plan how you will accept and manage funds raised specifically for trail maintenance activities. Clubs may choose to use their existing bank account or setup a specific account for trail funds. Regardless of the option chosen, Clubs should clearly account for funds raised for trail maintenance.

Clubs should establish an internal control for expenditure of trail funds. Funds should be expended in accordance with a plan and budget for trail maintenance activities, with expenditure approved by a suitable delegate within the Club.

Donations, grants and sponsorship

Common sources of funding to support trail maintenance include donations from the public, government grants and sponsorships.

Donations

Donations have become a popular method of getting a contribution towards trail maintenance for riders who don't have time or are unable to volunteer. Clubs should make it as easy as possible to donate. This might include:

- Online platforms.
- Trail signage that includes a QR code. As well as including this on a trail head sign or map, consider adding a sign to the top of a climb where riders often stop for a few minutes to catch their breath.

- Opportunities to donate at local businesses such as bike shops, cafes and shops.
- Clubs can investigate registering with the Australian Sports Foundation to make donations tax deductible.

Grants

Government grants have been a major driver in the creation of new trails throughout Australia over the past decade. Unfortunately, grants for maintenance work have been largely overlooked in favour of the construction of new trails that support tourism development.

Clubs can apply for grants from local, state and federal governments for trail work. Often these grant programs exclude standard maintenance work, so the project scope may need to be defined as "upgrading" a trail or otherwise creating new capacity.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a mutual value exchange: the Club receives cash or in-kind support to keep trails rideable and the sponsor receives community visibility, goodwill and engagement. Keep your sponsorship offers simple, measurable, and deliverable by volunteers.

Before you start:

- Check your Landowner's rules about what assets you can offer as part of a sponsorship agreement (i.e. signage sizes/locations, naming rights, logo use, event activations and any restricted categories e.g., alcohol, gambling, vaping). Get any necessary approvals from your Landowner in writing.
- Define your offer. What can you reliably deliver with volunteer capacity (signage, social posts, "adopt-a-trail" recognition, staff dig days)?
- Decide your ask. Do you want cash or in-kind support (tools, material, PPE, printing, storage, refreshments), or a mix?
- Nominate a lead to manage the sponsorship relationships, including agreements and reporting.



Common assets you can offer as part of a sponsorship agreement include:

- “Adopt-a-Trail” – recognition on trail signage, a trail map, and digital channels for a defined trail, section or feature (e.g. “[Sponsor] SuperFlow trail maintained with support from [Sponsor]”) for 12 months.
- Naming rights for your trail maintenance program (i.e. “Community Dig Days presented by [Sponsor]”).
- General signage with the sponsors name and/or logo on trailhead signs, wayfinder decals or feature-specific plaques.
- Digital visibility including website logo/listing, monthly social spotlight, tagged build-day posts, e-newsletter thanks.
- Experiences such as hosted staff volunteer days (we induct and lead, they bring people).
- Content including co-branded short videos or photo sets from a maintenance day.
- In-kind showcase such as “Tool library supported by [Sponsor]” labels.

The value of each of these assets will depend on the exposure they will generate for the sponsor and will likely be tied to the popularity of your trail network and the size of the local economy. Check with other local clubs and community groups to get a sense for the value of local sponsorships.

Common options for potential sponsors include local bike shops and outdoor retailers, builders/landscapers and civil suppliers, cafés/tourism operators, health providers and community banks. Prioritise any potential sponsors with connections to existing members.

Prepare a one-page offer that shows your network and the community that uses it, the maintenance outcomes their support will fund, and 1–2 simple recognition options (e.g., trailhead plaque + quarterly update). Approach sponsors with a short, local-impact ask—why it matters to riders and the community—then invite a quick call to discuss the issue.

Keep the conversation practical: try to elicit what the sponsor is interested in, confirm what you can reliably deliver, and agree a 12-month term with options to renew or review.

Once you have secured a sponsor, make a plan to deliver on your commitments and keep your sponsor informed and committed to the sponsorship agreement.

Ensure you deliver everything you said you would for the sponsor (e.g. signage, social media posts, acknowledgement).

