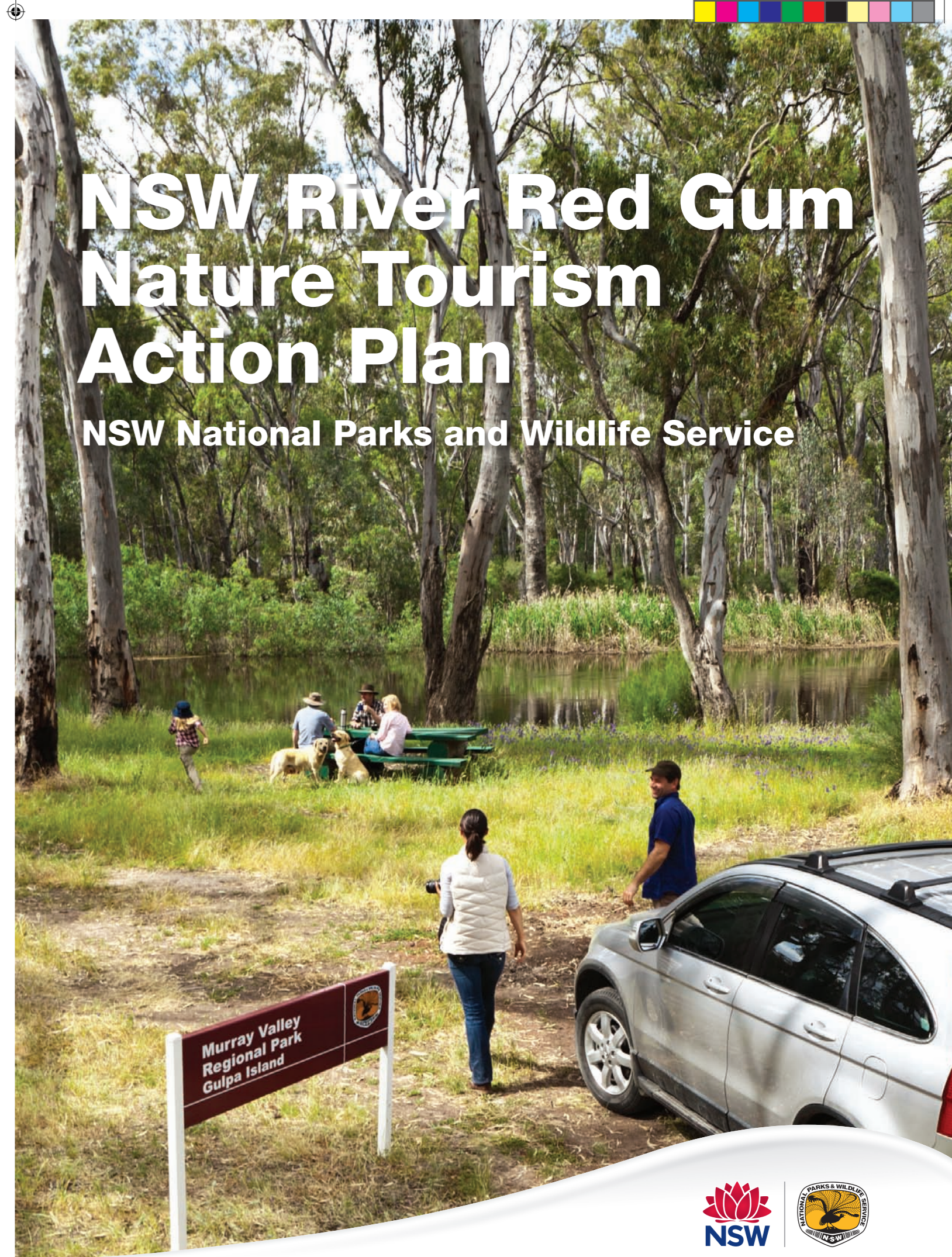


ALL AREAS				
	Project Name	Objective	Completion	Partnerships
Research	Visitor Profiling	Identify who visits, why, and where from	ongoing	Local and regional tourism groups, Parks Vic, Industry and Investment
	Projected Visitation	Understand our future potential visitor.	ongoing	Local and regional tourism groups, Parks Vic, Industry and Investment
	Ongoing monitoring	Provide a reliable source of visitor research information to inform future planning	ongoing	Parks Vic
Marketing and Promotions	River Red Gums Marketing Strategy	Increase the awareness and appeal of RRG reserves and region through a range of marketing campaigns, media familiarisations and promotional activities	2012-2014	Tourism Organisations, Destination NSW, Parks Vic, LGAs
Community and Stakeholder Engagement	Discovery Walks, Talks, Tours Program	Develop a program in collaboration with local tourism operators to be delivered in school holidays	2012-2013	Local community, and tourism sectors
	Parks Ecopass Tour Programs	Encourage the development of new local tourism ventures that draw upon the conservation values of the RRG reserves.	2012-2013	Parks Ecopass Operators, Private sector.
	Strategic Stakeholder and Community engagement	Address negative perception and support the transition to achieve the RRG Nature Tourism Action Plan vision, including proactive engagement with local media and community	2012-2013	Local government areas, visitor information centres, local media, community groups
	Changing Behaviour	Modify undesirable visitor behaviour and support the transition to achieve the RRG visitation strategy vision	ongoing	
	Aboriginal Engagement	The Aboriginal community is able to progress Aboriginal aspirations for a future role in visitor experiences in the RRG reserves	ongoing	Aboriginal Communities
	NPWS Campground Host Program (school holidays)	Boost the presence of NPWS in campgrounds and improve the visitor experience, confidence and safety.	2013-2014	Local community and special interest groups

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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# NSW River Red Gum Nature Tourism Action Plan

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service



[nswnationalparks.com.au](http://nswnationalparks.com.au)



## INTRODUCTION

In 2010, around 100,000 hectares of River Red Gum reserves were created in the Riverina and Murray regions. The range of new reserves, including national parks, regional parks and proposed Indigenous Protected Areas, together with existing parks in Victoria, forms the largest conservation area of river red gum in the world.

The forests and wetlands within the reserves are of international significance and protect important biodiversity and cultural values, including to both the local Aboriginal and non-Indigenous communities.

The NSW Government is committed to providing a variety of opportunities for local people and for visitors to the region to access, experience and enjoy these magnificent forests and the rivers and wetlands that sustain them.

