

Cooloola Trail Care Alliance Inc.

On Site Guidelines for Members and Volunteers - Victory Heights Trails

All work carried out by CTCA members and volunteers, must be done in a professional and respectful manner: –

- ✓ *respecting each others safety and person,*
- ✓ *respecting the environment and*
- ✓ *respecting the legal arrangements under which we are permitted to construct trails on this piece of land.*

Management Agreement explanation

CTCA Inc. has invested many, many of hours of time and significant personal funds over 2011/2012 to secure a Management Agreement with Gympie Regional Council that will enable us to establish a trail network on Council land right here in town . The Management Agreement allows us to design, build and maintain mountain bike trails within Victory Forest for community benefit – in accordance with a series of legally binding conditions.

So along with the great opportunity for us to create a dedicated trail area in Gympie also comes significant responsibility and also (unfortunately) legal liability. Council has placed all responsibility for work standards and controls with the CTCA Inc. requiring us to hold a minimum of \$20,000,000 in public and property liability insurance. This insurance covers both CTCA members and any volunteers carrying out trail work under our direction, but only when doing so in accordance with the Management Agreement.

The Management Agreement restricts us to only to establish trails that are approved by the Council Parks Manager. In practice we get that approval by first surveying on-foot the trail alignments we want to build, mapping them out on a Master Plan and submitting that to Council for approval.

CTCA is currently working to complete Stage II of the Victory Heights Trail Master Plan having successfully completed Stage 1 in 2013. CTCA has secured a 10 year lease over all of the land covered by the Master Plan, allowing sufficient time to plan and develop the trail network in a realistic and sustainable manner.

The legal situation in which we are operating is such that any work conducted outside the bounds of the Management Agreement and the Master Plan is not covered by our liability insurance and also not endorsed by Council. That means you are not covered, we (as an organisation) are not covered and any person injuring themselves when riding a piece of unauthorised trail may try and sue either the CTCA or the person who built it.

Needless to say - we do take our responsibilities as site managers and volunteer trail builders and the risks of non-compliance very seriously.

Unauthorised works also places in jeopardy our ongoing permission from Council to develop trail and for the public to continue to ride in this area and enjoy it. So if we all play by the rules – the more successful we are likely to be in securing our access and expanding this particular trail network and others in the future.

So how do we aim to abide by and preserve this agreement and our working relationship with Council?

- ✓ we only work on trails at times organised by CTCA
- ✓ we only build trail that has been approved by Council,
- ✓ we remove any unauthorised trails or technical features as soon as we become aware of them
- ✓ we report unauthorised activity to Council – including unauthorised trail building, rubbish dumping, moto X and 4WD activity, noxious weed infestations etc.
- ✓ we try and keep the place clean, safe and secure and inviting for people of all ages to come and enjoy
- ✓ If you see or become aware of anything that isn't in line with these things – please tell us – we want to know.

Personal Protection Equipment

During the day, we will be using rakes, shovels hoes mattocks, etc. and removing vegetation and moving some dirt, so we advise all participants to wear sturdy shoes, clothes that offer protection from sun and abrasions, gloves, a hat, sunglasses or safety glasses and sun screen, and have at least 1 litre of water on hand and snacks if you need them. We will supply water if you need more. Please ask your supervisor.

Entering and exiting work areas

When working on a trail please enter and exit the trail via the existing trail. Short cutting from an adjacent fire road through surrounding bush to reach a piece of trail will damage vegetation and ground-cover creating an “implied” path to nowhere that other people are likely to follow and wear in over time. This creates unwanted trails – that will need to be rehabilitated.

If you need to be short cutting to move logs, equipment in, etc. please make sure any vegetation disturbance is kept to a minimum and pushed back to where it was so there is no trace left.

Handling Tools Safely

- ✓ Carry tools at the side, not on a shoulder.
- ✓ Carry tools with the sharpest side facing down.
- ✓ Carry only one tool in each hand.
- ✓ When carrying a tool on a slope, hold it in the downhill hand.
- ✓ While working, maintain at least a tool-length distance to the next person.
- ✓ If a tool must be raised higher than waist level, advise nearby workers.
- ✓ Before walking past others using tools, announce yourself and make eye contact before passing.
- ✓ Keep tools visible and out of the way when not in use – to avoid trip injuries

“Circle of death” If you are within tool length distance of another worker who is swinging a tool, you are in danger of being badly injured. This space is called “the circle of death”. Stay out of other peoples circle and make sure no one is within yours when working.

Emergency Assembly Area

In the very rare case of a fire or another threatening event, please follow the instruction of the supervisor and move in an orderly fashion away from the fire or threat, out of the forest and to

the assembly area on Bath Terrace.

Food and Toilet Facilities

Across the road on Bath Terrace is a well-stocked shop, where you can buy lunch, snacks and drinks, similarly there is the Victory Hotel that also has toilet facilities.

Snake Bites

There are some large snakes in this forest, some of which are poisonous. They are part of the wildlife. If you see one please leave it be. If it is in the way where you are building trail, stay well back and wait till it's gone. Snakes sense ground vibrations so usually a team of trail builders will make enough noise to allow snakes to move on before you are aware of them. In the unfortunate instance that someone stands on a snake or is bitten, we have snake bite kits and the hospital is close by. Stay calm, tell your workmate immediately what happened, stay still, contact the Supervisor and allow the first aid to be carried out.

Some trail construction guidelines and info:

- ✓ All trails that we will be working on have been surveyed and clearly marked out using either pegs, flagging tape and/or spray marker. The exact trail footprint may also have been brush-cut and cleared of woody debris – depending on the degree of preparation undertaken before the working begins.
- ✓ Only work within the designated trail corridor. Please retrieve pegs and flagging tape as you go for your supervisor to collect.
- ✓ Any woody vegetation that is to be removed will have been spray-marked with ORANGE or RED paint. No other woody vegetation is to be damaged or removed. If you think a tree or bush is in the way that has not been marked for removal, don't assume it needs to go. Ask your supervisor about it. It may have a purpose.
- ✓ Remove all dead/fallen debris from the trail - except logs that have been marked for retention. Drag all removed vegetation well clear of the trail (at least 5 metres away) and out of site. This debris can pose a safety risk to workers and trail users and also detracts from the aesthetics of a finished trail.
- ✓ We try and align trails to take advantage of the natural landform and interesting features and to minimise vegetation disturbance, so mostly we will be removing grass tussocks and woody debris and unwanted wattle and brush box suckers.
- ✓ In the process of clearing the trail, remove as little soil as possible and try not to modify the natural lie of the land. Digging into the soil will always lead to either ponding water or diverting and concentrating water run-off both of which then need to be managed in some way. These consequences can be managed but it takes extra time effort and maintenance to do so. More on this below.
- ✓ If an earth structure such as a berm, grade reversal or jump is planned for a particular section of trail, your supervisor will let you know about it and provide instruction. Mostly these features are put in after the trail corridor is cleared and maybe even ridden a couple of times.
- ✓ The trail layout will generally have been designed and routed to ensure that overland flow is not collected by the trail and channeled along it, causing erosion. This is done by working across the slope (not down the fall line) and using grade-reversals to "spill" collected water from the trail at regular intervals. Grade reversals are constructed in three ways: redirecting the trail slightly up-slope, cutting a section of the trail slightly off-camber, or obstructing the flow of water down the trail using a log, soil mound or channel. Your supervisor will help you identify where these are required and how to construct them.