Implement periodic reporting to the sponsor on the activities that their support has enabled (i.e. a quarterly report that lists activities, key outcomes, a couple of photos and a testimonial from someone in the community). Be generous with your public acknowledgement and thanks to the sponsor.

Plan to commence renewal discussions several months before the end of the current agreement.

Common sponsorship pitfalls and how to avoid them:

- **Over-promising.** Limit deliverables to what you can actually publish/install. If in doubt, start small in the first year and build scope in future years.
- **Unapproved signage.** Always obtain Landowner sign-off first and then get sponsors to approve any signage drafts.
- **One-and-done.** Without a simple reporting rhythm, sponsorship renewals fade. Put four update dates in your calendar now to keep your sponsor engaged.
- **Sponsor “control” of trail work.** Remember, you set safety and environmental standards, not the sponsor.

Contributions from events

Where trails that you maintain are used for an event or race, it may be appropriate for the event organisers to make a contribution to your trail maintenance. This should be framed as a “use and make good” approach and can benefit both event organisers (through better quality and safer trails) and the Club (through financial support for trail maintenance).

You should ensure any arrangement has the support of the Landowner.

Small events may be supported through a simple “\$ per entrant” fee. Larger events, particularly those with specific needs for a racecourse, may require the negotiation of a set fee and a schedule of pre-race preparation work and post-race rectification.



As part of negotiating an event agreement, you might consider:

- Pre-event inspection & sign-off. Agree on the course, risk controls and any pre-works the contribution will fund.
- Wet-weather decision points. Define any triggers for postponement or cancellation of the event. You may have a lower threshold for postponing an event due to rain based on the potential damage to trails than the event organiser will have based on safely running the event. Consider who is able to make this decision and when it will be made.
- Post-event inspection. Within 24–72 hrs inspect the event site, log defects with photos and create a make-good list.
- Reinstatement. For specific rectification work (opposed to general maintenance) - plan and carry out works with your volunteers or through a contractor.
- Reporting and recognition. Make a short note to organiser with “what your contribution fixed,” plus a thank-you post and logo on the maintenance update.

Any arrangement should seek to leave the trails in a better position than if the event had not taken place. Fees should be sufficient to achieve full rectification after the event and contribute to the general upkeep of the trail network. If the level of impact is unknown, you may wish to secure a bond from the event organizer to ensure you have funding available to complete reinstatement.

Merchandise

Offering merchandise is also an option for Clubs to raise funding for trail maintenance. You should not underestimate the effort that is required for this approach to be successful, nor overestimate the funding that can be achieved.

For merchandise to be attractive, Clubs will generally need to create unique and cool designs. Once you have your designs, there are many drop-shipping services that simplify the task of getting a design-on merchandise, handling transactions and shipping orders. However, it is important to note that these services will charge a high margin and the profit to Clubs from sales is modest.



Running a Dig Day - Key Steps for Success

Running a dig day shouldn't be difficult.
Follow these steps and you'll be off on the right foot.

Planning

1. Make a clear plan for what work you will do. Make sure it is achievable and you aren't overloading your volunteers. Try to include a variety of tasks for people with different abilities.
2. Brief your Lead and supervisors and conduct a risk assessment. Make sure you are preparing to implement any agreed risk treatments or mitigations, including first aid kits.
3. Notify or seek approval from the relevant Landowners. Sometimes approval is a requirement of your trail maintenance agreement, but it is always a good idea to keep your Landowner engaged and aware of your activities.
4. Tell everyone about your dig day – get your communications plan in action and let everyone know when to show up and what you'll be doing. Give people plenty of notice before the proposed date and send a reminder closer to the date.
5. Monitor the weather and have a contingency in place if the weather is bad. Unless you have a deadline to meet, it is often better to postpone a dig day rather than ask your volunteers to suffer through bad weather.
6. Organise the catering, including a supply of drinking water and snacks to keep volunteer energy levels up.
7. Organise the necessary tools, equipment and materials to be delivered to the site. Organise PPE and other necessities (e.g. sunscreen/insect repellent).

On the day

1. Get to the site early and make sure you are set up and ready to start work at the agreed time. Set out signage notifying trail users that work is going on and any markers delineating the work site.
2. Set up sign-on sheets and schedule a volunteer briefing at the start of the day.
3. Ensure your Lead and supervisors are available to provide guidance and monitor work.
4. Take photos and videos, both for use in social media and also to record the work you are doing. You should aim to have before and after photos of key outcomes.

