



## Great Southern Rail Trail Official Opening (Nyora to Leongatha)

On Saturday the Great Southern Rail Trail Extension between Nyora and Leongatha was officially opened. The opening and ribbon cutting were held at the Loch railway station with speeches by the Hon Harriet Shing, Minister for Water, Regional Development and Equality and South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor, Nathan Hersey.

The 36km extension was a substantial project which required rail removal, gravel placement, drainage, rail crossings, new bridges, bridge decks and railings. The extension opening means that the trail now spans an impressive 107km between Nyora and Port Welshpool, with an additional extension currently underway between Alberton and Welshpool.

The ribbon cutting was just one part of the day however, with supporting events also held in many towns along the trail between Nyora and Leongatha.

The Nyora Men's Shed kicked off the celebrations by hosting an egg and bacon breakfast in Nyora, which was then followed by a 'search for clues' activity in Loch coordinated by the Loch Community Development Association.

The event program then moved on to Jeetho with scones and sandwiches by the Jeetho Hall Committee, a historical display in Bena by the Bena Hall Committee, a sausage sizzle lunch in Korumburra thanks to the Lion's Club of Korumburra, a delicious afternoon tea in the Ruby Hall hosted by the Ruby Hall Committee and the Kardella Country Women's Association and finish line festivities by the Leongatha Business Association.

Approximately 200 people participated in the event, with around half undertaking the whole 36km. Most participants cycled, although there were also some walkers who did smaller sections and a handful who walk or ran the entire length.

***Quote attributable to Cr Nathan Hersey, Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council:***

*"The Great Southern Rail Trail has evolved significantly over the years with many improvements made to the trail, including the Foster to Port Welshpool extension and the bridge works at Black Spur.*

*Last year, we celebrated a significant project milestone when the Korumburra to Leongatha section was opened and now we have celebrated the opening of the full extension. Every improvement made to the trail - small or large – helps to cement the Great Southern Rail Trail as one of our region’s most important visitor attractions and one of our most important community assets.”*

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