As part of the Government's plan to make NSW number one, it aims to double tourism expenditure by 2020 and increase participation in recreational activities by 10% by 2016. Our network of national parks and reserves play an important role in attracting people to regional NSW and enticing them to stay longer.

To achieve this, the NSW Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has developed a Nature Tourism Action Plan to guide the revitalisation and establishment of visitor experiences in the River Red Gum reserves over the next five years. The plan also recognises the importance to local communities and long-term visitors of these areas for continued access to the rivers for fishing, boating and other recreational activities.

## VISION

Our vision is to ensure that the values of our iconic inland rivers and red gum forests continue to unfold and are recognised through the visitor experiences on offer across the region. Ultimately, we aim to inspire and motivate more people to visit the region.

The River Red Gum reserves provide many opportunities to enjoy the natural setting, cultural heritage and history of these areas. Our goal is to create experiences that are immersive, interactive and provide a contrast to everyday life. Journeys through these unique forests should rejuvenate and foster a sense of connection to nature while revealing the history of this remarkable and ancient landscape.

- To deliver this vision, NPWS will partner with local communities and the region's tourism industry. Together, we will focus on targeting new markets that represent the best potential for visitor growth. We will also ensure that we continue to provide visitor experiences and recreational opportunities for local communities and long-term visitors to the region.

We have identified a number of strategic directions that provide the framework for our Nature Tourism Action Plan:

1. Experience development
2. Marketing and promotion
3. Community and stakeholder engagement, and
4. Research

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

In consultation with local communities, local government and tourism operators, NPWS has developed and finalised a comprehensive Nature Tourism Action Plan. The plan takes a landscape approach to identifying new experiences that meet the needs of visitors. Consultation on the draft Nature Tourism Action Plan, which informed the final actions and partnerships identified in this plan, concluded in February 2012.

NPWS has already upgraded important infrastructure and visitor facilities across the region including; improving road access, maintaining existing visitor sites, and building and planning of new picnic and visitor facilities. In total, NPWS allocated \$1.245 million to these projects in 2011/12. To ensure that the River

Red Gum parks can continue to meet the needs of new and existing visitors and local communities, NPWS will allocate a further \$1.5 million in capital funding during 2012-2013, including delivering the following priority projects:

### Murray region

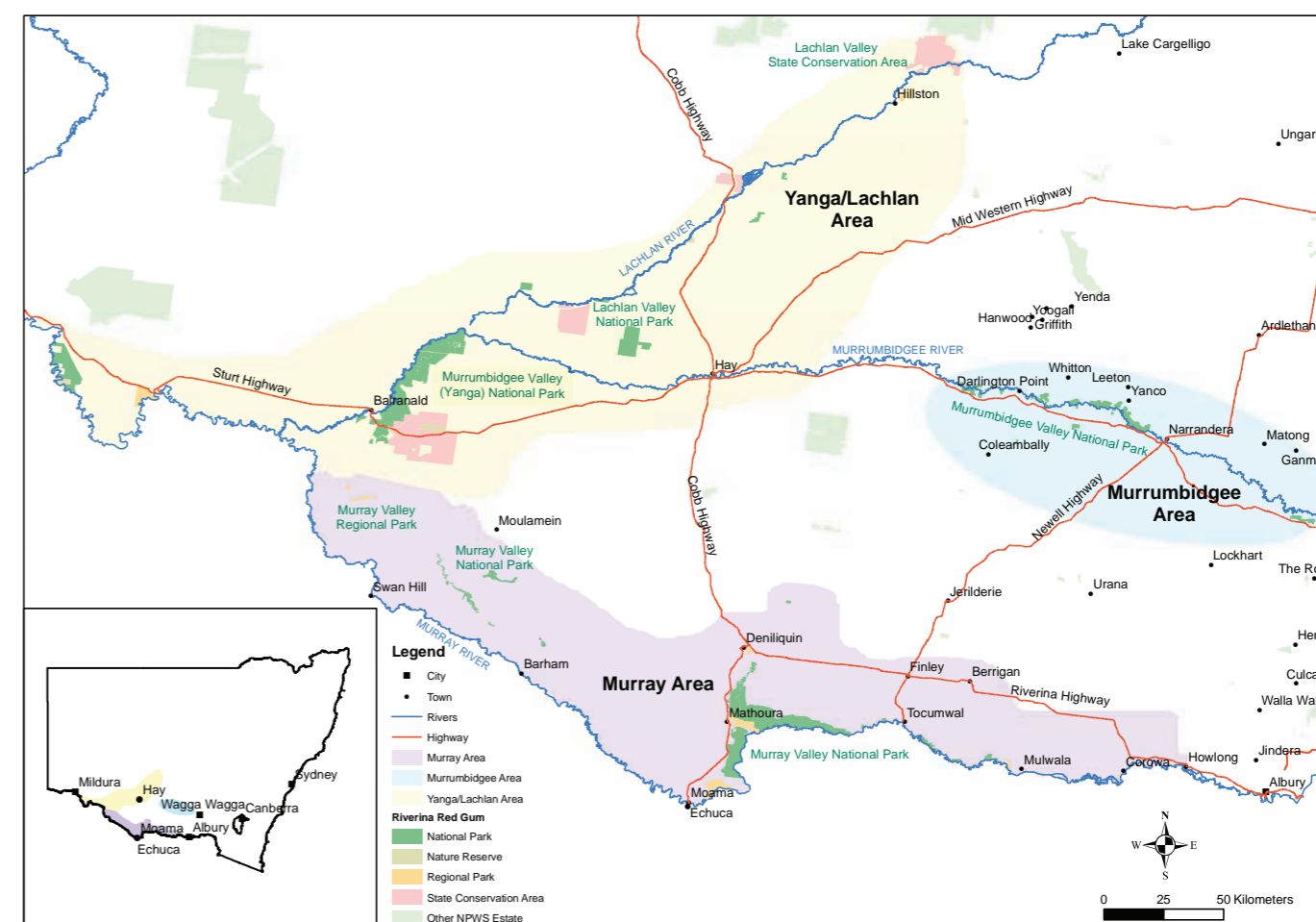
- Reeds Bed Bird Hide - Phase two of the Reeds Bed Bird Hide (Mathoura) including upgrading visitor facilities and the installation of innovative movement-activated interpretation in and around the bird hide. The aim of the project is to provide a multimedia approach to engage visitors with information about birds commonly found at this site.
- Five Mile Reserve - planning is underway to improve the site. As the base for the Southern 80 skiing competition held each February the site is an iconic part of the Murray landscape. NPWS is planning to revitalise the site including new parking areas, visitor facilities, and a review of the existing boat ramp.
- Moira Bird Hide – these projects provide an opportunity to offer a signature experience within the Murray Valley parks. The project will see the development of a series of boardwalks, walking and cycling trails to provide highly appealing access to a new bird hide on the Moira Lakes. The area is a significant breeding ground and provides up to

25 kilometres of tracks for single day and multi day walks.

- Cross Border Canoe Trail – in conjunction with Parks Victoria and LaTrobe University, planning and site establishment will be undertaken to create a canoe trail featuring formalised river access and future standing camp facilities.
- Interpretation – interpretation plays a key role in connecting with our visitors. An extensive interpretation plan has been developed for implementation at Reeds Bed Bird Hide, Barooga Ski Beach and Quicks Beach.

