

MEDIA RELEASE



\$410,000 FUNDING BOOST TO FAST-TRACK DEVELOPMENT OF 450KM MURRAY COORONG TRAIL

A funding boost will fast-track the detailed planning and construction of the *Murray Coorong Trail*, stretching over 450km from Cadell in the Mid Murray, to Salt Creek in the Coorong National Park.

The \$205,000 grant, awarded through the SA Government's *Open Space and Places for People* grant program, will help partners Mid Murray Council, Rural City of Murray Bridge, Coorong District Council and Department for Environment and Water design the remaining sections of the **Murray Coorong Trail**. The three Councils will also invest a combined \$205,000, and an additional \$22,000 of in-kind expertise to turn the ambitious project into reality.

Once fully developed, the combined walking and bike riding trail is expected to become a major drawcard for walkers, riders, nature lovers and tourists, with flow-on benefits for local business, the environment, recreation and community connection and wellbeing.

Much work has already been done by the partners to establish the plan for the trail – including developing the extensive Murraylands River Trail Feasibility Study. The Councils have also secured over \$1.5m in funding and contributed their own funds in recent years to construct 25km of the trail, with sections already being used in each of the three districts.

However, more detailed planning is needed for future stages of the trail's development – and to fast-track the trail's construction.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the funding commitment from the SA Government and the three Councils to progress design work was an important milestone in the prioritisation of the trail.

"The Murray Coorong Trail has been identified as a priority project for our region for some time, with the three Councils having already contributed towards a detailed feasibility study and the construction of the first sections of the trail," Mayor Burgess says.

"This new grant will allow us to fast-track the detailed design of the entire trail – spanning over 450km – and continue construction to bring this concept to life in a way that is well-designed and sustainable. This, in turn, will bring substantial benefits to our local communities and the State.

Rural City of Murray Bridge Mayor Brenton Lewis said he believed the Murray Coorong Trail would add an impressive new natural tourism drawcard for the region.

"This trail capitalises on, and complements, our region's existing environmental assets including the Murray River, our untouched wilderness in our national (and conservation) parks, the River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve and the unique beauty of the Coorong.

"Our wider region has already experienced a surge in popularity following the development of trails such as the Lavender Federation Trail, facilities for walkers and cyclists in Kinchina Conservation Park and the likes of the Murray Canoe Trail. The Murray Coorong Trail will add to our outstanding recreational tourism offering, while also providing a high-quality asset for our region's walkers, riders, nature lovers and families to explore."



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Coorong District Council Mayor Paul Simmons said the new sections of trail would boost the region's emerging status as one of South Australia's leading nature-based tourism icons.



"There are magnificent areas along the Murray River, Lower Lakes and within the Coorong National Park that many South Australians still don't know exist. This trail will put them on the map, quite literally and provide people with the perfect opportunity to spend multi-day trips here in our region.

"Now more than ever we need to support our region's community wellbeing and tourism economy, and this project will be a key part of that."

A specialist trail designer will be engaged to create the detailed plan, which will include extensive planning in the areas of sustainability principles and designs, trail mapping, construction methods and long-term trail management.

The goal of the Murray Coorong Trail is to be accessible to people of all ages, as well as drawing in special interest groups, nature lovers, bike riders, walkers and tourists. It will wind its way along the Murray River, via the Lower Lakes and Coorong National Park, providing unparalleled scenic views and immersive nature experiences for domestic and international visitors.

Passing through, or near, 18 towns over 27 stages, the trail will also cover four national or conservation parks, linking to over 30 other spur trails, with some sections less than 80km from Adelaide.

Trail sections that have already been constructed, or are under construction, include:

- Mannum to Kia Marina
- Murray Bridge to Toora Reserve
- Meningie to Seven Mile Road
- Wellington to Jervois
- Raukkan and the Raukkan Loop Trail
- Taillem Bend to Wellington East
- Swan Reach to Nildottie.

For more information on the Murray Coorong Trail, follow the [Murray Coorong Trail on Facebook](#).

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