

CODE OF CONDUCT

Trail Etiquette

This rail trail passes through public land with high environmental value and extensive areas of private property. People earning their livelihoods use many of these properties on a daily basis. Please respect their rights and those of other trail users by observing the following.

- **Keep to the rail trail**
- **Do not disturb livestock or machinery**
- **No fires**
- **No camping**
- **No motorbikes or unauthorised vehicles**
- **Dogs must be on a lead at all times**
- **Take your rubbish home**

Your respect for this natural and cultural environment will greatly assist the many local communities who care for this trail.

REMEMBER TO...

Equipment

Check your bicycle's tyre pressure and condition, brakes, chain tightness and lubrication.

Carry a bicycle repair kit and pump, and remember to wear your helmet!

Clothing

Wear a hat, sunglasses and comfortable clothing. Carry a waterproof jacket in your day pack.

Food and water

Take lunch and high-energy snacks and, on a hot day, up to 2 litres of water per person.

Safety

Apply sunscreen frequently.

Sudden and extreme weather changes are common in the Otway ranges. Carry practical all-weather clothing.

Be aware that mobile phones are frequently out of range in the Otways.

Tell a family member or accommodation provider where you are going and your estimated time of return.

Surface conditions of the trail vary. Please take care and ride to suit the conditions.

Accessing the trail

The Old Beechy Rail Trail runs on or near the route of the railway, using the original rail formation in many places. It is a gravel trail and suitable for walkers and cyclists - the gradient making it enjoyable! Some sections are only suitable for mountain bikes.

The 45 km trail can be completed in either direction, with accommodation along the way. Stay overnight at camping grounds, hotels or cottages in the Colac, Barongarook, Gellibrand or Beech Forest areas.


Shorter trail sections can be accessed at Barongarook, Watson & Faceys (Cashins Rd), Kawarren, Gellibrand, Dinmont or Beech Forest.

The Beechy trail makes an ideal alternate access route to the Great Ocean Road.

How to get there

Colac lies 150 km west of Melbourne on the Princes Highway. VLine services operate daily from Melbourne and Warrnambool to Colac railway station where the Old Beechy Rail Trail starts/finishes.

More information

 Colac Visitor Information Centre,
Corner Murray and Queen Streets, Colac,
Tel: 03 5231 3730.
colacvic@colacotway.vic.gov.au

 Great Ocean Road Visitor Information Centre,
Apollo Bay, Tel: 03 5237 6529.
gorvic@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Open daily 9am - 5pm (closed Christmas Day).

The Old Beechy Rail Trail's Friends

After 8 years of planning by local progress associations, volunteers and the Colac Otway Shire, the rail trail concept became a reality in 2005.

Formed in 2000, the Old Beechy Rail Trail Friends' Group assists with the maintenance of the trail. To join the Friends' Group, contact the Colac Otway Shire on 03 5232 9400.

Thanks to private landowners who permit public access, including Midway Pty Ltd.



www.railways.org.au

www.visitotways.com

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OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL

COLAC - BEECH FOREST





OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL

A SCENIC ROUTE

The Old Beechy Rail Trail follows one of the state's former narrow gauge railway lines through an area of scenic forest, rich farmland and rolling hills with the coast not too far away.

Along the trail you pass through pockets of rainforest with magnificent eucalypts and blackwoods shading the lush understorey. See and hear busy woodland and forest birds while listening for the echoes of the Old Beechy's whistle!



THE BEECHY

The narrow gauge railway from Colac to Beech Forest opened in 1902, providing a modern, all-weather transport link within forested ranges where road building was impossibly expensive.

The mountainous nature of the terrain meant that a narrow gauge railway was the most economical transport solution. A two feet and six inches wide (762 mm) track was laid for nearly 48 km south through Barongarook, Kawarren, Gellibrand, Banool and Dinmont to Beech Forest. The railway became known as The Beechy.

In 1911 the railway was extended 22 kms west of Beech Forest to Lavers Hill and Crowes, Australia's most southerly mainland railway station.

The locomotives and rolling stock were scaled-down versions of the broad gauge Victorian Railways stock. Examples currently survive at Belgrave's Puffing Billy railway.

