

# Omeo Mountain Bike Trails

Project update – December 2023



## Christmas presence

What a month of weather it has been! The changeable conditions have made trail construction tough over the past few weeks. First, there was the issue of not enough rain, then came a deluge, which stopped work for two days. The rain caused unwelcome damage to freshly constructed trails, making even more work for the crews.

The good news is XC5 and the almost 4km-long XC6 will be completed by Christmas. XC5, aka “Water Race” and “Sluice”, are beginner-level (green) trails.

The 1 km-long Water Race trail is accessed from the Oriental Claim trailhead and takes riders along Dry Gully Creek, crossing the creek at the halfway point of the trail then connecting to the Mine Bender trail.



*The XC6 “Pioneer” trail weaves through the historical mining areas of the Oriental Claims area and is looking spectacular.*

XC6 aka the Pioneer trail is a beginner level (green) trail of some 3 km, which connects to the Oriental Express trail and takes riders further into the Claims area and up to the

Pioneer Lookout, which offers fantastic views out over the valley and town. These additional sections take the total trail length to 15km.



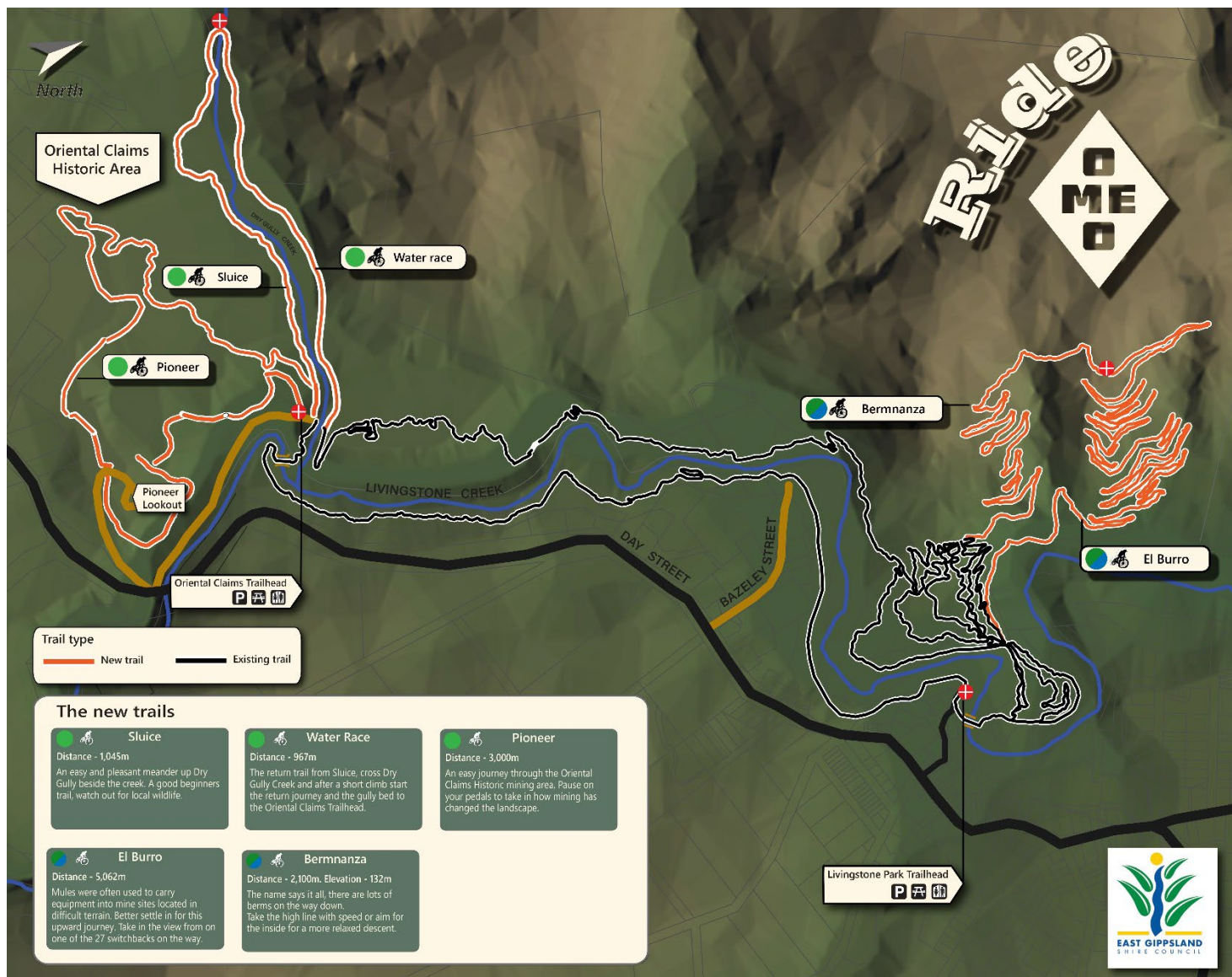
*The newly completed overpass is looking good and connects recently completed trails, including the Pioneer trail.*

XC10 is tentatively slated to open in January. XC 10 UP or “El Burro” is a green/blue-rated trail that takes riders up our first climb of the slopes of Mt Mesley with 5km of switchbacks. XC10 DOWN, the superb “Bermnanza” trail, also green/blue rated and will be the first of what will be many descents of Mt Mesley. Once open, riders can expect around 10 minutes of fast and fun flowing gravity-assisted berm-tastic singletrack as it drops 132m. And the Common Ground trail building team is working hard to rebuild the damaged Rodeo, Flomeo and Dig Deep trails to link into the newly completed overpass in time for the Christmas break, too.

