

Rail Trails

- An overview

Alton Twine
Bicycle Queensland





Bicycle Queensland

- 44 years strong
- Almost 13000 members
- History of events eg: Cycle Qld, Brisbane to Gold Coast and Great Brisbane Bike Ride, Her Ride etc.
- History of strong advocacy
- Hon. Rachel Nolan is Chair





Cycling-related tourism resulted in \$1.88Bn in direct output access Australian States and Territories in 2022

- Typically, a rail trail is a shared-use path on a disused railway trackbed. Rail trails may also share the right of way with active railways, light rail, or with disused track.
- As shared-use paths, rail trails are primarily for non-motorized traffic including pedestrians, bicycles, horseback riders and scooters.
- The characteristics of abandoned railways—gentle grades, well-engineered rights of way and structures (bridges and tunnels), and passage through historical areas—lend themselves to rail trails and account for their popularity.

Rail Trails are a global phenomenon, with many overseas trails decades old.

In the UK, Europe and US, rail trails are formally part of the cycle network, whereas in Australia in New Zealand, they have more of a recreation and tourism focus

Rail trails can be found in the US, UK, Europe, Canada, Asia and Oceania.



Cornwall, UK





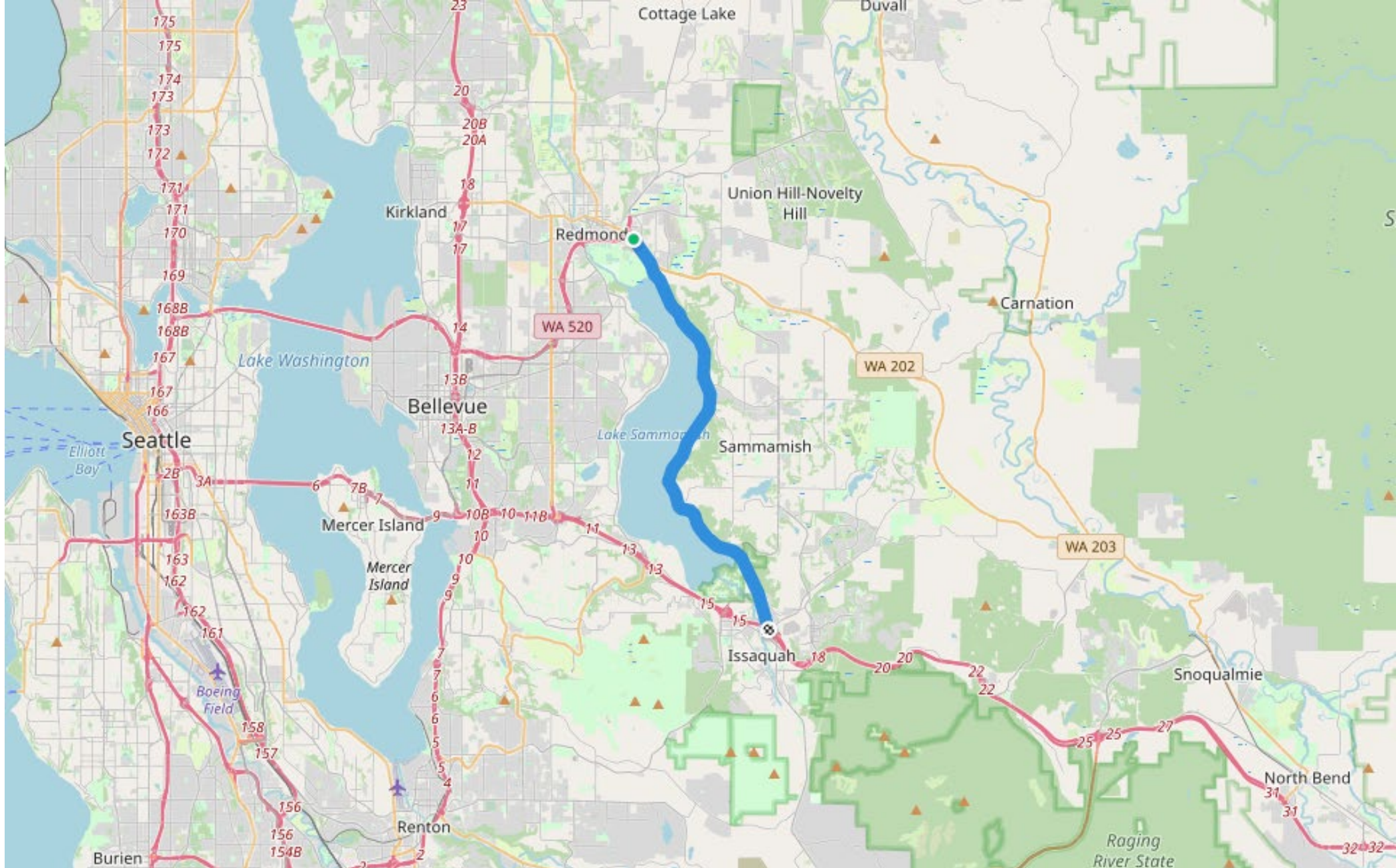
Otago Trail NZ

Washington US



East Sammamich Rail Trail

- 11 mile route
- Purchased by King County in 1998
- Part of a 44 mile route from the Cascade Mountains to the sea
- Several lawsuits over conversion of the trail
- First paved section opened in 2011
- Most recent section paved in 2023





Google









In Australia, rail trails are a booming business, with an increasing number being established, testament to their popularity.



Brisbane Valley Rail Trail

161 km



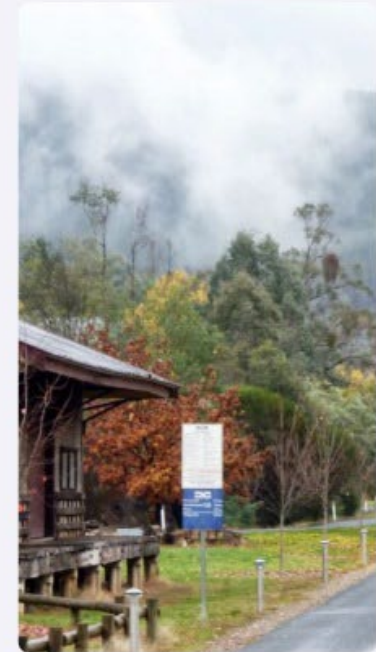
Great Victorian Rail Trail

134 km



High Country Rail Trail

80 km



