



Pyrenees State Forest

The Pyrenees Ranges offer visitors a wonderful mix of natural and cultural history, with spectacular views, rugged mountain ranges, abundant wildlife, a rich mix of wildflowers and historic sites. The main attractions of the forest are the Waterfalls Picnic Area, Governor Rock Lookout and the Pyrenees Endurance Walk. Other nearby attractions include the Percydale Historic Area, the Landsborough Flora and Fauna Reserve and the numerous wineries located around the Ranges.

Our forests tell a fascinating story of change and survival. How you use the forest today will shape our forest's future. How will you help shape the next chapter?

Getting There

The Pyrenees Ranges State Forest is in the Central Victorian Goldfields approximately 200 kms north-west of Melbourne near the town of Avoca. Avoca can be accessed via the Sunraysia or Pyrenees Highways. Once in Avoca travel west along Vinoca Road following the signs to the wineries then on to the Waterfalls Picnic Area.

History

The Jajowurrong people were the first to occupy the Pyrenees and knew the area as 'Peerick'. In 1836 Major Thomas Mitchell travelled through the region. After him came pastoralists and then in the 1854 gold was discovered. The foothills of the Ranges contain many relics from the gold mining era with mining holes and other relics still visible today.

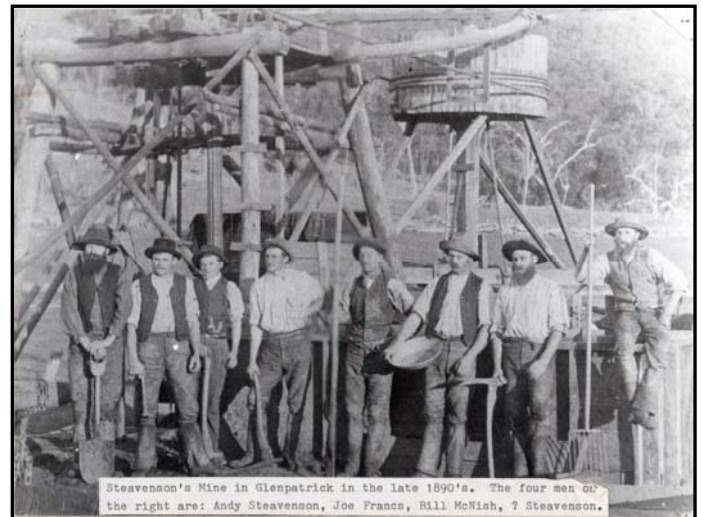


Photo: Steavenson's Mine Glenpatrick

Slate quarrying also occurred in the forest, with the material obtained used to pave the footpaths of central Melbourne. Timber harvesting began in the 1840's to supply the growing communities surrounding the forest and continues today on a sustainable basis.



Engine room at Slate Quarry Percydale 1920

Flora and Fauna

Rising nearly 800 metres the Pyrenees Ranges contains many natural attractions for the visitor. Box-ironbark forests are dominant on the foothills with mixed species stringybark forests being found at higher elevations.

Due to the diversity of the terrain, there are more than 200 species of plants and over 100 bird species recorded in the forest. Look out for Wedge-tailed Eagles, Little Eagles, Brown Falcons, Peregrine Falcons, Whistling Kites and Brown Goshawks high in the sky. Closer to earth you will find more common species such as Parrots, Galahs, Kookaburras and smaller migrant birds like Rainbow Bee-eaters. Threatened bird species such as the Powerful Owl, Swift Parrot, Speckled Warbler and Painted Honeyeater also make their home here.

Also look out for mammals such as Brush-tailed Phascogales, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Black Wallabies, Koalas, Yellow-footed Antechinus, Echidnas and Brushtail Possums. At night you may even see Lesser Long-eared Bats!



There are a variety of reptiles, including Striped Legless Lizards, Bearded Dragons, Lace Monitors and Sand Goannas. Less welcome but still a necessary part of the ecology is the Little Whip Snake. Reptiles are seen more often in the warmer months and care should always be exercised when walking through bushy and grassy areas.

Frog species found in the forest include the Brown Toadlet, Common Froglet, Growling Grass Frog and Southern Brown Tree Frog.

The predominant trees are Ironbark, Yellow Box, Red Stringybark, Bluegum and Messmate. A wide variety of Wattles and Pea flower species can be found here, as well as a number of Orchids such as Green-comb Spider-orchids, Sun-orchids, Leopard Orchids and Tiger Orchids. The vast array of

wildflowers such as Lilies, Daisies and Grevilleas make spectacular viewing in the spring (especially around the base of the range).