### Yanga region

- Kayaking Tour – site planning is underway for the development of an extensive kayaking tour along the Murrumbidgee River and Yanga Lake. Once the tour is developed NPWS will seek an external guide to provide the service in the park.
- Recreational Cycling – Yanga provides many opportunities for recreational cycling; planning is underway to develop cycle loops to key sites within the park.





### Murrumbidgee region

- Recreational Cycling – MIA I and MIA II have been identified as sites for potential recreational cycling. Site assessment has begun and a partnership identified with the Narrandera Shire Council.
- Gogeldrie Wetlands (Coonancoocabil Lagoon) – The site has the potential to offer a signature experience within the Murrumbidgee parks. A site assessment is underway to determine the environmental impact and the potential for the site to deliver appropriate visitor experiences. If the development proceeds there is a potential partnership opportunity with the Leeton Shire Council who manage the adjacent Gogeldrie Weir Caravan Park. A proposed swing bridge would offer appealing walking access to the park.

In addition NPWS will also be implementing a strategic community engagement program to strengthen communication and liaison with stakeholders and identify partnership opportunities. This approach will assist in ensuring that NPWS is an integral part of the River Red Gum communities. A new position of Senior Ranger Community Relations will be recruited and will be responsible for the implementation of this program. NPWS will continue to support local events, such as the Bidgee Classic Fishing Competition.

A key part of the Nature Tourism Action Plan is the continued marketing and research that has already taken place over the past year. Recent visitor research conducted in the Murray area confirms that the development of these projects is in line with the needs of visitors. NPWS will provide funding of \$165,000 to support ongoing marketing and research. Visitor research in both Yanga and the Murrumbidgee parks will be undertaken in 2012-2013. This research ensures that projects are informed by the needs of visitors.

Marketing will play a key role in engaging with existing and new visitors around the experiences developed as part of this plan. NPWS will continue to develop partnership opportunities within the region, working closely with other tourism organisations to maximize promotional opportunities. NPWS is already active at Caravan and Camping Shows around the country to profile the region.

### PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Nature Tourism Action Plan promotes an integrated approach between NPWS and partners to deliver visitor experiences for local communities and visitors to the region.

In establishing sites NPWS will provide infrastructure, access and conservation management, while partners will provide specialist knowledge and the operational capacity to deliver experiences that are outside the scope of NPWS alone.

Under the priority projects planned for 5 Mile Beach, Moira Bird Hide and the cross border canoe trail there will be excellent opportunities for private sector involvement in the development and operation of these visitor experiences.

NPWS has conducted a preliminary feasibility assessment at 5 Mile Beach for a potential high ropes adventure facility. While further environmental assessments are required, NPWS is committed to pursuing the feasibility of this project with a view to attracting a credible private commercial operator.

The setting and environment of Moira Bird Hide provides a unique location for the operation of an eco lodge and holds the potential to attract high yielding visitors to the region. Preliminary planning and environmental assessment of a suitable site will be undertaken by NPWS to ensure that a viable and appropriate option is taken to the market when seeking this partnership.

The following table is a summary of the Nature Tourism Action Plan highlighting the current status of each project. A number of projects are already advanced, while others are in the planning phase. NPWS is committed to achieving the projects within the expected timeframes, taking into consideration the environmental factors such as flooding that can sometimes inhibit the development of these projects.



### MURRAY – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name	Objective	Completion	Partnerships
<b>Signature Experiences</b>	Guided Multiday Adventure Trail	Provide a guided adventure tour, packaging kayaking, mountain biking and bushwalking	2012-2013	Contracted guides
	High Ropes Tree Top Adventure Park	Investigate a major drawcard to the region	2012-2013	Private Sector
	Five Mile Reserve	Enhance facilities for identified current use	2012-2013	Murray RTO, LGAs, NSW Maritime
	Eco Lodge Retreat	Investigate the feasibility of nature based experiential accommodation	2013-2014	Private sector
<b>Recreational Experiences</b>	Interpretation Program Development	Enhance the visitor experience with focused interpretation of the reserves' natural and cultural heritage values.	2012-2013	Parks VIC, LGA, Aboriginal communities
	Technical Mountain Biking	Offer a leading technical mountain bike track	2012-2013	Mountain bike clubs
	Self Drive Touring Route	Integrate experiences and sites in reserves with regional attractions and highlights	2013-2014	Long Paddock and Backroads Trail tourism bodies, RTOs
	Self Guided Walks	Deliver appealing walking experiences matched to the market	2012-2013	Special interest groups
	Horse Riding	Provide opportunities for sustainable horse riding experiences	2014-2015	Special interest groups
<b>Augmenting Experiences</b>	Quicks Beach Visitor Facilities	Enhance facilities for campers and day users	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Poverty Point Rehabilitation	Support ongoing use of Murray River	Completed 2012-2013	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Edwards River Bridge	Support continued access to Edwards River for a range of water and nature-based activities	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Moira Lake bird hide	Offer an accessible and quality bird watching experience	2012-2013	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Walking track upgrade - swinging bridge	Provide an enhanced experience for bushwalkers	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs, local operators
	Scott's Beach camping	Current visitor use is supported with improved facilities	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Barooga Day Use and Deniliquin Regional Park	Enhance existing sites by improving beach access and new facilities	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Reeds Bed bird hide (Mathoura)	Provide visitors with an opportunity to enjoy and learn about the wetlands and wildlife (specifically waterbirds)	Completed June 2012	Parks VIC, LGAs
	Cross Border Canoe Trail	Provide visitors with canoe opportunities through a designed canoe trail	2012-2013	Parks VIC, LGAs, LaTrobe University
	Entrances, access and signage	Improve visitor flow and orientation by providing suitable signage	2012-2013	Parks VIC, LGAs

