



*MEDIA RELEASE*

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**Future-proofing our region:  
Destination Management Plan launched for Western Murray Region**

By the year 2031 the Murray region aims to increase tourism by 44.4 per cent – by 2.4 million overnight and day trip visitors to a total of 7.8 million visitors – and the new Destination Management Plan for Murray Regional Tourism provides the blueprint to secure this growth and economic vibrancy for the Western Murray region.

Taking in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Mildura and Wentworth, the Western Murray region offers visitors rich experiences across river-based, food, wine and produce, fishing, festivals and events, history and heritage, nature-based and business events.

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, with an additional \$372 million in tourism-related projects and over 4,500 direct and indirect jobs,” 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 Victoria and NSW, 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.

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.

The NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Adam Marshall said, “Tourism is vital to the people of the Murray River. It injects billions of dollars into local economies, and provides nearly 20 per cent of local jobs.

“The NSW Government recognises the significant tourism gains made in recent years and central to this success has been the unique cross-border collaboration between the Murray River communities. I am excited about the delivery of the Murray Region Destination Management Plan and the even brighter future it heralds for tourism along the Murray,” he said.

Priority projects for the Western Murray region targeted under the Destination Management Plan include:

- Mildura Motor Sports Precinct: 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;
- Mildura South Sporting Complex: developing a sports precinct including six indoor courts, two fields and a 3,000 seat multi-purpose venue;
- Mildura Riverfront Stage 2: building on the significant riverfront development by linking the riverfront with the CBD, introducing commercial activation, concepts for the Powerhouse building, conference centre and other attractions;
- Gateway to the Outback Positioning: developing tourism marketing, product and experiences to position the Mildura and Wentworth region as an accessible and cost-effective Australian Outback experience (compared to Northern Territory);
- Mungo All Weather Road: a road upgrade to allow access to Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area in all weather, mitigating the risks currently faced by tour operators and independent travellers; and
- Wentworth Riverfront Development: long term planning for future expansion from the Wentworth Civic Centre to Willowbend Caravan Park, including the development of a large-scale riverfront eco-resort, filling an important gap in the current offer and holding significant appeal to key tourism markets.

The Murray Regional Tourism Destination Management Plan can be downloaded from [www.murrayregionaltourism.com.au](http://www.murrayregionaltourism.com.au)

Murray Regional Tourism works in partnership with Visit Victoria, Destination New South Wales, Destination Riverina Murray and 13 local government areas and tourism associations to drive the development of the tourism industry within the region and acknowledges the funding support for this project from our partners.

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