Activities to enjoy in the State forest

There are many activities you can enjoy in the forest, some of which include:

- Get active! Walk along one of the many tracks around the forest, ride your horse or bike along the bush roads and appreciate the beauty of the forest. Be sure to stay on formed roads when riding.
- Find a nice spot to relax, camp or have a picnic, remember to look after the forest by taking your rubbish home with you.
- Take your dog for a walk. Making sure your dog is under control at all times and does not disturb other visitors or harm wildlife.
- Try your luck fossicking or prospecting. All prospectors require a Miner's Right. This lasts two years and costs around \$30. You can purchase a Miner's Right online from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries website at www.depi.vic.gov.au. Remember to re-fill any holes you dig.
- Enjoy a car or motorbike tour of the forest, exploring the extensive road network. Make sure you are licensed and registered and always stay on formed roads.
- Test your hunting skills with licensed firearms and protect the forest from pest animals such as foxes and rabbits.
- Explore and search the forest for clues that give us evidence from the past – remember to leave everything as you found it.

Looking After our Forests

Lets look after our living museum!

- All native plants, animals, historic sites and geographical features are protected by law.
- Campfires are part of the outdoor experience. However sparks can easily start the bush burning. You can take care with fire by observing all fire regulations and Total Fire Ban days. Always use existing fireplaces where possible or 30 cm deep trenches, collect only dead wood from the ground for campfires, ensure your fires is less than 1 metre square and at least 3 metres clear of burnable material, never leave fires unattended, and ensure fires are safe and that they are completely extinguished when you leave.

Walking Tracks



1. Pyrenees Endurance Walk

Distance: 18 km one way

Time: 13 hours

Gradient: Very steep and difficult

Quality of Path: Rough track, many obstacles

Quality of Markings: Signposted

Steps: Occasional steps

Experience required: Experienced bushwalkers

The Pyrenees Endurance Walk is 18 km one way and is recommended as an overnight trip starting at the Waterfalls Picnic area with Camerons Track being the halfway point. This walk is considered to be reasonably difficult with some steep sections. In drier months, you will need to carry your own water.



2. Valley Walk

Distance: 1 km

Time: 20 mins return

Gradient: Flat

Quality of Path: Formed track, some obstacles

Quality of Markings: Signposted

Steps: Occasional steps

Experience required: No experience required

A pleasant after lunch walk, this track is signposted from the Waterfalls Picnic Area and follows the course of the No.2 Creek upstream to a rock outcropping. Water flows in the winter months only, or after heavy rainfall. There are numerous tracks throughout the forest, which also make ideal short walks. From the Waterfalls Picnic Area an easy walk along Ebling Track to Fraser Track and back will take approximately 1 hour or a walk along Waterfalls Track onto Schmidt Track to Sugarloaf Track and back will take 2 hours.

To assist visitors in choosing walks, the walks are classified using the **Australian Walking Track Grading System**.

Picnic Sites

For those seeking a picnic site in a relaxing forest setting, the **Waterfalls Picnic Area** is hard to beat, being easily accessible from Avoca, with toilets, picnic tables, fireplaces and a short walk available for day visitor use.

Toilets, picnic tables, fireplaces, a shelter and rainwater are also available at **Cameron's Track Campground**, with simpler facilities (picnic tables and fireplaces only) available at the **Governor's Rock Lookout**.



