Snowy Monaro
Destination Management Plan
2019

SNOWY MONARO REGIONAL COUNCIL
Stronger together Better together

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Snowy Monaro Destination Management Plan has been prepared by TRC Tourism Pty Ltd for Snowy Monaro Regional Council.

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that the geographic scope of this Plan covers and Elders past and present.

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Contents

ACRONYMS

SMRC	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
DNSW	Destination New South Wales
DSNSW	Destination Southern New South Wales
TSM	Tourism Snowy Mountains
DMP	Destination Management Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
KNP	Kosciuszko National Park
VIC	Visitor Information Centre

Introduction

Destination management is an ongoing process in which tourism, industry, Government and community leaders plan and manage a destination.

Tourism is an economic driver, generating jobs and contributing lifestyle benefits to communities. Equally, tourism needs to be managed to ensure that it leaves a positive legacy for current and future generations. This destination management approach identifies the products or experiences available, understands the visitor and engages broadly with community and other industry sectors and then markets the offering. The tourism sector needs to ensure that it is considered in the broader context of regional development and that it is recognised for its overall contribution and economic value to the region.[1]

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC), in partnership with Regional NSW commissioned a Destination Management Plan (DMP) for the newly formed Snowy Monaro Local Government Area. The plan has a local focus, though aligns with the Destination Southern NSW DMP and Destination NSW tourism objectives. The process of destination management doesn't happen in isolation. It involves a range of sectors, stakeholder groups and delivery partners — such as Government agencies, communities and business groups — working collaboratively to deliver their part of the tourism picture.[2]

This plan draws on the comprehensive foundation of strategic and statutory reports and documents that have guided tourism in the Snowy Monaro region in recent years:

- NSW Department of Planning & Environment SE and Tablelands Regional Plan–2036
- Destination Southern NSW Destination Management Plan 2018-2020
- Snowy Mountains Destination Management Plan–2013
- Snowy River Shire Council Strategic Tourism Development Plan–2016
- Cooma-Monaro Destination Management Plan –2013
- Bombala Destination Management Plan–2014
- Snowy Monaro Community Strategic Plan–2040
- Snowy Mountains Regional Economic Development Blueprint–2016
- Australian Alps National Landscape Tourism Strategy–2010

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[1] Tourism 2020 www.austrade.gov.au

[2] Tourism 2020 Best Practice Destination Management

SMRC sought to build on this foundation to create one inclusive tourism Destination Management Plan for the region. The Snowy Monaro DMP is built on effective consultation including workshops sessions, in-person interviews, submissions and community feedback — crystallising the priority actions, initiatives, precincts and experiences that will enable the region to achieve its and the State's tourism and community goals for 2020, and beyond.

Objective: This plan provides an inspiring and effective approach to grow the visitor economy of the Snowy Monaro region and create meaningful connections between place, community and businesses, with the visitors to the region.

Great experiences don't have to be complicated to deliver or sell, but they make all the difference to visitors. This DMP looks at ways of encouraging tourism, both from a demand perspective – how the region is marketed, and supply perspective – what infrastructure, what new products and what new experiences does the region have to develop to entice the visiting public.

Most of the products and experiences articulated in this DMP have common components based around the experience development themes:

**Theme 1.
Challenge Yourself
in Nature**

**Theme 2
Remarkable
Journeys**

**Theme 3.
Our Heritage**

**Theme 4.
Savour the
Snowies**

These themes link to the DSNSW DMP and Destination NSW planning. The visitor experiences on offer in the Snowy Monaro region bring to life the destination positioning. They are heavily nature oriented (walking tracks, outdoor active, wilderness and national parks) and are strengthened by the towns and villages, local produce and cultural heritage. The more quality experiences a visitor has, the better their overall impression of the destination will be. They will also be more likely to return and recommend the destination to friends.

This DMP aims to build on the recent successes and current initiatives in place across the Snowy Monaro region. The intention is to enhance and build on existing partnerships, initiatives and event calendars to continue the region's success in tourism planning and development.

The Region

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council was formed in 2016 and encompasses the former Bombala, Cooma-Monaro and Snowy River LGAs.

The region is in south-eastern New South Wales, about 50 kilometres south of the Canberra CBD and 400 kilometres south-west of the Sydney CBD. It is on land traditionally home to the Ngarigo, Walgalu, Bidawal and Southern Ngunnawal people and covers a diverse geographic area with a varied social and economic profile. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council Local Government Area covers 15,158 square kilometres and has an approximate population of 20,713.[4]

The Snowy Monaro region is a significant tourism destination that attracts large numbers of visitors each year for recreation and relaxation activities and to explore the rich history and diverse landscapes. The region is most well known as a snow holiday destination and it is the winter tourist market that has the largest economic impact on our regional communities. Outside of winter, there are significant tourism opportunities that have capacity for growth.

Tourism is the most important sector of the regional economy. In 2016/17, the total tourism and hospitality sales in Snowy Monaro Regional Council area were $740.0m. It is the largest source of employment in the region.[5]

The visitor economy assets for the region range from the sweeping Monaro plains, the iconic Snowy River, pristine lakes and waterways, Kosciuszko National Park, ski resorts, events and festivals, the Snowy Hydro scheme, country shows, quaint villages and regional centres, to outdoor active adventures such as bushwalking, mountain bike riding and horseback trail rides.

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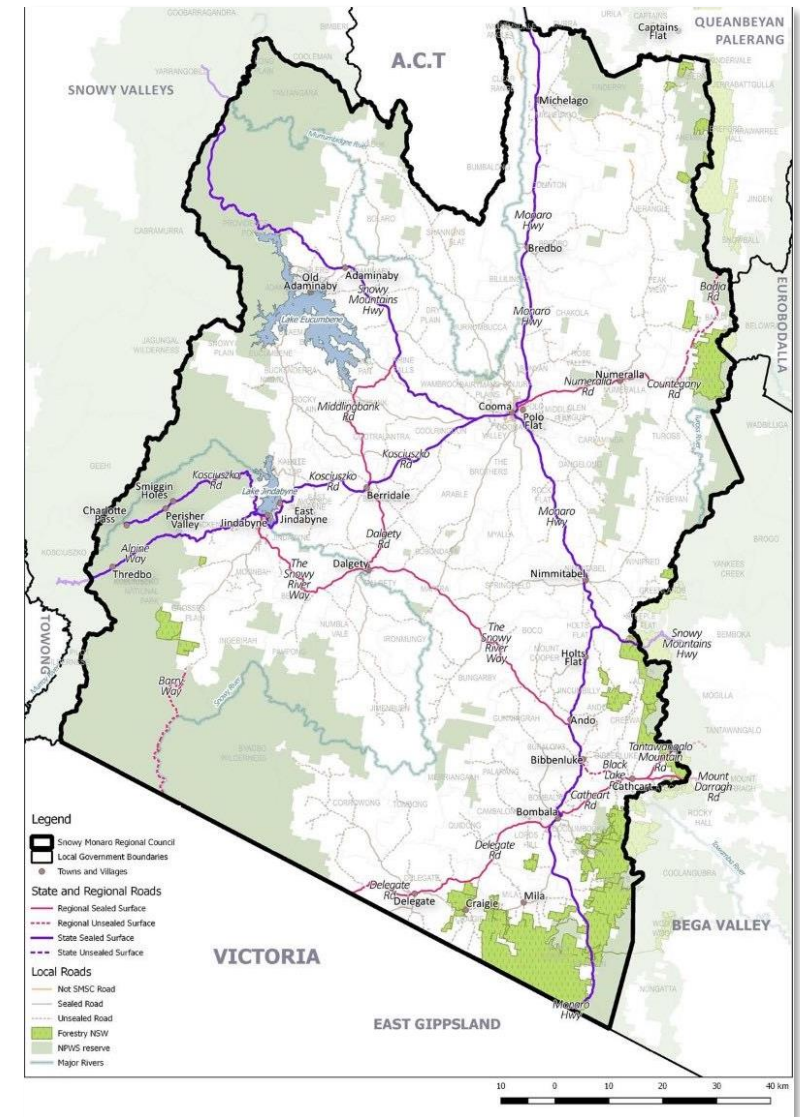
[4] www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro

[5] www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro/tourism-value

Partnerships, Governance and Support

Implementation and success of the Snowy Monaro DMP will be achieved through strong partnerships with the tourism industry, community, TSM, DNSW, DSNSW and SMRC.

- **TOURISM AUSTRALIA**
  is responsible for international marketing of Australia and national tourism strategies. AUSTRADE is also actively involved in several projects in the Snowy Monaro region.

- **DESTINATION NSW**
  is the lead Government agency for the New South Wales tourism and major events sectors. While DNSW's resources are focused predominantly on events, domestic and international marketing, it supports regional and local tourism via the new regional destination networks, and funding support via the Regional Tourism Fund and the Regional Flagship Events program.

- **DESTINATION SOUTHERN NSW**
  is one of six new Destination Networks across NSW. The Snowy Monaro is located within Destination Southern NSW. DSNSW's regional tourism priorities are to: increase visitation, grow physical capacity, renew and revitalise destinations, improve the visitor experience, and removing constraints on the visitor economy.

- **TOURISM SNOWY MOUNTAINS**
  aims to achieve tourism growth by developing opportunities for the Snowy Mountains region specifically, and by promoting the brand 'Snowy Mountains' and with responsibility for advocacy, lobbying industry, new product development, planning and is a resource for potential new investors in the region. It reports to a Board of local stakeholders.

- **SNOWY MONARO REGIONAL COUNCIL**
  is responsible for destination marketing within the region, tourism infrastructure and funding, and is actively involved in the local tourism industry by way of Visitor Information Centre management in Cooma and Bombala. This includes compiling a regional event calendar and supporting some events. Council is responsible for directional sign posting, town beautification and is establishing a Tourism Committee to assist with DMP implementation.

Working at a local level to lobby for improved tourism assets are several local Chambers of Commerce and Progress Associations. There is a strong need for a coordinated approach between all tourism bodies and a single body with responsibility for leading tourism marketing, planning and advocacy in the Snowy Mountains to enable the effective delivery of the actions contained within this DMP.
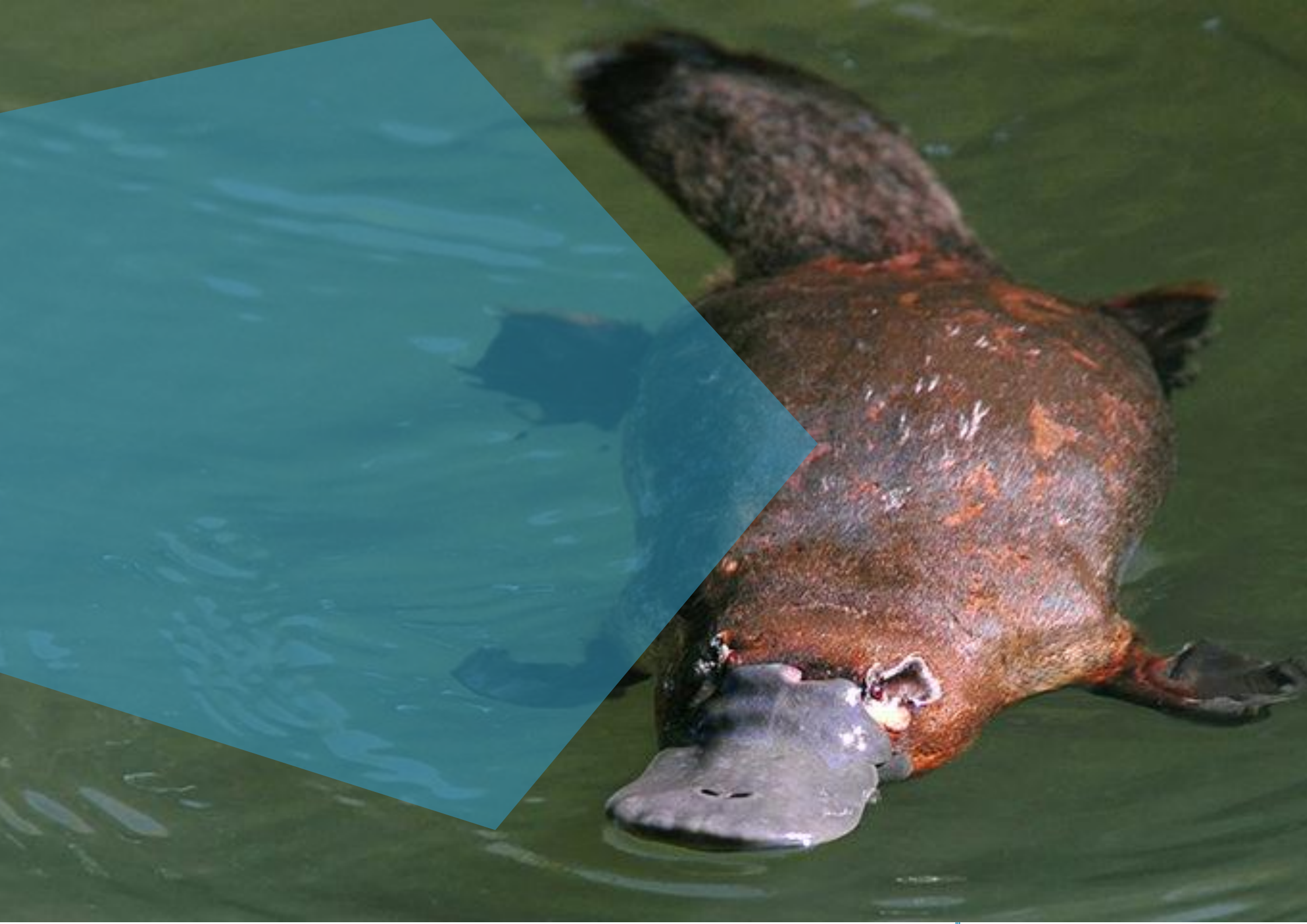
The Visitor Economy

The term visitor economy refers to overall demand and supply in all the sectors within which visitor activity and its direct and indirect consequences upon the economy take place.

