

Bass Coast Rail Trail



A 16km trail for walking, cycling and horse riding



View from Kilcunda Coastline with Wonthaggi wind turbines beyond.

For those interested in exploring the coastline on foot, the George Bass Coastal Walk can be found just after crossing the highway. This is a 7km walk (14km return) to the Punchbowl along a coastal track, with spectacular views.

Kilcunda – Mouth of Powlett River Road (3kms)

Crossing the trestle bridge the trail skirts roaring

surf and superb sandy beaches before it moves inland. Past the historic Kilcunda cemetery a downhill descent takes you to the Mouth of the Powlett River Road. In the coastal reserve alongside the trail, kangaroos can often be seen grazing, particularly in the early morning or late evening, and many waterbirds inhabit the extensive wetlands after rain.

Mouth of Powlett River Road – Dalyston Station (4kms)

The trail continues inland through farm land over two small timber bridges. It passes the site of the former Dalyston railway station where the trail is elevated to the level of the former station platform.

Getting Started

Alternative starting points:

Commence at the V Line bus terminal at Anderson located on the Bass Highway opposite the roundabout turn off to Phillip Island.

Wonthaggi – begin at the restored Railway station in Murray Street.

Trail Features

Anderson – Kilcunda (4kms)

There is a gradual descent through farmlands and railway cuttings as you leave Anderson. The trail passes mining remnants and sparse stands of native vegetation on the way to Kilcunda, the site of the first black coal mined in Victoria in 1852.

Of particular significance as the trail approaches Kilcunda is the mullock heap of the Mitchell Mine. The largest coal mine in Kilcunda, it produced nearly 260,000 tons of black coal between 1908 and its closure in 1946.

A panoramic vista greets users as the trail sweeps into Kilcunda. Across the Bass Highway the iconic timber trestle bridge crosses Bourne Creek where it enters Bass Strait.



Main mine workings and yard at Wonthaggi 1912.

Summary



Trestle Bridge at Kilcunda

Location

130km south-east of Melbourne, near Phillip Island (via South Gippsland and Bass Coast Highways). Alternatively, your journey on the trail can commence at Wonthaggi.

Distance: 17kms (Anderson - Wonthaggi) plus a 4km coarse gravel section under development between Anderson and Woolamai.

Surface: Fine gravel.

Suitable for: Walking, all bicycles, horses. Many sections are also suitable for wheelchairs.

Terrain: Flat with two moderate climbs.

Environs: Coastal and farmland, with interesting historical past.

Other maps: VicRoads map 102 A2 – C8.

Public transport: V/Line coach to Anderson or continue onto Wonthaggi to start the trail in this historical and rapidly developing regional centre.

Facilities

Anderson: No facilities.

Kilcunda: Caravan park; BBQ and picnic area; hotel general store (with cafe) and toilets.

Dalyston: Hotel, general store and toilets.

Wonthaggi: Major regional centre with full range of services and facilities, including bike shops.

Contact Details

Office Address:

76 McBride Avenue
Wonthaggi Vic 3995

Postal Address:

PO Box 118
Wonthaggi Vic 3995

Telephone:

1300 BCOAST (226 278)
133 677 National Relay Service
(for people with communication impairments)

Email:

basscoast@basscoast.vic.gov.au

Website:

www.basscoast.vic.gov.au

Dalyston – Lower Powlett Road (2.3kms)

A popular local fishing spot (the Powlett River) is a further 700 metres along the trail. There is a clear view of the Wonthaggi wind farm turbines which have the capacity to generate 12 megawatts of electricity.



Upline in Anderson 1955.

Lower Powlett Road – South Dudley Road (2.5kms)

The trail continues through open farmland with a variety of native species in the railway reserve. Stands of pine tree appear as the trail nears South Dudley Road.

Opposite the pine stands are remnants from the coal mining days of the State Coal Mine. The mine Rescue Station (constructed in 1938) is clearly visible.

Black coal mining in Wonthaggi commenced in 1909. At its peak, the State Coal Mine was a bustling hive of underground activity, filled with miners, pit ponies, dust and dim light. Mining was hazardous, and over 70 lives were lost in mine accidents between 1909 and 1940.

As alternative energy sources became available after World War II and the state railways were electrified, the State Coal Mine was gradually wound down in the 1950s. It ceased operations in 1968.

South Dudley Road – Wonthaggi (1.2kms)

Before heading into Wonthaggi, some trail users might wish to visit the Wonthaggi wetlands. These are located some 500 metres north of the trail off South Dudley Road.

Bass Coast Rail Trail Map

Other Destinations

State Coal Mine (3kms): continue on trail, cross Bass Highway and take East Area trail to Wonthaggi – Cape Paterson Road and then into Garden Street.

Cape Paterson (10kms): continue on trail and cross Bass Highway. Take East Area trail, cross Inverloch Road and continue on trail to Wonthaggi – Cape Paterson Road; turn left and follow highway to Cape Paterson (marked bicycle lane on highway).

Inverloch (13kms): continue on trail, cross Bass Highway and take East Area trail to Inverloch Road (first road crossing); turn left and continue on to Inverloch (wide shoulder on highway after you clear Wonthaggi).

Code of conduct

- Respect other trail users
- Respect the environment & neighbours
- Slow down & warn when passing
- Horses restricted to a trot
- Keep dogs on lead
- Do not disturb farm animals or wildlife (including birds, reptiles etc)
- Keep to the trail
- No fires
- Do not drop cigarette butts
- Take your rubbish home
- Camp only in designated areas
- Do not collect firewood
- Use community toilets provided, not the trail, bush or farms

Other South Gippsland Rail Trails

- Great Southern Rail Trail - Leongatha to Foster
- Grandridge Rail Trail - Mirboo North to Boolarra (temporarily closed in 2009 due to bushfire damage)
- Historical photos – courtesy of Wonthaggi and District Historical Society



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Bass Coast Shire is a genetically modified organism free zone.