After any extreme weather event there is a chance of damage or hazards. So, we’re asking all users to report any issues by calling (03) 5153 9500. Your reports can help our teams stay vigilant and responsive.

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*Impressive sections of new trail will be open in time for the busy Christmas school holiday period.*

## Scrubbing up nicely

A bike-wash facility is close to being completed near the trail head area in Livingstone Park.

In fact, if all goes to plan it might be ready as your read this.

It will include a semi-contained area with wash-down facilities to allow bikes to be cleaned before and after riding to reduce weed-seed spread and ensure riders' bikes are clean before heading home.

## All clear on the trails

Speaking of weed seeds, the rain, rain and more rain that we have seen in Omeo recently has meant prime growing conditions for weeds along the trails near Livingstone Park – including pesky blackberries and thistle. So, we had a contractor start weeding works along the trails last week. They are focusing on the current open network of 10km, then will work on XC5, XC6 and XC10 up/down. They will begin brush-cutting once the spraying is done.



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The spraying work is another reason why we are vigilant in asking riders to observe trail signage and refrain from entering areas where crews are working.



Weed spraying and brush-cutting work began in early December to ensure the trails are free of invasive species and unsafe greenery.

## Tiny Towns Fund for rural and regional Victorian towns now open

The Tiny Towns Fund for rural and regional Victorian towns is now open.

The fund is aimed at supporting local communities with populations up to 5,000 people to deliver high-quality tourism and community facility projects, such as splash parks and bike trails, playgrounds, community hall and library upgrades, public art and more.

Applications are now open, with grants between \$5,000 and \$50,000 available for each project.

Applicants are required to provide a co-contribution towards the proposed project

budget. To learn more and submit your application, head to [www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/tiny-towns-fund](http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/tiny-towns-fund).

Applications close Sunday 25 February 2024.

For advice and support with your application, contact the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions on 1800 878 969.

## Omeo joins the Hunt

Omeo took the spotlight in late November as riders from the US, Canada, South Africa, Ireland, Norway, New Zealand and across Australia converged on the High Country town on a two-wheeled trek to Canberra.

Omeo was the starting point for the Hunt 500 off-road cycling event and midpoint for the Hunt 1000, which originated in Melbourne.

Heavy rain forced riders to seek shelter and tackle muddy routes and waist-deep river crossings.

But the riders proved to be a tenacious bunch and most finished and returned home singing the praises of Omeo.

## Flush with success

We're potty about an exciting upgrade happening to the public toilets in Creek Street, Omeo, in Livingstone Park near the trailhead.

In late February, we'll be lifting the lid on brand new accessible toilet cubicles and four showers - perfect for a post-ride wash.

Until then, there are portable accessible loos on site and alternative toilets nearby in Main St (Day Avenue).

We are also hoping to provide early access to two of the cubicles in the toilet block that is being constructed.

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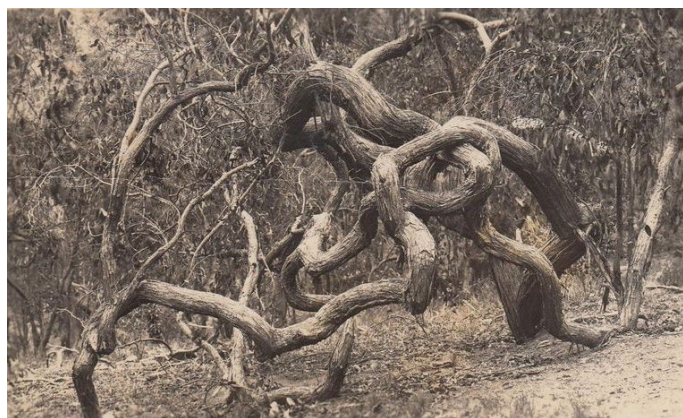


## A twist in our trail name competition

Our recent trail-naming competition, held during the Omeo Show, saw a visitor suggest the names Twisted Tree and Possum's Nest.

The visitor to our stand at the show revealed there are wonderful old stories behind the two proposed names.

The twisted tree, it turns out, was a big gnarly old snow gum that was sadly burnt and lost in the 2002/03 2003 Eastern Victorian Alpine Bushfires.



*Twisted Tree has emerged as a possible trail name after the history of the old snow gum on Mt Mesley was shared by visitor to our stand at the Omeo Show.*

Possum's Nest was the nickname for a hollowed-out pine tree that children used to play in. It was also lost in the same fire.

Both names are now being considered as future trail titles.

## Wishing you a Merry Christmas

This is the final newsletter for 2023, so we'd like to wish everyone a happy and safe festive season full of epic mountain bike rides.



You can take a look back over the year 2023 at [yoursay.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/77942](https://yoursay.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/77942).

## NEWS FLASH!

A contract for the completion of our trail network has been inked and approved at the Tuesday 12 December Council Meeting.

We're thrilled to announce that Stage D, the final trail section, has been awarded to Common Ground Trails through a contract variation.

With this development, the entire trail network is now officially under contract for delivery.

Thanks to a \$3.2 million state government grant, which also funded Stage C, the last stage is fully funded. The construction schedule is set, and preliminary works are already under way in preparation for construction commencement, marking a significant step forward.

This update is from East Gippsland Shire Council as the project lead. The update is published on:

- East Gippsland Shire Council website
- East Gippsland Shire Council Facebook page
- East Gippsland Your Say engagement portal
- Visit Omeo website

The project is supported by Council, the Victorian Government (Regional Development Victoria) and Australian Government (Building Better Regions Fund).