The term visitor economy is wider than the definition of tourism industries, which it includes, and it encompasses all staying and non-staying visitors. The term embraces the activities and expenditure involved in supplying products and services for visitors by both the private and public sectors. It also includes the primarily public sector activities and substantial expenditure on the creation, maintenance and development of the public realm and the infrastructure within which, and through which, visitor activities take place. Tourism industries are a sub-set of the visitor economy[6].

Developing a Visitor Economy Strategy for the Snowy Mountains is one of three actions of Direction 3 (Develop the Snowy Mountains into Australia's premier year-round alpine destination) of the NSW Government 2036 South East and Tablelands Regional Plan. This DMP fundamentally meets this need.

Destination NSW is driving visitor economy growth to NSW by tracking emerging markets, investing in innovation with a focus on nature-based tourism, investing in critical infrastructure and improved way-finding, and digital access to information to ensure visitors have a great experience. Their focus on nature-based tourism perfectly positions the region to be a key player in State tourism initiatives and marketing.

Efforts to attract investment to the region are underway or planned, including the identification of the Snowy Mountains as one of the eight iconic locations that are being promoted by Austrade and Tourism Australia under the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Investment Attraction Strategy. This commitment continues until 2021.

Tourism is a key contributor to the Snowy Mountains region, with visitors drawn to the region for snow sports during the winter and for activities such as bushwalking, fishing, mountain biking and events during the non-snow season months. Visitation across the year is varied with visitor levels peaking in the snow season (mid-July and August) and dropping off significantly in the non-snow season months. The seasonal nature of visitation to the Snowy Mountains has several challenges that currently prevent the achievement of a sustainable and economically viable year-round tourism industry. They include maintaining a permanent labour force in the region, attracting investment in new tourism products / experiences and infrastructure and resourcing the operational maintenance of improvements to existing infrastructure, given the impacts of weather and the remoteness of many attractions and pieces of visitor infrastructure.

All members of the community are affected by the positive and negative impacts of tourism as an intrinsic part of both the local culture and the offer of hospitality. Community tourism products and services are generally comprised of small businesses, with some larger operators, which survive alone, but when seen as a whole create the destination. The sum of these small and larger businesses is the essence of the tourism experience for guests.

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[6] www.tourismsociety.org

The Value of Tourism

SMRC recognises the value of tourism to the region and commits to ensuring the region is prosperous with diverse industry and opportunities, and that the residents and visitors connect with the region's welcoming and iconic attractions. The regional Council will:

- Ensure the Snowy Monaro Region is a destination that offers a variety of experiences, attractions and events year-round
- Encourage and promote vibrant towns and villages, acknowledging and celebrating the unique heritage and character of each town
- Further promote and develop the region's visitor accommodation, products and recreational infrastructure
- Implement the SMRC Community Strategic Plan 2040.

VISITATION, IMPACT & TRENDS 2017

658,000
Domestic Overnight Visitors

365,000
Domestic Day Visitors

15,000
International Visitors

4 DAYS
Average length of stay

HOLIDAY
Main Reason for Visit

395
Tourism Businesses in Council Area

1,038,000
Total Visitors

2,469,000
Total Nights

Sources: Tourism Research Australia, Destination NSW, www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro, www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro/tourism-value

2016/17

$740.0m
Total value added

$339.3m
Tourism & hospitality expenditure

Comparatively in 2015/16 the total value of agricultural output in Region $114M

VISITOR STATISTICS
AGE GROUP
41% 15 to 29 years
15% 30 to 39 years
14.1% 40 to 49 years
PURPOSE OF VISIT
75.5% Holiday
11.1% Business
10.8% VFR
SOURCE
40.2% Sydney
33% Regional NSW
11.8% ACT

Destination Performance

Local Government Area profiles (produced by Tourism Research Australia – TRA) assist industry and Government in tourism decision-making. As part of the research component of the DMP, Tourism Research Australia has provided the statistics for the new Council area. The following newly produced statistics include only the area within the new council boundaries for 2017.

Figure 1. Visitor nights over a 5-year period, using 4-year averages
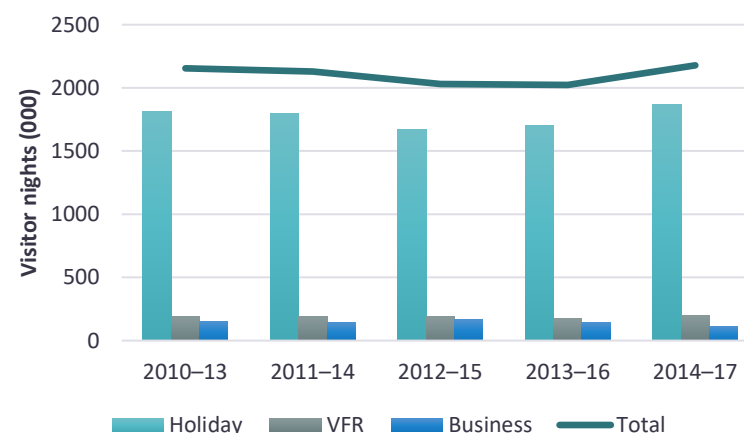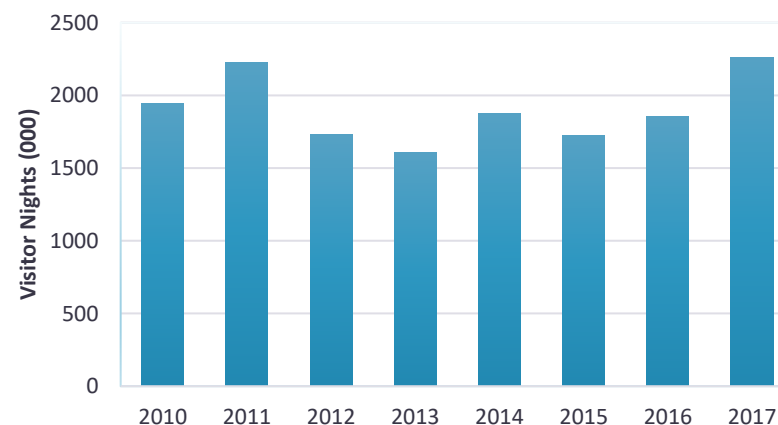

Figure 2. Actual visitor nights to the region 2010-2017

Future Performance

In the future, the region can rightly claim to be Australia's premier nature-based visitor destination. Offering a unique blend of snow sports, a broad range of nature and water-based summer recreational activities, outstanding heritage educational interpretive experiences - all supported by improved accommodation standards and infrastructure across the region's network of towns and villages.

Based on the new figures provided by TRA, the accompanying new performance goals for the region have been set (refer to infographic).

With these goals in mind, tourism needs to be managed to ensure that it leaves a positive legacy for current and future generations. As such these goals should be reviewed regularly to ensure sustainability and community support. Assisting the region to reach these goals will require adequate investment in product development and experiences, in marketing initiatives to move market demand from high awareness to high actual visitation, and in implementing a suitable tourism governance structure.

Growth will clearly have implications both positive and negative in relation to urban and residential development, transport and traffic, and labour availability with positive economic and potentially positive and negative social impacts. Many of the recommendations of this plan will contribute to addressing these impacts. Other regional planning by SMRC and state and federal governments will also need to take account of the likely growth and plan for this.

Future Performance

BY 2024

Based on the new figures provided by TRA, the below performance goals for the region have been set:

723,800 — Domestic Overnight Visitors Increased by **10%**

383,250 — Domestic Day Visitors Increased by **5%**

15,750 — International Visitors Increased by **5%**

5 Days — Average length of stay Increased by **20%**

415 — Tourism businesses in the council Increased by **5%**

With these goals in mind, tourism needs to be managed to ensure that it leaves a positive legacy for current and future generations. As such these goals should be reviewed regularly to ensure s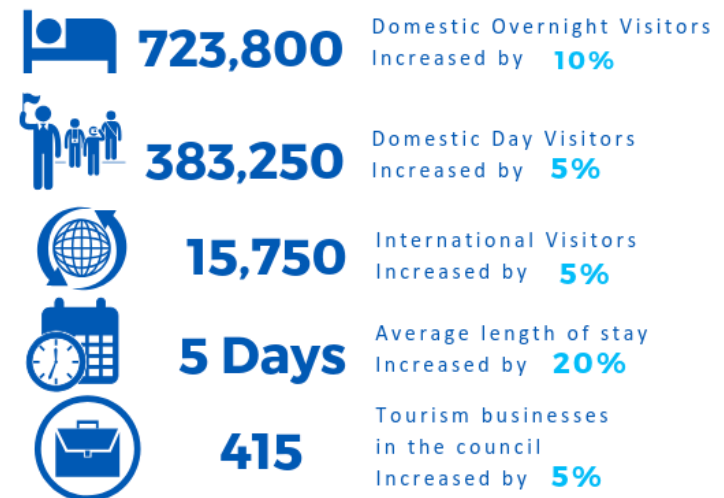ustainability and community support. Assisting the region to reach these goals will require adequate investment in product development and experiences, in marketing initiatives to move market demand from high awareness to high actual visitation, and in implementing a suitable tourism governance structure.

Sources: Tourism Research Australia, Destination NSW, www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro, www.economy.id.com.au/snowy-monaro/tourism-value

Target Markets

Getting away from the crowds is more important than ever before. Across the Australian travel marketplace in 2017, regional NSW tops the Australian places to visit (39%) followed by Sydney (38%), Melbourne (35%), Regional Victoria (28%) and Gold Coast (26%). Regional NSW holds the highest level of repeat visitation. Regional destinations are key drawcards for what Australians are seeking from their holidays – the focus should be on the experience. [7]

Target Markets

- Existing markets
  - » Nature tourism
  - » NSW family market
- New Markets
  - » Road trippers
  - » International backpacker

Existing Markets

The region is well placed to grow market share in the existing segments of Nature-based tourism and the NSW Family markets with an injection of new products and experiences on offer.

- **Nature tourism** is a market segment based around outdoor and nature experiences. Of the 28.3 million nature-based visitors to NSW, 12.1% were from overseas, 40.8% were from the domestic overnight market and 47.2% were domestic daytrip visitors. Nature-based visitors accounted for 83.7% of international visitors to NSW, 37.2% of domestic overnight visitors and 22.9% of daytrip visitors to NSW.[8]

- **NSW family** domestic travel fulfils a key role in busy family lives by offering a chance for families to reconnect, recharge and have a break from normal routine. A domestic holiday is often a weekend break or a short break (2 to 4 days) providing an opportunity for families to relax and to open lines of communication between adults and children without time pressures.

[7] Domesticate 2018
[8] www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/facts-and-figures/market-segments

New Markets

Looking ahead, the market segments of Road Trippers and International Backpackers are where the region could most easily grow market share by investing in infrastructure and marketing.

- **NSW road trippers** are defined as fully independent overnight holiday visitors to NSW who had at least 2 stopovers on their trip. They travel by private vehicle, company car, rental car, self-drive motorhome or campervan. Domestic road trippers contributed 5.2% of visitors and 9.3% of nights in NSW. Nearly half (46.0%) of road trippers to NSW came from interstate. Domestic road trippers stayed an average of 5.7 nights in the State. This was longer than the average for all domestic visitors in NSW (3.2 nights).

  This market is attracted to a destination by strong positioning for drive tourism supported by planned itineraries and high-quality experiences. Other destinations are doing this much better than the Snowy Mountains and with limited time, drive tourists are choosing other options. Creating and promoting a small number of high-quality drive routes with good experiences, will support growth in this market.

- **The international backpacker** market accounts for a significant proportion of visitors to NSW. According to the International Visitor Survey, there were 611,900 international backpacker visitors to Australia in 2015/16, NSW attracted the most backpacker visitors in Australia, with 75% market share in 2015/16. Backpacker visitors stayed on average 31.7 nights in NSW with a median length of stay of 8 nights.

  This market is seeking a diversity of experiences often with an active and adventure focus. An increase in adventure product, especially in summer and better transport to and within the region will underpin growth for this market.

Snowy 2.0

Snowy 2.0 involves increasing the existing Snowy Hydro Scheme's generation capacity by linking two of the Scheme's dams (Talbingo and Tantangara) through 27km of underground tunnels and an underground power station to create a closed pumped hydro system within the larger Scheme. The Exploratory Works phase of the project was approved and commenced in early 2019. It is expected this phase of the project will take about two years to complete and the total project (comprising the Exploratory Works and the Main Works) will cost more than $5 billion and take up to eight years to complete. At the peak of operations of the project it is expected Snowy 2.0 will directly employ 5,000 staff who will primarily be housed in worker housing on site within Kosciuszko National Park. It is anticipated that some workers' families will choose to relocate to the area, increasing the demand for housing in towns closest to the project such as Adaminaby and Cooma.

At the time of writing, the Environmental Impact Assessment for the Main Works component of the project is being prepared and some relevant details are not yet known, for example how access to affected parts of KNP will be changed. It is clear though that the project has the potential to impact on tourism through:

- Reducing the opportunities for recreational activities for visitors in the northern end of Kosciuszko National Park, particularly around Tantangara reservoir and Lobs Hole.

- Increasing heavy traffic on the Snowy Mountains Highway between Cooma and the project area within northern Kosciuszko National Park, impacting on drive tourists coming entering and exiting the region via that route.

- Increasing visitors to the region as fly in fly out or drive in drive out workers take the opportunity to explore the local region on shift breaks rather than travel home.

- Increasing the demand for accommodation in towns nearest the project and potentially moving housing stock out of the short-term holiday market.