Murray to Mountains Rail Trail

116 km



Northern River Trail

38 km

Northern Rivers Rail Trail delivering economic benefits for the Tweed

Economic Impact Assessment reveals \$3.7 million boost to region



“We always knew the Rail Trail would draw tourists, but it has far exceeded expectations. It's boosting our economy and highlights how recreational and nature-based infrastructure can stimulate regional economies.”

“Since opening, we have welcomed more than 165,000 users to the Tweed section of the NRRT and in further great news, results from our visitor experience survey shows 80% of visitors used a service on the Rail Trail, such as a café, restaurant, bike hire or shuttle service which is great for our local economy.”

Mayor Chris Cherry

Rebecca Whan, Mayor Chris Cherry and Cameron Arnold OAM welcome independent findings the Rail Trail injected more than \$3.7 million into the Tweed economy in its first year of operation.



The Tweed section has attracted **significant visitor spending**, driving a 15.7% average increase in monthly spend compared to the previous year and stimulated growth in unique visitors (+23% year-over-year) and visitor transactions (+19% year-over-year).

Businesses along the trail reported increased visibility, foot traffic and in many cases, **higher revenues** in both Murwillumbah and less-frequented hinterland villages.

The total value of visitor spend has increased by **\$3.717 million** compared to the previous year. This far exceeds the anticipated boost of \$2.45 million that was forecast.

The local economy should expect an **additional \$114.3 million** in visitor expenditure flowing into the Tweed LGA over the term of the rail corridor lease (30 years) – representing a **54% increase over the originally anticipated boost** to the local visitor economy.





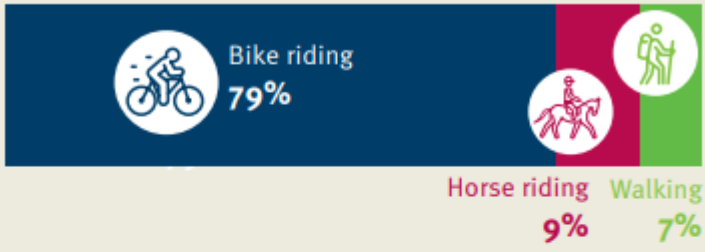
The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail



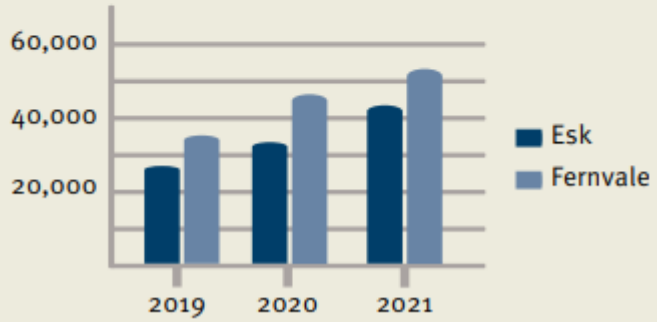
Australia's longest rail-trail
161 kms



BVRT user activity²




Growth in users despite COVID-19¹




Benefits to local communities

Increased employment opportunities



Somerset region unemployment rate down **2%** in 12 months following completion of BVRT and attributed to increased BVRT patronage³



Accommodation providers



11x increase in private accommodation offerings along trail in 12 months²

4 properties in 2020 >> 45 properties in 2021

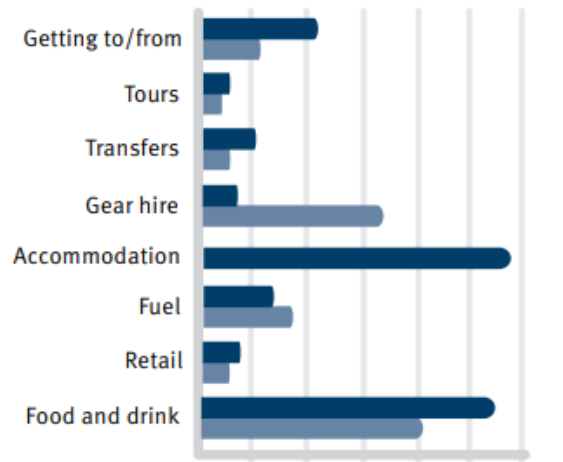
Tour providers



5 new local tour operators on trail in 12 months, delivering new intrastate and interstate tourists²

1 operator in 2020 >> 6 operators in 2021


Economic benefits³




Category	Overnight visitors	Day trippers
Getting to/from	~\$20	~\$10
Tours	~\$5	~\$2
Transfers	~\$10	~\$5
Gear hire	~\$35	~\$10
Accommodation	~\$55	~\$15
Fuel	~\$15	~\$10
Retail	~\$10	~\$5
Food and drink	~\$50	~\$40

Average visitor spend per day

- Overnight visitors
- Day trippers



Overnight visitor spend per day
\$179.81




Day tripper spend per day
\$118.88

Bike tourism boosts business⁴

Local businesses in the region are thriving thanks to the BVRT.

The owners of a historic country hotel offering accommodation, restaurant and bar in Linville opposite the trail, saw the BVRT's economic potential and purchased the hotel in 2019.

After \$250,000 in renovations, the hotel is now generating significant returns for both its operators and the local community, including:



- 500+** meals sold every week using local produce
- Plus** food trucks brought in to manage demand

New staff employed:

- 5** full-time
- 3** part-time.

Proportion of accommodation bookings from tourists visiting specifically to use BVRT:

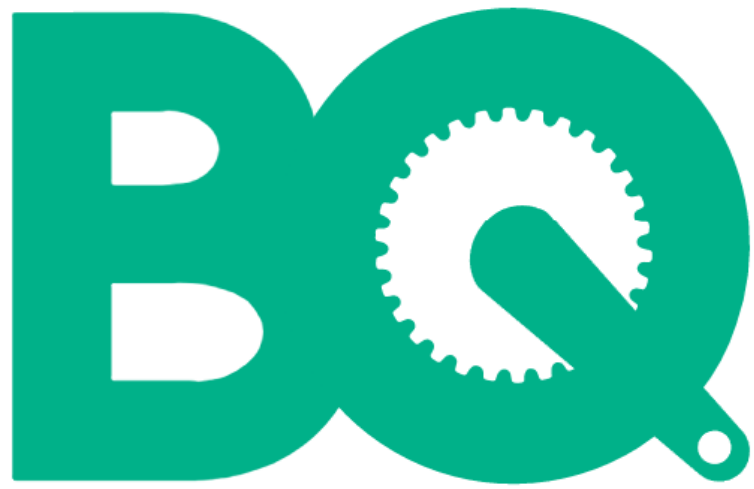
- 70%** in cooler months
- 15%** in warmer months.



Facebook Poll undertaken by South Burnett Rail Trail Users Association

- 307 votes
- 36% Improving the overall trail surface
- 7.5% improvements to the gullies
- 23% improvements to the number of gates
- 33% improvements to general maintenance





BICYCLE
QUEENSLAND

