

Highlights

Bushwalking Victoria has achieved much over the year, but we continue to be constrained by our limited resources. However, BWV continues a long tradition of punching well above its weight. BWV is fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers who have done a great deal for the benefit of the entire bushwalking community.

Fedwalk 2014

The 2014 Federation event was hosted by the four Gippsland clubs: Strzelecki Bushwalking Club, Ben Cruachan Walking Club, South Gippsland Walking and Adventure Club, and West Gippsland Walking Club. It was an outstandingly successful weekend. 295 bushwalkers enjoyed two days of walking in the alpine environs of the Baw Baw plateau and the historic gold town of Walhalla.

Promoting Bushwalking

Work commenced on a long term project to promote bushwalking as a healthy and enjoyable recreation suitable for nearly everyone. Initial focus is on developing an overall plan as the basis for activities that will work well together to build awareness of bushwalking over a period of time.

Several specific projects are being investigated, in particular working with several local councils to promote bushwalking in their area.

Leadership Training Packages

The Bushwalking Leadership Training course was successfully completed in 2014 by a project team of volunteers from a number of clubs led by Gerard Vander and funded by a grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria. It is now available to all members via the Bushwalking Victoria website.

A new project team, led by Sally Walker, has completed development of an Extended Bushwalking Leader training course, covering base camps, pack carries and walking in more remote and challenging areas.

This project has been funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria. The course will be tested in May 2015, the content reviewed in the light of feedback and then finalised prior to being made available to members.

The courses are intended for use by clubs for in house training or to team up with other clubs and run combined courses.

Using Social Media

2014-2015 saw greater focus on using social media and especially Facebook.

Bushwalking Victoria's Office Manager, Patsy Scales, has been very proactive and as a result the number of followers jumped from 100 to 600 over the course of the year, and the number continues to climb steadily. Bushwalking Victoria is also active on Google+, and Pinterest.

Thank You

Bushwalking Victoria relies on a wonderful group of volunteers who give their time and skills to make everything we do possible:

- Board members, consultants and advisors
- BSAR Convenor, committee and volunteers
- BTAC Convenor, committee and volunteers
- Editor, Bushwalking News Victoria, On The Track
- Fedwalk organising clubs
- Project team members

To all of you, thank you – Bushwalking Victoria could not continue without you.



BTAC Volunteers
AWWT 2014

Representing Bushwalkers

Regular meetings with Parks Victoria, Sport & Recreation Victoria and Victorian Trails Coordinating Committee.

14 Field Officers liaised with key national and state parks rangers plus representatives on:

- Grampians Peak Trail Task Force
- Living Links Steering Committee
- Australian Alps Walking Track Stakeholder Group

12 submissions to State and Federal governments

Actively contributed to Outdoors Victoria and Bushwalking Australia.

Fostered relationships with other trail users including 4WD Victoria

Support to Clubs

Coordination of annual renewal of Personal Injury, Public Liability and Associations Liability insurance for clubs.

Three tips and suggestions sheets, aimed at helping clubs have been distributed:

- Membership Recruitment and Retention
- Engaging with Media
- Influencing Decision Makers



Annual BSAR Training

Tracks and Conservation

BTAC has 85 volunteers from 22 clubs and 5 Individual Members.

Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation (BTAC) Committee and volunteers had a very busy and productive year:

- 10 projects completed
- 1611 volunteers hours
- 8 member clubs have completed additional track activities
- 10 clubs have taken up the Adopt A Track initiative

Bush Search and Rescue

Bush Search and Rescue (BSAR) Victoria has 221 volunteers searchers on call in 2014-2015.

There were six callouts and three searches, totaling 150 volunteer searching days:

- Lake Eildon National Park, 4-7 April 2015
- Staircase Spur, Mount Bogong, 5-6 July 2014:
- Eskdale Spur, Mount Bogong, 13-15 July 2014

BSAR volunteers were thanked at Parliament House by Premier Andrews and the Minister for Emergency Services for their efforts during the Eildon search.

159 volunteer training days were undertaken:

- Annual training at Kerweinguboorra;
- Steep Snow and Ice training on Razorback near Mt Hotham

Policies and Publications

Five key policy documents were finalized, all of them are consistent with and explicitly reference our philosophy of 'minimum impact':

- Conservation
- Commercial activities in protected areas
- Bushwalking infrastructure
- Other recreational user groups
- Partnerships and sponsorships

'Make tracks for conservation' brochure was produced to encourage walkers to join BTAC volunteers on our projects.

Work commenced on the review of 'Tread Softly'. This brochure will be central to informing all bushwalkers, members of the public and government departments on best practice minimal impact bushwalking in protected areas. It is to be distributed in June 2015.

Funding

Where our funds came from:

- 47%: Members fees and interest
- 16.5%: Grants and donations
- 4%: Sundry

How we used the funds

- 37.1%: Staff and overheads
- 12.9%: Projects
- 6.7% BSAR
- 4.5%: Volunteers
- 3.5% Memberships
- 2.1% BTAC