Domestic Trends

The appeal of holidaying in Australia to Australians continues to grow

- Escapism and short breaks have become the norm as Australians look to escape the busy pace of everyday life.

- Domestic holidays provide a perceived 'safety net' to Australians with easy and affordable trips at home that offer fun and relaxed holiday experiences – for younger Australians, this includes carefree and spontaneous experiences.

- Domestic holidays are more about the value of the experience, with Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR), mid-range hotels, motels, and serviced apartments.

- Indulgence is on the rise in relation to products and experiences.

- Reconnection with family or friends remains central to the Australian holiday experience.

- Camping and caravanning continue to increase in popularity - 30 to 54 year olds make up 47% of the market, visitors aged 55 years and over (30%) and 20 to 29 years (16%).[9]

Global Trends

Growth market segments globally

- There is a continuing rise in the numbers of contemporary female travellers, who are more likely to have a higher disposable income and to travel either on their own or in small groups of friends.

- The fifties are the new demographic for travel brands – more people are choosing to travel earlier than retirement to enjoy the more active or immersive experiences that destinations have to offer.

- Across the tourism industry, there is an increase in multigenerational travel, where three generations of family travel together - this is a significant opportunity considering the potential size of the travel party.

- The growing millennials market (those following Generation X) means that holiday destinations and tourism businesses now need to consider the needs of the youth market. Already accounting for 20% of the world's tourists, this group are looking for unique and authentic experiences and opportunities to learn something new and are guided by recommendations from friends.

New experiences

- The focus is on small-scale, immersive and locally curated activities. This is particularly important in relation to Indigenous and nature-based tourism.

- E-bike sales are on the rise worldwide, opening trails to potential new markets.

- New luxury is defined by small brands with big stories. This is driven largely by the opportunity for genuine engagement and interaction with local people, nature, heritage, arts and culture. The story of the place and its people are increasingly critical to the success of the experience.

- The 'festivalisation' of meetings and events – festivals add to the excitement of a destination and increasingly appeal to those organising major conferences and events.

- Dining out as the main event – this trend is no longer just about the 'super-star' (or multiple-hatted) restaurants but is now about 'local heroes' offering local fresh produce who create immersive, curated and/or unique experiences rather than standard, expected service.[10]

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[9] www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/

[10] www.skift.com/2017/01/12/the-megatrends-defining-travel-in-2017/.

The Visitor Offer

The stunning landscape is the region's most outstanding feature.

The Snowy Monaro region has unique beauty and stark contrasts. There is a real passion for this wonderful part of the country, with its distinct seasons of crisp summer air and winter snow across mountain landscapes. It's a land of spiritual connection for indigenous culture with many declared Aboriginal Places. The region holds many historic and heritage listed buildings dating back to the European graziers in the mid-19th century. Its land and communities can deliver many stories and journeys.

- Flanked by lakes and rushing streams, Snowy Mountains is the source of the country's great rivers – Murray, Snowy and Murrumbidgee. The waters of Lakes Eucumbene and Jindabyne are a freshwater angler's paradise and perfect for water sports and recreation.

- Mount Kosciuszko, hiking, camping, mountain biking, cycling, horse riding, fishing, water sports, four-wheel driving, motor biking, sightseeing and touring are popular year-round pursuits.

- The area's communities are rich in history, heritage, arts, crafts, festivals and events. The Snowy Mountains region is also gaining a reputation for quality primary produce, fine cuisine, award-winning cool climate wines, crisp local brews, tasty schnapps and pure mineral waters.

The focus on the winter market is currently justified, given the high yields it generates for many operators and the important overall economic stimulus it has for the whole region. Businesses and the community in the SMRC area significantly benefit from the winter tourism market.

The challenge for the region is that there is currently insufficient compelling product and experiences to attract a stronger summer visitor market.

In the Supporting Documentation TRC Tourism has included a newly prepared Snowy Monaro Tourism Product Audit. By categorising the existing product and examining the existing strengths and gaps in tourism product in the region, a clear vision for the regional tourism industry was developed. Nature products featured highly in the product audit and all consultation. Actions around nature-based tourism, from improving what products are currently available within the region, to visioning new and exciting outdoor active adventures that will bring new and repeat tourists outside of winter and encourage current visitors to stay longer are an important element of this plan.

Nature-based tourism is significant

- It can drive regional economies and job creation
- Nature-based visitors generate higher yield on average, spending more and staying longer
- It is an important motivator for international visitors to travel to Australia
- Nature-based tourism is growing
- Nature-based tourism provides the most memorable experience.

Experience-based approach

Great visitor experiences are vital to success in a competitive tourism marketplace. They are:

- A source of long-term competitive advantage
- Created by consistently exceeding customer expectations
- Differentiated by stimulating the emotions of visitors
- Enabled through inspirational leadership and facilitated by culture
- Revenue generating and can reduce costs
- An embodiment of the destination positioning.

Vision for the Region

Stakeholder consultation engaged the tourism industry and community in discussions about their vision for tourism in the region. A strong vision needs to be inspiring and aspirational. The following vision reflects the strengths of the region identified in consultation and other research for this plan.

Vision

The Snowy Mountains is the best nature adventure destination in Australia

Brand

Brands are about the way a destination connects to its visitors with a unique identity appealing specifically to individuals who might be inspired to visit a destination. It is how a destination is placed in the market, how it 'shows up' at every customer touch point.

The brand **Snowy Mountains** is an asset to the region. Successful tourism businesses will leverage off this brand (even if they are not located in the foothills of the mountains) because of its high recognition in the marketplace.

As well as being a brand, the Snowy Mountains is a destination magnet – something that tourists can visit and explore. Promote the magnet, and everyone else will benefit.

The tagline connected with the brand is **Australia's High Country**.

Strategic Priorities and Projects

With an increasingly unpredictable global landscape, more than ever there is a need for the tourism industry to embrace a disciplined, structured and continuous approach to identifying and monitoring future trends and issues to inform policymaking and strategic tourism planning.

Seven areas of focus have been identified for the Snowy Monaro region. On top of these strategic challenges, the region will also need to respond to market shifts, caused by either changing travel trends, economic downturns influencing the propensity to travel or changes due to environmental factors such as earthquakes and bushfires.

Seven areas of focus

1. Governance & Marketing
2. Access & Circulation
3. Accommodation
4. Planning
5. Labour / Skills
6. Visitor Servicing
7. Positioning the Region for Growth

The seventh area of focus, **Positioning the Region for Growth** includes experience development aligned with the four experience themes from the DSNSW DMP:

- Theme 1. Challenge Yourself in Nature
- Theme 2. Remarkable Journeys
- Theme 3. Our Heritage
- Theme 4. Savour the Snowies

Under this Strategic Priorities section there are several projects that have been identified as **Game Changers**. It will be critical that these are addressed.

- Game Changer 1. Ensure effective governance, funding and marketing for tourism
- Game Changer 2. Develop a regional transport and access strategy
- Game Changer 3. Understand the accommodation needs of the target market
- Game Changer 4. Improve Visitor Services
- Game Changer 5. Embrace and use the positioning
- Game Changer 6. Boost nature-based and adventure experiences
- Game Changer 7. Revitalise Lake Jindabyne and regional waterways
- Game Changer 8. Develop a trails master plan for the region
- Game Changer 9. Revitalise drive tourism around the region
- Game Changer 10. The Monaro Rail Trail
- Game Changer 11. The Snowy Heritage Centre
- Game Changer 12. Bombala Commercial Activation
- Game Changer 13. Strengthen the food and agritourism offering across the region
- Game Changer 14. Invest in the night-time economy
- Game Changer 15. Align events to the region's positioning

1. GOVERNANCE AND MARKETING

The Snowy Monaro region is in transition: from three Council jurisdictions with separate approaches to tourism management, and integrating with the Destination Southern Network and Destination NSW has changed the approach to governance and funding.

> **GAME CHANGER 1: Ensure effective governance, funding and marketing for tourism**

Successful destinations are measured by their authenticity and uniqueness – they seek high yield visitors and they have a coordinated approach to tourism leadership, communication and coordination. To achieve the vision and year-round visitor economy growth for the Snowy Monaro region it will require these elements to be considered and an effective tourism governance model implemented.

Throughout every consultation, stakeholders and community members acknowledged the need for improved governance of tourism in the region.

It is critical that Snowy Monaro Regional Council finalise the governance model for tourism including clear roles and responsibilities for those involved and commit to pursuing a sustainable funding model consistent with the magnitude and profile of the Snowy Mountains as a destination.

Tourism Snowy Mountains (TSM) has been formally recognised by SMRC as the organisation charged with effective marketing of the region under the brand Snowy Mountains. Their role includes all aspects of marketing and working with stakeholders to grow awareness of, and conversion to visit, the region year-round. Successful destination marketing organisations are well funded and resourced with sufficient staff to undertake roles associated with marketing (in all its forms), product development, industry development, and event attraction and management. Significant additional funding is required to resource TSM to perform these functions to enable the Snowy Mountains to compete with other successful destinations.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council is establishing a Tourism Coordinating Committee with Council staff, councillors and representatives from across the region. Critically, this committee must include a representative of TSM, ideally the Chair, to ensure effective communication, coordination and delivery of services.

Funding for tourism across the region is, at the present time, limited and under resourced. It comprises of:

- TSM receives a grant of $60,000 from Council for three years
- Cooperative campaigns with DNSW on a dollar for dollar basis with requirements to be managed through the state agency
- Council funding focused on visitor servicing and event support
- Additional funding through specific application for individual projects.

Marketing

A sustainable funding mechanism is required that allows for investment in all aspects of destination marketing. The optimal model would see TSM established as an effective and well-resourced Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) with a team working across all aspects of marketing - people, place, product, promotion and partnerships.

TSM's role is to market the region as a whole, under the brand Snowy Mountains. It is then up to SMRC, Visitor Centres, local businesses, local tourism associations and Chambers of Commerce to entice tourists to explore within the region.

Technology has changed the way people research, book and interpret their holiday experience, and will continue to evolve over the life of this plan. The digital space is a rapidly changing environment, requiring up to date technology understanding, constant investment in technology enhancements and the resource to generate and distribute great content. Handled correctly the digital space has a significant part to play in the way tourism operators grow their businesses and maintain clients, and for destinations and regions to attract new visitors.

Continuous brand promotion and marketing will be critical to increasing the awareness of all there is to see and do in the region. This includes all types of marketing: digital (e.g. Instagram, website, Snowy Guide app), relationship (regional and state tourism agencies), inbound, database, community, public relations (famils and advocacy) and branding. Importantly, all marketing, should be accessible by non-English speaking visitors.

ACTIONS

- Finalise the establishment of the regional governance model with clarity of roles for TSM and the Tourism Coordinating Committee and shared destination performance outcomes. Critically, the Chair of TSM needs to be on the SMRC Tourism Coordinating Committee.

- Investigate future tourism funding options that include tourism levies – whether accommodation or business based and realistic regional and state Government investment.

- Ensure effective engagement with the tourism industry across the region and appropriate strong relationships and collaboration with neighbouring regions – Canberra, Coast and Snowy Valleys Way Council.

- Hold an annual tourism forum to understand the trends, issues and opportunities in the tourism sector.

CASE STUDY: NOOSA TOURISM AND ECONOMIC LEVY

www.noosa.qld.gov.au

The Noosa Tourism and Economic Levy was introduced to fund the Noosa Local Economic Plan, including the promotion of tourism, through the levying of a special rate. Council's Revenue Statement states that the levy shall apply to all land that receives a benefit from tourism, either directly or indirectly.

Tourism is a major economic driver of the Noosa economy and Noosa Council is committed to its ongoing sustainability and appropriate promotion and marketing via Tourism Noosa.

This implementation includes the ongoing funding of the promotion of tourism and related activities and the implementation of other projects that will assist in delivering the strategies identified in the Noosa Local Economic Plan.

The special rate applies to all rateable land with council imposing a minimum amount of $31.00 per half year. (Refer table).

Category	Description	Rate cents per $/RV (annual)	Minimum per 1/2 year
A	Transitory accommodation – Urban (Not PPR)	$0.2224	$31.00
B	Transitory accommodation – Urban (PPR)	$0.0741	$31.00
C	Transitory accommodation – Rural (Not PPR)	$0.1668	$31.00
D	Transitory accommodation – Rural (PPR)	$0.0555	$31.00
E	Commercial and Industrial - Urban	0.1112	$31.00
F	Commercial and Industrial - Rural	0.0834	$31.00

2. ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Sustainable access and successful visitor circulation are critical factors in a region's growth. Whilst primarily a drive destination, the Snowy Mountains is also serviced by some bus routes, the Snowy Mountains airport (Cooma) and Canberra airport.

> **GAME CHANGER 2:**
> **Develop a regional transport and access strategy**

The impacts of population growth in the region and new and growing markets coming to visit the ski fields are generating significant traffic and parking issues on roads and in towns from Canberra to the resorts. Better roads in Jindabyne, whilst alleviating some issues there, increase the issues closer to resorts. Parking is insufficient in local towns and resorts. Traffic is banked up through Cooma at peak times. Accidents are regular on the highway between Canberra and the snowfields.

The issues are not going to improve with significant population growth occurring in the region, the Snowy 2.0 project, and the attraction of the snow driving growth in several new markets.

When reviewing transport and access to the region, current and future needs for tourism support services such as car rentals, shuttle services and road-side assistance should be included in the strategy.

Critical issues for the region in terms of access and circulation include:

- Addressing issues of winter congestion and traffic management from Canberra through Cooma, Jindabyne and to the ski resorts
- Encouraging transport services that link with airports to provide both transport and guided tourism experiences
- Supporting growth in the viability of Snowy Mountains airport to continue to provide year-round services
- Ensuring development and promotion of drive itineraries that encourage visitors to explore the region
- Ensuring adequate parking for larger recreational vehicles and cars with trailers.