## MURRUMBIDGEE – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name	Objective	Completion	Partnerships
<b>Transitioning Experiences</b>	Protecting park values from visitor impacts	Park management and visitor programs are planned and resourced to respond to the issues relating to current visitor use	Ongoing	LGAs, police, Parks VIC
<b>Recreational Experiences</b>	Self guided drives	Integrate experiences in reserves with regional attractions and highlights	2013-2014	Regional and local tourism groups
	Self guided walk	Deliver appealing walking experiences that are matched to the market	2013-2014	Local interest groups
	Bird Hide	Develop opportunities for viewing waterbirds at Turkey Flat and Goorgal Lagoon	2013-2014	
	Horse Riding	Provide opportunities for sustainable horse riding experiences	2014-2015	Special interest groups
	Interpretation Program Development	Enhance the visitor experience with focused interpretation of the reserves' natural and cultural heritage values.	2013-2014	LGAs, highway promotion groups, local tourism organisations, Aboriginal community, special interest groups
	Recreational Cycling	Increase visitation to RRG region through communication & development of opportunities for cycling (including mountain biking) experiences	2012-2013	Special interest groups, Narrandera Shire Council, Riverina RTO
	Koala Walk	Deliver a wildlife focused interpretative walk	2013-2014	LGAs, local tourism organisations, aboriginal community, special interest groups
	Gogeldrie Wetlands	Investigate opportunities to provide pedestrian access to the park and wetlands via Gogeldrie Weir	2012-2013	Leeton Shire Council, Riverina RTO, Special Interest Groups
<b>Augmenting Experiences</b>	Visitor Access and Signage	Improve visitor flow and orientation	ongoing	LGAs, local tourism organisations
	Middle Creek Bridge	Support visitor access	2012-2013	
	Murrumbidgee Valley National Park, Cudgel Creek Bridge replacement	Support visitor access	2012-2013	
	Boat Access within MIA I and MIA II	Consider the development of boat access	2013-2014	NSW Maritime, Riverina RTO, LGA's, Recreational Fishers
<b>Transitioning Experiences</b>	Changing behaviour	Park management and visitor programs are planned and resourced to respond to the issues relating to current visitor use	Ongoing	LGA's, police

## YANGA LACHLAN – EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

	Project Name	Objective	Completion	Partnerships
<b>Signature Experiences</b>	Kayaking Tour	Develop tours to explore the Murrumbidgee River and Yanga Lake wetlands	2012-2013	Private tour operators
	Hunthawang Homestead	Investigate the restoration of original homestead and provision of facilities for overnight and day use visitors	2013-2014	Local government areas, highway promotion groups, local tourism organisations, special interest groups
<b>Recreational Experiences</b>	Interpretation Program Development	Enhance the visitor experience with focused interpretation of the reserves' natural and cultural heritage values.	2012-2013	LGAs, highway promotion groups, local tourism organisations, aboriginal community, special interest groups
	Self Drive Touring Route	Integrate experiences and sites in reserves with regional attractions and highlights	2013-2014	Long Paddock and other tourism bodies
	Self Guided Walks	Deliver appealing walking experiences that are matched to the market	2012-2013	Local interest groups
	Horse Riding	Provide opportunities for sustainable horse riding experiences	2014-2015	Special interest groups
	Recreational Cycling	Increase visitation to RRG region through communication & development of opportunities for cycling (including mountain biking) experiences	2012-2013	Special interest groups
<b>Augmenting Experiences</b>	Visitor Access and Signage	Improve visitor flow and orientation	Ongoing	Local government areas, local tourism organisations

