

Desert Parks Bulletin

NO. 454 – 10 April 2013

If you decide to travel in the Outback, you should ensure your vehicles are properly prepared and equipped for outback travel and any emergencies or delays. Take extra water, food and fuel supplies. Ensure good communications equipment, either HF Radio or Satellite Phone. Ensure you notify a responsible person, such as a family member, of your plans prior to travelling into remote areas, and seek local advice. **The use of trailers in the Simpson Desert is strongly discouraged, plus motor homes and caravans should never attempt this crossing.** Serious damage can be caused to vehicles and the environment, and difficulties are likely to result.

If you attempt driving in sandy conditions and get bogged, do not attempt to get the vehicle out without ensuring 4WD and hubs are engaged, tyre pressures are decreased and sand is removed from the path of the tyres. If you become stuck, do not leave your vehicles to walk for assistance as this can have fatal consequences.

Check road and weather bulletins and local conditions before travelling into the Outback. Speed limits of 40km per hour apply within all Parks. For up to date public road information outside of National Parks, please call the Transport SA Road Condition Hotline on 1300 361 033 or visit the Transport SA web site on www.transport.sa.gov.au/quicklinks/northern_roads/northern.asp.

General conditions

For further information regarding the National Parks and Wildlife South Australia visit our website www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/home. For information regarding air tours phone the Wadlata Outback Centre on 1800 633 060. Check local conditions before travelling into the Outback area.

Be aware that entry to Desert Parks requires a permit or a Desert Parks Pass that must be displayed on the vehicle windscreen.

Tallaringa Conservation Park

Due to Department of Defence requirements, the Anne Beadell Highway and thus Tallaringa will be **closed from the 13th of May to the 2nd of June 2013.**

Lake Eyre National Park

Apart from a small amount of remnant water at the Warburton Creek entrance of Lake Eyre North, the rest of the lake is now dry. The best way to see water in Lake Eyre is still from the air. Local charters are available at William Creek and Marree.

Halligan Bay Track – Open to 4WD with caution. This track is a declared Public Access Route. It is a bush track, not a road. Drive with caution along the entire track as the landscape is fragile and the track will deteriorate with the number of vehicles using it. Please drive to track conditions. Driving on the Lake surface is an offence and dangerous. **Trailers and caravans are not recommended.**

Level Post Bay Track – Open to 4WD with cautions due to corrugations. This track is a declared Public Access Route. It is a bush track, not a road. Caution at corrugations, however drive with caution along the entire track as the landscape is fragile and the track will deteriorate with the number of vehicles using it. Please drive to track conditions. Driving on the Lake surface is an offence and dangerous. **Trailers and caravans are not recommended. No camping at Level Post Bay – camping at Muloorina campground.**

Marree's Outback Roadhouse – Agents for the Desert Parks Pass & Lake Eyre Permits. Post Office & Commonwealth Bank Agency, diesel & unleaded fuel, gas bottle refills, licensed restaurant and take away service available. Ph (61 8) 8675 8360. Innamincka Regional Reserve and Coongie Lakes National Park.



General Vehicle Access

Note: Be aware that entry to Innamincka Regional Reserve requires a day/camping permit or a Desert Parks Pass that must be displayed on the vehicle windscreen.

Coongie Track – Open to 4WD. Walkers Crossing Track – Closed due to floodwater damage. Repairs are currently underway. 15 Mile Track and Access to Cooper Creek –Open. 15 Mile Track is closed beyond Wills turn off.

Cullyamurra Waterhole – Open to 4WD. Trailers and caravans not recommended due to washouts.

Burke's Grave – Open to 4WD. Day visitors only.

Old Strzelecki Track (on Innamincka Regional Reserve only) – Closed due to recent rain.

Bore Track North – Open to 4WD.

Bore Track South – Closed. No visitor access across Bollards Lagoon station.

The Innamincka Trading Post (Ph: (61 8) 8675 9900). Agent for the Desert Parks Pass and camping permits. Provide a comprehensive range of supplies and services for visitors in the Innamincka area.

Innamincka Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8675 9901). Provide meals, drinks and accommodation. Agent for the Desert Parks Pass and camping permits.

Witjira National Park and the Simpson Desert Reserves

Check local conditions before travelling into this area. See the National Parks and Wildlife South Australia web site on <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/parks/home> for more information. Please purchase Desert Parks Pass or permit before travelling to Witjira.