A strategic approach is required to address access, circulation and parking on the access corridor and in resorts. It needs to consider both infrastructure and service responses including road conditions, availability of parking in different parts of the region, the availability of shuttle services, public transport and alternative solutions. Improved access from the south and west of the region would also better attract the Western NSW and Victorian markets. Summer access issues are not as critical but planning needs to provide for parking at peak times and safe bicycle routes in non-winter periods.

ACTIONS

- Pursue Government investment and advocate for major upgrading of the Monaro Highway from Canberra to Jindabyne

- Develop Jindabyne and ski fields access and parking strategy as part of Jindabyne Master Plan.

- Support the Snowy Mountains airport to underpin sustainability of year-round services.

- Limited investment in the Jindabyne airstrip to support charter flights and emergency services only in order to complement Snowy Mountains Airport.

- Advocate for any re-opening/new railway line between Canberra and Eden to include tourism services.

- Work with Snowy Hydro and their contractors to minimise disruption to tourism as a result of Snowy 2.0.

Transport, private and public, provided for visitors are standard in successful tourist destinations

3. ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation across the region is varied in terms of standard and diversity, and in some parts of the region there are insufficient guest beds in peak periods. In Jindabyne and the ski fields there is a shortage of worker accommodation with the situation being exacerbated as private homes previously available for rent are brought into the holiday market via the share economy.

> **GAME CHANGER 3:**
> **Understand the accommodation needs of the target market**

The quality of tourist accommodation establishments is a recurring theme in public strategies for planning and managing tourist destinations. Hotels and other forms of accommodation facilities play a vital role in attracting tourists to the destination.

Much of the existing accommodation supply in the region needs refurbishment in order to make it more appealing and marketable, but lower annual occupancy levels and room yield outside of the ski season and peak summer and shorter breaks make re-investment challenging.

Overcoming limitations of existing tourism occupancy data and meeting the challenge of measuring the impact of the share economy on accommodation supply could benefit the region to ensure its market share doesn't decrease as other regions invest in improved accommodation offerings.

This includes understanding not only current market needs, but also the needs of key growth markets, the level of accommodation supply required to meet future demand including the goals of this plan, and limitations to accommodation development. This can be achieved by conducting an accommodation demand analysis and investment prospectus.

Actions to ensure visitor economy growth, and that the region is meeting the accommodation needs of current and potential markets.

ACTIONS

- Undertake an accommodation supply and demand analysis to determine the appropriateness of the current accommodation supply in terms of quality, price and value and the need for additional beds across the region and the appropriate style and standards for development in different parts of the region.

- Use the accommodation analysis as the basis for seeking investment in new accommodation including some unique offerings suited to the regional positioning.

The accommodation currently on offer in the region will need improvement to encourage repeat visitation and new markets.

4. PLANNING

Land use planning controls regulate land and development and require a balance by Local Government between competing needs and a range of economic, social and environmental issues. Planning impacts the provision of a wide range of facilities and services that affect both visitors and the community such as accommodation, food and hospitality providers, retail, recreational activities and facilities.[11]

Australia's incredible natural assets are the major motivator driving international visitors to Australia and a key reason Australians travel. In the Snowy Mountains Kosciuszko National Park, managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, is a major drawcard.

Growing the range of visitor experiences, attractions, events, accommodation and food and beverage will increase the yield and contribution to the regional economy from more visitors. Planning at local and state government levels as well as Snowy Hydro needs to create an enabling environment for tourism development to underpin the potential of future investment. This requires consideration of how current planning controls influence tourism development and how these can be improved.

Where appropriate SMRC should advocate for review and introduce greater flexibility for tourism related land uses. Additionally, NPWS needs to consider opportunities for enabling new tourism experiences and allow for growth in infrastructure through the plan of management amendment and review process.

According to the NSW Department of Planning a Council's planning for tourism should consider opportunities and constraints as a result of existing land use and options for additional facilities, including:

- Existing and potential tourism sites, centres, features or places of interest as well as events/functions in the area or region and associated accommodation.
- Opportunities for businesses or educational facilities to expand tourism opportunities and to hold events.
- Considering opportunities and constraints as a result of existing tourist accommodation and options for additional supply.
- Current supply and demand for transport and the ability to provide new or upgraded infrastructure and services for tourism development.
- Consider opportunities and constraints as a result of conservation and natural resource strategies in the areas and options for additional synergies, including opportunities for linkages between tourism and natural resource assets.[13]

ACTIONS
- Jindabyne Master Plan to identify those issues and changes that are required in planning to enable growth and diversification in tourism development and to provide a lead for planning reform across the region.
- Review the current and potential use of the Alpine Way KNP access corridor and Smiths Road to ensure that land use planning controls are appropriate to allow tourism activity.

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[11] Victoria Local government guide for engaging with the visitor economy

[13] www.planning.nsw.gov.au

5. LABOUR / SKILLS

With growth in visitation to the region, more accommodation and experiences, there is a commensurate need for labour including skilled and unskilled staff all with exceptional customer service standards. The seasonal nature of the visitor economy creates a challenge in keeping staff year-round although this will change over time as the destination appeal grows beyond the existing peak periods as well as continued population growth.

Resolution of the issues requires both effective workforce planning and the training/upskilling of local people. With the State Government's recent funding commitment for an Education Precinct within the region, there is a growing opportunity to establish a tourism and hospitality training institution.

The Regional NSW department can assist the region with workforce planning through their Career Pathways project. In region training and seasonal work force could be facilitated through an appropriate tourism and hospitality training institution in the region.

Australia's tourism industry employed 924 600 people directly and indirectly in 2016-17. This accounts for 8 per cent of Australia's total employment at that time. However, tourism businesses are facing substantial recruitment and retention difficulties and skills deficiencies. In 2015, Deloitte Access Economics estimated 38,000 unfilled vacancies at that time, representing a vacancy rate of 7 per cent.

Under Tourism 2020, the Australian Government has identified four key actions to address these challenges:

- Improving recruitment and retention for the industry
- Enhancing regional workforce planning and development
- Identifying education and training gaps and potential mechanisms to address them
- Facilitating workforce mobility and expanding the traditional workforce.[14]

ACTIONS

- Work with Regional NSW to undertake workforce planning for the region.
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a tourism and hospitality training institution in the region that provides staff in peak periods and trains students outside of peak seasonal times.

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[14] www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Tourism/Policy-and-Strategy/labour-and-skills

Snowy Monaro
Destination Management Plan
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CASE STUDY: The Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School (BMIHMS)

www.bluemountains.edu.au

BMIHMS at Torrens University, provides internationally recognised hospitality and business degree courses that are highly respected within the global hospitality, hotel and event management industries. It has been providing hospitality education since 1991. The school was the first of its kind in Australia when it opened and has grown to be recognised as a leading provider of Hospitality Degree Courses. Over 23 years the Leura campus has developed hospitality degree courses where students live and study in a simulated hotel environment. This reflects the famous Swiss hotel school model of teaching and learning. In 2013, they were ranked the number 1 hospitality management school in Asia Pacific and Australia.

(TNS Survey 2017)

6. VISITOR SERVICING

Across Australia 35 cents in every Local Government dollar spent on tourism goes to Visitor Information Centres (VICs). VICs showcase a region's unique offerings and experiences. The VIC network encourages visitors to spend time in a region, often leading to longer stays and greater expenditure.[16]

> **GAME CHANGER 4:**
> **Improve Visitor Services**

Research recently released by Tourism Research Australia[17] indicates that VICs continue to be the leading information source for visitors during their visit to NSW (42%) and interestingly 23% of visitors talk to locals for advice.

During their stay, the visitor focus is largely related to on-the-ground activities, with more than half interested in things to see and do (55%), followed by information on local maps (34%), restaurants (32%), and local events (21%) and around a third of visitors are influenced to participate in more activities after visiting a VIC leading to increased yield.

Over the last decade extensive work creating new business models around visitor servicing has occurred. Research has indicated that visitor needs are evolving and therefore visitor servicing is changing. Customers are seeking travel inspiration and assistance at all stages of the trip cycle. This blended engagement comprises face to face and online channels. Bricks and mortar VICs still play a role but visitor needs are increasingly being viewed holistically at both the regional to

local level and across a variety of options such as pop-ups, mobile delivery and roving ambassadors. It is increasingly common for VICs to be co-located with other services for example library or arts services, business ventures (such as cafe and retail) or combined with other Council tasks such as community information services and Council regulatory functions. Local Governments have supported the transitions to new ways of working, helping analyse the overall performance including visitor and community benefits.[18]

Many of these changes are already upon us transforming the way we operate and how we engage with our customers. The challenge going forward is to continue to engage in a way that speaks to the values and unique perspectives of each and every visitor and fulfils or exceeds their expectations. This means rethinking and strengthening the approach, so the region offers visitors the most exceptional experience while they are in the Snowy Mountains.

Visitor Information Centres (VICs) will continue to play a role for a proportion of visitors seeking face to face validation and word of mouth recommendations around their journey, whether pre planned or not. It is recognised that the closer a visitor is to their destination, the more localised are their information needs as they become specific to the experiences available at the destination. The fundamental need is however the information, not the Centre (unless for human fundamentals such as toilets).

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[16] www.regionaltourism.com.au/tecset/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ARTN-Local-Government-Spend-on-Tourism-Report.pdf

[17] Tourism Research Australia Visitor Information Servicing in NSW June 2016

[18] Victoria Local government guide for engaging with the visitor economy

Elsewhere in the world VICs are being closed, reinvented and entering into partnerships for management and delivery of services. Staff and ambassadors are taking the information to the visitors. VICs are being located strategically and planned as experiences that can showcase a destination through stories, digital technology, booking support and offering an experience to the visitor. Often, they will be co-located with an attraction or as a visitor hub with opportunities for revenue generation in support of the business.

Across Snowy Monaro region there are three accredited VICs – Cooma, Jindabyne (Snowy Region VIC operated by NPWS) and Bombala – as well as the Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre that provides information about the hydro-electric assets and experiences in the region.

Cooma is the gateway to the region and where many visitors make decisions about the experiences they are seeking. SMRC has committed to spend a significant sum of money upgrading the Cooma Visitor Centre in the next 12 months, re-orienting the centre towards the park and potentially including a café in the external courtyard. While the location of the centre has been debated in the past, this investment means that re-locating the centre or co-locating with another tourism business is not an option for consideration at the present time.

Jindabyne is a central hub for visitors gaining more detailed information and planning their national parks and core mountain experiences. Bombala is important for visitors travelling to the region from the coast.

A more contemporary approach to visitor servicing for the region would see:

- The Cooma VIC evolve to become an innovative Visitor Experience Centre including a tourism experience offered on site. A café development should be included which is focussed around local produce and part of the park used to provide an outdoor interactive experience incorporating stories of Cooma's past.

- The Snowy Region (Jindabyne) Centre refurbished to contemporary standards and with options for commercial operators selling experiences in the centre.

- A review of the role and function of the Bombala Visitor Centre and its relevance to contemporary markets. Consider broadening its activities to become a purveyor of local produce and a hub for experiences such as the Monaro Rail Trail, walking trails, and platypus viewing.

Customers are seeking travel inspiration and assistance at all stages of their journey and Visitor Information Centres need to embrace digital technology and offer an experience

Mobile or "pop-up" visitor services are growing in popularity, like these examples from Sweden and Denmark

Each Centre needs to be:

- Aligned with the regional positioning but with its own unique and authentic flavour, supported by knowledgeable locals who know where to get the best deals, best food, best produce – speaking to the core appeals and brand.
- Operating under business plans that support commercial viability through a range of services, commissions and revenue opportunities.
- Adopting a visitor centric approach that offers a great place to visit, to learn, to book, to buy, to download, to recharge, to talk with an informative local ambassador.
- Providing personalised and best practice service delivery.
- Adaptable to changing needs of visitors over time.
- Offering a region-wide approach to information availability and booking services.
- Staffed by ambassadors with strong knowledge about their own destination/area and access to information about the region as a whole.
- Linked to digital and mobile information and support including mobile phone recharging and technology assistance.
- An anchor for drive journeys and experiences.

Transform Visitor Information Centres into Visitor Experience Centres using an Apple Store model with 'geniuses' or ambassadors in every shop / VIC that can tell you their expertise (adventure, nature, food, wine and history). VICs will need to be redesigned as retail outlets (both for tourism product and for local produce) and high-quality fit outs encouraging local experts to use them as a base (e.g. knowledge hubs or co-working spaces) for commercial operators, volunteer groups, environment and arts.

ACTION

- Develop a comprehensive new visitor servicing strategy to look at the customer journey and changing visitor behaviours to ensure the region is effectively matching visitor services with visitor needs.