Afterwards - follow ups and reporting

1. Store your sign-on sheets, photos, after-event reports and any other documentation.
2. Make some social media posts about the day, including any acknowledgements of sponsors and thanks of volunteers. Highlight the outcomes of any work completed.
3. Report back to your Landowner with a description of the work completed, photos, any outstanding items or faults that were detected during the day.
4. Plan to replenish any consumables and repair any damaged equipment.



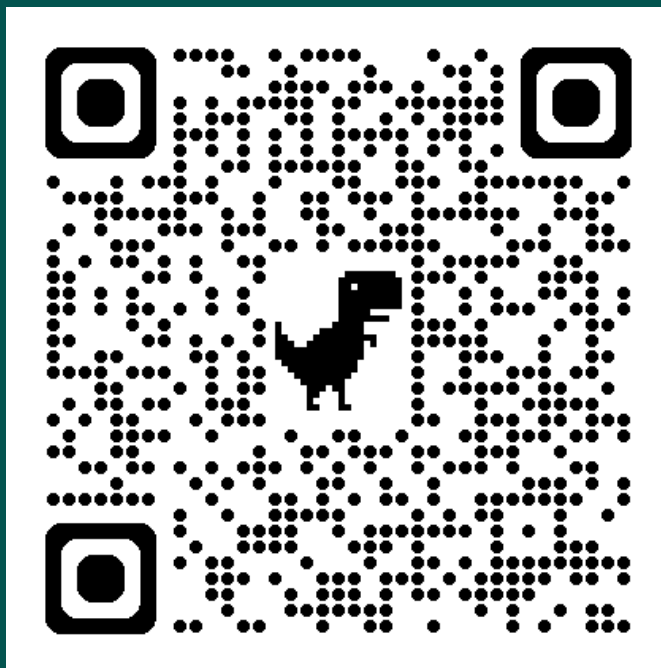
Membership QR



Thanks for helping look after our trails!

If you're not already a member of AusCycling, make sure you are covered by insurance by taking out a FREE AusCycling Non-Riding Membership.

Scan the QR Code for more information



<http://www.auscycling.org.au/membership>



Basic Induction & Sign-on Sheet

Date & Time: _____ Location: _____

Lead: _____

Please print clearly. By completing this document, you confirm:

- you are fit for work today (not affected by alcohol or drugs, well rested),
- you will follow instructions and any briefing given by the Lead and will stop and alert the Lead if anything feels unsafe, and
- you consent to the Club and AusCycling using photos/videos from today that include you for noncommercial communications and the promotion of trail maintenance activities.

Name	Mobile	Email	Emergency Contact (name & phone)	Medical considerations we should know about (optional)



Risk Assessment Template

Use this template for each volunteer maintenance session.

Complete during planning, confirm at the pre-briefing, and update dynamically if conditions change.

1. SESSION DETAILS

Activity/Project Name:

Date & time:

Location / GPS / Map ref:

Land manager / permit:

Session Lead (WHS responsible):

Mobile:

Supervisors (if any):

First aider(s):

First-aid kit/AED location:

Estimated participants:

Comms: Phone coverage: Y/N

UHF Channel:

Emergency contact on-site:

Weather forecast and conditions:

Fire danger rating:

Emergency access point(s):

Muster point:

2. SCOPE & EXCLUSIONS

Work to be performed (brief):

Work NOT included / exclusions: [e.g., no chainsaws/excavators; no work beyond marked flags]

Work area boundaries & public access arrangements: [signage, closures, spotters]

3. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Club SOPs / maintenance guidelines:

Land manager instructions/permit conditions:

Relevant policies (safeguarding, incident reporting, environment):



4. ROLES, COMPETENCY & BRIEFING

Lead:

Supervisors/spotters:

Competency requirements (if any):

Briefing time/place:

Attendance recorded: Y/N

5. HAZARD SCAN

- Slips, trips, steep / unstable ground
- Hand tools (striking / prying / cutting)
- Manual handling / fatigue / heat or cold
- Public interface (riders / walkers / dogs)
- Weather (storm, wind, lightning) / tree fall
- Vegetation and wildlife (bees / snakes / thorns)
- Rock work / crush and pinch points
- Vehicles / parking / track access
- Environmental (waterways / erosion) / biosecurity
- Highrisk equipment proposed (brush cutter / chainsaw / plant)

6. HAZARDS & CONTROLS

(add or delete rows as needed)

Hazard/Issue	Who could be harmed	Likely causes/ triggers	Planned controls (see menu)	Owner	When
Example: Tool strikes in tight work area	Volunteers, public	Close spacing; poor visibility	2m swing zone; spotter; pause work when public pass; eye protection	Lead	Prestart



Trail Maintenance Two-Pager

Activity:

Date/Time:

Lead:

Club:

1. BEFORE WE START

- Sign in; confirm you're fit for work (no alcohol/drugs, well rested, hydrated).
- Today's plan: [brief outline of tasks, boundaries of the work site].
- Known hazards at this site and for these tasks: [steep slopes, unstable rocks, sharp tools, heat/cold, snakes, cyclists/walkers].
- Location of first aid kits, AED and first aiders. Muster point in the event of needing to evacuate the worksite. Emergency communications via UHF or phone.
- Trail status: [open/managed closure, post any signage if required].

2. PPE (Minimum required for the set tasks)

- Sturdy closed-toe footwear, gloves, sun hat, sunscreen, long sleeves.
- Eye protection when striking/prying; add hearing/face protection for any approved powered equipment.

3. TOOL SAFETY — “RIGHT TOOL, RIGHT WAY”

- Inspect tools before use: look for cracks, loose heads, sharp edges, guards. Tag-out damaged tools for repair or replacement.
- 2m swing zone: keep two metres clear around anyone swinging/striking.
- Carry tools safely: points down, one tool at a time; lay tools off the track, blades away from walk lines.
- Use correct technique for the tool: two hands on striking tools; avoid over-reach; stand on stable footing.
- Rock work: use bars and team lifts; never place fingers under a suspended rock.

4. MANUAL HANDLING

- Plan the lift, clear the path, keep the load close, bend knees, neutral spine.
- Use team lifts, slings, barrows; set load limits and swap out regularly.

5. WORKING AROUND OTHERS AND THE PUBLIC

- Call out “Approaching / Passing on your right/left”; establish spotters where sightlines are poor.
- Keep tools and spoil off the tread when riders/walkers pass; pause work until clear.
- Children/young people: assign age-appropriate tasks and supervision.

6. ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE

- Stay within flagged corridor; protect roots, drains and watercourses.
- Biosecurity: brush/scrape soil off tools/boots at finish if requested.
- If you uncover cultural/heritage items or wildlife habitat, stop work and tell the lead.



7. HIGH-RISK EQUIPMENT (RESTRICTIONS)

- No chainsaws, excavators, skid steers, plate compactors or other powered plant unless specifically approved in writing by the Landowner/Manager, operated by authorised and qualified persons, and covered in today's risk briefing.
- Brush cutters (if allowed): experienced operators only, eye/ear/leg protection, 5m exclusion zone, refuel cold, no bystanders.

8. HYDRATION, HEAT & WEATHER

- Sip water often; take shade breaks. Swap tasks to avoid fatigue.
- Stop for thunder, high winds, extreme heat/cold, or if conditions change.

9. COMMUNICATION & STOP-WORK

- Radios/phones checked. If anything looks/feels unsafe: Stop, make it safe, tell the lead.
- Everyone has stop-work authority.

10. CLOSE-OUT

- Pack out all waste and flagging. Clean, dry and guard tools; report defects for repair/replacement.
- Biosecurity clean-down if requested. Sign out; quick debrief: what went well / what to improve.

Lead confirmation: Risks briefed, controls in place, first aid available, emergency plan known.

- Tasks, hazards and controls briefed
- PPE checked and worn
- First aiders and emergency plan confirmed
- Public access controls/signage in place (if required)

Crew check: Do you understand today's tasks and controls? Any concerns or conditions we've missed?

Lead name/signature: _____ Date/Time: _____