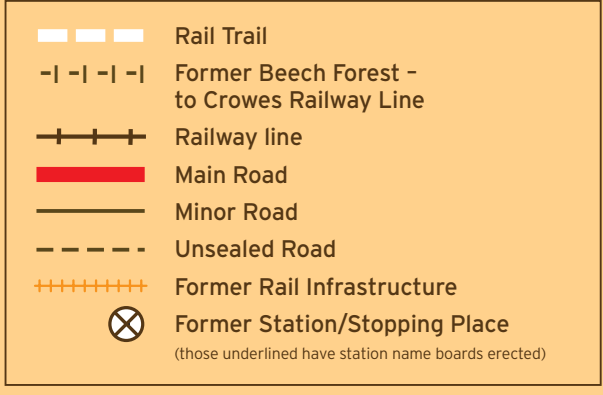
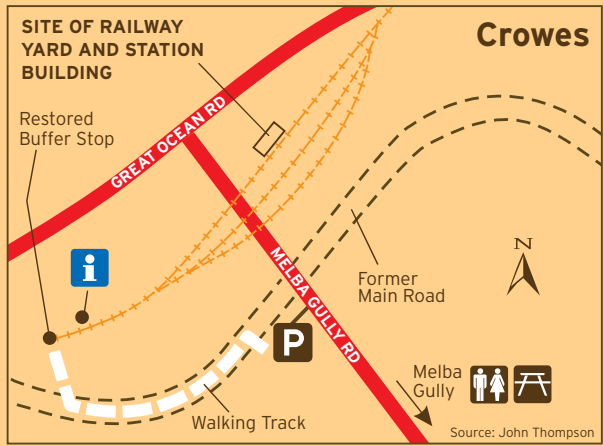
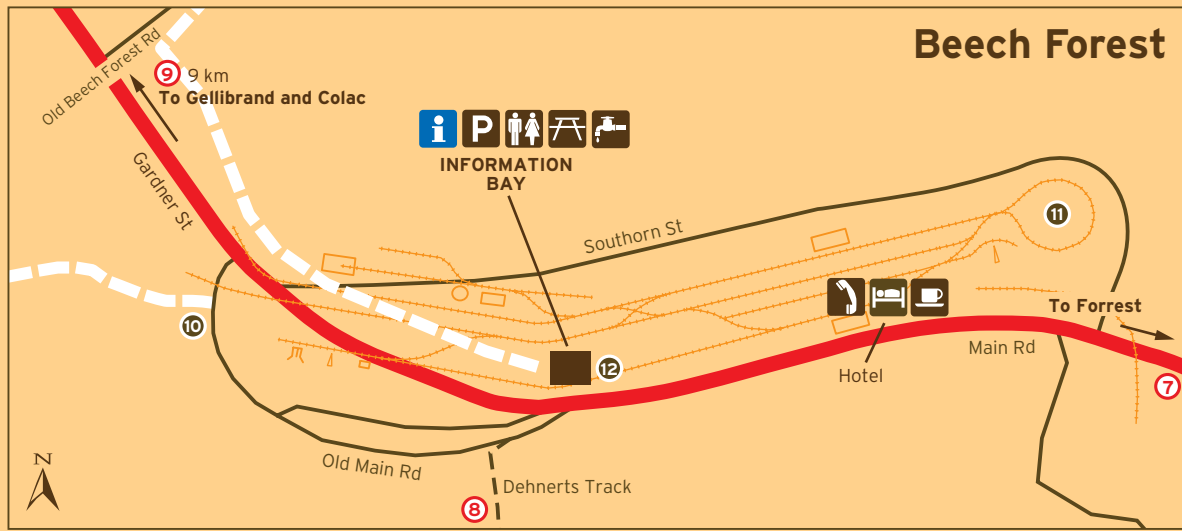
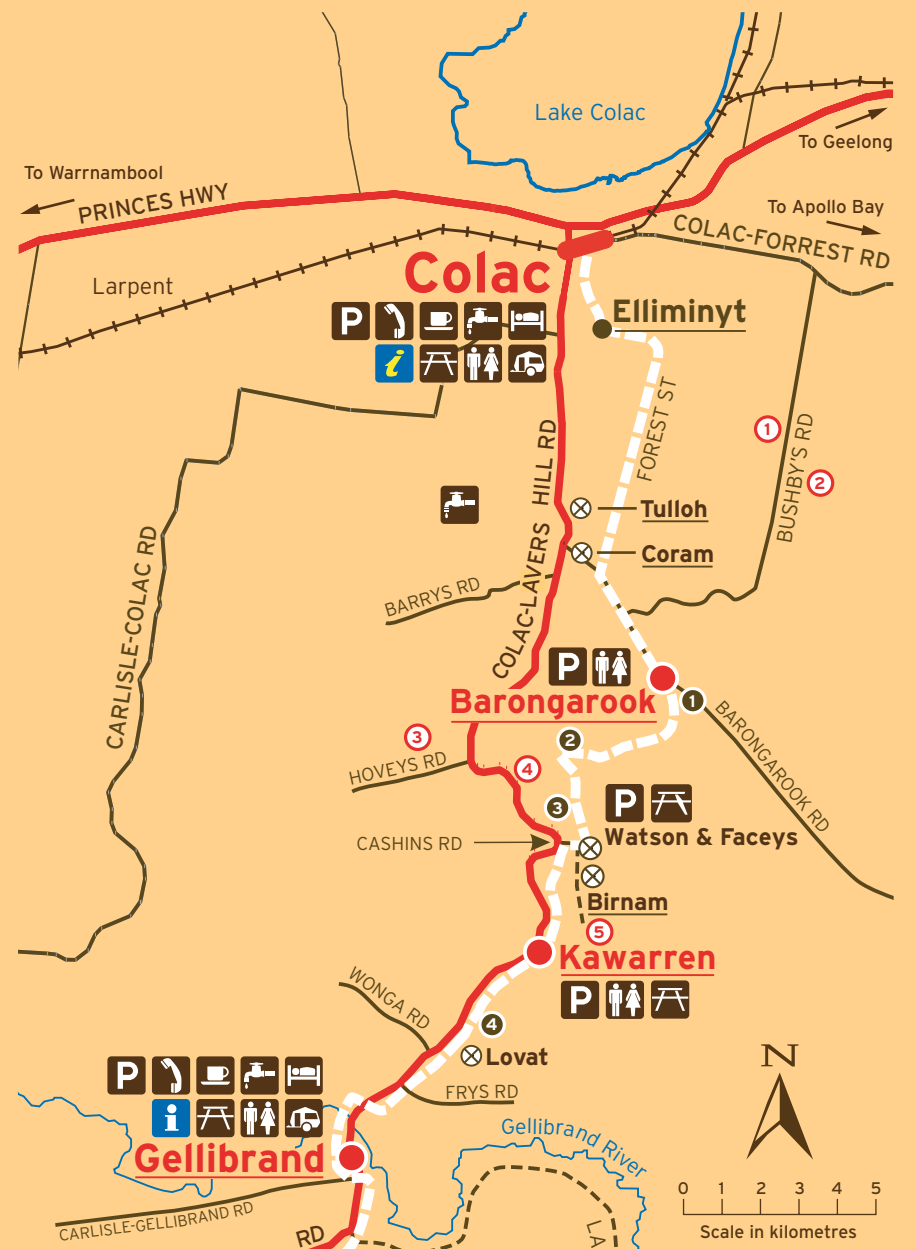
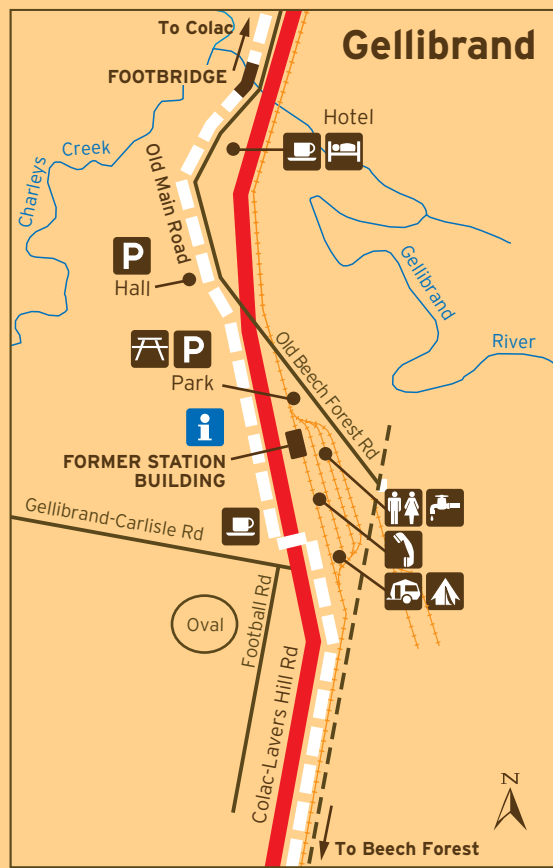
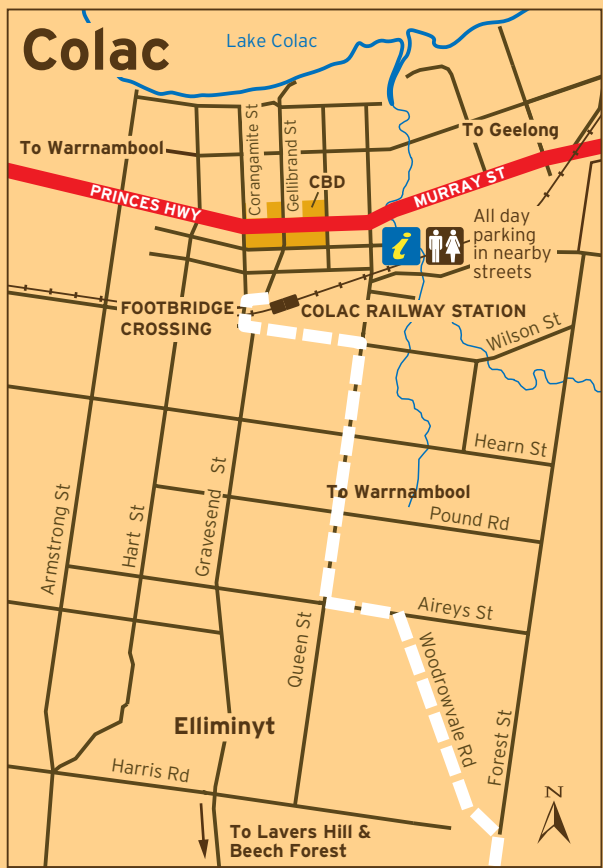
AGENT OF CHANGE

"The Beechy" was the first reliable transport service into an area with dense timber and high rainfall. It encouraged closer settlement and timber getting on a systematic scale. The railway became the major agent of development for the region to the south of Colac up to the 1940s.

The 28 stations and sidings were closely spaced because the roads were unmade and difficult to use for most of the year, and haulage distance for farmers and sawmillers to the rail had to be minimised. Special trains ran for social events and cultural activities along the line, and at Colac.



Above: Beech Forest Station. C 1912. (John Thompson Collection).
Left: Construction Train (NA Class) Beech Forest 1901. (PROV VR PR 4755 © State of Victoria. Reproduced with permission of the Keeper of Public Records. Public Record Office Victoria, Australia).
Right: Remnants of timber pile railway bridge south of Gellibrand. (Alexander McCooke).



OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL DISTANCES

Colac - Coram 8 km
 Coram - Barongarook 2.6 km
 Barongarook - Watson and Faceys 6.3 km
 Watson and Faceys - Kwarren 3.5 km
 Kwarren - Gellibrand 6 km
 Gellibrand - Dinmont 13.9 km
 Dinmont - Beech Forest 4.5 km
Colac - Beech Forest 45.2 km
Average walking pace is 4 km per hour

ROAD DISTANCES

Colac to Barongarook Rd turn off 8 km
 Barongarook Rd turn off to Barongarook Hall 3 km
 Barongarook Rd turn off to Kwarren 10 km
 Kwarren to Gellibrand 6 km
 Gellibrand to Ferguson 15 km
 Ferguson to Beech Forest 5 km
 Ferguson to Lavers Hill 16 km

FEATURES ALONG THE TRAIL

1 103 mile post	7 Remnant of old bridge
2 6 feet diameter culvert under the path	8 Waterfalls under small bridge
3 Site of water tank footings	9 Steam Boiler
4 110 mile post	10 Short walk towards Ferguson & scenic views
5 Ballast Siding	11 Balloon Loop
6 115 mile post	12 125 mile post

ATTRACTIONS

1 Otway Gypsy Wagons	7 Beech Forest Fine Art
2 Betel Nut Gallery	8 Otway Studio Art
3 Otway Estate Vineyard & Cottages	9 Otway Fly Treetop Walk
4 Ishshoes (footwear)	10 Otway Blackwood Furniture
5 Birnam Pottery	
6 Gellibrand Pottery	

