



## Horse riding trials in wilderness – Mummel Gulf National Park

### *Introduction*

The NSW Government is committed to providing opportunities for horse riding in NSW national parks. This includes a trial of horse riding in five wilderness locations through a two-year wilderness pilot. The pilot will assist in determining whether horse riding in wilderness can occur without causing irreversible damage to park values. The pilot proposals are outlined in [Strategic Directions for Horse Riding in NSW National Parks](#).

Information on the pilot, including the matters discussed below, is available on the [wilderness horse riding trial](#) webpage.

### *What trails are involved in Mummel Gulf National Park?*

The trails for the wilderness pilots in Mummel Gulf National Park are Dicks Hut Fire Trail and River Road Trail (see map). These traverse the declared Mummel Gulf Wilderness Area. Access to these trails is via the Oxley Highway east of Walcha and Enfield Road (part of the Bicentennial National Trail).

### ***Important safety and access advice for park visitors***

Parts of the trails in Mummel Gulf National Park are remote, rugged and challenging (around 11 kilometres long). Riders should ensure they have sufficient experience and that horses are of appropriate fitness.

### *When does the pilot start and finish?*

The pilot starts in Mummel Gulf National Park on 12 April 2014 and concludes in April 2016. Each pilot will then be evaluated, including assessment of monitoring data.

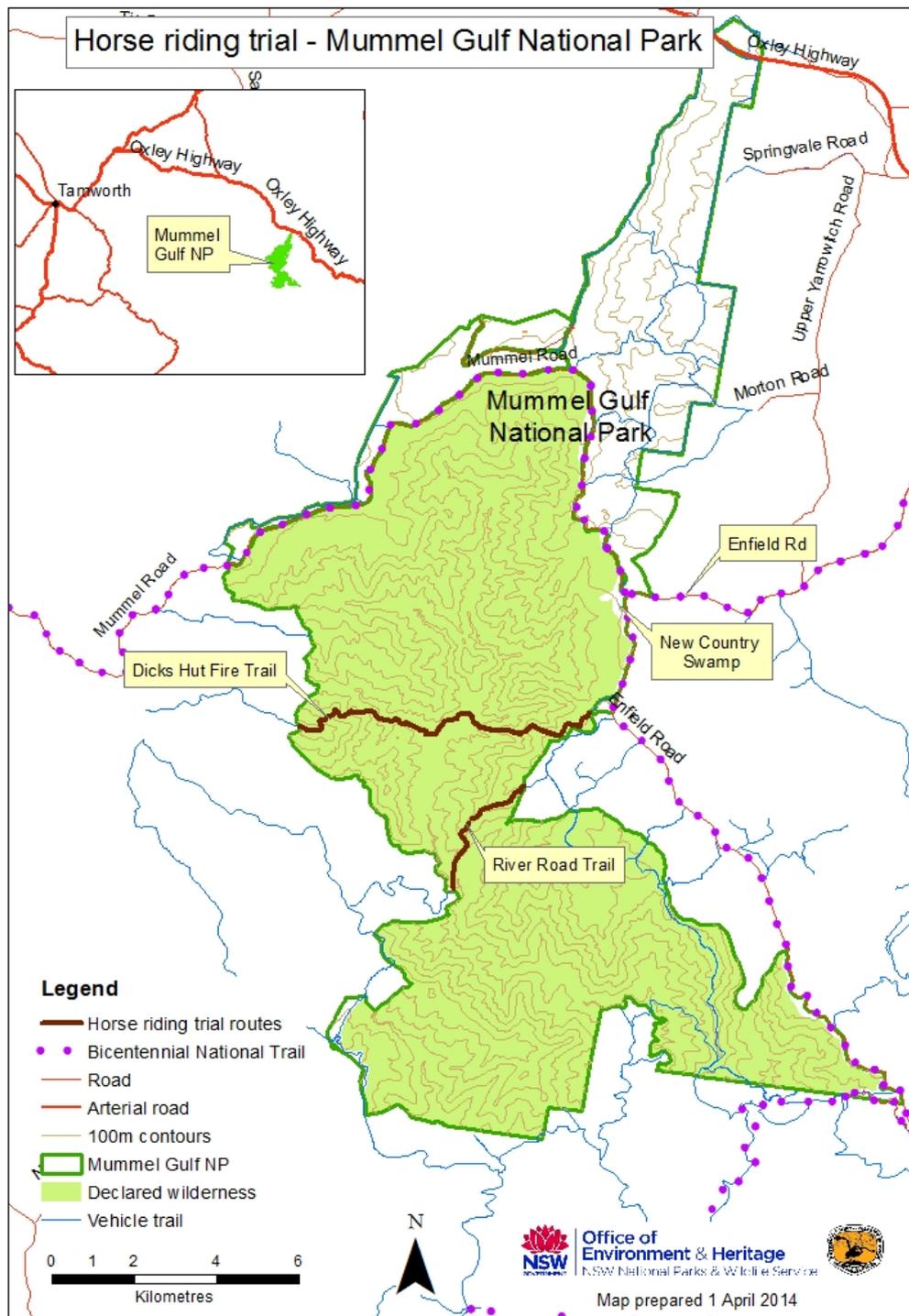
### *Do I need to book or get permission to ride?*

No. Access is available on the identified trails without needing to make a booking or get approval. Group size limits of 20 horses apply.

### *What should I do if planning to ride in these locations?*

The trial is in remote locations where mobile phone reception is highly variable and often not available. They also include some rugged and challenging sections. When planning a ride, normal precautions should be taken:

- check the [national parks](#) website for any warnings or localised closures that may be in place at that time
- check and plan for a range of weather conditions
- take appropriate quantities of food and water and first aid equipment
- do not ride alone and ensure you inform others about your departure and return times.



The [Code of practice for horse riding in parks](#), available on the OEH website, provides more information on safe riding techniques.

### ***Plan of management***

The plan of management for Mummel Gulf National Park has been [amended](#) to support the wilderness pilot.

## ***Assessment and safeguards***

A precautionary [review of environmental factors](#) (REF) to assess impacts of the trials has been prepared. A range of environmental safeguards have been applied to reduce the risk of adverse impact including:

- use of management trails already used for park management purposes
- no new construction of trails or supporting infrastructure with maintenance limited to essential actions needed to ensure safe access
- group size limits of 20 horses
- camping located outside wilderness in existing facilities at New Country Swamp
- application of a monitoring framework, including 15 monitoring sites.

## ***Monitoring***

Evaluation of the pilots will involve ongoing monitoring of both environmental issues, as well as feedback from park visitors. The monitoring framework will focus on track and soil condition, weeds, visitor experiences, and frequency and intensity of trail use (through remote-sensing cameras). Information from monitoring will be published regularly.

## ***Responsible riding practice***

The [Code of practice for horse riding in parks](#) was developed by NPWS in consultation with horse riders. It provides guidance on safe practices to avoid environmental damage, camping and driving with horses, group events and where to obtain more information.

## ***More information***

More information about the wilderness pilots is available on the [wilderness horse riding trial](#) webpage.

The National Parks and Wildlife Office at Armidale can also provide information about the particular trails involved in the trial and visiting Mummel Gulf National Park generally:

**Address:** 1st floor, 85 Faulkner Street, Armidale

**Phone:** (02) 6776 0000

**Web:** [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkHome.aspx?id=N0129](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkHome.aspx?id=N0129)