The Galway Discover Ireland Centre is a great example of anchoring a drive journey – the Wild Atlantic Way

7. POSITIONING THE REGION FOR GROWTH

Positioning Statement:
Be invigorated by alpine challenges, summer adventures and inspirational stories. Feel the source of powerful energy, where legends are still made

> **GAME CHANGER 5:**
> **Embrace and use the positioning**

A positioning statement helps inform all aspects of the visitor experience from pre-trip information to the experience while there and post trip follow up. It reflects what is special about the region and how it can differentiate itself from other destinations in the tourism marketplace. A positioning statement is not advertised – it is an internal tool. The statement is then used to underpin the brand, and subsequently guide the destination's experiences through product development.
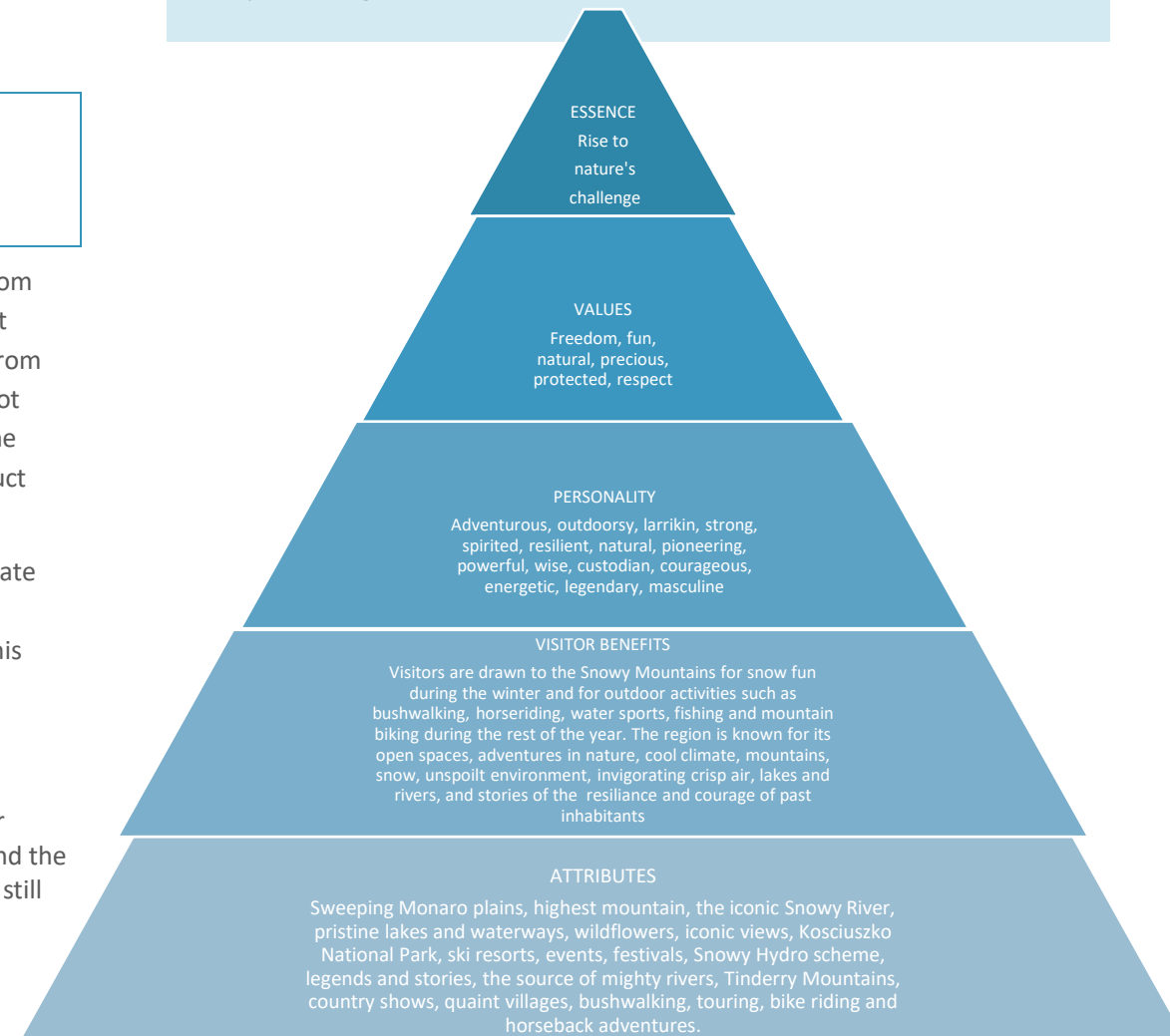
To attract visitors, it is important for the Snowy Monaro region to differentiate itself from other parts of the state and country. When a new product is developed, or marketing campaign envisaged, it must be checked against this positioning, to ensure it is delivering on the region's values and personality.

Delivering on the positioning

Rise to nature's challenge and be invigorated by alpine adventures, summer challenges and inspirational stories. Feel the freedom on sweeping plains and the highest peaks; the source of powerful rivers and energy, where legends are still made.

ACTION

- Ensure all marketing activities are consistent with the regional positioning.

ESSENCE
Rise to nature's challenge

VALUES
Freedom, fun, natural, precious, protected, respect

PERSONALITY
Adventurous, outdoorsy, larrikin, strong, spirited, resilient, natural, pioneering, powerful, wise, custodian, courageous, energetic, legendary, masculine

VISITOR BENEFITS
Visitors are drawn to the Snowy Mountains for snow fun during the winter and for outdoor activities such as bushwalking, horseriding, water sports, fishing and mountain biking during the rest of the year. The region is known for its open spaces, adventures in nature, cool climate, mountains, snow, unspoilt environment, invigorating crisp air, lakes and rivers, and stories of the resiliance and courage of past inhabitants

ATTRIBUTES
Sweeping Monaro plains, highest mountain, the iconic Snowy River, pristine lakes and waterways, wildflowers, iconic views, Kosciuszko National Park, ski resorts, events, festivals, Snowy Hydro scheme, legends and stories, the source of mighty rivers, Tinderry Mountains, country shows, quaint villages, bushwalking, touring, bike riding and horseback adventures.

Towns and Tourism Focus

Each town and village in the Snowy Monaro LGA has its own unique qualities and attributes.

Town / Community	Population[19]	Town Entry Taglines	Current Product including any hero experience	Tourism Focus - Future	Key DMP Projects
Adaminaby (inc Old Adaminaby, Angler Reach, Providence Portal)	332	Big Trout Country	Fishing, heritage (Snowy Museum) Horse riding	Fishing, Heritage, Car/Bike Touring, Outdoor Active,	Lake Eucumbene Trail, heritage interpretation, drive touring, beautification and streetscaping, fishing industry support
Berridale	1197	Heart of the Snowies	Food and wine (Shut the Gate), art (Pauline Coxon and Lucy Rose), retail	Art, Retail, Food	Heritage interpretation, beautification and streetscaping, drive touring
Bredbo	352	Village of Poplars	Food, Retail (Christmas Barn)	Food, brand aligned events	Monaro Rail Trail, Christmas and Wind Festival, streetscaping and beautification
Bombala	1387	Australia's Platypus Country	Nature (Platypus, riverside), heritage (Burnima Homestead, machinery shed)	Heritage, Outdoor Active, Car/bike/motorbike Touring, Food	Monaro Rail Trail, anchor tenant, drive touring, heritage interpretation
Cooma	6681	Capital of the Snowy Mountains	Services, heritage (Gaol and Railway, Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre), retail (Birds Nest), Art	Service, Heritage, Accommodation, Outdoor Active, Car Touring	Night time economy, Experience Centre, Monaro Rail Trail, heritage interpretation, streetscaping and beautification, brand aligned events
Dalgety	205	On the banks of the Snowy River	Heritage, nature (Snowy River)	Heritage, Outdoor Active, Food, Car Touring	Snowy River activation (standing wave), drive touring, streetscaping and beautification

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[19] 2016 Census Quick Stats – SSC (State / Suburb)

Town / Community	Population[20]	Town Entry Taglines	Current Product including any hero experience	Tourism Focus - Future	Key DMP Projects
Delegate	352	Experience History	Art (Bundian Way Gallery), heritage (Early Settlers Hut, School of Arts Museum)	Heritage, Art, Car Touring, Bundian Way	Drive touring, streetscaping and beautification, heritage interpretation
Jindabyne (inc East Jindabyne, Crackenback)	3523	Australia's Alpine Playground	Outdoor Active (Mountain Biking, skiing, walking, horse riding), fishing	Outdoor Active, Accommodation, Car/Bike Touring, Fishing	Lake Jindabyne Activation, Heritage Centre, access strategy, brand aligned events, streetscaping and beautification
Michelago	562	Gateway to the Monaro	Heritage (Railway station)	Heritage, bike touring (rail trail) Nature	Monaro Rail Trail, heritage interpretation, streetscaping and beautification
Nimmitabel	320	Dividing of the Waters	Food Service, heritage	Food Service, heritage	Local trail, drive touring, heritage interpretation, Monaro Rail Trail
Numeralla	258	Where the Waters Meet	Folk Festival	Events	
Ski Resorts towns	-	-	Winter adventures Summer walking and biking	Winter adventures Summer walking and biking	Continual improvement in snow product and access Precinct master plan for Charlotte Pass

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[20] 2016 Census Quick Stats – SSC (State / Suburb)

Welcome !
Special of the day
  free tasting !!.

Coffee and Cak
              7.

Hot Chocolate whip
Ice Chocolate dark
Enjoy !.
              4

Game Changer Experience Development

Game Changer and Supporting Projects align with the four experience development themes for Destination Southern NSW

Challenge Yourself in Nature

Remarkable Journeys

Our Heritage

Savour the Snowies

Challenge Yourself in Nature

Personal Challenge | Inspiring | Active | Exceptional Landscapes

> **GAME CHANGER 6:**
> **Boost nature-based and adventure experiences**

There is a need to create a network of high value and high-yield products to meet and exceed the expectations of target markets.

Nature-based tourism forms a significant component of Australia's visitor economy, ranking among top travel motivators for domestic and international visitors. In the year ending September 2017 nature-based visitors accounted for 84 per cent of international visitors to NSW and 28 per cent of domestic visitors, with China, the USA and UK making up the key international source markets.[21]

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation's previous Secretary General stated *adventure tourism is what tourism should be today, and definitely what tourism will be tomorrow[22]. Delivering on the positioning for the Snowy Mountains and the themes for Southern NSW, the region will require growth in the range of nature and adventure experiences to diversify what is currently on offer. Whilst planned investment in walks and mountain biking will contribute, there is a need for additional types of activities and more commercial businesses offering products like a world-class **Great Walk** in the alpine region. An important part of experiencing a destination, is the lookout and **viewing opportunities**, a safe place to take photos and capture memories. Lookouts located a) between East Jindabyne and Jindabyne would offer exceptional mountain and lake vistas and b) on the Monaro Highway viewing the Monaro plains and mountain vistas.

Exceed market expectations by offering high value and high-yield products like assisted hiking tours in New Zealand and snow backcountry tours

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[21] Destination NSW Annual Report 2016-2017

[22] www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zg511kesIb4

The **Charlotte Pass** turning circle needs improvement to become the start point of a world class walking or riding experience. The entire precinct needs a review and improvement to parking, **interpretive signage** and assisted walk **itineraries**.

Leveraging off the success of the L'Etape cycling event, the region could become known as an **iconic cycling** destination linking Canberra / Queanbeyan and the mountains through mountain bike hubs in Thredbo, Jindabyne and Cooma.

The Snowy River has the potential to support several white **water-based activities** at different locations along its journey. At its higher points below Guthega dam there is potential for small, niche and well managed events when water is released. The middle and lower Snowy River are well suited to easy to medium and some difficult white-water experiences. The weir at Dalgety could be developed as a white-water wave area where visitors could learn and play in a controlled white water setting that could underpin growth in this activity for the region. Enhancing opportunities for visitation and recreation on the Snowy River needs consideration of improving access and signage around waterways.

Promoting active experiences in nature and specialty producers of the region will diversify the visitor experience and encourage longer stays outside of winter.

It is important to plan viewing lookouts along drive and walking routes, like this spectacular one at Katoomba NSW.

Offer a more diverse range of adrenaline pumping activities.

ACTIONS

- Undertake a precinct masterplan on lands managed by NPWS, Charlotte Pass and RMS to create a high-quality visitor experience consistent with the lookout point for Australia's highest mountain at the road head at Charlotte Pass.

- Offer incentives to encourage a broader range of commercial operators delivering nature-based and adventure experiences in the region. This should range from small drive tours, tag along tours, walking, riding, white water and others. Incentives might include reduced or suspended fees for the initial three years of operation, access into closed areas (e.g. national parks).

- Identify sites suitable for adventure experiences (e.g. ziplines, rafting, climbing etc) and identify any barriers to investment.

- Implement a program of experience development for current and emerging operators to develop more commercialised experiences and packages, including working with adjoining regions and Canberra.

- Plan lookouts at appropriate locations along popular drive and walking routes.

GAME CHANGER 7:
Revitalise Lake Jindabyne and regional waterways

Create new tourism opportunities for Lake Jindabyne and the region's waterways, including Lake Eucumbene - one of the region's most spectacular summer tourism products.

Despite the beautiful vista and attraction of Lake Jindabyne and Lake Eucumbene, opportunities to enjoy the lakes from good quality recreational settings with activities of interest to visitors are very limited. Creating a high-quality visitor precinct that offers activities, areas for relaxing, accessing the water safely for swimming and small boats plus outdoor eating areas/café space would be very attractive for visitors.

Preliminary concept plans have been drawn for Lake Jindabyne, on the lakeshore between the caravan park and Rydges Horizons hotel. The development proposes outdoor recreational setting plus infrastructure to house a restaurant/café plus opportunities for a range of commercial activities for visitors.

Progressing this project would require:

- Comprehensive planning and approvals
- Expression of interest for a lessee for the restaurant plus licensees for water-based activities
- Government investment and collaboration of Government agencies in public areas
- Appropriate management arrangements
- Private sector investment in adventure products and experiences

- Other waterways in the region could be better utilised either by changing approvals for use or the construction of new infrastructure. Linking to Game Changer Six, there is an opportunity at the Snowy River at Dalgety, where the existing weir is not coping with increase flows from required releases from Lake Jindabyne, to include in any upgrade of the weir a mechanism to create a standing wave. The standing wave can be adjusted to provide greater or lower flows to provide either fun white water suitable for children to play on, or a more challenging wave around which events could be based.

