



*MEDIA RELEASE
For release 21 March 2018*

**STRONGER TOGETHER: DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLANS LAUNCHED FOR
MURRAY REGIONAL TOURISM AND DESTINATION RIVERINA MURRAY**

By the year 2031 the Murray and Riverina region aims to increase tourism by 45.6 per cent – by 3.91 million overnight and day trip visitors to a total of 12.47 million visitors – and the new Destination Management Plans for Murray Regional Tourism and Destination Riverina Murray provide the blueprint to secure this growth and economic vibrancy for the region.

This visitor economy growth target is forecast to deliver an increase in direct and indirect visitor expenditure of \$1.12 billion, and 9,385 more jobs across the region by 2031.

Destination NSW and Visit Victoria joined representatives from Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) and Destination Riverina Murray (DRM) at the launch, underscoring the significance of the region's visitor economy and the importance of the Destination Management Plans.

The NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Adam Marshall emphasised the importance of the Riverina Murray as one of Destination NSW's six key tourism regions.

"The Riverina Murray region offers visitors a winning combination of nature and water-based experiences, events and festivals, history and heritage, sports including alpine activities, food, wine and agritourism," he said.

"The Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan recognises the current health of the visitor economy in the region and identifies nine strategic development themes and over 40 priority projects to ensure that we continue to thrive and grow."

Adding the Victorian perspective, the Victorian Minister for Tourism and Major Events, John Eren said, "The Murray River's popularity as a holiday destination has grown enormously in recent years, a result of the region's diverse strengths as well as the continued focus and consultative, cross-border approach of Murray Regional Tourism."

"I look forward to seeing the region continue to develop under this new Destination Management Plan, and I am confident that the clear and strategic vision outlined, along with the strong leadership of Murray Regional Tourism, will deliver even more success for the Murray region and the communities it supports," he said.

MRT is the only Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) in Australia that includes areas within two states, Victoria and New South Wales, and is responsible for providing overarching tourism strategy for the Murray Region.

Wendy Greiner, Chair of Murray Regional Tourism, said that tourism to the Murray region in 2017 accounted for 19.9 per cent of total employment, attracting 5.4 million visitors (day trip and overnight) and \$2.9 billion in visitor expenditure (direct and indirect).

"Our region and our partners have been successful in growing tourism over the past six years by 623,000 visitors and \$339 million in visitor expenditure," she said.

"Today, with the launch of our 2018 Destination Management Plan, we embark on the next phase in the Murray region's tourism growth. The Plan sets a series of infrastructure, product and experience priorities to ensure that we continue to thrive and grow, and I look forward to working with the State Governments of NSW and Victoria, with Destination Riverina Murray, the 13 local government authorities, and with the tourism sector and communities that are united by the Murray, to deliver on the potential identified in the Plan," Ms Greiner added.

Genevieve Fleming, Chairperson of Destination Riverina Murray said the Destination Management Plan will guide Destination Riverina Murray and its partners to realise the priority projects, drive tourism growth, and deliver substantial economic benefits to the region.

"These projects will enhance liveability for our communities, create jobs, and position our region as a destination of choice in a competitive tourism market.

"The Plan has been developed with important and insightful contributions from a wide variety of sources, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners, and particularly Destination NSW, for their vital support."

Priority projects identified in the Destination Management Plans for Murray Regional Tourism and Destination Riverina Murray include:

- **Murray River Adventure Trail** (VIC/NSW): the creation of a multi-sport adventure trail extending the length of the Murray – 1,040km of land-based trails suited to walking and cycling, and 1,390km of water-based trails for kayaks and a range of water crafts – offering a unique and compelling nature-based tourism experience for visitors;
- **River Cruising** (VIC/NSW): Exploring the opportunity to develop and expand existing commercial cruise operators along the length of the Murray;
- **Pomingalarna Multisport Cycling Complex** (NSW): a plan to transform Pomingalarna Reserve, Wagga Wagga, building on the region's existing cycling reputation and creating a compelling cycling facility to attract more cycling tourism and events. Featuring an international BMX track and velodrome with lighting, a 1.8km criterium cycling track, car parking and amenities including toilets, change rooms, canteen, meeting rooms, bbqs, shelters and children's playground;
- **Koodrook Butter Factory Arts Precinct and Murray River Brewery and Distillery** (VIC): creating a new food and beverage destination in the region by rejuvenating a heritage site and developing a new brewery and distillery with a co-located arts and business precinct to offer brewing, coffee roasting, chocolate, food and wine, artist and artisan studios;
- **Ports of the Murray** (VIC/NSW): continuing the Ports of the Murray Strategic Initiative to advocate for port and riverside investment in communities throughout the region;
- **Albury Entertainment Centre** (VIC/NSW): completing the feasibility study to determine if capacity can be increased to 600+ and additional exhibition/breakout spaces created, to attract more events, business events and tourism;

- **Echuca Moama Resort and Conference Centre** (VIC/NSW): a new 400-500 person capacity conference venue with attached accommodation to position the region to attract business events and enhance the current accommodation offer;
- **Murray River Road and Mungo All Weather Road** (VIC/NSW): recognising that self-drive tourism is a significant market, these until-now untapped projects will develop and market touring itineraries and deliver the necessary enhancements to existing road infrastructure to support local community and visitor needs;
- **Murray Agri and Culinary Tourism Experience** (VIC/NSW): building on the region's strength as the nation's food bowl centre, creating and marketing a series of tourism products and experiences and supporting producers, growers and food and wine businesses throughout the Murray region to deliver unique, authentic and appealing agritourism experiences;
- **Griffith Wine and Food Hub** (NSW): establishing a food and wine hub to showcase Griffith's strength in regional produce and fresh and gourmet food, supporting small businesses and creating a market which could offer local produce, a wine bank, business incubator, food education programs, cooking classes and demonstrations, arts and crafts;
- **Mildura Motorsport Precinct** (VIC): capitalising on Mildura's robust motorsports profile by creating one of Australia's leading motorsports facilities, a precinct which will include a sealed 3km road circuit, skid pan, pits and control tower, office facilities, maintenance/wash-down shed, food/beverage facilities, parking and camping site; and
- **Hume and Hovell MTB Track and Adventure Trail (NSW)**: Building on the established Hume and Hovell walking track to develop a mountain bike track and adventure trail connecting the 426km track heads at Albury and Yass while passing through Wee Jasper, Tumut, Talbingo and Tumbarumba.

The Murray Regional Tourism Destination Management Plan can be downloaded from www.murrayregionaltourism.com.au

The Destination Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan can be downloaded from www.riverinamurray.com.au

Contacts:

Wendy Greiner Chair Murray Regional Tourism Board chair@mrtb.com.au 0419 608 239	Genevieve Fleming Chairperson Destination Riverina Murray genevieve.fleming@destinationrm.com.au 0418 485 500
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