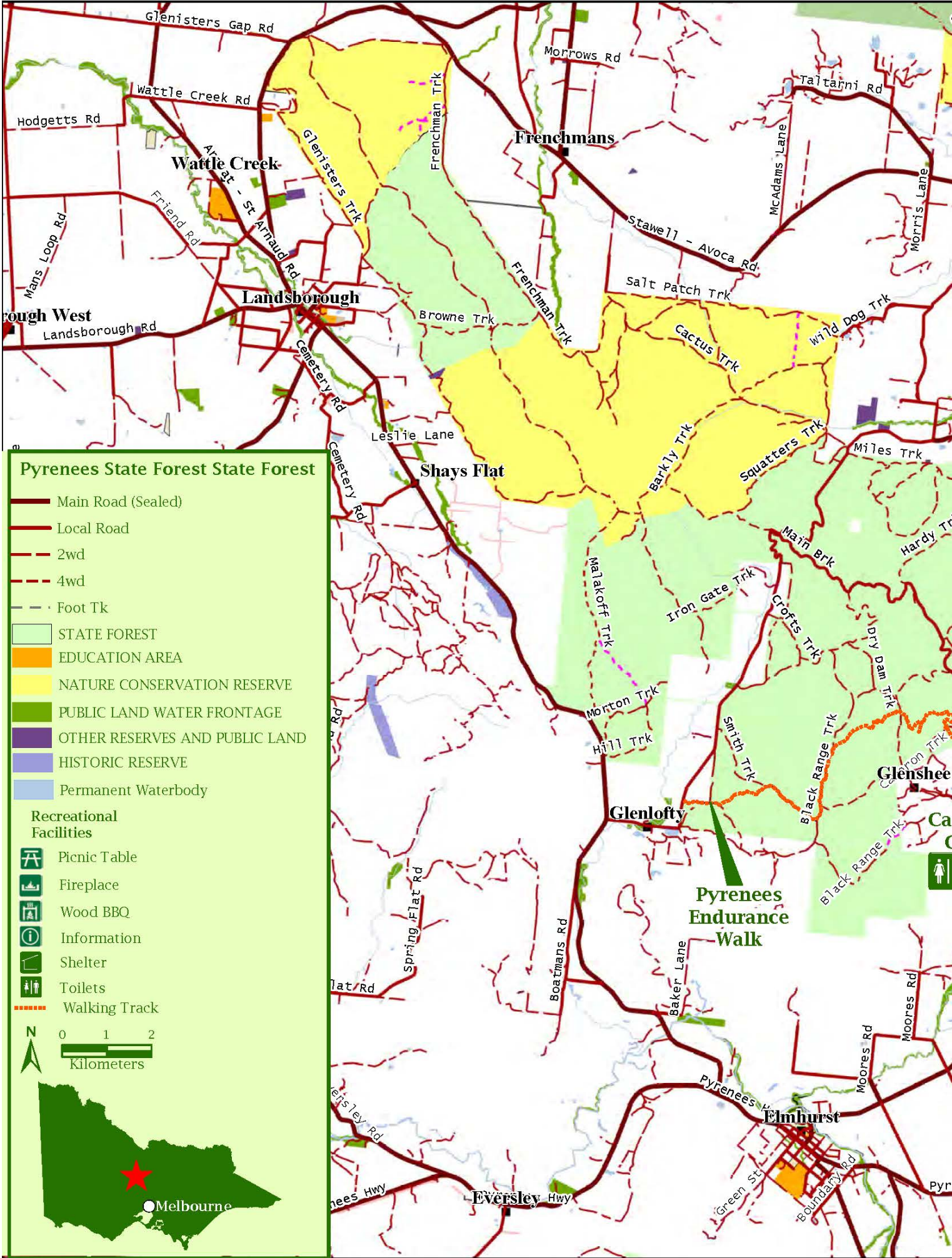
Fraser's Trail Bike Visitor Area

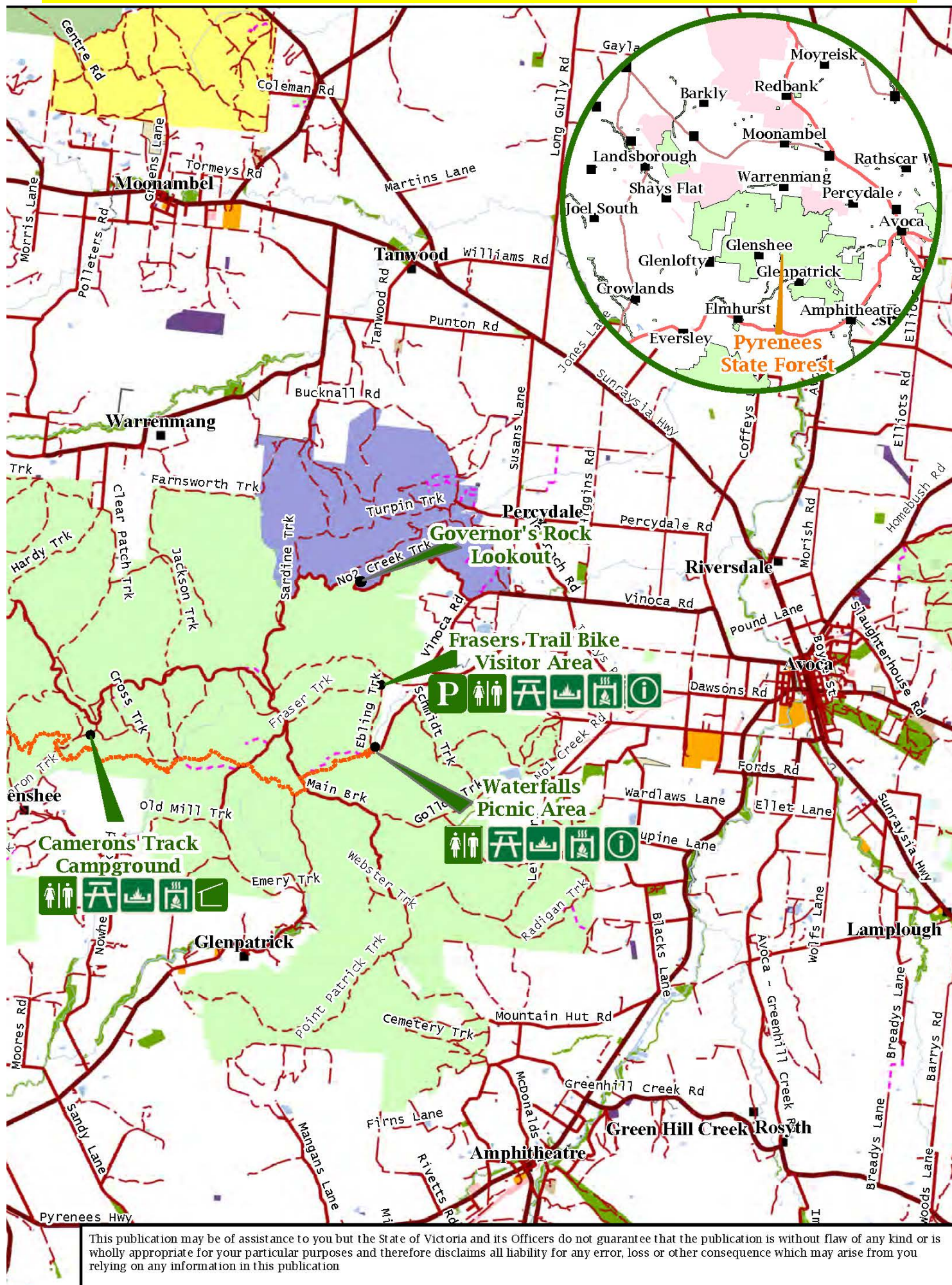
Situated at the foot of the eastern side of the Pyrenees Ranges within the Pyrenees State Forest, is the Fraser's Trail Bike Visitor Area (TBVA). Located at the intersection of Fraser and Ebling Track, the TBVA serves as an excellent launching place for your ride within the Pyrenees State Forest.

Facilities include: parking area accommodating both vehicles and trailers, information board and maps, toilets, a signposted riding route, picnic tables and seats.



Photo: Fraser's Trail Bike Visitor Area





Safety – Please read

- On Code Red Fire Danger rating days, Parks and State Forests are closed to the public. Do not enter parks or forests on **Code Red Days**. If you are already there when a Code Red day is declared, you should leave the night before or early in the morning.
- **Campfires are banned on days of Total Fire Ban. If in doubt, leave campfires out.**
- **Campfire safety** (on non Total Fire Ban days):
 - Use fireplaces where provided. Where not provided light your campfire in a 30cm deep trench or create a barrier around the fire with rocks or soil. Clear 3m around the campfire of any flammable material.
 - Keep your campfire just big enough for cooking and keeping warm and have an adult present at all times (Most campfires escape when they are left unattended).
 - Put your fire out with water. **If it's cool to touch it is safe to leave, and can't go bush!**
- **Forest roads** are public roads and normal road rules apply. Drive as if you were expecting a vehicle to come around the next bend.
- **Pit toilets** are provided at some State forest sites but hand washing facilities and toilet paper may not be supplied. Come prepared. Carry water with you when walking.
- **Do not camp under trees** – they can drop their limbs without warning
- To protect communities from **wildfire**, DEPI undertakes extensive fuel reduction burning, so you may notice smoke more often. For more information contact DEPI .

FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY

Look out for old mine shafts when walking through the forest.

For more information

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) is responsible for managing Victoria's State Forests. For further information contact DEPI's Customer Service Centre ☎ 136 186 (TTY: 1800 122 969) or visit DEPI's website at <http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/>.

Acknowledgements

[Pyrenees State Forest] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Steavenson's Mine Glenpatrick] (Photo: Avoca & District Historical Society Inc)
 [Engine Room at Slate Quarry, Percydale] (Photo: Avoca & District Historical Society Inc)
 [Lesser Long-eared Bat] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Wedge-tailed Eagle] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Yellow-footed Antechinus] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Koala] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Kookaburra] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Gold-dust Wattle] (Norman Stimson)
 [Chocolate Lily] (Schoo)
 [Pink Bells] (Photo: DEPI/McCann)
 [Frasers Trail Bike Visitor Area] (Photo: DEPI/Parker)

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