ACTIONS

- Work with Planning NSW and Snowy Hydro on the Jindabyne Master Plan project to plan for better tourism facilities around Lake Jindabyne.
- Review signage and safe entry points around lakes and rivers.
- Investigate the construction of a standing wave at the Snowy River weir at Dalgety.
- Work with NSW Fisheries and Snowy Hydro to ensure a sustainable fishing industry in Lakes Eucumbene and Jindabyne, and further investigate opportunities elsewhere in the region for recreational fishing.
- Improve kayak/canoe/SUP access to major local rivers e.g. Snowy River at Dalgety, along the Murrumbidgee River and the Bombala and Delegate Rivers.

There is potential for Lake Jindabyne to offer increased recreational facilities like this aqua park at the Sunshine Coast (QLD).

Supporting project:
Continual improvement in the snow product

The Snowy Mountains are a winter wonderland, offering all kinds of activities including downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding and night skiing. The product offering at Thredbo, Selwyn, Perisher and Charlotte Pass offer a consistent high standard snow experience. To complement these existing products, there is an opportunity to market and develop other snow experiences such as:

- Show shoe picnic trips
- Cross country and alpine back country touring
- Snow kiting
- Alpine photography
- Snow play – tobogganing and tubing

ACTION

- Investigate additional areas for snow play, as access to resorts is congested. The family market and intergenerational travellers that are not intending to ski or board, seek a snow adventure that encompasses natural or man-made snow, easy access, facilities and safe tobogganing areas.
- Encourage the use of Mt Selwyn for snow play activities.

The region needs additional areas dedicated to snow play

Remarkable Journeys

Ride | Cycle | Walk | Paddle | Drive

> **GAME CHANGER 8:**
> **Develop a trails master plan for the region**

A trails master plan would include several different types of trail users: walkers, runners, road cycling, mountain biking, horse riding and possibly water trails.

Cycling and mountain biking continues to grow in popularity amongst travellers looking for outdoor adventure. There has been a 22% increase in the number of domestic overnight visitors including a cycling experience in their itinerary over the last five years.[24]

The region's reputation for trail-based experiences is growing including walking in the national park, road cycle events and mountain biking in Thredbo, Cooma and Jindabyne trails. There are many other proposals for trails across the region that community groups have raised as having potential. These range from short trails (e.g. Bombala to the Platypus Reserve, from Nimmitabel around Lake Williams, linking the Early Settlers Hut and the caravan park along the river in Delegate) through to longer and multi day experiences (Lake Eucumbene Shared Trail and Lake Jindabyne Round the Lake).

There is a critical need to undertake strategic planning for trails across the region to determine those that have the greatest potential to create benefits for the community and the economy. There will not be enough resources to see all trails either constructed or, more importantly, maintained.

A regional Trails Master Plan would consider:

- Community needs
- Target markets for the region
- Those trails that can best deliver these needs
- The trail experiences that should be prioritised
- Sustainable Governance and funding of these trails.

A regional Trails Master Plan would have the goal of:

- Creating a positive and collaborative culture for all users
- Strengthening the perception of the Snowy Mountains region as a destination of choice for mountain biking, cycling, trail running and walking
- Increasing visitation, contributing to the local economy
- Enhancing the sustainability and liveability for local communities.

A Trails Master Plan would prioritise investment in the infrastructure and services that will best position the region as a world-class destination. It would identify trails for different markets such as short, easy rides suitable for the whole family, to half-day and full-day, or multi-day rides with challenging terrain for more experienced riders/ and walkers. It would also address the experience that each trail/ path would provide.

> **ACTION**
>
> - Invest in a comprehensive trails master plan for the region.

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[24] Destination NSW Media

GAME CHANGER 9:
Revitalise drive tourism around the region

Encouraging the promotion of the region through the development of a drive tourism strategy, will contribute to the goal of increasing overnight visitors and dispersing visitors around the region. Many of the regions towns and villages rely on the drive market to support their economies. A strategy to revitalise drive tourism has the potential to:

- Enhance drive travel experiences to visitors travelling in and around the region and encourage visitors to travel beyond major tourism attractions
- Encourage longer stays in regional towns, creating greater spend within the region
- Link new tourism experiences to the new travel experiences.

Touring routes are used extensively around the world. The key to all these great drives and touring routes is the experience, engagement of people in the journey and the supporting information e.g. successful routes offer accommodation booking services through key portals and on route signage.

The Kosciuszko Alpine Way touring route from Canberra to Albury was a member of the Sydney-Melbourne Touring International Marketing Program between 2000 and 2010. This program targets the international travel trade with visitor itineraries featured in over 60 key trade wholesale programs worldwide, with the UK, Europe, South East Asia, New Zealand and North America being the strongest self-drive markets.

Because the Kosciuszko Alpine Way is no longer a member of the program, the current Melbourne to Sydney via Canberra touring route sends drivers down the Hume highway from Canberra bypassing the Snowy Mountains completely. The increased appeal of Canberra as a tourism destination and the strength of product in the Snowy Mountains, if marketed effectively through a program such as Sydney Melbourne Touring, will be enough to encourage visitors away from the coastal route between Sydney and Melbourne.
www.sydneymelbournetouring.com

ACTIONS

- Undertake strategic planning and experience development for two strong drive journeys:

  -Canberra to the coast and Snowy Mountains via Bombala

  -Alpine Way, Cabramurra Road, Kiandra, Adaminaby and return

- Seek reinstatement of the Kosciuszko Alpine Way touring route as a member of Sydney-Melbourne Touring.

CASE STUDY: GOING TO THE SUN ROAD

www.nps.gov/glac/planyourvisit/goingtothesunroad.htm

The Going-to-the-Sun Road was completed in 1932 and is a spectacular 80km, paved two-lane highway. It spans the width of Glacier National Park, in north western Montana, crossing the Continental Divide at 2,025 metre high Logan Pass. It passes through almost every type of terrain, from large glacial lakes and cedar forests in the lower valleys to windswept alpine tundra atop the pass. Scenic viewpoints and pull-outs line the road, so motorists can stop for extended views and photo opportunities. The road is well worth traveling in either direction, as the view from one side of the road is much different than from the other. In 1983 Going-To-The-Sun Road was included in the National Register of Historic Places and in 1985 was made a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark in the USA.

The success of this route is in part due to the provision of outstanding supported information for visitors including audio tours, e-books, visitor centres, signs and interpretation programs – giving a full experience suit to visitors providing engagement at many levels on site.

CASE STUDY: GREAT EASTERN DRIVE

www.greateasterndrive.com.au

One of Australia's greatest road trips is the Great Eastern Drive. This journey leads the traveller from the white beaches of Tasmania's east coast, to luscious food and wine, award-winning walks, and views that will take your breath away. Whatever you're looking for, you'll find it when you just stop…and wander, along the Great Eastern Drive.

Signage: The Great Eastern Drive signage system worked with national and local highway regulations to develop a collaborative framework between State and local government and the East Coast RTO to deliver a comprehensive network of new signage delivering on the Great Eastern Drive Brand.

The Great Eastern Drive logo was incorporated into the existing state system of large green signage at intersections and decision points as well as town entry signage.

The plan also provides for Welcome signage and sculptural details at attractions and lookouts to further promote local attributes, iconic experiences and provide welcome points and photograph opportunities for visitors.

An audit was undertaken, and redundant signage removed ensuring a clean, concise signage system. The new signage also has capacity for attachment of event signage. aimed at preventing the plethora of home-made signage traditionally used for local events and activities.

Ongoing maintenance remains the responsibility of the local councils and is supported by service agreements and MOUs.

CASE STUDY: Wild Atlantic Way

www.wildatlanticway.com

The Wild Atlantic Way is an iconic internationally renowned touring route that opened in 2014. It is the first long-distance Irish touring route, stretching along the Atlantic Coast from Donegal to West Cork. The stated objective was to provide greater visibility for the west coast of Ireland to overseas tourist markets.

An important part of the concept was the provision of resources to assist industry develop products and experiences along the route aimed at international markets. Resources include tool kits, operational programs, guidelines for businesses to be a part of the Wild Atlantic Way and trade manuals for group organisers.

The six stages of the touring route development were: the progress of the brand position and identity, and target market segments; identification of the route: a way-finding strategy including directional signage; delivery of 'discovery points'; selling Wild Atlantic Way experiences; and marketing and communications.

The Wild Atlantic Way was designed to be an iconic touring route and is not dedicated to one region. It links 6 regions and divides its discovery points into 'Signature' points and discovery points. Signature Experience Plans are being developed to provide geographic or thematic approaches and tangible actions to be carried out within 2 to 3 years. Each Signature Experience will contain a 'hero' tourism product at the centre of the area or theme and will be supported by a Supporting Visitor Experience.

Supporting Project:
Create remarkable touring memories

Combining experiences

Day trippers are a significant part of the overall drive market and represent an important portion of visitors.

Be enticed across the region by landscapes and experiences. Drive tourism is vital in facilitating regional dispersal and access to the region's many and varied visitor experiences. Dispersal is the extent to which growth in visitor numbers and expenditure are shared across the region. Businesses in rural and regional communities rely on income from drive visitors (who stop), as they often buy local tourism products and services, as well as basic travel necessities like fuel, food and other supplies. Driving is also the only or main way to get to many Snowy Monaro experience.

The concept of linking touring and experiences isn't new and touring relates to more than just drive tourism – it's cycling, horse riding, paddling, mountain biking on the Thredbo Valley Track, wildlife watching (e.g. bird watching routes, platypus viewing), Bundian Way opportunities, heritage, alpine walks, food experiences and visiting events.

Promoting regional dispersal through drive tourism means identifying experience development opportunities like town beautification, signage, lookouts and lighting. It also covers product development like establishing a Snowy River Fishing Trail or Museum Trail with corresponding marketing and product initiatives.

Ensure digital development of visitor experience information

To enhance journeys, and truly make them remarkable, the region should investigate all forms of digital information to assist with product marketing, interpretation and learning. Visiting big city tourism products can mean putting on the augmented reality goggles to truly appreciate and learn – imagine this being used during a Snowy Monaro heritage drive tourism route.

ACTIONS

- Identify potential customer journeys and map where improvements need to be made.
- Ensure beautification and streetscapes are continually improved.

Our Heritage

GAME CHANGER 10: The Monaro Rail Trail

Rail trails appeal to a broad range of markets including families with children. Cycle tourism is a growing market within the Australian tourism sector, particularly within the nature-based tourism segment. It includes both domestic and international visitors, mostly staying overnight but can include day trippers.

Rail trails present opportunities for businesses to develop products and services to meet the needs of visiting cyclists and walkers. This includes transport, merchandise, accommodation or provisioning and guiding services. Cyclists do more while on holiday when compared with other tourists, making them a stronger source of income for regional economies.

The proposed Monaro Rail Trail follows the disused rail line from Queanbeyan to Bombala, a distance of 208 km. This is a good distance for a cycle tourism experience enabling a 3-5 day journey by the family and leisure market who might ride up to 50 kms /day. The alignment travels through typical Monaro and country with broad expanses of open space and rural landscape. There are many interesting rail features including heritage listed bridges, sidings, sheds and stations all of which add to the experience and the story that can be told.

A well-planned and constructed trail along the alignment of the redundant railway line supported by the right product would offer a great cycle tourism opportunity. Whilst there are many strong aspects of the potential experience, there are also several issues that will need to be resolved if the product is to be successful.

ACTION

- Undertake a Monaro Rail Trail feasibility study to investigate the potential of the trail to boost summer tourism product development.

GAME CHANGER 11: Snowy Heritage Centre

Much of the Snowy Mountains regional heritage has been lost over the years, from ancient Aboriginal culture through to stories, buildings and artefacts from early settlers.

Recent support has been received from the NSW Government to investigate the feasibility and design of a Heritage Centre in Jindabyne that will become an iconic attraction, enjoyed by both existing visitors to the region and as a driver for new visitation. The Centre would celebrate the connection between culture, nature and heritage and shares the story of the relationship between the three,

The Heritage Centre could include an interpretation centre, interactive exhibitions, school experiences, retail outlets, an art gallery and other such facilities. The centre would be a community asset and present the stories of the Snowy Mountains and the Snowy River in an exciting and engaging way to ensure that they will be appreciated and preserved for future generations of Australians.

A vibrant visitor experience that celebrates the heritage stories of the Snowy Mountains has the potential to:

- Pay tribute to the community and the iconic 'Man from Snowy River' heritage and brand
- Boost tourism and economic opportunities for the region through employment and business growth
- Offer a year-round and non-weather dependent attraction.

ACTION

- Undertake a feasibility study into the Snowy Mountains Heritage Centre and seek funding for implementation.

CASE STUDY: Otago Central Rail Trail

https://www.nzcycletrail.com/trails/otago-central-rail-trail/

Steeped in history, this pioneering cycle trail offers a 152km scenic journey into the Central Otago heartland in NZ.

Named after the old railway line, built between 1891 and 1907, the Otago Central Rail Trail is New Zealand's original 'Great Ride'.

It travels through big-sky country where cyclists traverse ever-changing dry and rocky landscapes, high-country sheep stations, spectacular river gorges, tunnels and viaducts.

There are over 20 townships located on and off the trail. Side trips include going to places such as an old abandoned gold diggings left over from the gold rush and the country's only international curling rink.

The Central Otago climate is characterised by hot summers, cold winters and low rainfall. The autumn landscape is renowned in these parts for the kaleidoscope of browns, golds and reds.

Tourists allow at least four full days to bike the trail – more if they want to do some exploring off the trail. If they are after a shorter ride, there are numerous townships located along the trail where they can start or end their ride. As a well-established cycle trail, there are plenty of places to stop for refreshments and accommodation.

