



# STEVE PRETZL

PRESIDENT, RECREATIONAL TRAILBIKE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION WA



1. All notices must be read  
 2. This area is gazetted for motorcycles and quads only.  
 3. Off Road Vehicles must be registered and display the appropriate registration.  
 4. Helmets and boots must be worn at all times. Full protective riding gear is strongly recommended.  
 5. No alcohol to be consumed within this area  
 6. Centre Way (Limestone Rd) is NOT part of the ORV Area.

*Enjoy but take care!*

Information: [www.rtra.asn.au/gnangara](http://www.rtra.asn.au/gnangara)

RECREATIONAL TRAILBIKE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION WA

Department of Environment and Conservation

lookout for other vehicles.

**BEWARE:** Unmarked trail crossings.

**BEWARE:** Buried or exposed hazards including tree roots and stumps, metal objects.

## Stand up, be heard

I was sweating: a dirt biker, in amongst bushwalkers, mountain bikers and horse-riders at the State Trails Conference.

The room fell silent. "A bloody trail bike rider? Here? At our conference?"

And yes, it was at their conference. But, I was there because it sure isn't their land we ride on, and I wanted them to know that. I also wanted them to know the long-held stereotypes of dirt bike-riders as hoons and environmental vandals needed a damn good shake-up.

I wanted them to know I shared their concerns about noise, anti-social behaviour, the spread of die-back, turbidity in water catchments, disturbing the habitats of native fauna and trail erosion.

I wanted them to know these things, because we trail riders can't ignore these issues, just as the holier-than-thou, non-motorised brigade can't pretend banning us is the only solution.

Things in the West have come a long way since that day in 2007. The Recreational Trailbike Riders' Association has been invited to attend the State Trails Conference in '08 and '09, so riders have a clear voice. With nearly 2,000 members, we're organised and vocal, just like the bushwalkers and mountain bikers.

Recreational trail riding is now recognised in the state's Master Trails Planning. This change in attitude is bringing benefits for riders.

The State Government is currently considering the State Trail Bike Strategy – a ten year program covering nearly 100 recommendations, with a projected investment of many millions of dollars.

More immediately, we turned the tide on closures of Off-Road Vehicle Areas, successfully lobbying to keep the popular

view, and the community and environmental concerns, associated with trail riding.

As riders, we need to take some responsibility. We need to stay off walking and mountain bike trails, away from water catchments, areas at risk of die-back and residential areas. We need to stop fitting loud aftermarket exhausts; we need to not do laps

## Riders have a clear voice. With nearly 2000 members, we're organised and vocal

Lancelin dunes area open and overturning a local government decision to close the smaller Kwinana area.

The Department of Environment and Conservation is committed to spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on upgrading the Off-Road Vehicle Areas in Gnangara and Pinjar: 200-plus hectare plantations about 20 minutes from the Perth CBD.

A recent land use study commissioned by the Department of Environment identified at least two areas, close to Perth, that could each accommodate hundreds of kilometers of trails.

None of these things could have been achieved if we had not made the shift from a combative relationship with agencies like the Department of Environment to a collaborative one. We had to understand their point of

around property fire breaks; not cut up the dirt roads, which are the driveways of rural residents; not ride through creek beds and wetlands; and not to take our kids riding on local ovals and reserves.

The message we're giving the land managers is if you want to stop people riding in places you don't want them, you have to give them a place they actually want to be. That's the essence of the State Trail Bike Strategy and it has seen us gain the support of the mountain biking/bushwalking/horse riding groups.

We're now at a critical juncture, where the actions of the responsible majority can have a huge influence on the future of trail-riding in Australia. Put simply, we riders have to give a little to get a lot. **ADB**

DID YOU KNOW...

Steve has been known to eat steak marinated in Motorex ■ Steve won a state car racing championship in 1987