

A NURTURING BOOST FOR NATURE

Murray Regional Tourism has welcomed the NSW Government's announcement to develop a Nature-based Tourism Strategy, anticipating that it will strengthen the case for significant cross border projects, such as the Murray River Adventure Trail.

As a destination that is primarily defined by its outdoor and nature-based activities, the state-wide strategy will be extremely beneficial to the Murray region and help to attract more visitors to the region who are seeking these experiences.

CEO of Murray Regional Tourism, Mark Francis, said the Murray Region Destination Management Plan highlights the need for the region to develop new nature-based tourism product, and is looking forward to seeing how the State's strategy supports this direction.

"We are really excited by the development of a nature-specific tourism strategy, and the positive impact this could have on the Murray region," Mark said.

"The Government is also backing up the strategy with \$28 million of funding for nature-based environment and tourism infrastructure projects, through the Regional Growth Environment Tourism Fund. This provides a fantastic opportunity for us to apply for funding to help get the Murray River Adventure Trail underway," Mark said.

"The Murray River Adventure Trail is a world first, long distance, multi-sport river adventure trail that extends along the Murray River in Victoria and NSW. It extends from Lake Hume near Albury/Wodonga in the east, to Mildura in the west. Visitors will be able to experience a range of nature-based activities as they travel all or part of the trail, from the 1,040km of bike and walking paths, or 1,390km of water-based trails."

"Not only will the trail drive tourism and visitor dispersal throughout the Murray region, but it will also create employment opportunities. It is estimated that the trail will attract an extend the length of stay of 110,000 visitors to the Murray region annually, be used 200,000 times per year by local residents, and generate annual output of \$12.8 million and 71 jobs per annum in the Murray region economy."

"We also anticipate an increase in new tourism product associated with the trail, which will further enhance the visitor experience and create jobs for local people," Mark said.

According to Destination NSW, YE March 2018, the Murray region receives over 1.2 million domestic overnight visitors (up by 13.5% on YE March 2017), spending \$484 million in the region (up 32.9% on YE March 2017).

The NSW Government has committed to developing the Nature-based Tourism Strategy by December 2018.

For more information on the Murray River Adventure Trail, please visit <http://www.murrayregionaltourism.com.au/murray-river-adventure-trail/>

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About Murray Regional Tourism (MRT)

Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) works in partnership with Visit Victoria, Destination New South Wales, Regional Tourism Associations and 13 local government areas to grow the visitor economy across the Murray region.

W: <http://www.murrayregionaltourism.com.au>