Our Heritage

SUPPORTING PROJECTS: Arts and Cultural Tourism

For regional NSW, arts and cultural tourism represents a great opportunity. It can mean increased audiences for local events, more visitors to local galleries and museums, and greater support for local arts practitioners. [25]

Art and cultural tourism can bring economic benefits – for small businesses such as cafe owners and accommodation providers, shuttle businesses and petrol stations – through increased visitor numbers and longer visitor stays.

Beyond the economic benefits, showcasing arts and culture can have a significant influence on building community and making people feel proud of their town or region.

Art and cultural events and experiences can range from high-profile annual festivals or monthly craft markets, to public art installations and culture or heritage trails. These may spring from something unique to the area, or they may simply be brought to life by a group of locals with a shared passion.

A visitor might actively seek out art and cultural institutions to visit or attend performances as a part of their trip. Travellers might also find themselves becoming cultural tourists incidentally. The reason for the trip may be to visit friends or family and, during their stay, they find themselves participating in local arts experiences – exhibitions, a concert, a light show, a night market or heritage trail. Either way, offering an art or cultural experience as part of a holiday, can help create remarkable memories.

According to Create NSW, there are several trends that highlight the opportunities cultural tourism can offer to regional communities.

- Cultural tourism is growing in Australia and around the world. In 2015 NSW hosted over 11.4 million 'cultural and heritage visitors', an increase of 15.4% on the previous year.
- Cultural tourists stay longer and spend more.
- Regional museums and galleries are popular. According to Tourism Research Australia, visiting art galleries is one of the primary activities of the domestic cultural tourist.
- International visitors are increasingly interested in cultural activities

The Snowy Monaro region offers a small number of high-profile art and cultural opportunities for tourists. The Lake Light Sculpture exhibition each Easter in Jindabyne is a successful and popular event that has contributed significantly to the arts and culture offering in the region, and resulted in the acquisition of a number of pieces for permanent installation around the region. The Raglan Art Gallery, a small cluster of galleries in Berridale, and many smaller businesses, shows and events (annual town shows, rodeos, country markets and fairs) also offer an art and/or cultural experience.

Understanding and preserving the past provides a context to a community and helps to shape its future. The distinctive identity of a place is expressed through its buildings, streetscapes and natural environments, experienced through authentic community activities and remembered through local images and stories. The recent investment of State Government funds into the feasibility study for a Snowy Heritage Centre highlights the available opportunities to harness a shared local passion to assist in preserving this identity and creating remarkable memories for regional visitors.

A focus for the region would be to ensure it becomes known as an area that offers an arts and culture experience. That these experiences are connected to touring opportunities and to acknowledge that the arts can act as a hub for community connectedness.

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[25] www.create.nsw.gov.au

Developing a focus on place management is important. The aim is to turn spaces into places, giving people reason to stop and become involved. These places reflect an appreciation of cultural and environmental diversity and a sense of belonging.

ACTIONS

- Plan for cultural facilities and activities to meet increasing demand and to capitalise on this growing economy.

- Identify and grow partnerships to build community capacity in the arts and cultural space e.g. South East Arts.

- Continue to acquire permanent sculpture installations for all towns in the region and promote themed drive itineraries around art and culture offerings.

- Ensure information about the range of arts and cultural opportunities is available for visitors.

Supporting Projects:
Cluster historic villages and improve experience

Heritage tourism has the potential to improve the economic vitality of Snowy Monaro communities, broaden the region's tourism base and improve awareness, appreciation and conservation of the region's physical and intangible heritage.

Importantly it provides considerable non-economic benefits: promoting, protecting and sustaining the heritage base; addressing traditions and values that define nations and communities; recognising multicultural legacies linking nations; engaging local and regional governments; and furthering important educational functions.[26]

Opportunities for heritage tourism in the region are:

- Clustering the region's historic villages and marketing them as a single product. This would involve branding, developing routes and ensuring the product along the route was accessible and sign posted. Working with neighbouring regions to include other great heritage assets such as Kiandra, Yarrangobilly Caves, Khancoban, Corryong, Tumbarumba will strengthen the offer.

- Revisiting the Cooma heritage precinct and improving walking route information, interpretative signage, lighting, digital development and storytelling. This could involve augmented reality stories of immigration, cemeteries, journeys, migration, Aboriginal stories, farmers and the Snowy River.

- This could also link to shared pathway product development e.g. Lake Jindabyne or Lake Eucumbene shared pathway, stories of Snowy Hydro and immigration at intervals along the walking or cycling journey.

- Finding a respectful way to tell the **Aboriginal stories** of the region is an important aspect of regional product development. This experience could be linked to a nature-based product e.g. rafting or walking.
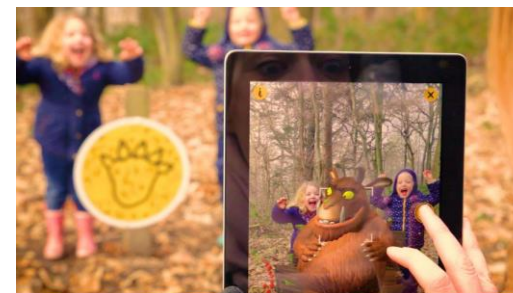
ACTION

- Seek funding to develop a heritage interpretation strategy which includes interpretative signage in the heritage villages of Delegate, Bombala, Nimmitabel, Adaminaby, Michelago and Cooma telling the stories of the towns and augmented and virtual reality elements to bring the history to life.

Example of an augmented reality game where children search for characters in the woods – a game could be developed where you search for the characters who are part of the history of each town.

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[26] www.stateheritage.wa.gov.au

Savour the Snowies

Fresh Produce | Connect with Characters

> **GAME CHANGER 12:**
> **Bombala commercial activation**

An anchor tenant serves as a magnet for other tourism related industries to develop.

Having one successful anchor tenant can improve the standards and practices across the whole tourism sector and increase exposure of the town to potential visitors.

Bombala has been challenged to increase the businesses in its commercial centre and create a strong proposition for visitors to stop and to stay. Whilst the Monaro Rail Trail could have a significant impact on the town, other experiences could also leverage growth.

Bombala is well placed geographically both on a significant travel route and well positioned between Canberra, the coast and Jindabyne. Attracting one strong new experience that is a destination in its own right would be the optimal solution for the town rather than endeavouring to re activate multiple small businesses. Adopting a model such as the Royal Mail Hotel at Dunkeld (VIC); the Sir George Hotel or Long Track Pantry at Jugiong (NSW); or the Prairie Hotel at Parachilna (SA) could work well for Bombala. Investing in rejuvenation of one of the old hotels to attract an 'anchor tenant' that creates a destination hotel (with excellent food, wine and accommodation) could underpin the growth in other small businesses to service the destination.

ACTION

- Work with the Bombala Chamber of Commerce to seek an investor that can revitalise one of the hotels or properties to create a destination through high quality restaurant offering local produce, accommodation and experiences that will attract the Canberra market as well as regional Victoria and NSW.

CASE STUDY: Royal Mail Hotel at Dunkeld VIC

www.royalmail.com.au

Article by Suzanne Morphet, The West Australian Aug 2018, titled:

Gourmet experience fit for royalty in Victoria's Royal Mail Hotel.

It's unlikely a town as tiny and off-the-beaten-track as Dunkeld, population 678, would harbour a hotel as devoted to food and wine as the Royal Mail.

It's a three-hour drive from Melbourne and sheep vastly outnumber people here. Yet, gourmands routinely rank the Royal Mail as one of the country's greatest dining destinations, in part because its wine cellar holds the largest stash of Burgundy and Bordeaux in the Southern Hemisphere.

It doesn't hurt that the scenery rivals the food and wine. Beyond my balcony (and within easy walking distance) Mt Sturgeon beckons, and beyond that Mt Abrupt, two sandstone peaks that mark the southern edge of Grampians National Park. But neither the hotel nor the village would be on any traveller's map if it weren't for one man.

Allan Myers grew up in Dunkeld, named by early Scottish settlers for a town back home. The son of the village butcher, Myers studied law at Oxford where he "got introduced to wine by French wine sellers who came to the school looking for lifelong customers", according to Kylie Schurmann, the hotel's marketing manager.

Back home, Myers began practising law in Melbourne, but he never forgot where he grew up. A fire in 1944 had destroyed most of Dunkeld, but the Royal Mail Hotel survived. When Myers bought it in 1995, it was a run-down pub with just a few rooms.

The bluestone cottages, where shearers once lived, have been converted to guest cottages, part of the Royal Mail's accommodation.

Last autumn, the Royal Mail upped its offerings again, this time with the opening of its new standalone restaurant Wickens, named for chef Robin Wickens, the British expat who honed his craft in some of London's top restaurants before moving to Melbourne.

Wickens offers five- and eight-course tasting menus based in large part on what's available from their impressive garden on any given day, supplemented with lamb, beef and snails, all raised on the extensive holdings, as well as regionally sourced protein such as wild kangaroo.

Savour the Snowies

> **GAME CHANGER 13:**
> **Strengthen the food and agritourism offering across the region**

Food and wine experiences have become key drivers of destination choice amongst many domestic and international visitors. Traditionally thought of as being simply farm stays and winery visits, the term agritourism now encompasses a wide variety of activities where agriculture and tourism intersect. Agritourism is the act of going to a region to visit a farm or food-related business (including restaurants, markets/events, produce outlets and natural attractions) for enjoyment, education, or to participate in activities and events.

Tourism Research Australia and DNSW commissioned a report into Food and Wine Tourism in NSW (2015). Some of the key findings included:

- People are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about and engaged in food and wine. They are seeking 'authentic' experiences and products.
- Having the ability to buy local produce and to take short drives to places of interest nearby to the main destination being visited were also important for a 'good' food and wine experience.
- Apart from distance from home, the top three factors influencing destination choice were the quality of customer service, the range of accommodation options and the ease of organising the food and wine trip.

The Snowy Mountains region has a growing, yet under developed food and wine tourist offer. This market segment would benefit from focussing on not only producing, but also offering that produce locally. There is a need to encourage more producers and suppliers into the market, and to encourage new clusters and experiences e.g. breweries/distilleries, farm visits, and food based events. [27] Potentially in the Snowy Monaro region, the product is available to have visits to trout farm with cooking lessons, truffle hunts, farm-stay accommodation and schnapps/gin distillery tastings.

Development and mentoring opportunities

Creating awareness of local producers among chefs and cooks in the region and providing opportunities for them to work together is essential in growing the market for producers and increasing the amount of local produce on menus. Holding tourism business Master Classes can assist in helping those produce businesses who are interested in diversifying into the tourism industry by offering assistance, information and mentoring opportunities.

> **ACTION**
> - Partner with bodies such as Australian Regional Tourism to leverage off their National Agritourism Strategy.
> - Develop an Agritourism Strategy for the region in cooperation with adjoining Councils within the Destination Southern NSW Destination Network. This would look at: the direction needed to sustainably grow the sector; define the barriers constraining farmers and regions from developing agritourism; identify and share practical solutions where barriers have been overcome and define the product gaps in the market.
> - Assist and encourage new produce operators into the tourism industry by helping with mentoring opportunities and grant funding applications.
> - Support local markets and farm gate operators as an important incubator for new producers.
> - Run a program of events and Master Classes to encourage relationships between restaurant and café owners and local producers to strengthen delivery of regional produce.

[27] https://regionaltourism.com.au/projects/agritourism

CASE STUDY: Nature and Nosh Showcasing Local Nature and Food in New Zealand

www.natureandnosh.co.nz

Nature and Nosh offers the ultimate experience for the adventure and food-loving tourist with their ingenious fusion of tramping some of the most scenic and diverse day tracks the North Island has to offer, matched with an array of local food and wine.

Their tours are truly unique in the diversity of food that's offered. They include a Maori visit to sample traditional Maori delicacies, wine tasting at an award-winning Waikato winery and tasting gelato in Waharoa made from full-cream, grass-fed jersey cow milk. Visitors can also learn about honey manufacturing in Katikati and indulge in paddock-to-plate experiences with local chefs in Waihi.

Owners, Kylie and Steve had a clear target market in mind when they set up the business, aiming for overseas customers who are hikers and who fall into the 40+ category with a disposable income to spend on highly curated activities such as this. "Thousands of travellers flock to New Zealand every year for hiking, and we want to show them another part of the New Zealand experience, bringing food to the forefront."

Storytelling is also a part of the food experience and engenders an interest and an appreciation for small, family-run businesses amongst travellers, making people really think about where their food is coming from.

The great outdoors & great food. A match made in heaven? Nature and Nosh think so.

Source: NZ FOOD AND AGRI TOURISM INDUSTRY INSIGHTS EDITION 1, 2018

NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

GAME CHANGER 14:
Invest in the night-time economy

The night-time economy is a key driver of growth and a significant contributor to the economy. The various towns in the foothills of the Snowy Mountains provide a range of important services including accommodation, retail and fuel. Visitors in both summer and winter stay in these centres. The potential to create greater attraction and increased economic benefits exists. Growing the night-time economy is one area that could be pursued.

There is a range of areas of improvements that could deliver results including ideas such as:

- The visual amenity of different towns through lighting for both safety and attraction. (Cooma has some in place but could be significantly expanded)
- Heating of streets with outdoor gas heaters and, where appropriate, fire pits.
- Creating more vibrant café and restaurant culture in the towns.
- Night-time events that underpin what each centre is recognised for (eg night markets in Cooma, year round lakeside sculpture in Jindabyne, Christmas in July in Bredbo).
- A new food and wine precinct with brewery/distillery or similar in SMEC precinct in Cooma.
- A 'field of lights' product in an appropriate setting similar to that of the Albany Field of Lights spectacular www.fieldoflightalbany.com.au
- A night light show (Vivid style) or night movies.

Local government plays an important role in supporting and managing the development of local NTEs. It is essential NSW Councils be equipped to advance this important part of the 24-hour economy so that it is vibrant, safe and sustainable at a local level. Many NSW councils take a proactive approach to the development and management of their NTEs through: economic development and partnerships; place making and urban design; strategy, policy and research; planning and regulation; culture and creativity and services; infrastructure and safety.