The Witjira Co-management Board has approved that both wood fire collection and wood fires will not be permitted in Witjira from 2013, with the exception that wood fires are still permitted at Mt Dare. This does not apply to the Simpson Desert reserves in South Australia and wood can be carried through Witjira to be used in the Simpson Desert reserves.

Witjira National Park – Open to 4WD. Drive with caution and to track conditions as tracks are over a fragile landscape and deteriorates rapidly. Check local conditions before travelling. Please call the Desert Parks hotline on 1800 816 078 for further information. A public phone (card only) is available at Dalhousie Springs. (Note: Phone cards not available at Dalhousie).

Camping is restricted to Dalhousie Springs, 3 O'clock Creek and Purni Bore.

The Dalhousie airstrip is currently closed to public use.

The Oodnadatta Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7804) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass, meals including takeaway, drinks and accommodation (not open Sunday).

The Pink Roadhouse Oodnadatta (Ph: 1800 802 074, Email: pinkroadhouse@bigpond.com) – Agent for the Desert Parks Pass, phone cards, fuel, food, travel supplies, refreshments, tyre and minor repairs and welding.

Mt Dare Hotel (Ph: (61 8) 8670 7835) – Desert Parks Pass Agents - Diesel and unleaded fuel, accommodation, meals, hot showers, fuel, minor repairs, camping, travel supplies and phone cards available for travellers. Satellite phones are available to hire from Mt Dare Hotel for trips across the Simpson Desert.

Simpson Desert – Open to 4WD with caution. Access/exit to the Simpson Desert is via Dalhousie and Birdsville. No access/exit via Warburton Crossing yet. Please check with local authorities or call the Desert Parks Pass Hotline on 1800 816 078. For information about access to the Queensland Simpson Desert, please contact the Wirrari Visitor Centre on (07) 4656 3300.

Use extra caution as sand dunes will be soft after the summer closure, and may have blow outs from summer winds. The first few sand dunes west of the K1/Rig Road intersection along the Rig Road are difficult to traverse and may cause problems for drivers. Carry extra fuel reserves as up to 50% more fuel may be used currently than a normal desert crossing.

The use of trailers in the Simpson Desert is strongly discouraged. Serious damage can be caused to vehicles and the environment, and difficulties are likely to result.

Warburton Crossing – Closed until track repairs occur.



Additional information

Hire of Communications Equipment

Satellite phones can be hired from Birdsville & Mt Dare.

For further information call:

- Warrarri Centre - Birdsville (61 7) 4656 3300
- Mt Dare Hotel - (61 8) 8670 7835

Condition updates

As conditions change a further update bulletin will be issued. For further information on SA Desert Parks and Far Northern South Australian road and track access, please call the Desert Parks toll free hotline on 1800 816 078 or the Transport SA Outback Roads hotline on 1300 361 033.

Alternatively contact local Police where applicable for condition updates. For travel communications, contact the Australian National 4WD Radio Network Inc on (61 8) 8287 6222.

Fight the Bite - a health warning from SA Health

The recent warm weather and rains in the Northern Territory and in Northern South Australia has seen an increase in mosquito numbers across central Australia.

Mosquitoes are not only a nuisance but some can spread serious disease such as Ross River virus (RRv) and Barmah Forest virus (BFv) when they bite (symptoms of RRv and BFv can include joint pains, rash, fever, fatigue or muscle pain).

There is NO CURE and NO VACCINE to protect against these mosquito borne diseases. The only known and effective way to reduce risk of mosquito borne disease is to prevent mosquito bites.

If you are a visitor, or if you live in northern South Australia, it is important that you protect yourself, your family and friends against mosquito borne disease by Fighting the Bite. Key strategies include:

- **Covering up** – wear long, light coloured, loose fitting clothing (mosquitoes can bite through tight clothes like jeans)
- **Apply personal insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin** (avoid using on babies and toddlers and ALWAYS read and follow instructions on the label first).
- Ensure **insect screens cover openings** in holiday houses, boats, caravans or tents.
- Cover sleeping areas or beds with **mosquito nets** if necessary.

For additional strategies and information about how to **Fight the Bite** and protect against mosquito borne disease visit www.health.sa.gov.au.

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While every attempt has been made to provide up to date information in this bulletin, all travellers are responsible for ensuring that they obtain accurate and detailed information and are properly equipped and prepared for all emergencies prior to travelling into remote outback areas. Privacy, Disclaimer, Copyright © 2013

