

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Thursday, 19 November 2020

## MORE KILOMETRES FOR THE MURRAY TO MOUNTAINS RAIL TRAIL

The extension of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail is on track to deliver 25 kilometres of pristine trail by autumn next year and help the North East region's economic recovery, thanks to support from the Victorian Government.

Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes was in Wooragee, near Beechworth today to view progress on the rail trail, which has been realised with a \$5.2 million investment from the Regional Partnerships.

The trail capitalises on the High Country's natural beauty, with nine bridges offering scenic views of the waterways and surrounding scenery and will strengthen the region's reputation as a world-class cycling destination while backing Victoria's tourism-led recovery.

The extension to the trail is part of the Government's \$12 million North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation (NEVCO).

The project, better known as Ride High Country, will add approximately 30 kilometres of sealed trail to link Beechworth to Yackandandah, and Yackandandah to Osbornes Flat.

Construction of the new trail is expected to create 34 jobs and when completed next year, it is estimated that more than 7,600 additional visitors will use the trail annually. It is expected to create 28 ongoing jobs and generate an extra \$3.1 million of visitor expenditure in the region.

Already a popular destination among locals, the early constructed trail sections have been in high use during restrictions with community consultation and engagement ongoing to inform future trail sections.

In addition to the Beechworth to Yackandandah trail, the project includes the development and delivery of a four-year marketing campaign that will further help attract visitors back to the region, supporting regional jobs and making sure more Victorian families can experience the best our state has to offer.

Funding for the rail trail project was a direct response to the Ovens Murray Regional Partnership, which identified increasing cycle tourism as a key priority.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

*"This exciting project will position the North East as one of the world's top destinations for trail cycling, boosting tourism, growing jobs and putting regional Victoria at the forefront of our recovery."*

*"The North East has something for everyone and the best of everything – that's why we're investing in infrastructure to ensure the region is an even better place to live, work and visit."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

*"The High Country is an amazing destination – this project will put the trail on top of every rider's must-do list."*