ACTIONS

- Include consideration of night-time impacts and benefits in town beautification projects.
- Work with Chambers of Commerce to encourage adequate and consistent opening hours and customer service across the region year round.
- Develop a night-time economy strategy for Snowy Monaro region.

The night lights in Cooma in 2017 were a great start to encouraging a night time economy.

The Christmas Markets in Edinburgh are an iconic night time economy success.

CASE STUDY: BATHURST WINTER FESTIVAL

www.bathurstwinterfestival.com.au

Staged over two weeks each year in the NSW July school holidays, the Bathurst Winter Festival celebrates all that is creative, vibrant and unique to the Bathurst region.

Historic buildings will come alive through static and interactive illuminations, breathing life into old buildings every night from sundown. Wander through the Enchanted Forest or rug up in the Winter Playground with the open air ice rink, giant Ferris wheel and enjoy regional food, produce and entertainment.

The Festival celebrates cultural heritage, its seasonality and incorporates illuminated heritage buildings, night markets showcasing live music, local food stalls, craft beer and artisan distillery, an outdoor ice rink, a giant ferris wheel and interactive kids' activities all staged in the historic and beautiful Bathurst Town Square – the site of Australia's oldest European settlement.

Outcomes:

- 24,500 attendees at Brew & Bite and Ignite the Night, surpassing the goal of 20,000.
- Video views exceeding 20,000 on Facebook alone.
- Increased social engagement.
- Increased use of the event hashtag #bathurstwinterfestival

Source: www.adloyalty.com.au/case-studies/bathurst-winter-festival-2017

ALIGNING EVENTS TO POSITIONING

> **GAME CHANGER 15:**
> **Align events to the region's positioning**

Events are important for the destination to highlight the region's positioning, create interest in the region and grow visitation throughout the year. The Snowy Monaro is home to several existing, successful events which underpin the "rise to nature's challenge" positioning of the region such as the Cannonball Run, L'Etape, the Snowy Ride, the Snowies Mountain Bike Festival, and the Snowy Mountains Trout Festival. Events in many of the smaller towns align with the inspirational stories and legends aspects of the positioning such as heritage days and fairs (e.g. Delegate and Nimmitabel) country shows and rodeos. These will continue to evolve and grow in importance and will be complemented by other local events that are run and supported by local businesses and community groups.

Events can bring a broad range of economic, promotional and community benefits to a destination - which is why the events sector is such a major priority for Destination NSW. When considering new events, attention should be given to the following:

- Visitation
- Expenditure
- Seasonal hotel occupancy
- Potential to encourage local skills development
- Economic flow on to the local business community
- How the event contributes to the region's brand appeal and positioning
- Community pride

The L'Etape Cycling and Thredbo Cannonball downhill are great examples of events that align to the region's positioning

Develop new events and market current ones

A review of the way current events are developed, managed and marketed should occur to ensure maximum reach across the community and into target markets. Developing new events and ideas will be critical in presenting a healthy and vibrant annual program of events that delivers positive results to the region's visitor economy. For example:

- Field of lights in Uluru and Albany have brought significant positive tourism impacts into these communities.
- The Lake Light Sculpture event could encourage surrounding towns to get involved.
- Investing in the night-time economy, and running Christmas or night markets.
- Ensure regional events / shows are clustered and do not compete.
- Investigate the business events market.

ACTIONS

- Develop an events strategy for the region.
- Consider financial investment in 2-3 signature large-scale regional events per year that that are aligned with the regional positioning and identified in the strategy.
- Pursue additional nature-based events e.g. trail running.

ACTIONS

The Action Plan aims to build on the recent successes and current initiatives in place across the Snowy Monaro region. The intention is to enhance and build on existing partnerships, initiatives and event calendars to continue the region's success in tourism planning and development in line with DSNSW DMP. Responsibility for delivery and estimated costings each of the actions will be agreed with the region's primary tourism stakeholders.

HIGH PRIORITY: Achieved 1 year   MEDIUM PRIORITY: Achieved 2-3 years   LOW PRIORITY: Achieved 5 years ONGOING: Life of the DMP

PROJECTS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	INDICATIVE COST TO SMRC
Governance & Marketing			
GAME CHANGER 1. Ensure effective governance, funding and marketing for tourism			
1. **Finalise the establishment of the regional governance model with clarity of roles for TSM and the Tourism Coordinating Committee and shared destination performance outcomes. Include the Chair of TSM on the SMRC Tourism Coordinating Committee.**	High	SMRC	NA
2. **Investigate future tourism funding options that include tourism levies – whether accommodation or business based and realistic regional and state government investment.**	High	SMRC & TSM	NA
3. **Ensure effective engagement with the tourism industry across the region and appropriate strong relationships and collaboration with neighbouring regions – Canberra, Coast and Snowy Valleys Way Council.**	Ongoing	All agencies	NA
4. **Hold an annual tourism forum to understand the trends, issues and opportunities in the tourism sector.**	High	SMRC (TSM and DSNSW support)	$20,000
Access & Circulation			
GAME CHANGER 2. Develop a regional transport and access strategy			
5. **Pursue government investment and advocate for major upgrading of the Monaro Highway from Canberra to Jindabyne.**	Ongoing	SMRC	NA
6. **Develop Jindabyne and ski fields access and parking strategy as part of Jindabyne master plan.**	High	Regional NSW	NA
7. **Support the Snowy Mountains airport to underpin sustainability of year-round services.**	Ongoing	SMRC	NA
8. **Limited investment in the Jindabyne airstrip to support charter flights and emergency services only.**	Low	Regional NSW	NA

9. Advocate for any re-opening/new railway line between Canberra and Eden to include tourism services.	Medium	SMRC	NA
10. Work with Snowy Hydro and their contractors to minimise disruption to tourism as a result of Snowy 2.0.	High	Regional NSW, SMRC	NA

Accommodation			

GAME CHANGER 3. Understand the accommodation needs of the target market

11. Undertake an accommodation supply and demand analysis to determine the need for additional beds across the region and the appropriate style /standards for development in different parts of the region.	Medium,	SMRC	$40,000
12. Use the accommodation analysis as the basis for supporting investment in new accommodation including some unique offerings suited to the regional positioning.	Medium	TSM	NA

Planning			
13. Jindabyne Master plan to identify those issues and changes that are required in planning to enable growth and diversification in tourism development and to provide a lead for planning reform across the region.	High	DPIE	NA
14. Review the current and potential use of the Alpine Way KNP access corridor and Smiths Road to ensure that land use planning controls are appropriate to allow tourism activity.	Medium	SMRC	NA

Labour / Skills			
15. Work with Regional NSW to undertake workforce planning for the region.	Medium	SMRC, Regional NSW	NA
16. Work with relevant partners to investigate the feasibility of establishing a tourism and hospitality training institution in the region that provides staff in peak periods and trains students outside of peak seasonal times.	Medium	SMRC	NA

Visitor Servicing			

GAME CHANGER 4. Improve Visitor Services

17. Develop a comprehensive visitor servicing strategy to look at the customer journey and changing visitor behaviours to ensure we are effectively matching visitor services with visitor needs.	Medium	SMRC, NPWS	$50,000

Positioning the Region for Growth			

GAME CHANGER 5. Embrace and use the positioning

18. Undertake a precinct masterplan on lands managed by NPWS, Charlotte Pass and RMS to create a high quality visitor experience consistent with the lookout point for Australia's highest mountain at the road head at Charlotte Pass.	High	TSM	NA

Game Changer 6. Boost nature- based and adventure experiences

19. Undertake a precinct masterplan on lands managed by NPWS, Charlotte Pass and RMS to create a high quality visitor experience consistent with the lookout point for Australia's highest mountain at the road head at Charlotte Pass.	High	NPWS	NA
20. Offer incentives to encourage a broader range of commercial operators delivering nature-based and adventure experiences in the region. This should range from small drive tours, tag along tours, walking, riding, white water and others. Incentives might include reduced or suspended fees for the initial three years of operation, access into closed areas (e.g. national parks).	Medium	NPWS	NA
21. Identify sites suitable for adventure experiences (e.g. ziplines, rafting, climbing etc) and identify any barriers to investment.	Medium	NPWS, Regional NSW	NA
22. Implement a program of experience development for current and emerging operators to develop more commercialised experiences and packages, including working with adjoining regions and Canberra.	High	DSNSW	NA
23. Plan lookouts as appropriate locations along popular drive and walking routes.	High	SMRC, NPWS	$1,000,000

Game Changer 7. Revitalise Lake Jindabyne and regional waterways

24. Work with Planning NSW on the Jindabyne Master Plan project to plan for better tourism facilities around Lake Jindabyne.	Ongoing	SMRC	NA
25. Review signage and safe entry points around lakes and rivers.	Low	SMRC, SHL	$20,000
26. Investigate the construction of a standing wave at the Snowy River weir at Dalgety.	Low,		$100,000
27. Work with NSW Fisheries and Snowy Hydro to ensure a sustainable fishing industry in Lakes Eucumbene and Jindabyne, and further investigate opportunities elsewhere in the region for recreational fishing .	High	SMRC	$30,000
28. Improve kayak/canoe/SUP access to major local rivers e.g. Snowy River at Dalgety, along the Murrumbidgee River and the Bombala and Delegate Rivers.	Medium	SMRC	$100,000

Supporting Project: Continual Improvement in Snow Product

29. Investigate additional areas for snow play as access to resorts is congested. The family market and intergenerational travellers that are not intending to ski or board, seek a snow adventure that encompasses natural or man-made snow, easy access, facilities and safe tobogganing areas.	High	NPWS	NA
30. Encourage the use of Mt Selwyn for snow play activities	High	SMRC, Mt Selwyn Resort	NA

Game Changer 8. Develop a trails master plan for the region			
31. **Invest in a comprehensive trails master plan for the region.**	High	SMRC	$80,000
Game Changer 9. Revitalise drive tourism around the region			
32. **Undertake strategic planning and experience development for two strong drive journeys.**	Medium	DSNSW	NA
33. **Seek reinstatement of the Kosciuszko Alpine Way touring route as a member of Sydney-Melbourne Touring.**	Medium	DSNSW	NA
Supporting Project: Create remarkable touring experiences			
34. **Identify potential customer journeys and map where improvements need to be made.**	Medium	DSNSW	NA
35. **Ensure beautification and streetscapes are continually improved.**	High	SMRC	$1,000,000
Game Changer 10. The Monaro Rail Trail			
36. **Undertake a Monaro Rail Trail feasibility study to boost summer tourism product development.**	High	SMRC	Underway
Game Changer 11. Snowy Heritage Centre			
37. **Undertake a feasibility study into the Snowy Mountains Heritage Centre and seek funding for implementation.**	High	SAHA	Underway
Supporting Project: Arts and Cultural Tourism			
38. **Plan for cultural facilities and activities to meet increasing demand and to capitalise on this growing economy.**	Medium	SMRC	NA
39. **Identify and grow partnerships to build community capacity in the arts and cultural space.**	Medium	SMRC	NA
40. **Continue to acquire permanent sculpture installations for all towns in the region and promote themed drive itineraries around these and other art offerings.**	Medium	SMRC	$30,000 pa
41. **Ensure information about the range of arts and cultural opportunities is available for visitors.**	Medium	SMRC, NPWS	NA
Supporting Project: Cluster historic villages and improve experience			
42. **Seek funding to develop a heritage interpretation strategy which includes interpretative signage in the heritage villages of Delegate, Bombala, Nimmitabel, Adaminaby and Cooma telling the stories of the towns and augmented and virtual reality elements to bring the history to life.**	Medium	SMRC	$150,000
Game Changer 12. Bombala Commercial Activation			

43. Work with the Bombala Chamber of Commerce to seek an investor that can revitalise one of the hotels or properties to create a destination through high quality restaurant, accommodation and experiences that will attract the Canberra market as well as regional Victoria and NSW.	Medium	SMRC, Regional NSW	NA
Game Changer 13. Strengthen the food and agritourism offering across the region			
44. Partner with bodies such as Australian Regional Tourism to leverage off their National Agritourism Strategy.	Medium	DSNSW	NA
45. Develop an Agritourism Strategy for the region in cooperation with adjoining Councils within the Destination Southern NSW Network.	Low	DSNSW	NA
46. Assist and encourage new produce operators into the tourism industry by helping with mentoring opportunities and grant funding applications.	High	DSNSW	NA
47. Support local markets and farm gate operators as an important incubator for new producers.	Medium	SMSC	NA
48. Run a program of Master Classes for restaurant and café owners to strengthen delivery of regional produce.	Medium	DSNSW	NA
Game Changer 14. Invest in the night-time economy			
49. Include consideration of night-time impacts and benefits in town beautification projects.	Ongoing	SMRC	NA
50. Work with Chambers of Commerce to encourage adequate and consistent opening hours and customer service across the region year-round.	Medium	SMRC	NA
51. Develop a night-time economy strategy for Snowy Monaro region.	Medium	SMRC	$40,000
Game Changer 15. Align events to the region's positioning			
52. Develop an events strategy for the region.	High	SMRC	$40,000
53. Consider financial investment in 2-3 signature large-scale regional events per year that are aligned with the positioning and identified in the strategy.	High	SMRC	$100,000
54. Pursue additional nature-based events e.g. trail running.	Medium	SMRC	NA

HIGH PRIORITY: Achieved 1 year   MEDIUM PRIORITY: Achieved 2-3 years   LOW PRIORITY: Achieve 5 years   ONGOING: Life of the DMP

Supporting Documentation

Refer to the companion document Snowy Monaro Destination Analysis for the following supporting information: