

BP Ramble – November 2010

Introduction

This ramble is based around a 4WD trek starting in Victoria, through the Victorian High Country and into the NSW Snowy mountains, visiting Jindabyne and returning back into Victoria. This ramble is for a duration of 5 days with 4 nights of camping.

This ramble is designed to test the survival skills of the group. This includes being fully self sufficient for the camping element of the ramble along with and ensuring camp craft skills are maintained rather than just “rolling out a swag”.

The ramble uses existing treks as defined in “The High Country – 4WD and Camping Guide”. The reason for this as this book is sanctioned by Parks Victoria and the NSW Parks & Wildlife Service. This will ensure that the routes used are acceptable from a legal and safety standpoint. The treks within the book have a few deviations or options to choose along the route (for example, an off road option or bitumen option). Wherever there is an option to use an Off Road track, I have chosen these as the selected option.

Dates

The plan is to leave on **29th October 2010** and return to Melbourne on **2nd November 2010**. This will require leave from work on 29th October & 1st November 2010.

Route

Please note that this is a proposed route and is subject to change.

- **29/10/2010 - Day 1 – 380km**
 - Melbourne to Dargo 360km
 - Sealed Highways / Roads
 - Refuel at Dargo
 - Dargo to Collins Flat Campsite (on way to Swifts Creek) 21km
 - Trek 10 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Moderate / Difficult – 4WD Low Range primarily
 - Camp: Collins Flat Campsite on Dargo River
 - Toilet & fishing facilities
- **30/10/2010 Day 2 – 175km**
 - Collins Flat Campsite to Swifts Creek 66km
 - Trek 10 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Moderate / Difficult – 4WD Low Range primarily
 - Visit “Dogs Grave”
 - Built in the mid 1970s to remember the link between drovers and their dogs.
 - Refuel at Swifts Creek
 - Swifts Creek to Buchan 109.6km
 - Trek 12 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Easy/Moderate – 4WD High Range and 2WD primarily
 - Moscow Villa Hut – built in the 1940s as a “summer retreat” by bushman Bill Ah Chow in the 1940s.
 - Visit to Buchan Caves
 - Refuel at Buchan

- Camp at Buchan Caves Reserve
 - Toilet facilities provided
- **31/10/2010 Day 3 – 230km**
 - Buchan to Jindabyne 170km
 - Sealed Roads / Highways
 - Refuel at Jindabyne
 - Jindabyne to Pinch River Campsite 60km (approx)
 - Trek 16 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Difficult – 4WD Low Range Primarily
 - Camp at Pinch River Campsite
 - Fishing Facilities
 - No toilet facilities (dig a hole)
- **1/11/2010 Day 4 – 138km**
 - Pinch River Campsite to Native Dog Flat 80km (approx)
 - Trek 16 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Difficult – 4WD Low Range Primarily
 - Native Dog Flat to Tom Groggin 58km
 - Trek 15 – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Visit to Davies Plain & Hut. Built in 1939, but largely rebuilt using recent construction techniques to survive the alpine seasons.
 - Camp at Tom Groggin
 - Toilet, fishing & picnic facilities
- **2/11/2010 Day 5 – 521km**
 - Tom Groggin to Benambra 95km
 - Trek 14 (Reverse) – 4WD Camping Guide
 - Visit to Mt Pinnibar Lookout providing an awesome look out over Mt Kosciusko and the other alpine ranges.
 - Benambra to Melbourne 426km
 - Refuel in Omeo and wherever else required.

General Requirements:

- All food and water for the four days to be carried, unless it is an emergency (i.e. water contaminated due to fires in NSW etc) no additional food stops from Dargo to the end of the ramble are permitted. (N.B. Water collection from Rivers etc as per DSE/NSW Forestry over the ramble is permitted)
- Each evening a camp is to be set up, this would include:
 - Eating shelter
 - Proper kitchen area with:
 - Preparation/cooking area with stoves etc.
 - Wash up area
 - Own dome tents for sleeping (each participant BYO)
- An appropriate camp menu for the conditions. e.g. not a BBQ for every meal etc. Showing good campcraft skills in the process. This would involve:
 - Setting up an appropriate eating shelter.
 - Proper sit down eating facilities using portable tables and chairs.
 - Wash up area

Safety Requirements:

- Two (2) First Aiders attending the ramble with Senior Level First Aid
- Minimum of 3 vehicles.
- GPS to be carried by one of the vehicles with spare batteries.
- Off Road First Aid Kit
- 3G Mobile phone with appropriate antenna fitted to one vehicle
- UHF Radio for each vehicle for inter-vehicle communications.
- HF Radio with Raddtel & VKS-737 authorities to allow communication if 3G Mobile phone access is not possible.
- Basic toolkit shared between the group
- Emergency hose and belt kit for each vehicle (there is a leg of 250km with no simple access to mechanical services)
- Once per day the group shall call in to the NSW or Victorian (where appropriate) Bushfire Information Line, due to the possible fire risk during this part of the year. If 3G internet access is possible, checking of the CFA or NSWFB websites would be completed instead.

Challenging Aspects:

- I have never been on a 4WD trip over a number of days or a long journey. My 4WD experience does not go much past a “play” in a local 4WD area. It is important to note, I am now qualified as a Basic Activity Leader for 4WD as per the course I completed with the Scout 4x4 Unit.
- Being fully self sufficient (with the exception of fuel) for the four days.
- Using proper camp craft skills rather than “cooking out of a frypan” for the standing camps at the end of each day.
- Some tracks are seasonal, as a result in the Victorian Area we may be the first group through. Parks Vic/DSE may be providing us the keys to the area to enable us to inspect and provide information back to Parks for their attention. For example, GPS coordinates of large tree falls, quality of fire places and damaged areas from the winter season.

Log Requirements:

- As per the requirement of the rambler’s badge, a log will be presented with details of the ramble.
- The log shall be backed up by photos taken during the ramble including:
 - Stops along the journey
 - Photos of the campsite set up each night
- The log will explain the course taken throughout the day including details of any challenges. If there are any deviations of the course, they’ll be recorded with details as to why and the approximate distance changes recorded also.
- Where possible (i.e. 3G Internet Reception), online updates to a webpage with a map overlay will be provided on a web page.

Further Documentation

The following documentation has been provided prior to departure via an online website at <http://mmckernan.id.au/ramble>

- Meeting Location for departure
- Group Packing List (i.e. shared equipment)
- Personal Packing List

- Vehicle Packing Lists
- Food List & Menu
- Typographical Maps for the area
- Final route details

Progress Tracking

While we are on the trip, the car computer in Matty's car will be transmitting on a regular basis it's coordinates back to his website.

This will then enable our progress to be tracked online (and timestamped). We can also attach small photos or notes to the data to enable us to let people know what we are up to back home.

The site address is

<http://www.mmckernan.id.au/ramble/maps>